

for Lucero

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Summary

Yasuni's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet. It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. Yasuni consists of Yasuni National Park and a Waorani Ethnic Reserve, an indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani are the Taromenane and Tagaeri, two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation. Yasuni's staggering richness does not only lie above ground; under the soil are vast amounts of crude oil that put Yasuni's future on the line. Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuni: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and Yasuni-ITT. This thesis aims at explaining the role of ENGOS (Environmental NGOs) in the decision-making processes in Yasuni. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following two questions: *To what extent did ENGOS influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* and *What factors explain the political influence of ENGOS on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* This analytical and explanatory study describes the extent of the ENGOS' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuni. In addition, it also tries to explain the factors that determine this political influence.

To answer the research questions a theoretical framework has been created based on the following concepts: *power, influence, political influence, political arena, policy network, ENGOS*. These concepts all came together in the influence of ENGOS on environmental negotiations. The works of Arts (1998) and Betsill and Corell (2008) form the scientific backbone of this thesis. The theoretical model aims at explaining the influence of ENGOS on the main actor in these decision-making processes: the government.

The first set of data was retrieved from semi-structured interviews with key actors on the three different topics in Yasuni. This data was used to examine the influence of ENGOS on: issue framing, agenda setting, the position of key actors and on the final agreement. With these results the decision-making process is reconstructed, the influence on all different phases is analysed and a counterfactual analysis of ENGO influence was made. The second set of data consists of factors explaining ENGO influence, which have also been retrieved from interviews. In the discussion these are combined with the eight factors Betsill and Corell extracted from several case studies about the political influence of NGOs on environmental negotiations.

This analysis provided the following results. The influence of ENGOS on the decision-making process of the Zona-Intangible was low: while ENGOS participated in the negotiations, there was no effect on the process or outcome. Conversely, ENGO influence in block 31 was high, ENGOS had both influence on the process and the outcome. ENGO influence on Yasuni ITT has also been high: ENGOS participated in the negotiation and had some success in the negotiation process. Also the participation of ENGOS could be linked to the outcome. This demonstrates that ENGO influence is case-specific.

ENGO influence is enabled by: 1 The *personal network* of ENGO employees; 2 *Scientific research* done by ENGOS; 3 the *Stage of negotiation*; 4 The *easy access of ENGOS to negotiations*; 5 Acting as a *watchdog*. The factors restricting ENGO influenced are listed in order of importance: 1 The *high economic stakes*; 2 The *small financial capabilities* of ENGOS; 3 the *poor ENGO-coordination*; 4 The *lack of continuity within ENGOS*; 5 The *tense relations between ENGOS and the government* of the last years.

Finally, four recommendations for ENGOS have been formulated: 1 invest in an extensive personal network; this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions. 2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOS, as this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOS. 3 join in early on negotiations. The earlier ENGOS join, the more the final document will be in line with ENGOS' policy goals. 4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOS and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice.

1. Introduction

Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet (Finer et al., 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Acosta 2010; Larrea, 2010). It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. (Villavicencio, 2010; Acosta et al. 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). Yasuní consists of Yasuní National Park and an Ethnic Reserve for the Waorani indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani, the Taromenane and Tagaeri, are two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation (Proaño Garcia and Colleoni, 2008, Martinez, 2010, Rommel 2007). They live in Yasuní together with over 1300 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and more than 100.000 species of insects (del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010). One hectare in Yasuní has as many as 650 tree species, an number higher than the number of tree species of Canada and the U.S.A. combined (Bass et al. 2010, del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010; McSweeney and Pearson, 2009).

Yasuní's staggering richness lies not only above ground; below the soil vast amounts of crude oil put Yasuní's future on the line (New Internationalist, 2008, Finer, 2010, Bass et al., 2010). Although the area is formally protected at the regional, national and international level, oil concessions have been given to a variety of oil companies (Finer, 2009). And as these oil blocks were designated before Yasuní was a formally protected area, protecting this area from destruction by oil companies is problematic (Acosta, 2010; Rommel, 2007).

Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuní: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and the Yasuní-ITT. These three topics will be further elaborated in the following section.

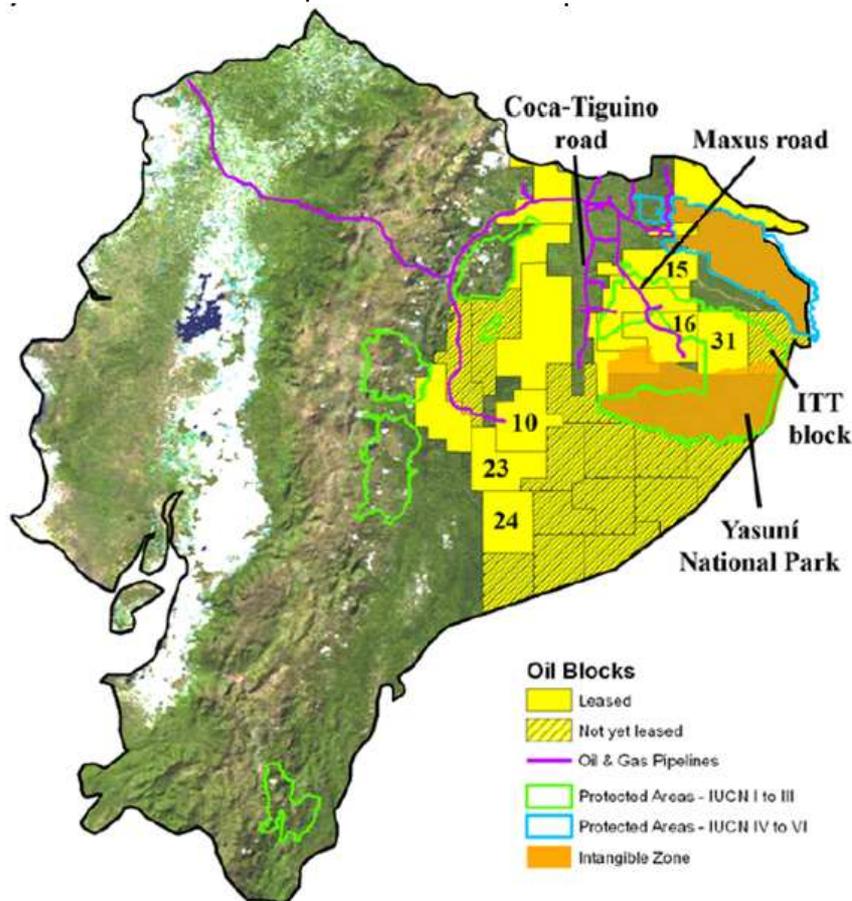


Figure 1: Oil and gas blocks in Ecuador. (Finer et al., 2008)

1.1 Zona Intangible

The indicated zones (former parts of oil blocks) in figure 1 are declared No-Go-Zones for oil exploitation in Yasuní: Zonas Intangibles. The northern No-Go-Zone, La Zona Intangible Cuyabeno falls outside the boundaries of Yasuní, whereas the southern No-Go-Zone, la Zona Intangible Tagaeri- Taromenane (ZI) consists of a substantial part of the Man and Biosphere Reserve (Finer et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Rommel, 2007). This thesis will only focus on the southern ZI, as the northern is not located in Yasuní. This No-Go-Zone was created by the ministry of environment to conserve the Tagaeri and Taromenane, and the forest they live from (Rommel, 2007). Although created in 1999 it took until 2007 to draw its final boundaries, but since then it finally seems to be protected adequately. It encompasses 7580km² and covers the complete southern half of the National Park and a part of the Woarani territory (Finer et al., 2009). As can be seen in figure 2 there are not only oil blocks that have yet to be leased in the southern Zona Intangible, parts of the oil blocks 16, 31 and ITT and almost half of block 17 also fall within the southern No-Go-Zone, this placed major oil reserves in block 17 and block-ITT (Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini) off limits (Finer et al., 2009).

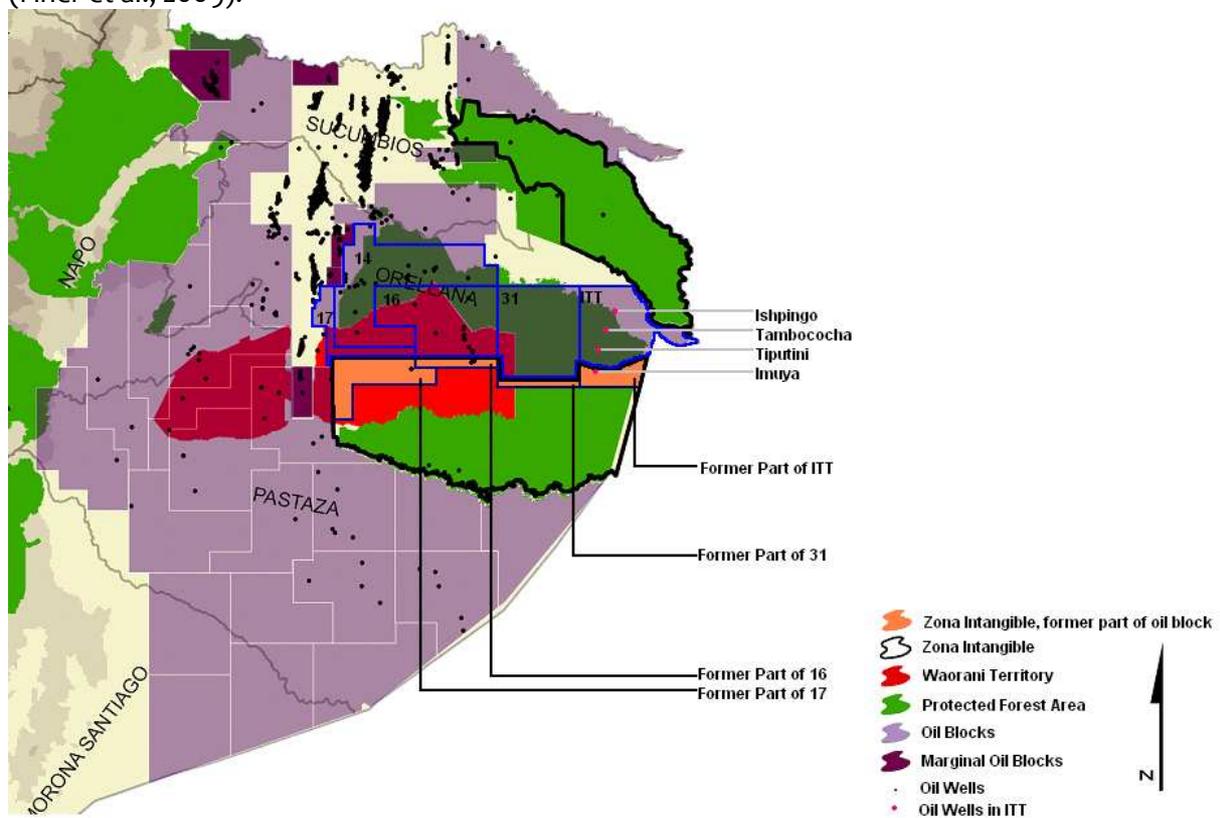


Figure 2: Zona Intangible and the consequences for oil production in Yasuní (Accion Ecologica 2008)

1.2 Block 31

Block 31 is one of the largest oil blocks in Yasuní, although only in size. The amount of oil in block 31 is hardly enough to break even when exploited (Martinez, 2010). It is a very strategic block, however, as it is close to block ITT, in which 20 percent of the remaining oil of Ecuador is located (see 1.3). Therefore a long struggle has been going on to stop the exploitation.

In 1996, the government released block 31, and it was given to the Argentinean company Perez Companc. In 2002, block 31 was taken over by Petrobras who executed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for the construction of an oil road, which started a large controversy. Many different groups joined to stop this road, ranging from NGOs, Social movements, and indigenous communities to famous international scientists (Finer et al. 2009).

Despite these lawsuits and protests, Petrobras started developing the road and clearing primary forest in May 2005, from the banks of the river Napo to the border of Yasuní National Park. At that time, Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of presidency. His successor Alfredo Palacio, reconsidered the issue and authorized development of these fields only under the condition that no roads were constructed and the production plant was outside the national park. In the following year a new EIS was executed and permit was given, based on a new plan that did not involve roads. Surprisingly, however, a year later the new president Rafael Correa announced that Petrobras terminated its contract and returned block 31 to the state (Finer et al., 2009).

1.3 Yasuní-ITT

Next to block 31, under the North-Eastern part of Yasuní National Park called Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) lies one of the biggest remaining oil fields with at least 846 million barrels with a total value of more than 72 billion US dollars, accounting for twenty percent of the remaining oil reserves. (Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer, 2010; Bass et al., 2010; New Internationalist 2008). Since Ecuador is an oil dependent economy, it needs this income to invest in education, healthcare and energy (de Hierro, 2010).

However, a ground-breaking initiative has been developed to generate income without exploiting this oil, and thereby protecting Yasuní's fragile biodiversity. The use of the crude oil in Yasuní would result in the release of 407.000.000 Metric tons of carbon dioxide, which could retrieve 7.2 billion US dollars on the international carbon market. However, as the carbon market only recognizes already emitted CO₂, the idea arose to place the CO₂ not emitted from Yasuní on the voluntary carbon market (Acosta, 2010). Foreign investments in this so-called "Yasuní Guarantee Certificate" will generate enough income to relieve the need for extraction (del Hierro, 2010).

The collected funds would be managed by a trust fund headed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which would invest the money in long-term development plans. The oil-based energy would be replaced by hydro-electrical, geo-thermal, solar and biomass energy. A million hectares would be reforested and protecting fourteen natural reserves and indigenous lands. This will result in the protection of 36 percent of Ecuador, and finally a revolutionary new development strategy (del Hierro, 2010). Since ITT is bordering the Intangible Zone, it would therefore create a rather large area free of oil development. It would also make the exploitation of bordering oil fields, like block 31, unprofitable and thereby would preserve these areas too (Finer et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol does not recognize the Yasuní Guarantee Certificates. Ecuador also tried to get this initiative recognized under REDD, however it was not accepted since it is not sufficiently focused on deforestation. For the climate agreements in Mexico 2010 Ecuador hoped to get it recognized as a new initiative next to the existing REDD and REDD+, however Ecuador did not succeed (Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). The search for investors and funding, is still on going.

1.4 Aim of the research

As shown above, the three battles are faced with an open end, and while the official facts can be presented, it remains unclear how and why things were decided. A relevant yet unanswered question is: what was and will be the role of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Social movements in Yasuní?

This thesis investigates the political influence of the various ENGOS on policy- and decision making concerning the oil extraction in Yasuní. Yasuní is a natural area of global importance and can serve as a flagship for nature conservation. Yasuní's uncontacted indigenous people and biodiversity are threatened by oil extraction. Nevertheless it can serve as an example on how nature can be protected although it is under high pressure. ENGOS acting on local, national and global level are

trying to conserve the indigenous living grounds of the voluntary isolated tribes and Yasuní's unique biodiversity.

This paper focuses on creating understanding of the political influence of ENGOs on oil extraction in Yasuní, and aims at formulating recommendations for the involved ENGOs to enhance their political influence in similar political arenas in the near future. Hopefully this might influence the outcome in Yasuní or at least provide ENGOs worldwide with information and recommendations on how to be better prepared for conflicts similar to this one. The aim of this thesis is therefore answering the following two research questions:

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

This study is analytical and explanatory. It describes the extend of ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuní in addition it also tries to explain what factors determine this political influence.

To answer these questions a qualitative research project is carried out, using interviews, and primary and secondary texts. Especially for the first questions semi-structured into-depth interviews are of high importance. Staff from ENGOs, governmental bodies and different kinds of specialists were interviewed. The original idea to make a strict distinction between these groups was a lot harder in reality than it seemed beforehand. The initial methodology needed this strict division to analyse the decision-making process from three different angles (see 3.7). However this was not the case. For example: scientists were former NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past, people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. Therefore a new methodology will be introduced to analyse the retrieved data more securely, without making divisions for theory's sake while such division does not exist in reality. Finally, a reconstruction of the decision-making process of all three themes (Zona-Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní-ITT) will be made. Overall, the research questions will be answered by analysing the role of ENGOs in this decision-making process. Additionally, this thesis presents recommendations for Ecuadorian ENGOs to enlarge their influence.

This thesis focuses on Yasuní: the Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve, which consists of Yasuní National Park, Waorani Reserve and a 10 kilometre buffer on the west, north and south side. Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve boasts uncontacted indigenous people, an unique biodiversity and both producing oil blocks and blocks that might produce in the near future.

The researched period lies between January 1999, the time of the ministerial decree that declared a large area of Yasuní a Zona Intangible until March 2011, the end of this fieldwork period.

Several factors made it harder to execute the research needed for this thesis. On September 30th 2010 a coup d'état and a personal assault on the president just failed. This created a tense political situation which made it harder to contact governmental representatives. People that gave interviews were less open than normally, which makes it hard to check if the given information is correct.

When the tension became less and less during the following weeks the tension among oil-producers grew tenser since new contracts were given for the next ten years. This made it impossible to contact oil-companies since new information could harm their contract. Therefore the initial idea to include oil-companies had to be changed.

The internal tension on Yasuní-ITT has also risen since Germany, the largest confirmed donor retreated. This did not only cost a lot of money but also implied that other countries and donors drew back.

2. Theoretical Framework

The introduction shows that there are many things at stake in Yasuní. A large variety of actors strives to see their own, often conflicting, goals achieved. Since not each and every one of these goals can be achieved, all actors attempt to influence the people that make the final decision. Although one actor may have more chance to influence a decision maker than another, this does not mean that he will certainly achieve his goals. When different actors are competing in this way, and if their access to resources and information is unequal, there will inevitably be a large difference in their influence on decision-making (Connell and Smith, 2006). Thus, there are power inequalities in this field; some have more power than others. To understand why this occurs, it's important to focus on the concept of power. What is power and what does power do are relevant questions in this context. These and other questions relating to power and influence will be answered in this chapter as well as the other relevant concepts that can help explain the role of ENGOs in environmental negotiations.

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Power Literature

Why is power studied to such a large extent? To put it very boldly: All aspects of social life are based upon power (Kidd et al., 2010 p. 4). This statement indicates how important power may be in everyday life. When the topic of power arises, it is often immediately associated with politics, but there is a major difference between power and politics. "Power is about getting what you want, and politics is about how and why different groups struggle to get what they want." (Kidd et al., 2010, p.5). This definition of power is very broad, and while many scientist would not agree on it, many of them would agree that this broadly is what power is about.

Deep inside, everybody has an idea of power, and of its opposite: powerlessness. We call people powerful when they can execute power over others, and consider those who cannot the powerless. In an average society the latter group is the vast majority (Kidd et al., 2010). Powerless is 'without power' just as "dark" is defined as "without light". This implies that we all know what power is and we can describe it without problems. We also know many of the manifestations of power.

In the social and political sciences, however, power is an 'essentially contested concept' (Ashe et al., 1999 p. 69). According to Kidd et al. (2010, p.7) five general themes can be distinguished within power literature:

1. Power and agency (individuals) – how much of a say do ordinary people have over their actions on a day-to-day basis? How much agency (or freedom/free will) do they have?
2. Power and structure (society) – how rooted and integral are power relationships within the overall make-up of society as a whole? To what extent does society as a thing weigh down upon individuals, regulating their decisions, actions and options?
3. Power and domination – what happens if people step out of line? How are they punished? Do some groups benefit from the punishing of others?
4. Power and empowerment – should we see power as a tool to use against others or as a way to make decisions about and for ourselves? Is it a matter of having power over what others do or is it power to do something for ourselves?
5. Power and identity – how does having power, struggling for power or being the objects of someone else's power make us who we are? What is the relationship between power and how we come to see ourselves in society: our identity?

According to Stephen Lukes (1974) these kinds of power can be gained through two different ways: power can either be obtained through battle, struggle and the possible resistance of others, or be the outcome of an agreement, it is not held by some over and at expense of others

who have none of it. Banfield (2009 p.9) puts it as follows: “Power is the ability to establish control. So who has power controls the situation, this person can do what he wants, not only within its own life but also with the lives of others and sometimes even with society.”

Thus it can be concluded that power is a vital topic in people’s life, this might explain why science’s early interest in studying power.

It is commonly accepted among scientists that modern power literature goes back to the 16th century when Machiavelli published “The Prince” (Bejan, 2010). Only twenty years later Thomas Hobbes published his renowned book “Leviathan”. These two authors started the first discussion in power literature, one that would continue for many years. On the one hand Machiavelli focused on strategies while Hobbes centred his book on notions. Arguably, Machiavelli’s focus point was the question *what does power do* while Hobbes tried to figure out what power actually is (Bejan, 2010; Clegg, 1989; Machiavelli, 2005). Given this, Machiavelli was in many ways a militarist while Hobbes was an early modernist, always looking to the answer to the question “what is power?” and with a strict sense of order. Modernists were not interested in what power does and how power could be used effectively for one’s own goals (Clegg, 1989; Giddens, 1990).

This chapter will continue with scholars inspired by the school of Hobbes since the “what is power” question is more relevant, particularly considering that Machiavelli focused largely on matters of military power. Hobbes’ book led to philosophical and sociological discussions on what power is and how it is executed. Machiavelli’s book is more practical hand guide on how to gain power, how to execute and how to maintain it. Although interesting, it is of lesser relevance for this thesis. Clegg (1989) states that Hobbes way of thinking led to modern power literature in which power is initiated by human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators. Various modern scholars use mathematic equations to specify the level of power or influence, for example Becker (1983) and Arts (1998).

Hobbes’ book led to several major discussions within sociology, discussions that are still held by scientists today: Is power distributed among many or held by an elite? Is power intentional or not intentional? Is power confined to decision making or is it evident in non-decision making? Is power constant over time? (Clegg, 1989) Before the end of this theoretical framework these questions will be answered.

The answer to the question: “Is power distributed among many or held by an elite” requires a brief overview of the elitist and pluralist theories. The publication C. Wright Mills’ book “The Power Elite” can be seen as the start of modern elitist theory (Clegg, 1989). This theory states that power in society is distributed among a small ruling elite (Wright Mills, 1956). Although the elite has changed from kings, dukes and monks to presidents, CEOs and bankers it is still omnipresent (Bottomore, 1993). But is it really? Dahl (1961) is a well-known supporter and one of the founders of the pluralist theory. In his book “Who Governs?”, he claims that power is not held by an elite, as was thought before, but by a very large group. This publication received much critique; many scientists argued that his findings were case-specific (Clegg, 1989). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) observed that where one group of scientists concluded that power was largely diffused in their cases and others assumed that it was extremely centralized, this difference would not be due to a case specific difference, but rather to predetermination in the research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Under the approach of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the researcher should neither begin by asking “who rules?”, as the elitist does, nor by enquiring “does anyone have power?”, as the pluralist does, since these questions already determine the outcome.

The next big contribution to the power debate was by Steven Lukes. Lukes’ influential book “Power: a Radical View” (1974) can help answer many of the remaining questions above, including: “is power intentional or non-intentional?” and “is power confined to decision making or

is it evident in non-decision making?” The book divides power into three different dimensions: In the first dimension the exercise of power occurs in observable overt conflicts between actors of key issues; in the second the exercise of power occurs in observable overt or covert conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues and in the third the power is exercised to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist. (Clegg, 1989; Connell and Smith, 2006)

The first dimension is the one Robert Dahl (1957, p. 203) used: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. This is a very clear and obvious form of power. A good example is a police officer that commands people to turn right; all people will follow his orders even though they would not have done so when it was not told to them by this police officer. Betsill and Corell (2008 p.24) state: “influence occurs when one actor intentionally communicates to another so as to alter the latter’s behaviour from what would have occurred otherwise.” Banfield (2009) adds: “What is A’s ability to achieve the intended result? And what is his ability to achieve it without incurring disadvantages (“costs”) which he regards as equal or greater than the advantage of the result.” This essentially comes down to: the more power A has the more abilities it has to influence the behaviour of B without negative consequences.

Lukes states that this definition of power is blind; it does not see all the less obvious ways in which one can influence another actor. To put it in a political perspective, it does not show the various and less obvious ways in which a political agenda can be controlled in a political system (Lukes, 1974; Clegg, 1989). To overcome this weakness, the first dimension is supplemented with a second dimension, which Lukes characterizes as the exercise of power that occurs in observable open or hidden conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues. This implies that one should not only look at what is done and which decisions are made, but also at what is not done and which decisions are not taken. The fact that a specific item never reaches the political agenda, or that a decision taken about something is never taken, can be the influence of one of the actors. This all goes beyond the visible and obvious exercise of power characteristics of the first dimension. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz previously introduced this as “the second face of power”: the not taken decisions. They discovered that, hidden from the public, an elite influences agenda-setting and in this way exerts its power on society (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962)

So far we have two dimensions, or the two faces of power. One open and obvious that is observable, and one that is hidden and which might also be called “non-decision making”, where conflicts are suppressed and it is prevented that a decision will be taken (Connell and Smith, 2006). Where Bachrach and Baratz (1962) stop with two dimensions or faces of power, Lukes (1974) was still not content, he felt that there were still some aspects of power not brought to light. Therefore he introduced a third dimension of power, characterized by the idea of a hidden conflict that affects interests. Latent conflict exists when there would be a conflict of wants or preferences between those exercising and those subject to power if the latter were to become aware of their interests. This is the power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist.

Linking these three dimensions, Lukes defines the underlying concept of power as: “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests” (Lukes, 1974, p. 27) The interesting aspect of this definition lies in the “contrary to B’s interests,” which is rather clear in the first dimension when the outcome of B is decided completely by A, and in the second dimension when B’s interest is never uttered, never placed on the agenda. In the third dimension, however, it is not clear that someone has gained or someone lost; this kind of power may be exercised even if B does not feel it.

The question: “is power constant over time?” can be answered rather easily. No one king stays in power over time and only a few presidents reign longer than eight years. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) are the first that state that power is not constant over time: it comes, fluctuates and finally diminishes.

“Does one need to exercise power to have power?” is a question that continues to divide scholars. The differences between Dahl (1957, p. 203) and Druckman and Rozelle (in: Tedeschi, 2008) are a clear illustration. As mentioned above Dahl (1957) defines power as: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. Druckman and Rozelle, on the other hand use the concept of “resources”, and in which way these can influence decision makers. They define power as following (quoted from Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3): “Power as control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others”. The difference between the two definitions can be explained by the emphasis of exercising power or influence on the one hand (Dahl) and on the other an emphasis on having power. This difference is called the episodic versus dispositional concept of power (Clegg, 1989) The dispositional school claims that one can be powerful without actually exercising power. A clear example is a nation-state that is powerful in the region because it has a substantial army, not because it uses it (Tedeschi, 2008). In this line of reasoning it can be said that those that hold political power are generally accepted by all other political actors, such as a part of the voters in a democracy. In politics this will mean that they are in control of relevant offices, resources and decision-making apparatus.

For the supporters of the episodic school, however, it is impossible to assess the capability of a player if that capability is not applied. One cannot count and add up a player’s power as if it were money and subsequently forecast outcomes. There is no one-to-one relation found between the resources an actor has and the outcomes it achieves. “A concept of power without the notion of influence is therefore misleading” (Arts, 1998, p.57).

Power is not only a topic in the power literature, research on power is also done in the regime and institutional literature. The power of actors on the development and effectiveness of regimes is studied by scholars (Mitchell, 2003). Mitchell (2003) for example recognizes the role of the interests of states and the efforts of individuals and groups to influence the outcome of International Environmental Agreements (IEAs).

2.2 The Concept of Influence

Now that it is clear what power is and what it does, it is time to introduce the most important concept of this thesis: influence.

The difference between power and influence can briefly be explained as follows. Power is “control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others” (Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3). On the other hand “Influence means the modification of one actor’s behaviour by that of another” (Arts, 1998 p. 57). This extended definition forms an underlying principle for this thesis, and hereunder the concept of influence will be further developed.

Arts (1998, p. 57) also adds the following to the definition of influence given above:

“Influence is to be distinguished from power. Power means capability; it is the aggregate of political resources that are available to an actor. (...) Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent.”

To complete this list of definitions used in this thesis the final difference between political power and political influence will also be given by Arts (1998, p 58):

“Political power refers to a more or less permanent ability to influence policy outcomes, whereas political influence refers to an episodic effect on decision-making”.

Influence can be organized in the same way as power in the previous chapter, using the three dimensions of power. First the openly executed influence between actors. This focuses on the behaviour of actors in decision-making, mainly on key situations. The execution of influence is

often observable: policy preferences are demonstrated through political actions (Lukes, 1974 p. 15)

The two dimensional view of power focuses on decision-making and non-decision-making. This second dimension looks at current and potential issues, both overt and covert. The emphasis in this dimension still are the policy preferences of the actors (Lukes, 1974).

In the three dimensional view of power the two dimensional view of power is expanded with latent conflicts. It also recognizes next to the subjective interests like policy preferences the “real” interests of actors outside the decision-making process (Lukes, 1974).

Giddens (1990) claims that actors are constrained to act, and thereby influence, within given rules and with the existing division of resources. This means they cannot just do what they like and use all resources they want: their political influence is restricted, they have to behave according the rules of the game and according the distribution of resources (Arts, 1998). This distribution of resources in the practice means that actors have only restricted money, supporters, logistics etc. to influence decision-making. This means that they have to use their resources wisely and within the rules of the game.

All actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave. An actor can be part of the political discussion and can join all meetings or one might be excluded from all formal meetings. Rules of the game can be transparent for all actors, but can also be non-transparent, meaning that not all players know what the rules are (Larson, 2010). Rules of the game can be altered by (a group of) players with sufficient power: the rules of the game change over time, with changing society and changing actors. In some cases a single actor can even change the rules of the game, this is normally a governmental player (Boix, 1999; Larson, 2010). Hence rules of the game are the institutional environment that determines what strategy an actor can use and what resources it will use to achieve its policy goals (Williamson, 2010). “Institutions in this context are a set of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that define social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices and guide interaction among the occupants of individual roles. Structures of property rights, electoral systems, and practices relating to marriage and the family are all examples of institutions in this sense. Institutions in this sense must not be confused with organizations construed as material entities with employees, offices, equipment, budgets, and (often) legal personality” (Young, 2002 p. 5).

2.3 Political Arena and Policy Network

Political actors can meet in two different settings, in a political arena or in a policy network. Political arena is a commonly used metaphor in political science, it refers to the battlefield of ancient gladiators, where all the actors compete and try to win while they are restricted by certain rules. The political struggle is quite similar. The political players meet to make a decision or to develop specific policy. The players focus on specific outcomes in the form of a decision or policy. Another similarity is that all players try to win which comes down to influencing the policy or decision to such an extent that their policy goals are met best. The fourth and final similarity is that all actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave etc. (Arts, 1998). A political arena can be defined as follows (Arts, 1998, p. 55): “[...] a formal meeting places of political players who struggle, debate, negotiate, and decide on policy issues and in doing so, are bound to given rules (although these might be changed by players as well).”

In recent times the term policy network gained recognition. Börzel (1998 p. 254) has the following definition: “a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-

operation is the best way to achieve common goals". It has to be stressed that most definitions are controversial, and so an alternative definition will be given from Arts (1998, p.56): "a more or less stable social system in which mutually dependent public and private players address policy issues and programmes". Börzel (1998) states that several scientists consider policy networks as a simple metaphor to indicate that policymaking is done by a large number of different actors all with different roles and stakes. While Börzel (1998) recognizes many forms of policy networks, for this thesis the form of policy network that seems to be most appropriate is a policy network as a form of governance. Several types of governance in and by networks can be distinguished (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). These refer to networks of public and of private organizations, and of mixes of these two. Networks of public policy organizations, the one that seems relevant for this thesis, have been considered to be the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p 148). The typical mode of interaction between the actors is through negotiations (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004).

According to the definition of Kenis and Schneider (1991 p. 36) policy networks are "webs of relatively stable and on-going relationships which mobilize and pool dispersed resources so that the collective (or parallel) actions can be orchestrated towards the solution of a common policy". This means that a policy network includes all actors involved in the policy making process. They are mainly characterized by informal interactions between public and private actors with distinctive but interdependent interests, who strive to solve problems of collective action on a central, non-hierarchical level (Börzel, 1998). This implies that there is no longer a central role for the government, where the government has a hierarchical power over other players. This fits well in the on-going debate surrounding the existence of a key role of governmental institutions (Segebart, 2008).

2.4 Policy and the Policy Cycle

A well-known concept in policy studies is to simplify the policy-making process in a series of stages: the policy cycle (Crabbé and Leroy, 2008). Generally the stages are: agenda-setting, policy making, the forming of opinions, policy implementation and the stage that consists of autonomous developments and policy outcomes. From this stage, the cycle starts anew by the setting of a new agenda, as can be seen in figure 2. All of this is of importance for this thesis, but some important processes are not recognized in this cycle, or at least not made explicit. First the stage of issue-framing, that refers to how the issue is conceptualized before, during and after the negotiation process. A frame is "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment" (Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 33). By framing (or re-framing) environmental problems, NGOs can highlight particular aspects of a problem such as the driving causes or who has the responsibility to act, thereby establishing the boundaries in which others have to respond (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Issue framing may occur before negotiations or during the negotiation-process, which means an issue can be re-framed. Agenda setting is recognized in the policy cycle but influencing key-actors is not explicitly included. Many groups try to influence the main actors during the negotiation-process. NGOs among others use this as a strategy to achieve their policy-goals (Betsill and Corell, 2008). The next section introduces the main actor of this thesis.

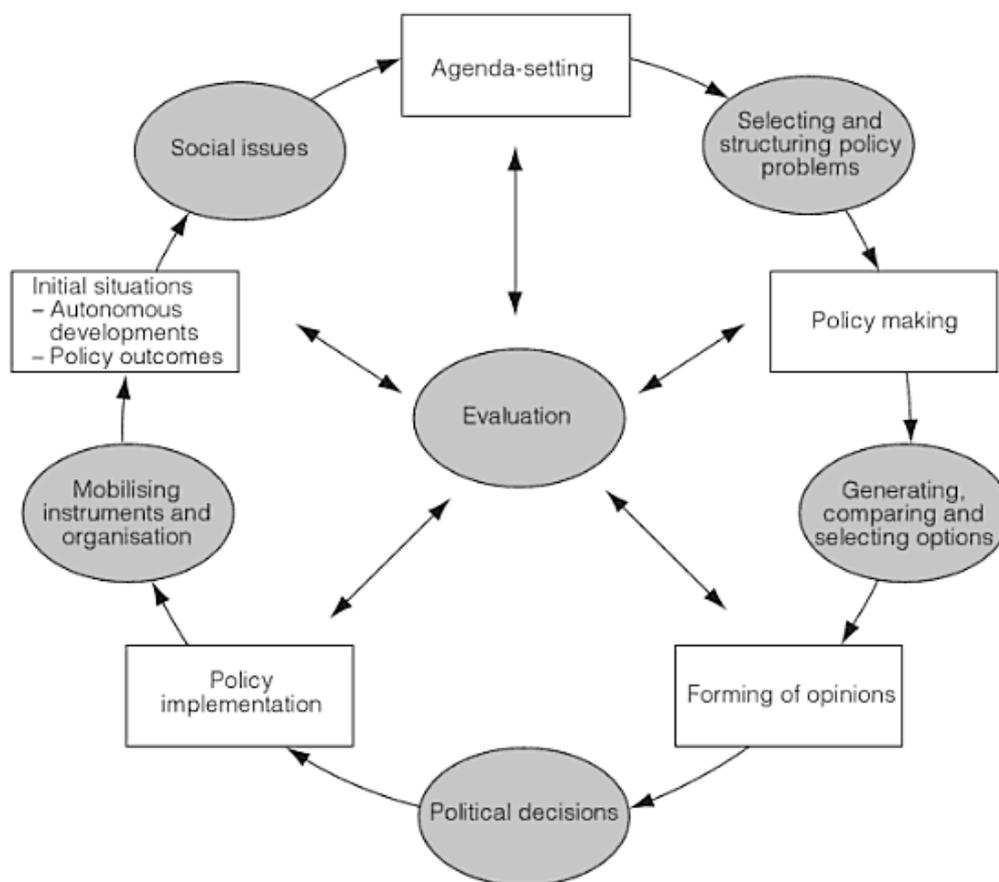


Figure 3: The policy cycle From Crabbé and Leroy (2008 p.3)

2.5 NGOs, ENGOs and Social movements

With power and influence defined, the next big concept for this thesis is that of NGOs. Many scholars recognize the NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, as one of the most important political players these days. The practical definition of an NGO, however, is intensely disputed. (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). Many definitions of NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) exist; every case might even need its own tailor-made definition, including and excluding desired groups. This spectrum of definitions ranges from almost including every group to almost excluding all : some authors argue that even soccer-clubs might fall under the umbrella of NGOs (Kidd et al., 2010; Arts, 1998). Arts (1998) on the other hand uses an extended definition of NGO, or in his case, global NGO: “[...] a global NGO is defined as a promotional pressure group which seeks to influence political decision-making on certain issues at global level. In the case of the UNFCCC and CBD we deal with welfare, communal and issue-specific organizations (respectively development, indigenous, environmental and conservation groups)”.

The definition of NGO used in this study has mostly been drawn from Arts’ definition of global NGOs given above, since it mainly focuses on the political role of NGOs where other definitions focus on the role of NGOs in society. In order to filter relevant NGOs without excluding other potential groups, the following definition, adapted from Arts (1998), is most suitable: “a NGO can be defined as a pressure group that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making.” NGOs fitting the latter definition can basically be divided in two groups: protest groups and pressure groups. Protest groups are groups that are outside the political arena and try to change policy by demonstration, contest and sometimes violence. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are in the political arena and try to change policy from within. This latter group can be divided further: in advocacy and lobby groups. Advocacy groups act as advocates for their cause mainly in

official events. Lobby groups try to influence individual policy- and decision-makers in an informal way (Arts, 1998). It is not clear whether groups inside the political arena are more effective than groups outside. Insiders have more and better access to decision-makers but they have to act responsibly and may lose their independence. Kidd et al. (2010) states that it is probable, however that many outsiders groups want to become part of the 'inside' groups.

In modern governance theory another split between NGOs is made, Visseren-Hamakers (2009) for example makes the difference between campaigning and collaborative NGOs, the first group represents pure conservation NGOs. One could think of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth. The second group consists of NGOs that create partnerships for example the World Wildlife Fund. Also Van Huijstee (2010) and Humphreys (2006) recognize two groups of NGOs, in this thesis they will be divided in "campaigning NGOs" and "collaborative NGOs".

Closely related to NGOs but crucially different are social movements. Contrary to NGOs, social movements normally have no strict hierarchy. These groups consist of like-minded people who seek to influence policy-making on a narrow range of issues. Although seeking to influence policy and policy-makers, they are not interested in becoming policy makers (Kidd et al., 2010). When using the definition above, however, social movements might also be classified as NGOs .

Social movements and NGOs can also be divided into sectional and promotional pressure groups. Sectional groups protect the interests of their members, such as labour unions, or a group of indigenous people that fight for protection of their lands. Promotional groups exist to promote a cause they believe is neglected by the government, for example Greenpeace and Amnesty International (Kidd et. al., 2010). These examples show that sectional groups often tend towards social movements while promotional groups lean towards NGOs.

So how important are NGOs and social movements in political decision making on environmental matters? While the pluralists' perception that pressure groups and social movements play a vital role in the political decision making is true to form, it is also recognized by many that better environmental outcomes are achieved when NGOs and social movements are involved in decision-making (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). All those groups with environmental focus normally are called ENGOS (Betsill and Corell, 2001). From now on, since principally NGOs with environmental goals are studied the term ENGO will be used: ENGOS can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seek to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts.

2.6 ENGO influence on environmental negotiations

Most scientific literature has focused on the power of states, and what factors might explain the power of these states (Kidd et al., 2010). Military, economic and political are the most important resources states have to execute power (Kidd et al., 2010). Nowadays it is recognized that not only states have power, and non-state actors can also shape governmental outcomes. Like states, NGOs have access to a range of resources that can give them influence. While NGOs do not have military power, some of them do have significant economic resources; these are mostly NGOs in the private sector, but some are environmental NGOs like Greenpeace and WWF. Rather than economic and military resources, the most important resources for NGOs are commonly recognized as knowledge and information. This specialized knowledge and information is used to influence governmental decision-makers (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the relationship between power (capabilities) and influence is not direct. The question is how to translate the capabilities into influence (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Holsti (1988) distinguishes six strategies that states can use to exercise influence: persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and the use of force. Betsill and Corell (2008) translate these to NGOs and they conclude that persuasion is the most used among NGOs. NGOs spend a large amount of time trying to influence decision-makers. The use of force, often used by states, is not a possible option for NGOs (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Power in relation to International Environmental Agreements is already discussed briefly in 2.1. Also the role of NGOs is underwritten in this regime theory. NGOs for example provide information, conduct research, and propose and evaluate policies, actions that introduce both ideas and political pressure into negotiations (Mitchell, 2003).

Arts (1998) divides the explanatory factors of political influence into three levels: the arena level, level of the outcome and the context level, which is a quite detailed division (see 2.8). Instead, Betsill and Corell (2008) make another division by identifying firstly the participation in negotiations and secondly the effect on the behaviour of other actors.

Betsill and Corell (2008, p.189) identified eight most often mentioned factors that could explain the political influence of NGOs through comparisons between different negotiation cases. It has to be said that their study mainly focuses on Environmental NGOs and that it is just the top of the iceberg of factors that could influence NGO influence, but it gives a good overview on the influence of Environmental NGOs especially when it comes down to forest related cases. The factors most often mentioned by key-informants in the research of Betsill and Corell are explained below (2008).

Several experts state that *NGO coordination* between like-minded enhances the influence on negotiations: they speak with one joined and therefore stronger voice. However in the cases researched by Betsill and Corell (2008) and Arts (2001, in: Betsill and Corell 2008) NGO coordination has only a neutral effect. They claim that NGOs have achieved all levels of influence whether they did or did not coordinate, so an NGO can have large influence without coordinating its actions. Coordinating NGO strategies seems hard: even among NGOs with common interests, a consensus between a large NGO with many resources and a small NGO focussing on the situation on the ground is hard to reach (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

There are no set *rules of access* governing NGO participation in international environmental negotiation (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Habitually NGO access is created ad hoc in international negotiations, and therefore it varies greatly, making it easier to study. Repeatedly it is assumed that more restricted access leads to lesser influence. Betsill and Corell (2008) showed that this relation is more complex. They claim that when NGOs are actively invited and stimulated to participate, their influence grows; in these cases NGOs were seen as important partners to achieve a common goal. On the other hand when states restrict NGO access, NGOs frequently overcome: they changed strategies and therefore less access did not constrain NGOs to influence the negotiations. This is remarkable when one notices the amount of energy and time NGOs dedicate to get a more open access to decision-making processes. They believe that more access leads to more influence but it is shown that this is not necessarily the case. The key to success lies in convincing states and decision-makers that NGOs can be an effective partner in making better decisions or implementing these, then states will actively facilitate NGOs to participate and that will lead to an increased influence. Christensen (2006) states that with soft-law real rules of access often do not exist, it is not made explicit who can and who cannot join the decision-making process, however in some certification schemes this is very well defined (Yale Program on Forest Policy and Governance, 2008).

The cases of Betsill and Corell (2008) hint that there is a relation between the *stage of negotiation* and the influence of NGOs. Two different stages can be distinguished. The first one being a formulation phase “where participants agree upon a framework for the negotiations” and a detail phase “where they bargain over the specifics of the final text” (Betsill and Corell, 2008, p.193). NGOs are seen to have more influence in the earlier stage than in the detail phase where governments are trying to solve core issues, when the tone of the negotiations is much harder. Betsill and Corell (2008) argues that the later stages are more heavily politicized, which may lead to less people to decide on the core issues (Betsill and Corell, 2008). They claim that the peak of NGO influence lies in the agenda-setting phase, the phase before the actual negotiation. NGOs co-decide what will and what will not be discussed: they identify problems and call upon states to act. This does not mean that NGOs do not have influence in the real decision but their greatest

effect is on agenda-setting, particularly when agenda-setting is defined as an on-going process rather than a distinct stage of policy making that ends once negotiation begins (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Political stakes are seen as a major factor shaping political influence. When the negotiations are in an early stage and the aims are still vague NGOs can influence the decision making to a larger extent than when the stakes are higher. Initial agreements where general principles are articulated, new organizations and decision-making processes are established can relatively easily be influenced by NGOs, as these do not require fundamental behavioural change from the government. When an NGO tries to bind a governmental body to specific commitments the stakes are higher. However, when governments have (positive) experiences working with NGOs they tend more often to work with them when there are higher stakes (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

If there is *institutional overlap*, and NGOs do not have the possibility to influence the negotiations directly, they can influence negotiations indirectly by influencing related institutions, if they. The overlap between the WTO and international trade regimes, for example, restrains the influence of Environmental NGOs while enlarging the influence of NGOs representing business/industry (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Competition from other NGOs can make it more difficult to influence negotiations since NGOs will be speaking with a diffuse voice, or all NGOs might be competing for the same financial funds or want different outcomes of the negotiation. However, NGO influence is not necessarily constrained when there is competition from other NGOs (NGO influence is not a zero-sum game) (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

When an NGO forms strong *alliances with key governmental bodies* their influence increases greatly (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Yanacolpulos, 2005). NGOs can shape the position of a state, either directly or through the public opinion and media. NGO influence increases when proposals are written that resonate the interests of the government, creating a sound basis for cooperation. NGOs and governments can both be working together and working against each other, there is no generalization possible and it has to be determined case to case.

The last mentioned factor that determines political influence is the *level of contention*. This often comes down to NGOs having more influence if there are no economic interests at stake. This factor is really relevant for this study since the potential oil revenues are a large economic interest. Short-term costs and revenues have higher priority than long term costs and benefits, and if NGOs manage to frame their claims consistently, their influence increases (Betsill and Corell, 2008). There may also be contention over sovereignty of states or lands of indigenous people. Protecting indigenous people can be threatening to states, but still NGOs often succeed (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Next to these factors, many others are mentioned by other articles. However, they are not the most relevant for this thesis and will only be mentioned shortly. From the work of Widener (2009-1) an extra factor can be added: *scale of operation*. Some NGOs work on a higher scale and want to influence other things than NGOs that work on a lower scale. The first group might want to influence international policy while the second group focuses on the situation on the ground.

Financial capabilities of a NGO play a large role in their effectiveness. The more financial funds a NGOs has, the more effective it can work, and therefore the more influence it has (Silva, 1997).

Related are the *organisational capabilities* of NGOs, the better it is organised the more influence it can execute (Silva, 1997).

A factor that most influences the effectiveness of the influence is the *availability of expertise*. With more expertise an organization has better knowledge of what to do and how to do it. This has positive influence on the effectiveness and the amount of power since others might act upon the NGO (Silva, 1997).

There is one final group of factors that must be mentioned, but that are very different from the other factors: *contextual factors*. These factors are not controlled by any player within a political arena and might enable some actors' influence while at the same time restricting the influence of other actors.

With all the theory of this thesis introduced it is now the place to conceptualize the theory. To conceptualize the theory, a definition of political influence is needed for this thesis. Political influence is chosen since it implies executed power on chosen topics. Since the focus of this thesis closely relates to Arts book “The Political Influence of Global NGOs” (1998) his definition of political influence concerning global NGOs will be given (Arts, 1998, p.58): ... *political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to an outcome in treaty formation and implementation, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned.*” This definition can be largely used, with a minor adaptation, to define political influence in this thesis.

Arts adds that it is possible to rewrite this definition in terms of the so-called counterfactual. Then political influence implies that the policy outcomes are more in line with the desired outcomes of an actor than it would have been if he had not intervened. To put it more simple and general, the player did matter and did make a difference. Arts (1998 p. 59) adds something that is very important for this specific case: “it should be stressed that the achievement of one’s goal might not only cover the realization of a desired outcome, but the prevention of an undesired one as well”.

In this thesis political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned

In Arts (1998, p. 60) the selective nature of agenda-setting is accepted at the theoretical level, but barely covered by the empirical research. In this thesis a different approach is chosen, since the most important possible achievement of the NGOs might be influencing the agenda setting and issue framing (Kidd et. al., 2010; Connelly and Smith, 2006; Betsill and Corell 2001). The political arena perspective will be used in this thesis since it recognizes the central role of the government. The main focus of this thesis is the influence of NGOs on the government, both intentional and un-intentional. The question if power is intentional or non-intentional is not very relevant for this study which focuses on NGO power. One can claim that all power is intentional since all organisations have their own policy goals they want to achieve, and are therefore intentionally exercising power. On the other hand NGOs have a lot of unintentional power, it can be seen as influence as a side effect, it might change the political climate or discussion unintentionally. Unintentional influence also includes negative influence in the way that this influence will make it harder to achieve its policy goals. Nevertheless a large (and the most important) part of the influence is intentional, since it is focussed on specific actors to achieve policy-goals. (Clegg, 1989).

In this thesis a whole range of different NGOs is trying to influence the outcome in Yasuní. Therefore it is hard to know which groups to include and which to exclude. In Ecuador NGOs have emerged over the last twenty years as leading actors in development. Their numbers rose greatly as did the variety in types of NGOs. Their role in policy making and grass roots organizing also became more fundamental with the retreat of the state. Now NGOs are looking for ways to find new forms of collaboration with the government. At this time NGOs can be seen as one of the most important links between grassroots and the government (Keese and Argudo, 2006).

For this thesis, groups that fit the definition of NGO from the theoretical framework are included:

“ENGOs can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts”

Social movements fit this definition and are therefore included under the caller of NGO although it is recognized that they are essentially different from NGOs. In Yasuní they have the same objectives and work more or less in the same way. Not all NGOs have the same objectives in

Yasuní, they can roughly be divided in three groups. The first group is made up by organisations in favour of oil exploitation: the money gained by the oil exploitation is needed in Ecuador. This group is called *extractivistas* (those in favour of oil extraction). The second group wants to keep the oil under the ground, the so-called *ecologistas*. This group consists of people that consider the social impacts on the indigenous people in Yasuní too large and of groups that want to conserve the unique biodiversity. In reality most groups share both reasons, some have more environmental focus and others a more social focus.

The third group consists of groups that are divided; the so-called *ambientalistas*, and normally the consensus of these groups is exploitation with minimum impact. A lot of NGOs and Social movements fall under this group.

Since the *extractivistas* do not have a lot of support among Ecuadorian NGOs, and the fact that this thesis focuses on Environmental NGOs; *extractivistas* NGOs will not be studied in this thesis, it solely focuses on the *ecologistas* and *ambientalistas* NGOs, as these groups have environmental objectives, the one rather radical the other more mild. To make this clear in the rest of the study these two groups will be called ENGOS: Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations.

2.7 The conceptual model

The conceptual model presented is in line with a political arena rather than with a policy network. A disadvantage of the political arena is that it gives the impression that players, roles, rules and outcomes are fixed, however in reality these factors are to a large extent fluid. The policy network theory recognizes this, but also questions the central role of governmental bodies (Arts, 1998; Börzel, 1998 and Segebart, 2008). In this case the government can still be seen as the central player, making the political arena is the better alternative for this thesis.

This study focuses on the influence of ENGOS on the government and not on all kinds of mutual relations between the government, ENGOS and other players. It also must be stressed that although some problems in Yasuní might have been privatized in the past, for example the government retreat from negotiations between Indigenous movements and oil companies in the past, but at this moment the state is the unquestioned central player. Therefore the political arena is more suitable since it makes the government the central player and leaves enough room to study the influence of the other players including ENGOS on the government and therefore on the policy.

The theoretical model underneath (figure 4) is based on ENGO influence on Climate and Biodiversity Conventions (Arts, 1998, p. 71). This model fits in the pluralist view on power and influence: many actors co-decide and have influence.

The upper part of the model consists of external events and trends, a major factor influencing negotiations. A shift of or within the government, changed economic circumstances or a shift in the environment (local, national or global) can completely change the discussion.

Instead of an international focus as in Arts (1998), this thesis focuses at three different levels, the regional, national and international level. On all three levels are actors trying to influence the outcome. These levels are not strictly divided. A group that mostly focuses on the regional situation might seek international attention for its cause. The same can be said for international NGOs that participate in the global discussion, they might also work in small communities in Yasuní. It has to be said that although the problem takes place in three different levels the national level is the most important, and therefore has the most attention in this thesis. This is because the regional level mainly focuses on the execution of the nationally designed policy and that on the international level the ENGO actors have a lesser voice.

It is recognized that the group *others* is rather broad, and consists of many groups. However in this thesis all these groups are lumped together to get a clearer insight in the role of ENGOS: the main actors of this thesis. This choice might have influenced the research outcomes since this thesis solely focuses on the role of ENGOS. The influence of NGOs that, for example, aim at oil extraction is not investigated.

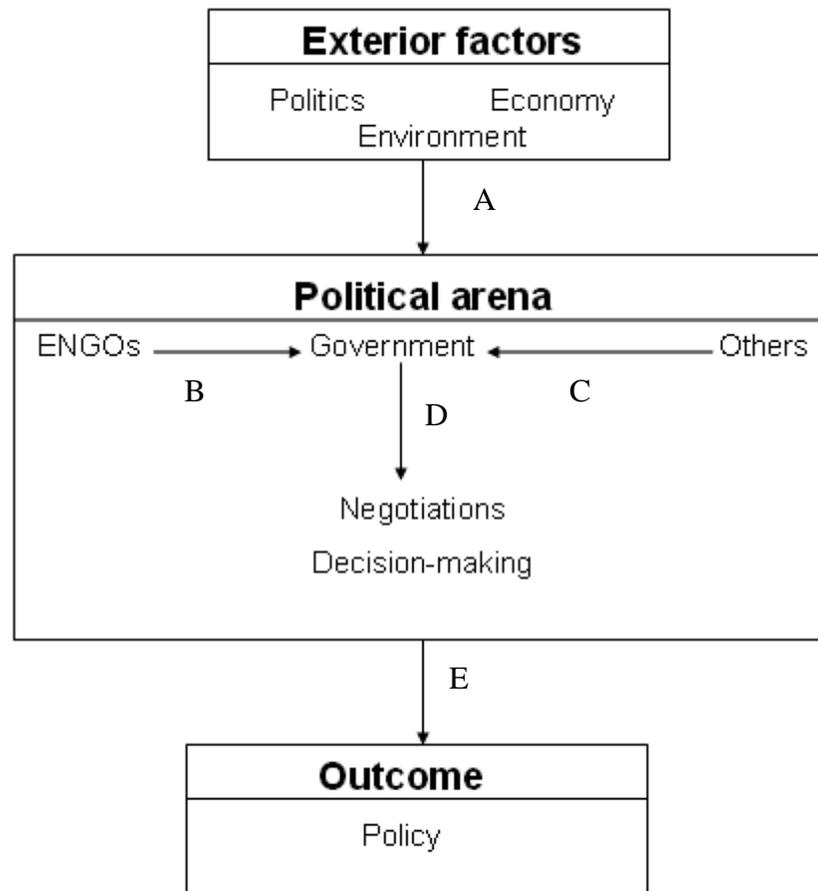


Figure 4: Main issues concerning decision-making in a political arena with NGOs (based on Arts, 1998 p.71)

Arrow (A): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors can be political, economic, environmental; and they may not be fixed, what constrains one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis etc.

Arrow (B): political influence. This is the political influence of NGOs on the government, this includes agenda-setting and issue framing. This is the main focus of the research.

Arrow (C): political influence. This is the political influence of other actors on the government, in this thesis this group mainly consists of oil companies and their affiliates like *extractivistas* NGOs. It has to be stressed that arrow (B) and (C) are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given the formal status and position a government has. In reality, however governments do influence other players and NGOs, but it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (D): engage in. All actors including the government engage in negotiations and decision-making. The government is the leading actor and can determine the outcomes the most. The outcome depends largely on the nature of the negotiations, and on the nature of the actors involved.

Arrow (E): leads to. The policy processes lead to outcomes in this case: policy.

In this model NGOs can impact policy outcomes in principle, but are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors. This thesis focuses on the national level while the

international and local levels are recognized, whereas Arts' (1998) model focuses solely on the international level.

Apart from this, two other large differences exist between Arts' model and the one used in this thesis. The upper part of Arts' model consists of the international system, which in turn consists of "events and trends", and a part called "structure". Structure is divided in the distribution of resources, regimes and the rules of the game. Leaving out this structure increases the explanatory power of the central part of this model while at the same time simplifying it. Now the focus is more on the political arena, and everything influencing this arena is regarded as a given trend or event: something that changes the political arena and therefore the terms for negotiations. The other large difference between this model and that of Arts is that there is no feedback between the outcomes of the negotiation and the events and trends. Since the contextual factors are regarded as given circumstances, and this thesis is a short term research, it goes too far to for this thesis to assume that the policy influences these events and trends. The events and trends in this case are highly unpredictable. Giving the model a feedback loop might suggest that they are predictable.

To give some more context to the two research questions they will be placed in figure 4. Question 1 verifies if arrow B does exist and how large it is, in other words: how influential are ENGOs. Question 2 tries to explain arrow B: what factors can explain the influence of ENGOs. The research questions are repeated hereunder.

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology for data collection and data analysis will be presented.

3.1 Assessing the Extent of Political Influence of NGOs

This chapter will present the methodology used to answer research question 1. During the fieldwork it became apparent that the method chosen to analyse the data from the interviews was not applicable in this thesis. Therefore the data will be studied in another way than was intended. The methodology chosen beforehand will be introduced first in this chapter. Then the weaknesses experienced during the fieldwork will be discussed and finally the adapted methodology will be introduced

3.1.1 Original methodology

The normal procedure of comparing cases with and without NGO influence is not applicable since all three investigated cases are unique (Finer et al., 2009; Arts, 1998; Yin, 1994). So when the commonly used comparative case analysis is not applicable, what method is most appropriate? In modern political literature three different methods to assess political influence can be distinguished: the reputation, position and decision-making methods (Arts, 1998).

The reputation method connects power with reputation, it states that what counts in social relations is the mutual perception of power. In other words: if one is regarded influential by others he will be treated as such. The same is true for the opposite, if one is regarded powerless (Arts, 1998). Using opinions of selected key figures one assesses the influence of several actors in a given community (Peters, 1999). A major weakness is the subjectivity of this study; it is completely based on the opinion of others, and it does not say much about the factual influence of an actor. An advantage is the easy way in which one can collect data. Simply by getting the reputation of having influence it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, only the reputation is enough to enhance one's influence (Peters, 1999).

The position method assumes that political influence is based on the position taken by the actors, this position directly influences access to authorities, information and other resources. The closer one is to the authorities and the more information and resources one has, the stronger one's influence is. Using this method, a kind of hierarchy can be designed to rank all actors. For example a president has more influence than a minister, who has more influence than a lobbyist and so forth (Arts, 1998). The position method has a high reliability since it is easy for organisations to pinpoint the crucial, and therefore influential, positions. The major critique on this method is that it easily assesses one's position but not the influence one executes (Peters, 1999). It is easily argued that all majors have a different level of influence while they all have the same positions, so there have to be more factors. Another critique is that it does not discriminate between different issues and political arena since respondents are only asked to assess the power of actors in general. (Arts, 1998)

These two commonly used methods are designed to analyse actors' political influence, but they do not automatically say something about who really influences a political decision (Peters, 1999; Arts, 1998). While position can certainly affect political influence it does not necessarily say much about the control of outcomes. A valid argument for this is that not all members control the outcomes of decision to the same extent, even though they have formally the same position; this differs from case to case.

Incorporating the weaknesses of the latter two methods, the decision-making method aims at analysing decision in specific issue-areas in order to reconstruct the contribution of players to the

final outcome. It assesses to what extent the actors' interventions were successful in the decision making process. This assessment is used to reconstruct the relative influence of each actor. Because key issues and key decisions are studied, the influence of political players is considered to be politically relevant (Arts, 1998; Peters, 1999). Data is generally collected by interviews with actors and decision makers and the analysis of policy documents, interviews with more objective specialists can also be used. However, the decision-making method is also criticized, mainly by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who pinpoint that agenda setting is also influence. Another kind of critique is that one can achieve policy goals without exercising influence: it is hard to separate the extent to which one has achieved one's goal and the influence one had on that outcome (Peters, 1999).

The methods described above all have their advantages and disadvantages, and since every case needs another method, in the practice these three methods are often mixed by picking and combining relevant elements. Originally, a variation on the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal analysis, in short EAC Method, was used for this thesis. This qualitative method combines the three modern methods of analysing political influence. The methodology concerning the EAC Method is developed by Arts (1998). In his book Arts also assesses political influence of ENGOs in a rather complex political arena: the climate and biodiversity conventions. With several adaptations this methodology can be used for this study. A strong point of this methodology is that it studies the same political influence from three completely different angles, which seriously reduces the change of inaccuracies. However in Bas Arts (1998) and this thesis it is not so clear who achieved what specific result in the designed policy.

The EAC methodology works as follows.

Ego-perception

In this qualitative technique a number of selected key respondents of NGOs are asked to assess their own influence on the governmental decisions regarding oil production in Yasuní. Then they will get the opportunity to elaborate on their examples of NGO influence. These interviews will create a list of so-called *ego-perceptions*. Both the quality and quantity of these ENGO claims are taken into account in the assessment (Arts, 1998). These interviews will be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline, in this thesis table 3.

Alter-perception

After selecting a group of key respondents representing government the respondents will assess the political influence of ENGOs active in Yasuní. These result in a list representing alter-perception. Again, both the quality and quantity of these claims on NGO influence are taken into account in the assessment. For this part, other players assess both the reputation of NGOs and the factual achievement of their policy goals (Arts, 1998).

These outcomes can confirm, reject or add to the claims of the NGOs. This is the first control on the claims made by the key informants of the NGOs (Arts, 1998). These interviews in which ENGO influence will be assessed will also be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline.

Causal analysis

Finally, the NGO influence will be subjected to a second control of the NGO claims, the so-called causal analysis. This is done to verify if ENGOs really did influence the policy in the way they claim.

Causal analysis is structured in the following way: First it is checked if an NGO achieved their goals regarding policy, and to what extent. The achievement of these goals is divided in two groups: enhancing a desired 'good' or preventing an undesired 'bad'. The Causal analysis helps to judge the political influence of NGOs. For this thesis, this control will be based on the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) in table 3.

The ego-perception, alter-perception and the causal analysis all point out whether there is in fact an influence of NGOs. If the alter-perception and causal analysis indicate that there was no influence it might be concluded that there was no influence although the ego-perception might claim the opposite. The situation changes where the alter-perception and causal analysis differ, then it is up to the analyst to decide which should prevail. In general the causal analysis is dominant over the alter-perception since it is based on objective documents instead of on subjective visions of key informants. However this dominance also depends on the quality of data as these might differ (Arts, 1998; Steinberg, 2004).

To put this all in perspective, it should be recognized that any assessment of political influence is after all only an informed guess (Arts, 1998). One can never be sure of having included all relevant visible and invisible factors and actors in the analysis, especially in cases like this one, where objectivity is hard to find and transparency is not a common phenomenon. Even scientific judgements on political influence remain guesses. But they are ‘informed’ at least, as the political processes concerned are analysed as thoroughly as possible. (Arts, 1998)

Ego-perception	Views of ENGO representatives with regard to their own political influence (claims)
Alter-perception	Views of government representatives with regard to the political influence of ENGOs (first control of ENGO claims)
Causal analysis	Researcher’s assessment of ENGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews (second control)

3.1.2 The problem between the methodology and the circumstances in the field

The EAC-methodology is based on a strict separation between people working in NGOs, government or other players. While this separation might have existed at an international level or in the nineteen nineties when Arts (1998) carried out his study, the interviews for this thesis showed something completely different for Ecuador. Of the 18 interviewed people 13 worked a long time within another group. For example, scientists were also NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. This made it illogical to pretend there is a hard distinction between the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal-analysis group. There were two possibilities to solve this friction between the methodology and the situation in the field. The first one was to just make a distinction of all interviews in one of the three groups. This could be done according to the current job, which has as a weakness that this was not the job the people had during the events. The second one is trying to group the people in their most meaningful group, the one they worked in during the events or their most influential job. However, this would make the influence of the researcher to unintentionally manipulate the data too large. The second possibility is to look for an alternative methodology that would solve this problem. Since there were interviews done with a very broad group of people one could assume that the truth was captured within the data derived from these interviews. Since almost all people worked at different type of jobs, the data derived from the interviews was more objective than assumed before starting the fieldwork. There were no large differences in the reconstruction of events between the point of view of a former minister and an NGO-employee. Therefore it is chosen to use all data from the interviews to reconstruct the decision-making process. This methodology will be elaborated on in the following section.

3.1.3 Alternative methodology

The methodology, aiming at answering research question 1, was adapted to solve this problem is derived from Betsill and Corell (2008), who studied several cases in which the NGO influence on environmental negotiations was central. During this research a methodology was developed to systematically analyse NGO-influence. The data needed for this is the same as Arts (1998) used and consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews with government delegates, ENGOs and specialists. Since the framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was used during the interviews to systematize the data it could easily be fit to this methodology.

Also the research task is the same: analyse evidence of ENGO influence. Only the methodology is different. The methodology is based on two different dimensions. The first is process tracing: here the participation of ENGOs will be linked to their influence using causal mechanisms to explain this influence. The other analysis is the counterfactual analysis: answering the question “what would have happened if ENGOs had not participated in the negotiations?” This separation will be held during the analysis of the results and the conclusion on the first research question of this thesis. In table 2 an overview of the research strategy, the data type, the data sources and the methodology is given.

Table 2: Strategies for gathering and analysing data on (E)NGO influence (cells contain examples of questions researchers might ask. From: Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 28))

Triangulation by:	Intentional communication by NGOs/NGO participants	Behaviour of other actors/global attainment
<i>Research task: Gather evidence of NGO influence along two dimensions</i>		
Data type	<i>Activities:</i> How did NGOs communicate with other actors?	<i>Outcome:</i> Does the final agreement contain text drafted by NGOs? Does the final agreement reflect NGO goals and principles?
	<i>Access:</i> What opportunities did NGOs have to communicate with other actors?	<i>Process:</i> Did negotiators discuss issues proposed by NGOs (or cease to discuss issues opposed by NGOs)? Did NGOs coin terms that became part of the negotiating jargon? Did NGOs shape the positions of key states?
	<i>Recourses:</i> What sources of leverage did NGOs use in communicating with other actors?	
Data source	<i>Primary texts</i> (e.g., draft decisions, country position statements, the final agreement, (NGO) lobbying materials)	
	<i>Secondary texts</i> (e.g.[...]media reports, press releases)	
	<i>Interviews</i> (government delegates, observers, NGOs) <i>Researcher observations</i> during the negotiations	
<i>Research task: analyse evidence of NGO influence</i>		
Methodology	<i>Process tracing</i> What were the causal mechanisms linking NGO participation in [...] environmental negotiations with their influence?	<i>Counterfactual analysis</i> What would have happened if NGOs had not participated in the negotiations?

In this thesis the extent of political influence is not directly measured or asked in interviews, solely whether there was influence. Table 3, shown below, was used as a framework to systematically analyse the political influence of ENGOs during interviews. The influence of ENGOs was investigated for the five recognized phases: Issue framing, agenda setting, position of key actors, final agreement/procedural issues and final agreement/ substantive issues. In the framework presented in table 3, several questions are presented for all these phases to help the systematic analysis. These questions are answered as part of the results of this thesis.

Claims made by all respondents were verified so that in the end a conclusion could be drawn about the level of influence. Therefore it was chosen to keep the data collection as qualitative as possible with the only exception that the data derived from interviews was used to differentiate between low, moderate and high ENGO influence, as is done in table 4, based on the framework designed by Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 38). The input for this scheme is the completely filled in framework of table 3, which points out if there was ENGO influence, and in what phase. Together these two tables form a complete methodology that enables the researcher to systematically investigate ENGO influence.

Three final schemes will be made one for “La Zona Intangible”, one for Block 31 and the last one for Yasuní-ITT. The conclusion will be drawn when the final scheme of each topic will be linked to table 4. This will lead to three end conclusions of ENGO influence of low, moderate or high, on all three subtopics, and thereby to an answer on research question 1.

Table 3: Indicators of NGO influence (quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 34,35)

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

Table 4: Determining the level of NGO influence (Quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p.38)

	Low	Moderate	High
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate and have some success in shaping the negotiating process but not the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiating process • NGOs' effects of participation can be linked to outcome
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a no on all the outcome indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a yes on one or both of the outcome indicators

3.8 Assessing the Explanatory Factors of NGO Influence

This section introduces the methodology used to answer research question two: What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni? This is done after the first research question is answered being: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” The second question tries to explain the political influence of ENGOs.

To collect the data used to answer the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” all interviewees were asked for the factors that can explain ENGO-influence. This resulted in a ranking of mentioned factors. This list, combined with the list from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used to draw conclusions on the explanatory factors of ENGO-influence.

During the interviews people were asked which factors might have explained the political influence of ENGOs in the Yasuní case, and in interviews with ENGOs which factors might have explained their specific influence. This was done for both enabling and restricting factors. These factors are investigated using interviews, with the data from these interviews one can study how ENGOs have influenced both the negotiation process (through issue framing, agenda setting and shaping the positions of other actors) as well as the outcome (procedural and substantive elements of the final text) of the negotiations concerning the production of oil in Yasuní (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Finally in the discussion a distinction will be made for the explanatory factors for the three sub-topics since not every factor might be as important, or even present, in all three cases.

3.9 Research Strategy

Three different subtopics will be investigated in this thesis, all three very important to answer the research questions. The first will be the construction of “la Zona Intangible” (No-Go Zone), an area that cannot be developed because of the uncontacted indigenous people living there. The construction of this No-Go Zone and the construction of its final boundaries were negotiations where various NGOs tried to influence the outcome. This decision places several oil fields off limits for exploitation.

The second theme is block 31, an oil block that is not yet exploited within the National Park. Previously Petrobras owned it but after a negotiation process between Petrobras, the Ecuadorian government and NGOs Petrobras decided to give block 31 back to the Ecuadorian state.

The third theme concerns Yasuní-ITT. This initiative proposes to keep all the oil in the ITT field underground and let other countries pay half of the expected revenues. This money will be guarded by the UNDP and will be invested in sustainable development projects in Ecuador.

The investigation will be done according to the research strategy designed by Betsill and Corell (2008). Process tracing will be important in this thesis, by reconstructing the process the role of ENGOs and their influence can be analysed. Another important methodology is the counterfactual analysis: asking the question: “what would have happened without ENGOs?” This latter strategy is of major importance for the first research question.

3.10 Data Collection

As can be seen in table 2, the data source consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews. Interviews are especially important to retrieve data for this thesis, used to reconstruct the decision-making process and to answer finally the question “what would have happened without ENGOs?”

18 interviews were held. Since people were also asked about former work-experience an extended list of institutions were analysed, of which a complete list can be found in Appendix 2. This list shows that in fact a substantial larger group of ENGOs, governmental bodies and specialists were interviewed.

To avoid an “in crowd,” people were asked who their “opponents” are or with whom they disagree. To include important people the interviewees were asked to name the actors that facilitated the process. This is called snowball sampling, but with the slight difference that in this way opponents are also selected. This is done to counter the most common flaw: the dependence on the first sample of interviewees and their contacts (Kumar, 2005). This is a very useful method for decision-making and for groups that are not completely understood how they interact.

The texts used in this thesis were almost without an exception of Ecuadorian origin and therefore written in Spanish. Primary texts in this thesis mainly consist of formal governmental decisions, decrees by secretaries of state and lobbying material from a range of actors. Secondary texts are mainly media reports, press releases, documentaries and other articles.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected for this thesis is purely qualitative. First the data analysis for the first research question will be given and in the sub-chapter thereafter the data analysis for the explanatory factors of political influence will be given.

The data used to answer research question 1 consists of interviews and primary and secondary texts, this will be used in two different ways. With all these data the decision-making process will be reconstructed. Since many interviewees wanted to be anonymous and unrecognizable it is impossible to use many quotes since names are easily obtained from these. However all data will only be presented if it is verifiable. So the results are a reconstruction of the decision-making process and with extra stress on the role of ENGOs in this. The decision-making process is be divided in five phases, corresponding to table 3: Issue framing, agenda setting, influence on key actors, and the procedural issues and substantive issues of the final agreement.

The results used to answer research question 2 consist of the factors mentioned during the interviews that could explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. A ranking will be made of these factors with the number of times it is mentioned. A conclusion will be drawn using these factors and linking them with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008). Together with the decision-making process it will be made clear which factors are of more and lesser importance.

4. Results

This chapter shows all results from interviews concerning the influence of ENGOs more in depth and with more details, and is structured as table from Betsill and Corell (2008); see p29. This is done three times, each time for the three different subtopics: Zona-Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní-ITT. These extended reconstruction will be used to fill in a complete framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) that will be presented with the conclusions. Later an analysis will be given on what would have happened without ENGOs, the counterfactual analysis. This is done for all three topics. The analysis starts with the issue framing of Yasuní as a whole and the role of ENGOs, because this can be seen as the start of the three topics. First Yasuní as a whole was framed, and later the entire decision-making process for all three topics started, including the framing of the specific issue.

4.1 ENGO influence on framing Yasuní

ENGOs have claimed to influence the framing of Yasuní National Park as (one of) the place(s) with the highest biodiversity in the world, and as a special issue of the New Internationalist. Many initiatives to frame Yasuní as the most biodiverse place on the planet came from civil society like “Yasuní Green Gold”, “el Yasuní depende de tí”, “Expedición Andarele” and “Yasuní por la vida”. The four highest Google hits for “Yasuní” are on number one “live Yasuní” from the ENGO Finding Species. Number two is from Wikipedia, the third is “SOS Yasuní” from the Ecuadorian ENGO Acción Ecologica. The fourth is “Save Yasuní” from the American ENGO “Save America’s Forests”. The first government controlled hit can be found on the eight place.

The same can be said about books; most of the books and articles written about Yasuní are written or compiled by ENGOs (3 respondents). Only since Yasuní ITT the government has written more about Yasuní. New social media become increasingly more important as a source of information, especially for the younger more cosmopolite generation. On Facebook all hits except one (Wikipedia) are from ENGOs and Social movements. Twitter is less used, three groups use “Yasuní” name: one movie that wants to promote the ITT initiative from civil society, one high school project that aims at the same goals and the official, however not active, Yasuní-ITT-account from the Ecuadorian government. Remarkable is that all except the one aiming at fundraising for the Yasuní movie are not used since October 2010. The same is true for the Facebook accounts.

The scientist concerned for Yasuní (SCY) possibly made the highest contribution to frame Yasuní as a unique place with an extraordinary biodiversity. The findings from this report that concludes that Yasuní is the place with the highest biodiversity known to men, is quoted in almost every article related to Yasuní (Acosta, 2010; Acosta et al., 2010; Larrea, 2010; Honty, 2010; Martinez, 2010; Villavicencio, 2010; Bass et al., 2009; Finer et al., 2009; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Yasuní ITT, 2009; Finer et al., 2008). But SCY is not a science-based initiative. It was initiated by two ENGOs from the USA: Finding Species and Save America’s Forests. It was also the work of ENGOs that seven famous and respected scientists joined the campaign and wrote letters to stop the construction of Petrobras’ oil road in block 31. These letters even ended as a news article in the New York Times (New York Times, 17 Feb. 2005)

Even the government uses a lot of material provided by ENGOs, in the airport of San Francisco de Orellana or shortly Rio Coca, the gateway city to Yasuní, the entire airport is decorated by photos from Finding Species.

Another remarkable achievement is the sheer number of stickers, posters etc. provided by ENGOs. Stickers provided by ENGOs can be found on lampposts throughout cities and posters are hung in many important buildings, especially in the governmental hub of Quito and larger cities in the Amazon. Hereunder in figure 5 a timeline is presented with all the important dates from Ecuadorian politics and the three different subtopics.

Timeline Yasuní

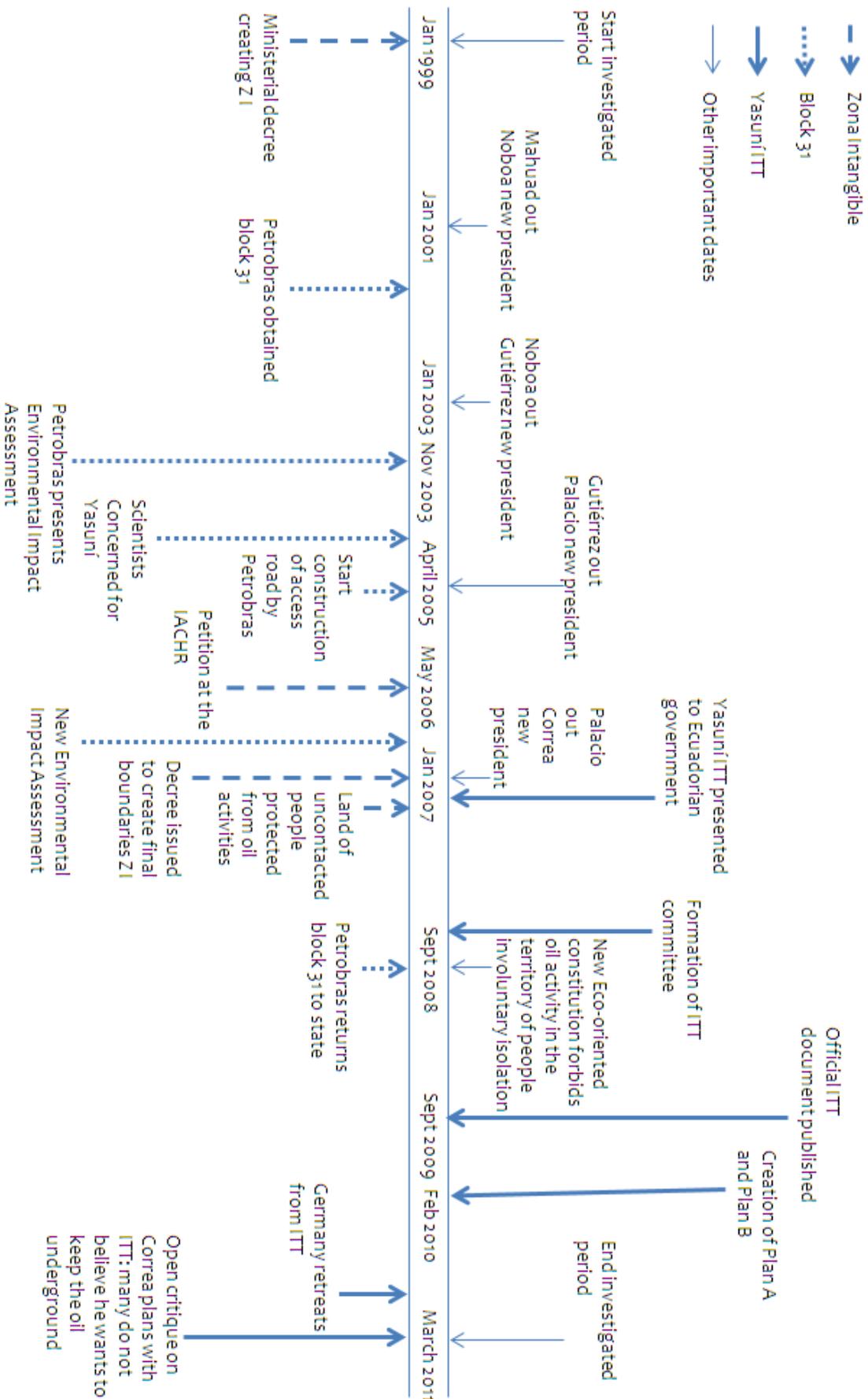


Figure 5: Timeline of Yasuní with all important events concerning the Zona Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní ITT

4.2 Process tracing of La Zona Intangible

The first theme that will be discussed is the one that has its roots deepest in history, La Zona-Intangible. Its roots go back almost thirty years when indigenous people started to ask for an oil moratorium. In January 1999 “La Zona-Intangible” (ZI) was created by a decree of the minister of environment (Yolanda Kakabadse) in order to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane. Although it was decided that the Zona-Intangible was to be located in the southern part of Yasuní it did not yet get fixed borders. Since the created no-go zone did not have borders it was impossible to enforce the laws protecting this area and illegal logging, for example, took a rise. In 2006 more than ten logging camps were present in the Zona-Intangible. On the May 1st, 2006 a group of Ecuadorian activists petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to intervene and force the Ecuadorian government to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane from all different threats. On the tenth of May, 2006 the IACHR called on the Ecuadorian government to adopt specific ‘precautionary measures’ in order to protect the indigenous tribes by putting measures into practice to prevent the entry of outsiders, such as loggers and oil workers into their territory (Bass et al., 2010; Finer et al., 2009; Narvaéz, 2009; interviews with 6 respondents). In January 2007, eight years after the Zona-Intangible had been created, the president signed a decree to draw its final boundaries. This was followed in April 2007 by a new policy on uncontacted people of the Ecuadorian government, which places their territories off-limits to extractive activities (Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 3 respondents). In the following months a logger was killed just outside the Zona-Intangible. It became obvious that the ZI did not cover the complete living grounds of the Tagaeri and Taromenane. In March 2008 the implementation of the IACHR’s precautionary measures started, creating the first military control point to protect the ZI in April 2008, and it stopped the illegal logging effectively (Finer et al., 2009; Proaño and Colleoni, 2008; interviews with 4 respondents). Ecuador’s new constitution created under president Correa from September 2008 forbids all extractive activities within the territory of indigenous people living in voluntary isolation, and calls the violation of these right ethnocide (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008; Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 4 respondents)

4.3 Results on ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible

This chapter demonstrates all results concerning the Zona-Intangible, using Betsill and Corell’s (2008) framework (table 3). This table forms the red line of this chapter. The five table heads are converted in five sub-chapters and will discuss the main issues from table 3. It starts with issue framing then, agenda setting, the position of key actors followed by the final agreement procedural and later substantive issues. One part of the scheme from Betsill and Corell (2008) has been adapted, under agenda setting the “terms of debate” have not been included. This is done since the majority of the respondents did not understand the answer or did not know what to answer. Since this led to a shortage of usable results it has been chosen to not include this in neither the results nor the discussion.

The information for this chapter consists of 7 interviews that gave substantial information about the ZI, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.3.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning La Zona Intangible

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

First there was the idea from ENGOs and indigenous groups that wanted an oil moratorium in the entire Amazon. This idea had been around since the 1970s. In 1964 Chevron-Texaco was working in the Ecuadorian Amazon under the name of Texpet. The operations were mainly in the northern part of the Amazon near Lago Agrio, and caused an ecological disaster. Hundreds of millions litres of water were polluted and the nature and people suffered severely. This induced the activism of people living in the southern parts of the Amazon, who did not want the fate of their northern

neighbours. Their solution, supported by ENGOs like Oilwatch and Acción Ecológica, was a moratorium for oil in the entire Amazon (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews). The government did not agree and wanted the oil extracted to fund necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure. (7 interviews)

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

When Yolanda Kakabadse came into office in August 1998 she saw the problems, and wanted to protect the uncontacted indigenous people, but also other indigenous groups and Yasuni's fragile ecosystem. All protected areas in Ecuador are under direct control of the minister of environment. Therefore she had the power to declare two areas no-go-zone for development, particularly since uncontacted people were living there. The Intangible Zones are something different than an oil-moratorium, so there was a noticeable shift on the issue. First the government changed its opinion, from exploitation to preservation, however 5 different presidents led the government during the negotiations, inducing several severe shifts in the government perception (5 interviews). Secondly a large group of ENGOs did agree on the official governmental plans, although not all (4 interviews). Finally, oil companies strongly opposed to the plans of a ZI, this did not change during the negotiations (7 interviews).

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The role of ENGOs on the agenda setting of La Zona Intangible seems to be marginal, except from raising a discussion about an oil moratorium in the Ecuadorian Amazon. However, that discussion started in the 1980s and nothing had been done until 1999, when the minister of environment made the decree declaring two No-Go-Zones. It looks like ENGOs and indigenous groups started the discussion and when the right person had the power to make a change a part of the initial plan was executed. However direct influence on the issue framing by ENGOs seems rather unlikely (Bass et al, 2010; Finer et al, 2009; 10 interviews).

ENGO influence on issue framing?

No, ENGOs started the discussion on oil a moratorium, but it cannot be proven to have influenced the idea of a ZI.

4.3.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning La Zona Intangible

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

The minister of environment that created the ZI, Yolanda Kakabadse, did that on her own initiative although here goals were almost identical to that of many ENGOs and indigenous groups she states. Since the Man and Biosphere Reserve fell under her jurisdiction she could "finally" create a No-Go-Zone. She was the one that brought the idea of a ZI to the attention of the community. These statements from Kakabadse are underwritten by all 6 other respondents.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The construction of a no-go-zone was put on the agenda, but there was not a real negotiation. The minister of environment formulated a decree and that was executed. The creation of an oil moratorium for the entire Amazon never entered the agenda although it was often suggested by environmental groups. Two ENGOs, Fundación Natura and EcoCiencia, gave technical assistance to Yolanda Kakabadse when she was minister of Environment in 1999 to design the Zona Intangible of Yasuni and the Zona-Intangible Cuyabeno (Narvaéz, 2009). Oil-companies also tried change the boundaries so that oil wells were not placed off limits (lobbying material of Andes Petroleum; 7 interviews).

After 7 years without definitive frontiers the creation of these boundaries was put on the agenda again by ENGOs, first without success but after a government change it was formulated as a priority by the government.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

The role of ENGOs in shaping the agenda is not completely clear: they did start the discussion of the oil moratorium, but this was never put on the agenda. The no-go-zones came from within the government, and while there might be indirect influence of ENGOs in framing the issue of oil extraction, biodiversity and uncontacted people, this is not evident.

Acción Ecológica, an Ecuadorian ENGO, opposed the creation of a ZI that did not cover the entire Ecuadorian Amazon was stated by 3 respondents not affiliated with Acción Ecológica. This led to a diffuse sound from ENGOs being split in two groups at that time. One group was pro-ZI, since they believed that it was the best they could achieve, the other group consisted of ENGOs and indigenous groups that disapproved the ZI because it was not ambitious enough. According to the three respondents this led to tension between ENGOs and made it harder to influence the government and impossible to claim that either group did influence the government decisively. A high civil servant gives the following explanation: “In 2004 a coalition of civil activists: *el grupo de vigilancia* and an indigenous movement: *las indígenas de seis lados* took action, this was the impulse to restart the discussion of the ZI boundaries. Later many ENGOs, scientists, and other civil society groups joined the discussion. At this time the process to draw borders was started again but the president at that time, Lucio Gutiérrez was not interested in the theme. In the end of 2006 it was restarted again from nothing under president Palacio, here the foundations were laid that led under the boundaries of the ZI under president Correa”.

Two respondents, state that the formation of the borders of the ZI in 2006 was placed on the agenda by ENGOs. Another source state that the force behind the creation of the boundaries were not ENGOs although he knows ENGOs claim this but the sub-secretary of the minister of environment at that time, first months of 2007. On this statement the former two state they had contacts within the government that could speed things up.

The second agenda, with the boundaries of the ZI, might be shaped by ENGOs, they raised the topic again in 2006 but did not succeed. A year later with a new government they did succeed, but it is not clear if this is due to ENGOs, or to a new government that wanted to solve this problem created by former governments. People in interviews disagree on this; it is possible that certain ENGOs are overestimating their influence while other players underestimate their influence. However, it looks like ENGOs could only succeed in their goals if they had powerful contacts within the government. And these newly installed governmental employees already had the same opinion. ENGOs seem to have functioned as a watchdog at this time, unable to achieve their goals single-handedly, but with the right governmental people in place they might have sped up the process (interviews).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, the agenda was set and dominated by the government, however at times ENGOs functioned as a watchdog to ensure that the creation of boundaries was not completely off the agenda.

4.3.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning La Zona Intangible

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government formulated the idea of creating a no-go-zone, so that might be their initial position in this case. Many ENGOs had the same opinion, although definitely not all. Several ENGOs especially Acción Ecológica considered the plans were not ambitious enough. So a pragmatic (and *ambientalistas*) group of ENGOs went for the governmental plans since it was a lot better than nothing and they feared that when they would be too ambitious they might have ended empty-handed. The last key actor in this are oil companies, who wanted to secure their investments and their oil-blocks. Therefore they wanted no Zona-Intangible but when it would be created at least outside their oil blocks (lobby materials Andes Petroleum, interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

One can be certain that the oil companies did not change their opinion; they wanted to stop the creation of the ZI and to reformulate the boundaries to exclude some important oil wells. The opinion of ENGOs did not change either, the two groups remained existing next to each other. The only actor that did change (their opinion) was the Ecuadorian government, which was led by 5 different presidents during the negotiations of 1999 until 2007. No other change was noticed only that the two governments from Noboa and Gutierrez (January 21, 2000 until April 20, 2005) had no priorities creating the ZI's final boundaries. This finally changed in 2006 under the presidency of Palacio. The process restarted and the complete process was successfully finished under President Correa in 2007. One respondent shows that the most important trigger to restart the negotiation in 2006 were new oil explorations in block 14 and 17, that would fall in the ZI, but since it did not have boundaries the oil companies could still try to erect an oil post. This made all actors aware that nothing had been solved yet.

Half of block 14 and 17 fell within the supposed boundaries of the ZI. The oil companies wanted to fix this problem legally, but the government did not want that, and ENGOs were exercising pressure at that time to finally create some borders. Since the official aim of the ZI was to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane the government sent airplanes to scout them from the air. All living grounds of these people were to be protected by the ZI, and the borders were drawn by minister Alban, an eco-orientated minister that already played a key role in block 31.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs tried to shape the position of the government especially under president Gutierrez, this failed several times. When Palacio came into office some people within the government were open to idea of drawing the ZI's boundaries. This made it easier for ENGOs to join meetings. The influence of ENGOs is discussed severely, more than a few people from ENGOs claimed to have played a key role in drawing the borders of the ZI. Not only several people from the government but also more objective specialists oppose this claim. They state that the role of some individual governmental players was more substantial and that these ENGO-employees are severely overestimating their influence. The specialists seem to have a better overview of the negotiation process, and therefore it can be argued that reality resembles their reconstruction.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did try to influence the government, but the government only changed when a new president was installed.

4.3.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning La Zona Intangible

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed.

4.3.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning La Zona Intangible

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The opinion of the majority of ENGOs is resembled in the final agreement, a no-go-zone for development and oil exploitation in Yasuní to protect the (uncontacted) indigenous people and the environment. However some wanted a more ambitious plan.

After an exhausting process and eight years, the borders were drawn of the ZI just about the time oil companies started new explorations. Several oil fields were placed off-limits by the final boundaries of the ZI for example half of block 14 and the Imuya post in the ITT block. This was celebrated as a victory by many ENGOs (interviews).

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Except from joining some meetings and functioning as a watchdog, the role of ENGOs might be rather small. There is some evidence that ENGOs sped up the process of drawing the borders, however no new decisions were made purely because ENGOs promoted it (interviews). In the literature very little can be found from the hands of ENGO concerning the ZI. In comparison to Yasuni-ITT and Block 31 also very little can be found on the websites of ENGOs, as well in other materials distributed by ENGOs.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the content of the agreement was not changed by ENGO influence, although they might have speeded it up in the final stage

4.4 Counterfactual analysis in La Zona Intangible

What would have happened to la Zona Intangible without the participation of ENGOs? Indigenous movements, not ENGOs, started the discussion of an oil moratorium; ENGOs joined later.

It might be that the focus shifted a bit towards nature conservation instead of the living grounds of indigenous people, but in practise it comes down to the same: a large part of the Biosphere Reserve needed extra protection.

The agenda setting might not have differed a lot in the beginning, since the minister of environment raised the whole topic, but in a later stage ENGOs were functioning as a watchdog. Making sure the drawing of the boundaries was never completely off the agenda. But did that make a difference? In 2007 a green government was installed led by Raphael Correa, with or without ENGOs protecting parts of this fragile ecosystem better was one of its teams priorities. ENGOs were not able to change the position of the government possibly also due to the fact that five presidents led the country during the negotiation. No time was available to strengthen their network within the government. It is hard to say if ENGO participation made a difference to the solution, most respondents from ENGOs and other institutions agree that it was almost an entirely government led process. ENGOs were free to join in meetings, but only if they knew the right people in the government could they really exercise influence. Therefore one can conclude that already conservation-orientated people were in the governmental staff when the boundaries were drawn, they may have succeeded without the ENGOs.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible seems to be low: ENGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome. In this case ENGOs did join in the negotiation process, but they do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators. However, who knows what would have happened without ENGOs keeping this topic on the agenda during the political difficult years between 1999 and 2006?

4.5 Process tracing of Block 31

The subsequent topic that will be discussed consists of a series of the negotiations concerning Block 31. The invested period for Block 31 starts in 2003 when Petrobras takes over block 31 from Perez Companc, reaches its summit with the battle for block 31 which makes Petrobras decide to return block 31 and ends in 2011 when this block is still state-owned but not yet leased. Why is there so much hassle about block 31 when it has been proven that the amount of oil in this block is hardly enough to financially break even (Rival, 2010)? Block 31 is the gateway to the large

adjacent reserves in block ITT. To extract the heavy crude of ITT lighter oil is needed to create a mix that is easy to pump up. However when block ITT would not be exploited, block 31 would lose its strategic value and would not be exploited either (1 interview).

This issue commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road, but before the government approved the EIS, Petrobras started the construction of this oil road. What happened afterwards and what was the role of ENGOs in all this?

As stated above the process started when Perez Companc, an Argentinean oil company, sold the exploitation rights of block 31 to Petrobras in 2002 (interviews; Finer et al. 2009). Petrobras presented an Environmental Impact Study in 2003 for the oil reserves of Nenke and Apaika. This study called for the construction of an access road into the National Park (4 interviews; Finer et al., 2009). At that moment the real negotiation started.

To prevent this road an extended research was started involving 59 scientists with experience in Yasuní, called the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní (SCY). The American ENGOs Finding Species and Save America's Forests initiated this initiative. The SCY created an unsolicited Technical Advisory Report regarding the plans for block 31. This report concluded that the greatest threat for the area were the direct and indirect effects of access roads. Later the Smithsonian Institute and The Association for Tropical Biology also published science based letters opposing to this access road (4 interviews; SCY; Finer et al., 2009).

Around the same time several Ecuadorian ENGOs started a lawsuit challenging the fact the relocation of a new processing facility required for the project into the park without proper studies. A second lawsuit was started by human right groups focussing on Constitutional violations of the project (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009).

The Grupo Asesor Técnico de Parque Nacional Yasuní (GAT) was one of the first to know what was going on. This group consisting of ENGOs, universities, local governments and civil right groups were the first ones to know that Petrobras already started with the construction of the not yet approved access road in May 2005. Together with the president of the national park they informed the government demanding that no roads were to be allowed in the National Park. They also demanded reduced impact for the oil pipe. Despite being informed the government did not take a strong position in this issue, they did not force Petrobras to stop (2 interviews). This road reached the northern frontier of Yasuní National Park, and Petrobras was seeking the final permit that would allow them to enter the National Park (Finer et al., 2009). The other permits had already been signed by the minister of Environment, and several details were changed during a meeting with the GAT. Meanwhile ENGOs from the GAT formed a coalition called Amigos de Yasuní and accused the universities and governmental bodies of being environmental unfriendly. Wildlife Conservation Society-Ecuador (WCS) had to change director and the Universidad Pontificia Católica resigned from the GAT (1 interview). Although struggling with internal unrest the GAT demanded that Petrobras would not cross the Rio Tiputini, and when Petrobras did start the road between Rio Tiputini and the National Park the GAT demanded a suspension of their licenses, and that no final license would be given.

At this time President Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of office by the Ecuadorian people and was replaced by Alfredo Palacio: a radical change. Palacio re-examined the oil access road issue in block 31. "On 7 July 2005 the newly installed minister of Environment informed Petrobras that they were not authorized to construct the processing facility or road into the park and instead had to develop a road-less entry design with the processing facility located outside the park" (Finer et al., 2009 p.12). This new minister did not know much about Yasuní and its problems and was introduced to all this material by ENGOs.

“Less than a week later, over 150 Waorani marched through the streets of Quito to protest the Petrobras project and delivered a letter to the government calling for a 10 year moratorium on new oil projects in their territory” (Finer et al., 2009 p.12).

In September 2006 Petrobras submitted a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for a processing facility outside the National Park and for helicopter access to the drilling platforms instead of a road. (ENGO petition 22 march 2007; Finer et al., 2009). Letters were sent by ENGOs in September 2006 to point out the weaknesses and threats from the new Ecological Assessment of Petrobras. However, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment disagreed and discarded the letters from the scientists and ENGOs involved (interview, Save America’s Forests). Why did Petrobras leave block 31 after having invested more than \$200 million? Several versions of this story are told.

1 Ana Alban, the minister of environment under the presidents Palacio and Correa did not like Petrobras and the way they operated. Therefore she never gave the final license needed to access the National Park. Petrobras tired of waiting returned the block to the Ecuadorian state (1 interview)

2 While starting the construction Petrobras used boats a lot bigger that was allowed in the contract. Petrobras also dumped several barrels of diesel in the Rio Napo, these nonconformities were pointed out to the minister of environment by ENGOs, leading to the suspension of the license for 2 years. Not being able to work would cost a lot of money and therefore Petrobras decided to return block 31 (1 interview)

#3 When this license was issued by the minister of environment it was not yet backed up by local governments what was necessary for its validity. One local civil servant in the Amazonian town of Rio Coca did not want to sign this license. According to two respondents he saw the destruction created by oil companies in the Amazon and wanted to protect the area he grew up in. Unfortunately his motives are not verifiable. Remarkably he was the only one allowed to sign the local license for Petrobras. So when the final license was given, it was not yet backed up legally on a local level, making block 31’s oil production illegal (2 interviews).

4 In October 2007 the minister of environment issued the license. This triggered a new round of ENGO petitions and actions. In September 2008 President Correa suddenly declared that Petrobras resigned and had returned block 31 to the Ecuadorian state (Finer, 2009; ENGO petition 22 march 2007).

Knowing that all interviewees only knew their own side of the story, the truth has to be a combination of these three stories. This all finally caused Petrobras to terminate its contract. Directly afterwards block 31 was transferred to state-owned Petroamazonas SA.

With the new 2008 constitution in place, which forbids oil extraction in protected areas, block 31 seems to be protected sufficiently. However an exception was built-in, it allows drilling to proceed if it was petitioned by the President and declared in the national interest by the Congress, which may call for a national referendum if deemed necessary (Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews, Constitution of Ecuador, 2008).

4.6 Results on ENGO influence on Block 31

The information for this chapter consists of 5 interviews that gave substantial information about block 31, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

The 5 main sources unanimously explain that this topic commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road. Before the government approved the EIS Petrobras started the construction of this oil road.

4.6.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Block 31

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

Oil production in block 31 seemed to be the best option for the Ecuadorian government and oil companies, and at that time the government did not oppose construction of an access road (5 interviews). ENGOs and indigenous organisations fiercely opposed to these plans. The GAT opposed to the construction of an access road, not to oil extraction.

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

All five respondents, underwrite the importance of *Scientists concerned for Yasuní*: an initiative by Finding Species and Save America's Forests, two American ENGOs. They created a unsolicited Technical Advisory Report that consisted of scientific research of 59 well-known researchers on the biodiversity of Yasuní. The words that framed the complete Yasuní-issue was uttered here first: "Yasuní has the highest known biodiversity of the planet". All 5 respondents noticed a change in the governmental approach: from oil-production with an access road to a more environmental approach. Also people from within the government and opponents of the SCY underwrite their significance for framing Yasuní as one of the most biodiverse places on the planet and defining the direct and indirect consequences of roads as its biggest threat. This strengthened the GAT's and ENGOs' claim to stop the construction of roads. Again the change from the Gutiérrez presidency to Palacio's did also make a large difference, Palacio was more eco-oriented and under his presidency Petrobras was suddenly expected to present greener plans.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The ENGO induced the SCY frame into the entire discussion and also later discussions about oil exploitation in Yasuní (5 interviews). This putted the creation of an access road and oil-production in a completely different light. However other actions by a variety of ENGOs made the Ecuadorian people aware of the problems in block 31 (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009). The latter might be less obvious but it also activated another group of people that might have made the difference in a later stadium: civil activists, civil servants and ordinary citizens. 1 respondent also emphasized the importance of large actions of the ENGO-indigenous coalition, this made people aware of the risks for the people living in Yasuní and the environment.

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, ENGOs did influence the issue framing of block 31, especially in the role of SCY and activist ENGOs.

4.6.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Block 31

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

Three respondents claimed that the SCY played a key role, however one stated that the actions by other ENGOs did catch the eye earlier. It was also stated that the issue came to the attention of the community when Petrobras applied for the environmental license. This was also the first time national newspapers wrote about it. However it became a major topic on an international scale when Finding Species and Save America's Forests joined the campaign and sponsored the study of the SCY. This led to a storm of national and international media attention, and also reached many people from within the government. So the scale was determined by the SCY while it might not have been the first moment for Ecuadorians to hear about block 31. The attention generated

by the SCY was later used by other ENGOs and civil society organisations to find a large audience and impact during their actions.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The most important is the construction of an oil road and the EIS placed on the agenda by Petrobras and the alternative: extraction without roads was placed on the agenda by the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

ENGOs tried to influence decision-making by starting lawsuits at different times, lobbying, supplying scientific research and actions to influence the public opinion and the government. They also joined a large number of meetings (Finer et al., 2009; 7 interviews). Later when the inexperienced Alban became minister of environment ENGOs introduced her to the topic, framing her mind-set against oil extraction, Petrobras etc. (1 interview).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

Yes, indirectly through the GAT and also directly with a lot of interaction between the government and ENGOs.

4.6.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Block 31

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government and Petrobras wanted to extract the oil. The GAT allowed extraction but opposed to the idea of an access road. ENGOs generally opposed both (interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

A respondent involved in the first negotiation phase gave the following reconstruction: “When Petrobras announced in a meeting with the president of the National Park that the construction of the access road already had been started the latter informed the government. A series of discussions and meetings started, consisting of Petrobras, government representatives and the GAT. The first demand of the GAT was no access roads within the National Park. The oil pipe could be constructed with reduced impact. The government acted weak and did not have strict demands on how things should be executed.”

The government made a radical change when president Gutierrez was replaced by Palacio. They became greener and stricter. ENGOs did not change their position much; at times they became more or less active. This was called opportunism by the GAT blaming ENGOs for only taking interest in Yasuní when things were going wrong and taking all credits. This demonstrates a growing tension within the GAT between ENGOs, universities and governmental bodies and a tension between groups inside and outside the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. All these played a role, the sheer number of actions might have influenced the general opinion, the official governmental opinion and the opinion of individual decision-makers, as is pointed out in the reconstruction option 3. 1 respondent from a ENGO explained that a large action about block 16 created a coalition between ENGOs and indigenous people, these groups started an even larger protest to protect block 31, this coalition wanted to stop the oil-extraction altogether. The actions were based on the fact that in Brazil it is illegal to drill for oil in protected areas. Petrobras, owned for 50% by the Brazilian state, was using double standards.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

Yes, ENGOs did not only raise the issue and frame the topic in an environmental way, but also pointed out a lot of things to the government; their lobby and negotiation seemed effective. The strongest example is that Alban was introduced to the topic by ENGOs

4.6.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues Block 31

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (5 interviews). Although the GAT consisted partly of ENGOs, this only applied to earlier negotiations.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs in the negotiations was never discussed and therefore not formalised either.

4.6.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues of Block 31

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

It very much does, no oil has been exploited, no road entered Yasuní, Petrobras returned block 31 to the state, oil exploitation without access roads became the standard option for the government. It looks like an outright success story, yet in the near future Petroamazonas might start the exploitation, block 31 is not officially protected from oil companies.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. ENGOs were present in staggering numbers; over 50 national and international ENGOs joined the campaign. The most important actions might have been in the meeting rooms with ministers and high officials. There they could shape the discussion and supply the decision-makers with essential (scientific) information. 3 respondents also demonstrated that many things that were illegal or non-conform Petrobras' contract, this lead to governmental sanctions and actions. 3 respondents underline the role of ENGOs in supplying scientific data about the effects of oil roads. 2 mention the intensive media offense and the role of the SCY.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, the final result is in line with ENGOs' policy goals, and they played a substantial role in the negotiation process.

4.7 Counterfactual analysis in Block 31

What would have happened without ENGOs? 4 respondents answered that question and all of them said that the oil in block 31 would already have been exploited, using an oil access road. Having seen and processed all data and after reading many articles it still seems to be true. The role of ENGOs within and outside the GAT was so large that it changed the complete decision-making process; it almost became dominated by ENGOs. What would the government have done without knowing that Yasuní was one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, and without the attention it created? Probably business as usual: let the oil get exploited and demand a percentage of the revenues. ENGOs were the one to point out all Petrobras' unconformities, and without that information the IEA would be approved easily. On all key moments the role of ENGOs was substantial, and throughout the process they were functioning as a watchdog.

Many people tried to explain what happened at times, but with incomplete data they could not trace the complete process, and luck seems to play a large role. However what seemed miracles for many people, e.g. the returning of block 31 by Petrobras or the suspension of the license, was the uncoordinated work of ENGOs and other civil society organisations. Their influence on

individual decision-makers, such as minister Alban or the civil servant responsible for the license in Rio Coca, seems to be large. Not only direct but also indirect influence played a role. The discussion was held on the terms set by ENGOs. Thus without ENGOs the discussion would not have been broader than an effective way to extract oil, and that is what would have been happened. The exploitation of two wells in block 31 connected by a road.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on all the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators.

4.8 Process tracing of Yasuní ITT

This chapter does not aim at describing the technical details of the proposal, sufficient articles have been written about it, many of them almost identical (Sevilla, 2010; Larrea, 2010; Acosta et al., 2009; Martinez, 2010; Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer et al., 2008; Friedman Rudovsky, 2007; Rival, 2010).

In the literature concerning Yasuní-ITT some attention has been given to the first stage of the Initiative, how the idea to protect Yasuní's Biodiversity from oil extraction became a viable proposal (Acosta, 2010). However the decision-making process has not been discussed. This will be the first attempt to reconstruct the decision-making process from an idea of many up to the situation of Yasuní ITT at this moment.

The following is from a personal interview with Alberto Acosta, the minister of energy and mines that presented the ITT Initiative to the Ecuadorian president and the Ecuadorian house-of-representatives, also used is Acosta's 2010 article about the *prologue* of the initiative.

According to Acción Ecológica the ITT has three histories, they will be mentioned throughout this chapter, demonstrating a new phase has started.

4.8.1 Part 1 of the History of ITT

The idea, the basis of the ITT Initiative has been slowly constructed over many years by civil society. This idea presented in January 2007 to the Ecuadorian government is a child of many fathers. It is certain that the basis of this idea lies in the old idea of suspending oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazon. At one point, at one time, one person had been completely filled with indignation and shouted, "Stop the exploitation!" This resistance settled in the minds of many Amazonian communities. Their arguments were clear, oil exploitation was affecting the nature and environment they were living in. Their health suffered under the pollution and oil companies were one of the main contributors to the construction of the Amazon. The image of evil of these groups was Texaco, one of the world's main oil companies, nowadays a part of Chevron. Texaco worked between 1964 and 1990 in the Ecuadorian Amazon, in this time-span in constructed 339 oil wells in 430.000 hectares to extract around one and a half billion barrels of crude oil. This led to the pollution of billions of barrels of water (Acosta, 2010; Crude the movie, 2009; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). While it is impossible to put a price on life and nature, it seems clear that Texaco's activities destructed millions worth of life, water and nature through contamination of water, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and death of animals. The health of people in this area also suffered severely: 31 percent of the people close to oil extraction activity suffer from cancer, compared to a 12.3 percent national average. This adds up to 27 billion dollar, the amount demanded from Texaco by the Ecuadorian and especially Amazonian people (Acosta, 2010).

This all does not even include the social consequences like: sexual violence from oil workers, spontaneous abortions, discrimination and racism, forced replacements, destructive influences only local culture and languages and on the social cohesion. It even led to the extermination of

the local tribes the “Tetes” and the “Sansahuaris”. To eliminate all these problems in the future an oil moratorium has been proposed for all hydrocarbon activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This is the prerequisite history that is needed to understand the ITT Initiative (Acosta, 2010; 2 interviews), and that it is the idea of many. Now the real birth of the initiative will be reconstructed.

In 2000 *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (post-petroleum Ecuador, an alternative development plan) was published, three years later it was presented to the minister of environment by three Ecuadorian NGOs: Pachamama, CDES (Centro de Derechos Economico y Sociales) and Acción Ecológica. At the same time the indigenous community of Sarayaku started a lawsuit against the Argentinean oil company CGC in the IACHR. This resulted in a proposal of not exploiting Yasuní’s oil, led by the NGO Oilwatch (Acosta, 2010; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). At this time many NGOs thought that there was too much focus on block 31 and too little on ITT, therefore a campaign was started led by Acción Ecológica.

This idea of an oil moratorium was incorporated in the election campaign of *Movimiento País*, nowadays *Alianza Pais* the political party led by, now president, Rafael Correa. Their governmental plans 2007-2011 want “*declare a minimum of 40% of the national territory protected area to conserve the biodiversity and heritage of Ecuador*”. They also wanted to incorporate Ecuador’s nature and environment in economic and productive politics. This is not simply suspending oil exploitation. It aimed at optimizing the existing oil posts instead of maximizing the sheer number of oil posts. These plans also imply an oil moratorium for the south and middle of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Although the Yasuní ITT is an idea of many, if it had parents these would have been Esperanza Martinez, president of the NGO Acción Ecológica and Alberto Acosta, former minister of mining and energy and former president of the constitutional assembly (5 interviews). Acosta always had a lot of contact with Acción Ecológica, and his wife worked there at the time. In this group the idea existed to keep oil under ground and maybe already especially about block ITT. Acosta had already written several books about this issue, and when he became minister he had an opening to introduce this idea. The discussion to keep the oil underground has been led by NGOs.

In September 2009 an official document called “Yasuní-ITT Initiative: A big idea from a small country” edited by the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of environment was presented. This documents aims at preserving 38 percent of Ecuador’s territory. It is important to remember that the most relevant details of this document had been formulated long before Correa became president (3 interviews; Acosta, 2010).

Already in December 2006, Martinez gave the following guidelines to the future minister of energy and mines Acosta, from Acosta and Martinez (2010 p. 18):

- 1 *Declare the moratorium as policy aimed at protecting and conserving collective rights*
- 2 *Present internationally a proposal as an effort of Ecuador to meet three global goals: the reduction of greenhouse gasses, the conservation of biodiversity and security of indigenous people*
- 3 *Construct a commission, together with the ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs that makes an global assessment of Yasuní National Park and its population and identify the problems. Formulate necessary actions for local people, secure that they are covered by the state and not by multinationals.*
- 4 *Create an international agenda to present the proposal with as a goal that it becomes recognized as beneficent on an international level, translate this to an economic compensation that enables Ecuador to execute the initiative.*
- 5 *Analyse distinct economic options: selling crude in the soil, carbon compensation, and cancellation of external hesitation.*
- 6 *Inaugurate a sub secretary of Clean Energy, Decentralization and Low Impact, as a signal to the transition to a new petroleum model...*

These are very specific objectives, seeking to protect the life of uncontacted indigenous tribes, the protection of one of the most biodiverse zones of the planet and to avoid the emission of 410 million tons of CO₂.

4.8.2 Part 2 of the History of ITT

The second phase started when more data was collected to create a better proposal. A lot of information was based on the research done to prevent the oil access road in block 31. In this phase the Ecuadorian state became the main actor, instead of civil society and ENGOs.

In April 2007 Rafael Correa stated that although previous administrations had begun to elaborate plans to extract the oil in ITT, the first option would be to keep the oil underground in exchange for international compensation (Finer et al., 2009).

This led to the presentation of the ITT Initiative by Acosta to the Ecuadorian government on June 5, 2007 and later of the presentation to the world by President Correa. The ITT Initiative consisted of two options at the time: A- keep the oil underground by using the ITT Initiative and B- exploiting the oil using a multinational alliance. On November 20, the oil lobby convinced the president to exclude oil reserve Tiputini from the ITT project. At the same time Correa was received full of enthusiasm at the OPEC and UN top meetings, so the role of the president was already ambiguous. The initiative also knew a large number of ups and downs during that first year, at times convinced by their right, at times full of doubt (interview; Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009). The first idea was to incorporate the value of Yasuní's environmental services, the ENGO *Earth Economics* joined in November 2007 and calculated the value of the environmental services in the entire Biosphere Reserve. The value of these services exceeded the value of oil at least two times. However no funds can be found for the funding of environmental services (interview).

The project was consolidated with the formation of a new commission on 29 July 2008 headed by ex-mayor of Quito Roque Sevilla and included some (former) ENGO members like Yolanda Kakabadse, founder of the ENGOs *Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano* and *Fundación Natura*; and Natalia Greene from the ENGO *Pachamama* (Yasuní ITT Initiative).

The goal of this commission was to create a concrete proposal to keep the oil underground in ITT, this was partly funded by *La cooperación técnica Española* and the GTZ (the Spanish and German International Cooperation). This group gave the proposal time and space to crystallize. At this point the idea of an international trust fund supervised by the United Nations was first raised. The focus on environmental services was replaced by a compensation of \$350 million per year for 10 years, based on gaining half of the income it would gain through exploitation, based on the oil price of mid-2007. In late 2008 the strategy was based on carbon markets. Ecuador proposed the creation of "Yasuní Guarantee Certificates" (YGC) for the CO₂ locked in ITT. These YGCs could be sold to compensate non-emitted CO₂. The money would go into a trust fund and the interest of these funds would be used to fund sustainable development (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009).

Two of the most important articles on which the final ITT Initiative was built are the one from Acosta, Gudynas, Martinez and Vogel (2009): *leaving the oil under ground or the search for a lost paradise: elements for an economic and political proposal for the Initiative for not exploiting the crude of IT*, and Larrea and Warnars (2009) *Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Avoiding emissions by keeping petroleum underground*.

4.8.3 Part 3 of the History of ITT

The third phase starts when the government adapts the original proposal and introduces Plan B, extracting ITT's oil as a viable option. At this time the role of ENGOs also changes fundamentally: instead of seeing the government as a partner they see them as opponents. The international community does not believe that Ecuador still aims at keeping the crude in the subsoil. The setup of plan A is complicated, so complicated even that people within the government do not fully comprehend how it functions (interviews). Since 3 February, 2010 it is organized in the following way. Plan A is led by the ministry of environment and works in 3 groups. First: the political

committee, including ministers from involved ministries. Second: the technical committee, technical advisors and specialists, including the technical director Carlos Larrea. And third: the negotiation committee, negotiators and public relation specialists aiming at fundraising (3 interviews). Plan B is organized more effectively, it is run by the state-owned oil companies and aims at investigating how the oil should be exploited (interview).

The role of president Correa is crucial in this, although he became president with the campaign aiming at preserving Yasuní, he does not appear to fully support the ITT Initiative. One day he claims he created the ITT Initiative himself, and taking all credits in big international meetings, while the next he declares on state television that he wants to extract ITT's oil. Correa also cut out all ENGOs from the negotiation process, while they were main actors in the earliest stage, and important advisors later in the process (2 interviews).

The following critique from ENGOs has been uttered on the changed plans. The first initiative aimed at preserving the culture of indigenous groups, a focus lost in the newer proposals. Secondly the original initiative aims at a non-extractive economy, in the newer plans mining is an alternative for hydrocarbon activities. Finally plan B is introduced and developed at the same time as the "keeping the oil underground option" (2 interviews).

People that were involved from the beginning or an early stage only utter critique about this stage. Acosta resigned from all official jobs, as did Falconí. The ENGO of Martinez is chased by the police, and smeared by the government, which tries to make it illegal. Yolanda Kakabadse, now president of WWF international, talks about the smokescreen of the Yasuní ITT Initiative: the extraction of oil in the Amazon always had been the unofficial goal (Hoy 2 March 2011).

At this point, also the international community that needed to fund the ITT Initiative seems to lose confidence. As a first question: it is hard to explain why oil extraction in ITT should be forbidden while it can be done in block 31 and block Armadillo, as the current plan proposes. In both blocks the biodiversity is similar and uncontacted indigenous people also live there. And shouldn't Yasuní be protected sufficiently being a UNESCO site and a National Park? Secondly international actors begin to see that the president does not want to keep the oil underground and that opponents of the ITT Initiative are gaining strength. Many people in favour of the ITT Initiative have been removed from official positions. Germany, the first country to commit, willing to donate \$50 million a year, retreated from the project, not trusting Ecuador's commitment for keeping the oil underground indefinitely. This is a bad signal to all other potential donors and makes it harder to convince them to contribute, if even the self-declared leader on climate change does not want to contribute, why would other countries take the risk? (Schalatek, 2010)

4.9 Results on ENGO influence on Yasuní ITT

The information for this chapter consists of 10 interviews that gave substantial information about Yasuní ITT, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.9.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Yasuní ITT

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

7 respondents pointed out that ENGOs and indigenous groups aimed at a moratorium for Yasuní. 3 did not mention the initial point of view of ENGOs. All 10 respondents state that the government and oil companies wanted to extract the oil from block ITT in the near future. One respondent gave the following overview: "it started with Plan Verde, a plan for an alternative economy: joint initiative of ENGOs, indigenous argue for an oil stop for more than 20 years. Thus, first there was an idea of alternative non-oil economy with human rights, more development and biodiversity conservation. Later this crystallized as Yasuní-ITT"

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

With Alberto Acosta as minister of energy and mines, the possibility to keep the oil underground and get financial compensation to do this became the official framing of oil exploitation in Yasuní.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

Alberto Acosta was closely in touch with ENGOs and the idea of many, mentioned by Acosta, was largely influenced by ENGOs and their employees. It has been stated by multiple respondents that the ITT Initiative would not have been launched without ENGOs

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, the idea was largely created/influenced by multiple ENGOs and ENGO-related groups.

4.9.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Yasuní ITT

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

All respondents state that Alberto Acosta presented the ITT Initiative to the community, however the president did the international campaign and presented it to the United Nations. Since Acosta used the opening he had being the minister of energy and mines to present “this idea of many”, he is the one that presented the issue.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

Keeping the oil underground was placed on the agenda as a serious option for the ITT oil block. Another item that was mentioned was the alternative development model, one that does not depend on extractivism and is sustainable on a social, cultural and environmental level. Later in the process the president put the exploitation of ITT’s oil back on the agenda by developing plan B at the same time.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

Especially in early stages, ENGOs and people from ENGOs joined meetings. This allowed them to shape the agenda at times, however 3 respondents pointed out that they could not change much about the agenda and 2 respondents pointed out that they could not change anything at all. From early on, since the presentation of the Initiative to the House of Representatives and the President the agenda has been controlled by the government.

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, or at least ENGO influence on the agenda setting seems to be marginal. Only some influential people with ENGO and governmental ties were able to shape the agenda to some extent.

4.9.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Yasuní ITT

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government is without doubt the key actor in this negotiation, before Correa became president Ecuador wanted to extract the oil in block ITT. At the start of the negotiations discussed in this thesis the government’s official position to try to keep the oil underground. ENGOs supported this idea, and oil companies opposed.

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

Also in this negotiation, the government did change their opinion during the negotiation, a difference is however that this time these changes were not induced by a change in administration. The pro-oil voices within the government led by Correa gained power while those in favour of keeping the oil underground resigned from official positions. ENGOs and the oil companies did not change their positions.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

Half of the respondents (5) stated that ENGOs were not involved, and another 4 said that they wanted to join but were excluded by the government; this is not true, however it demonstrates the marginal role played by ENGOs. The later in the process the smaller the role of ENGOs was, until at this time they do not even play a role anymore. The ITT Initiative is now completely controlled by the government. Some respondents talk about hijacking plans from civil society and by that paralyzing the green and left opposition. They state that this is the official policy towards civil society by this administration.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did not have enough power or influence to change the position of key actors, even the “idea of many” had to be presented by someone from within the government, only he could change other governmental actors.

4.9.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning Yasuní ITT

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed, however people from ENGOs did get official jobs but not because they were from ENGOs, only because they knew the right people (3 interviews).

4.9.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning Yasuní ITT

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The newer the official documents are the less it reflects the opinion of ENGOs. Even more important the probability that the ITT Initiative will be executed seems smaller every day. However the respondents from ENGO still hope the Initiative will be put into practise.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Only some people from ENGOs to write the first version, and were not able influence the position of the government. The scientific basis of these discussion however has been laid by ENGOs, therefore the influence of ENGOs on the proposal is rather substantial. ENGO influence on the chances the ITT Initiative will be executed is close to zero.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, however ENGOs do not have influence on the chances of success of the ITT Initiative, they did contribute to the basis and official text of the ITT Initiative. Although their role was not formal and they were not officially included, some influential people from ENGOs: Kakabadse, Greene, Martinez could influence the final text of the Initiative.

4.10 Counterfactual analysis of Yasuní ITT

What would have happened if no ENGOs were involved in the decision-making process? It is the question if an idea like the ITT Initiative would have crystalized without ENGOs. Indigenous movements might have taken over the role but it would have looked different then. The role of ENGOs in the discussion prior to the negotiations was crucial, although an “idea of many”; many of those “many” came from ENGOs. It is demonstrated that before Alberto Acosta became minister he was already influenced by Martinez, the director of Acción Ecológica. If this would not have happened he might have acted the same, however it demonstrates how interwoven ENGOs

were in this stage. It is the question if anything might have started without the preparing role of ENGOs.

Later in the process the role of ENGOs becomes less powerful. The commission that wrote the final text of the initiative that was presented September 22 2009 also consisted of people from ENGOs or with strong ties to ENGOs, without these people the initiative might have looked a lot less like the initial idea. ENGOs admit that they already lost grip on the process at that time, which indicates that it would not have gone different without ENGOs. In the last phase the role of ENGOs was marginal or even non-existing, this reduces the need for a counterfactual analysis of this phase.

It can be concluded that the initial phase without ENGOs would have been completely different, and since the first phase is often one of the most important: without an start there is not anything; it can be concluded that without ENGOs no ITT Initiative would ever have been presented.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on one of the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators. However it is not felt by many people involved, ENGOs seem to have played a role of high influence. This is based on the entire process and does not reflect the current role of ENGOs, which seems to be marginal.

4.11 Results on the explanatory factors of ENGO influence

In this chapter the results from the second research question will be presented. This consists of the data derived during the 18 interviews with people from ENGOs, the government and specialists. All interviewees were asked whether they could think of factors that could explain the political influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process in Yasuní. They were also asked what factors could explain the lack of ENGO-influence. These restricting factors are needed in order to give a complete picture of the decision-making process; using only enabling factors will not give a true image of what happened. The results on these two questions will be presented in the section hereunder. All respondents could give as many answers as they liked, therefore the number of factors will not add up to 18.

This discussion aims at answering the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” Here the results from the interviews are combined with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008) and the judgement of the researcher.

Table 5 and table 6 underneath show the results from the respondents, including the general explanation. These are the pure results. However, this chapter will go one step deeper and try to analyse what enabling and restricting factors played a large role in ENGO influence in Yasuní. The number of times a factor has been mentioned does not necessarily represent its importance, it is merely an indicator. This chapter will use these results as a tool to explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. The analysis of these factors starts with the enabling factors, presented hereunder in table 5.

Table 5: Explanatory factors of ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Individual actions	4	Individual actions of ENGO-employee made a difference
2	Contextual factors	3	Mentioned: media and public opinion
	Coincidence	3	Mentioned: miracle, coincidence, luck
	Access to negotiations	3	Easy to join negotiations
	Personal network	3	Through the personal network of ENGO-employees influence was exercised
	Scientific research	3	A lot of research done by ENGOs, so the discussion is based on their information
7	Institutional network	2	Through the network of the ENGO influence was exercised
	Stage of negotiations	2	Joined early and therefore a larger influence
	Watchdog	2	Controlling the government and taking actions when things do not go well
10	Alliances with key governmental bodies	1	An alliance with a governmental player makes it easier to influence governmental decisions
	Confidence between actors	1	NGOs that trusted each other worked together and could enlarge their influence
	In touch with grassroots movements	1	Knows what happens within Yasuní and good contact with indigenous people
	Lot of knowledge and experience	1	Most experience within this field by some ENGOs
	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as good coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Scale of operation	1	More influence on a detailed level
	Well-known ENGO	1	When needed people could find the ENGO

The most important enabling factors that explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní will be discussed.

Most often mentioned and of a rather high importance are *individual actions*. However, most mentioned does not mean these are most important, it only indicates that the individual actions are highly visible. Margot Bass and Matt Finer for example started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní together as a personal initiative. Events like these are highly visible and are of importance. Nevertheless they could only have success when other people or institutions were also working on the same topic. Rather remarkable is that the people that did those individual actions or were involved in individual actions often mentioned *coincidence* as a large explaining factor, often unaware of actions or activities undertaken by others. Instead, a person that had a good overview of the negotiations in Yasuní only mentioned *coincidence* once; he explained that the success of ENGOs depended on so many factors that some luck was necessary to achieve its goals. He explained that the right political climate is needed, the right influential people on the right jobs, a network reaching into the government, some help from the public opinion and the media, enough financial resources at that time. When all these things came together one might call it *luck* or *coincidence* he said. That is true: **many different variables together explain the change of success of ENGOs.**

It is rather easy for ENGOs in Ecuador to join negotiations, *access to negotiations* are therefore an important factor. This is called *rules of access* in Betsill and Corell (2008). They state that ENGO influence is enhanced when ENGO participation is facilitated. This is what happened in Yasuní too. ENGOs could join official meetings of several ministers easily. Even some international actors could join official meetings on a tourist visa, while they were on holiday (interview). Nonetheless

it becomes more difficult every year for ENGOs to join these meetings. The government becomes more and more closed. **The easy access of ENGOs to negotiations enhanced their influence.**

Almost certainly the most important factor to explain ENGO influence is the personal network of ENGO-employees. As can be seen in the negotiations concerning block 31 and Yasuní ITT, the connections of people from ENGOs played a decisive role. According to an Ecuadorian political analyst, this is because Ecuador is ruled by an elite (Natalia Greene, interview). Everyone from this elite knows everybody else. With the Rafael Correa's new government many people from ENGOs and universities were able to join this elite. People from ENGOs became minister, high civil servant, or member of the House of Representatives or the constitutional assembly. With these people in place it became easier to invite other people from ENGOs to join the decision-making process. These people on key positions enabled ENGOs to influence the government from within and to join more closed meetings. This also comes back in two other factors: *alliances with key governmental bodies* and *the institutional network*. This easy-access has been restricted in recent years since the president thought the influence of the civil society groups were too large. **The personal network of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence.**

One of the most influential activities undertaken by ENGOs is *scientific research*, the negotiations of block 31 and Yasuní ITT are built on a fundament of scientific research done by different ENGOs. The recommendations and conclusions from these reports can be found in official government texts like the results from the SCY in the official text for Yasuní ITT. **Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation to the negotiation.** This is also underlined by another mentioned factor: *knowledge and experience of ENGOs*.

The *stage of negotiations* could also explain ENGO influence, especially on Yasuní ITT. ENGOs were active and influential in a very early stage. Although their influence diminished during the negotiations they already had so much influence in the beginning, the final document still represents much of their position. **When ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher.**

The final important enabling factor is being a *watchdog*. Several ENGOs are continuously controlling governmental functioning, when decisions are taken opposing ENGOs' policy goals actions are taken. Some respondents call this opportunism but it looks like it works pretty well, however it is also important that other groups work all the time, not only when action is needed. **Acting as a watchdog is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions.**

Other mentioned factors do not seem to have played a large role in Yasuní. *Being in touch with grassroots movements*, *Confidence between actors*, *ENGO-coordination*, *Being a well-known ENGO* do not appear to have played a decisive role. *ENGO-coordination* in fact, is also mentioned as a restricting factor.

Restricting factors are also of importance explaining the political influence of ENGOs. In the case of Yasuní the following factors respondents mentioned the following factors, including a brief explanation (table 6).

Table 6: Restricting factors for ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Economic stakes	4	The economic stakes are high in Yasuní, this makes it hard to influence governmental decisions
2	Political stakes	3	The political stakes are high in Yasuní making it hard to influence decisions
3	Financial capabilities	2	Both mentioned as a lack of funds
4	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as a lack of coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Bad atmosphere between ENGOs and government	1	This restricted the influence of ENGOs
	Lack of continuity within ENGOs	1	A restricting factor

The most often mentioned factor: *economic stakes* also seems to be the most important. The economic stakes in Yasuní are high. Ecuador is a poor country and needs income from oil to fund education, healthcare and energy. With already 20 percent of the oil reserves in ITT the economic stakes are enormous. The political stakes in the case of Yasuní do not differ much from the economic stakes because the political stakes are in essence also economic: the money is needed by the government, raising the political stakes. Betsill and Corell also state that ENGO influence is constrained where economic interests are at stake. **The economic stakes in Yasuní are high; this restricts ENGO influence.** At the same time the influence of the oil-lobby is enhanced by these high economic stakes. This is scientifically underwritten by Betsill and Corell (2008).

In comparison to the government and oil companies, ENGOs have little *financial capabilities*. This lack of funds also restricts the functioning of ENGOs in Yasuní. **The small financial capabilities of ENGOs, compared to those of the government and oil companies, restrict the influence of ENGOs.**

The lack of *ENGO-coordination* also seems to restrict ENGO influence. Although Betsill and Corell state that it has a neutral effect it seems to restrict ENGO influence a bit, with coordinated actions more impact could be achieved. In the case of the ZI several groups of ENGOs demanded different things, making a diffuse sound and creating a competition of ENGOs for governmental attention. Although also mentioned as an enabling factor **ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor.**

This bad coordination has its basis in the *lack of continuity within ENGOs*, another mentioned factor. With new people aboard ENGOs every few months no strong alliance between ENGOs could be build. Because many people changed jobs very often not a lot of experience could be gained in a specific topic, this also restricted ENGO influence. **The lack of continuity within ENGOs led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs.**

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. It became harder to join meetings and ENGOs have less access to key governmental actors.

Hereunder the explanatory factors will be analysed for all three cases separately. The difference in the three cases lies in the enabling factors, the restricting factors seem to be the same among the three cases, these say more about Yasuní as a political arena than over the cases separately. Therefore the following three sections focus on the enabling factors.

Not all enabling and restricting factors are of the same importance for all three cases. In the case of the Zona Intangible one seems to be the single most important: **acting as a watchdog.** Without ENGOs participating in the negotiations the creation of the final boundaries of the Z I might have

gotten off the agenda resulting in a Zona Intangible without boundaries. This would have made it impossible to protect this area from loggers and even worse, oil exploitation.

For the decision-making process concerning block 31 other factors have been important. The **individual actions** mentioned above mostly concerned block 31. Margot Bass and Matt Finer that started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní initiative. Their effort made a large difference on the negotiations. It included many more actors, the issue was reframed: from normal oil production to the destruction of a natural area with an unique biodiversity. **The personal network of some ENGO employees was also of major importance**, several ENGO employees knew people within the government, this made it easier to access negotiations. This **access to the negotiation** enabled ENGOs to execute a lot of influence: all different groups of people could join formal meetings with the GAT and the minister of environment, especially when Alban became minister. ENGOs introduced her to the problems from an ENGO perspective, making a powerful ally of her. Finally **a lot of scientific research was executed** to investigate the influence of oil extraction and the construction of roads on biodiversity and the indigenous people of this region. Later this knowledge was used in the discussion of Yasuní ITT and the Zona Intangible (see 5.1).

For the Yasuní ITT initiative two factors enabled the large influence of ENGOs. First the **stage of negotiations** at which ENGOs joined. ENGOs were part of the group that created the initial idea. Later several ENGO employees were part of the ITT committee, enabling ENGOs to project their ideals and policy goals on this official governmental document. All **this was possible due to the personal network of some key actors** like Esperanza Martinez, Alberto Acosta and Yolanda Kakabadse.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results will be analysed using the literature presented in the theoretical framework. Also the contribution of this thesis to the literature will be discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The three different cases cannot be seen completely separated from each other. As can be seen in the timeline in figure 5, the three cases have a lot of overlap in both time and actors. Also the same contextual factors influence the three different negotiations, often in a similar manner. With a greener president ENGOs gain influence, with a less eco-oriented president they lose power. New laws, for example, also apply to all three cases. This however is already recognized in the theoretical model in figure 4, whereas the influence between the cases has not been studied yet. In this chapter the interdependence and influence of the different cases will be discussed.

The Zona Intangible did influence the other cases; first it set an example for conservation in the region. Secondly, it placed an important oil well in block 31 off limits, Imuya. Since then people no longer talk about block ITTI but about ITT.

From ENGO's perspective the central case in Yasuní is block 31. The start of these negotiations started the active role of ENGOs in Yasuní, where previous decision-making (for the ZI) took place without ENGOs. **While ENGOs tried to frame the issue of block 31, they actually framed the larger issue of oil production in Yasuní.** The SCY wanted to preserve block 31, and did research in Yasuní to use the results as lobby material. The outcomes of their research, "Yasuní has an unique biodiversity and its greatest threat are roads" are still quoted. These results were even used for official government policy for the Zona Intangible and Yasuní ITT. One can state that **the scientific research done for block 31 is the backbone of Ecuador's policy concerning Yasuní.** The success of ENGOs on block 31 positively influenced the chances of conservation for the ZI and ITT. Only after the successes in block 31 the final boundaries of the ZI were finally drawn. The battle of block 31 made ENGOs the most experienced actors in Yasuní. With the new governments of Palacio and Correa they could gain influence because they knew how things worked, and the history of the negotiation was also know to them.

Another remarkable similarity between the three cases are the actors, not only on an organizational level, but specially on a personal level. Some key actors come back in all three negotiations. They could even have a different role in all three negotiations.

At one time some people thought that block 31 got too much attention, at that time ITT became more important in the negotiations. In January 2007 the focus changed from block 31 to Yasuní ITT. **The interdependence of block 31 and Yasuní ITT is very large.** They are destined to the same future, either oil extraction or conservation. Basically what will happen to block ITT will happen to block 31. When the ITT initiative will be executed the extraction of oil in 31 would no longer be profitable. When ITT will be extracted the oil from block 31 will be used to mix 31's lighter oil with the heavy crude from ITT.

Since Petrobras returned block 31 to the state and the official document of Yasuní ITT is published the influence of ENGOs diminished. The Correa administration excluded ENGOs from the decision-making process and eco-oriented ministers and advisers were replaced. What this will mean for the future is still unknown.

The three dimensions of power from Lukes (1974) can also be found in the case of Yasuní. The first dimension is most seen in Yasuní: the openly executed influence between actors. The government is the central player in this dimension, it states what other actors should do and what decisions will be taken. The second dimension can also be found, many decisions are not taken, the final boundaries of the ZI took eight years; eight years in which no decision has been taken

because those boundaries were not in line with the policy preferences of the government and oil companies. The same can be said for Yasuní ITT, it has not yet been started because there is a covert conflict within the government and between all actors. Some do not want to keep the oil underground: no decision on the activation of Yasuní ITT is in line with their policy preferences. The third dimension of power is hardest to observe; however, in the Yasuní case, the “real” interests are overt. The separation of the actors in two groups have been made earlier in this thesis, groups that want to extract the oil and the groups that want to keep the oil under ground. Later a third group was added that wants to extract the oil with minimum social and environmental impact. This separation reflects the “real” interests of the actors. The extraction of Yasuní’s oil has long been a latent conflict, however in the investigated period it was clearly overt. Before 1999 many conflicts have been latent, but since block 31 everything happens more openly. Except for the conflicts within the Correa administration: these best represent the third dimension of power in this thesis.

Some political scientists in Ecuador, for example Natalia Greene (interview), recognize the existence of an elite that rules Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a small group of people in which everybody knows each other; these people rule the country, or rule a theme like nature conservation. This implies that the ideas from Wright Mills (1956) are still applicable for Ecuador. In this thesis special attention has been given to ask open questions to verify if in Ecuador the pluralist theory, the elitist theory or a hybrid is most relevant. Therefore neither the elitist question “who rules?” is asked nor “does anyone have power?” like a pluralist would ask.

The choice for a political arena has been a good choice for this thesis, although the situation sometimes resembles a policy network. However the central player is most certainly the Ecuadorian government, therefore there is as strict hierarchy of actors. For Yasuní it is as follows: on top are the governmental players, underneath international players like UNDP or UNESCO, followed by powerful groups and businesses, ranging from oil companies to powerful indigenous organizations, ending with NGOs. Another hint that it is not a policy network is the fact that the public and private players are not mutually dependent, in fact the government can do what it wants. At times this provokes an intense reaction by other players, but it does not mean that the policy will be changed.

Whereas Arts (2008) solely focuses on intentional influence, this thesis also underlines the importance of the unintentional influence of ENGOs. Some ENGOs, especially those with a more radical view had a lot of unwanted unintentional influence on the negotiation. They radicalized, which made cooperation with some other actors impossible. This history has been repeated by several respondents and demonstrated the important role of Acción Ecológica. The discussion whether influence has to be intentional can be explained for Yasuní. Many groups try to influence the decision-making and the key actor: the government. This is done because these groups want to achieve their policy goals. However aiming at positive influence they might at times experience unexpected and unwanted side effects. For example in the discussion of the ZI the claims made by Acción Ecológica to make the entire Amazon a No-Go Zone for development almost ruined the chances to create the actual ZI. Therefore the importance of unintentional influence in this thesis is rather large.

The distinction made in governance literature between NGOs that work in partnerships and NGOs that focus more on action has also been found in this thesis. Van Huijstee (2010); Visseren-Hamakers (2009); and Humphreys (2006) have found a similar distinction. In Ecuador partnerships are still rare, especially in the Yasuní region. However a group of NGOs cooperates more with the government and others, whereas the second group solely consists of more radical NGOs. In time partnerships might be a part of the Ecuadorian NGO-landscape. The terms “collaborative” and “campaigning” NGO seem to suit the situation in Ecuador.

The results from this thesis can be linked to the outcomes of Betsill and Corell (2008). The latter found eight factors that can explain political influence of NGOs, and also a brief explanation of how these factors explain political influence. In this thesis a number of these factors are mentioned by respondents, six of these have also been listed by Betsill and Corell.

ENGO coordination had a neutral effect according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in this thesis however it was mentioned as a restricting factor. The lack of coordination was restricting the influence of ENGOs on the government according to the respondents. In Yasuní's case it seems to be a restricting factor rather than an factor with a neutral effect. Betsill and Corell (2008) did mention that all levels of ENGO influence were achieved under varying levels of ENGO coordination, in Yasuní the influence of ENGOs could have been higher if the actions of like-minded ENGOs were more synchronized.

Betsill and Corell state that ENGO influence is enhanced when active steps are taken to facilitate NGO participation. In Yasuní it was at times facilitated like in the Yasuní ITT committee, at times it was not facilitated but the participation of ENGOs was still high. While Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence does not decline, in Yasuní ENGO influence declined with more restrictive rules of access, particularly in the last 3 years.

Betsill and Corell (2008) underwrite the importance of joining the negotiations in an early phase, however this is often not enough to achieve influence in a later phase. The same can be seen in Yasuní, and especially in Yasuní ITT. ENGOs joined early but over time the policy less and less resembles the ENGOs' opinion.

The political and economic stakes are very high in Yasuní, this reduces influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), and that is true. The government and other players are less open to the ideas from ENGOs since so much money and power is at stake.

Alliances with key governmental bodies enhances influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in Ecuador this is done at times, although only mentioned by one respondent. This implies that it is not the most usual way to influence the government in Yasuní.

The last two factors from Betsill and Corell (2008), *institutional overlap* and *competition from other NGOs* have not been found in this thesis. However the competition from other NGOs might have played a role in the drawing of the ZI's final boundaries. Two groups of ENGOs had completely different goals, protecting the proposed area or protecting the entire Amazon. This battle between ENGOs did no good for the negotiation, but the goal of the larger group was reached: protecting the proposed area. Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence is not a zero-sum game and that competition between NGOs does not necessarily constrain NGO influence.

5.2 Contribution to the literature

This thesis investigated the decision-making process of the major issues in Yasuní: la Zona Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní ITT. This is one of the first investigations to combine these three major cases, and the first that analyses the decision-making process of these cases. Also the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has not been studied widely yet. Other than the works of Narvaez (2007) and Lara (2007) the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has only been touched superficially. This is the first complete overview of the last twelve years in Yasuní. The timeline created for this thesis is also a novelty. It is of importance that these cases finally have been linked formally since the negotiations influenced each other, although it was not yet recognized.

This thesis is also another verification of explanatory factors, Betsill and Corell (2008) do not mention the personal network of ENGO employees, while in Ecuador this is the single most important enabling factor for ENGO influence. This might be a valuable addition to the list of Betsill and Corell (2008). Many others (6 out of 8) have also been found in this thesis; underlining the quality of Betsill and Corell's (2008) list.

The use of Arts' (1998) model demonstrated that there is a large difference in the area of research between Arts' and this research. His methodology was not applicable to the situation in Ecuador where there is no strict boundary between ENGO-people and governmental or other employees. This behaviour of Ecuadorian decision-makers might not be typically Ecuadorian, this happens among many political players in environmental issues (Carter, 2008). The distinction between two types of NGOs, one more pragmatic the other more radical in its message has not only been found in this thesis but is a mayor area of investigation. Van Huijstee (2010) and Visseren-Hamakers (2008) have found the same outcome in their investigation. Humphreys (2006) also investigated this phenomenon in governance.

5.3 Discussion of the Model

The model used in this thesis was adapted from Arts (1998) before carrying out the research, and was a useful simplification of the reality. However further adaptations could be made to enlarge the explanatory power of the model; it makes the model more suited for Yasuní. To introduce this model, it is necessary to understand the background of the situation in Ecuador. Figure 6 below provides a schematic guide to reading the following section.

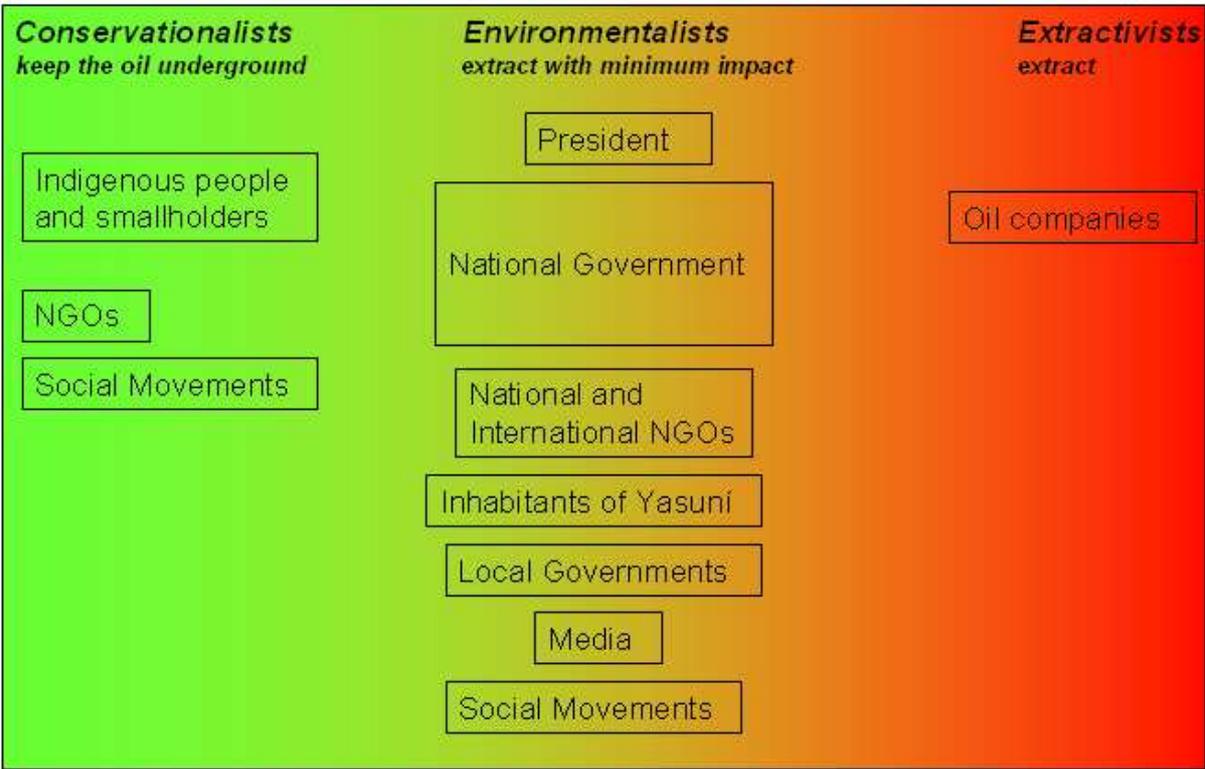


Figure 6: The major actors of this thesis

Three different groups can be categorized in Yasuní, those in favour of extracting Yasuní's oil, *extractivists*; those that want to keep the oil underground, *conservationalists* and those to want to extract the oil but with minimum impact: *environmentalists*. The *extractivists* consist, nowadays, solely of oil companies. The *conservationalists*, consist of some NGOs, some social movements and indigenous people and smallholders living in the Amazon. Here the distinction between NGOs and social movements is used since these behave differently. Social movements in Ecuador often represent an group of people, like the social movements of indigenous or women. If policy is designed that touches these people in a negative way, actions are taken whereas NGOs work with projects on specific themes. However this distinction not needed for the entire thesis, since for Yasuní these groups have similar goals. However, several people interviewed for this thesis worked both at NGOs and at social movements. The *environmentalists* are the most diverse

group. They consist of some inhabitants, governmental actors and NGOs that believe in oil extraction with minimum impact; some NGOs, social movements and governmental bodies that believe in a pragmatic approach, where minimum impact extraction is the best they can achieve; and actors that reached this consensus since they are internally divided: such as the national government, the media and the president. This is a rather strange claim, but it seems that the president of Ecuador swings back and forth between keeping the oil underground and extracting it. The National Government at this time consists of both pro-oil people and pro-conservation people.

This new knowledge can lead to a new model, still simple but with some nuance. While the basic structure remains the same, the grey scale from figure 6 are included to indicate the political opinion of these groups. The second difference is that NGOs are split in ENGOs and NGOs. The first group consists of campaigning NGOs the second of collaborative NGOs, this same distinction can be found in governance literature (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009). Separating these two groups of NGOs enlarges the explanatory power of this model without making it overly complicated. The main focus for this research would lie on the political influence of ENGOs instead of NGOs. The adapted model is showed hereunder in figure 7. A final change is that this model acknowledges that the government makes the final decisions, rather than participating in negotiations (arrow V, explained below).

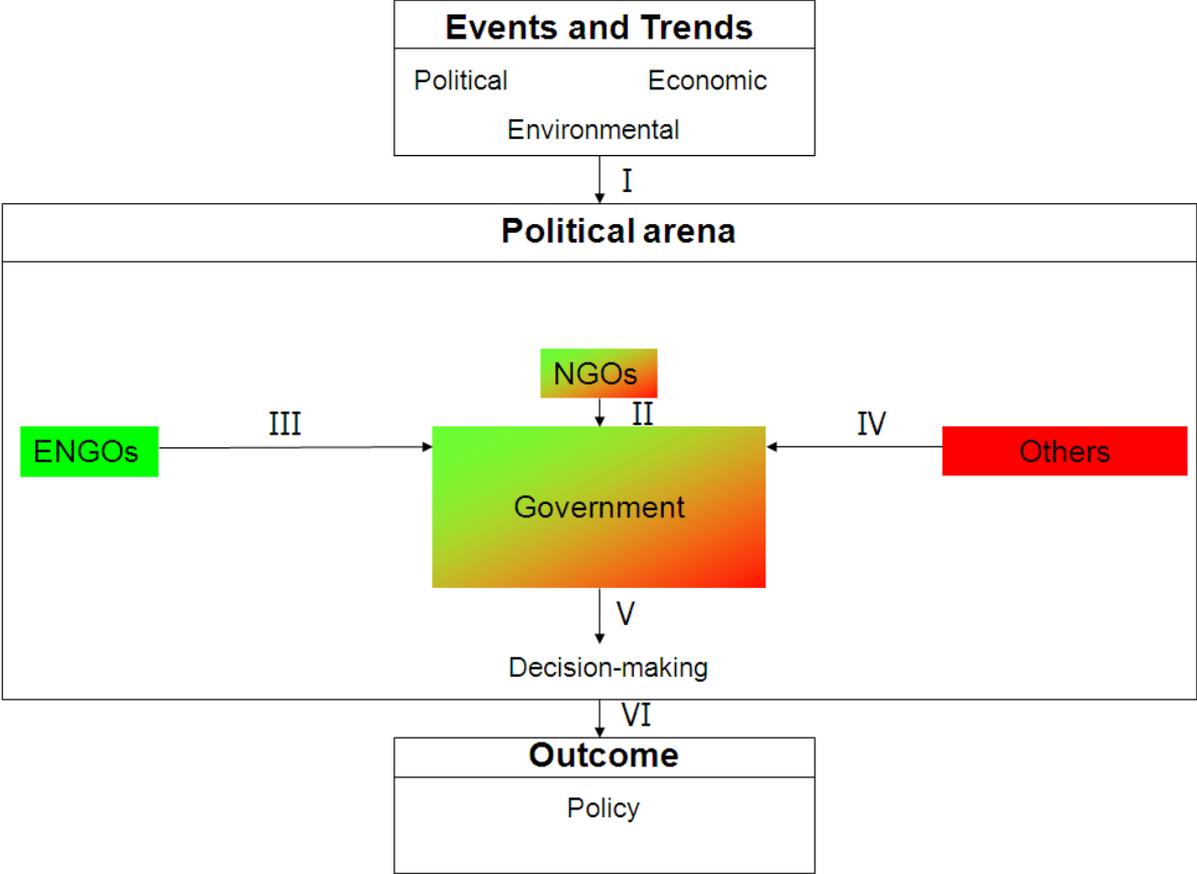


Figure 7: The adapted theoretical model

Arrow (I): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are all political, economic, environmental factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors may not be fixed, what is a constraint for one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis, etc.

Arrow (II): *political influence*. This is the political influence of *collaborative* NGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing.

Arrow (III): *political influence*. This is the political influence of (*campaigning*) ENGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing. This arrow is the main focus of the research. In the governance literature this group can also be called campaigning NGOs (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009)

Arrow (IV): *political influence*. This is the political influence of actors other than NGOs on the government (primarily oil companies, for a detailed list, see figure 6). It has to be stressed that arrows II, III and IV are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given its formal status and position. However governments do in reality influence other players and NGOs it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (V): *does*. The government is the most important actor in decision-making, but during the process it might be influenced.

Arrow (VI): *leads to*. The policy processes lead to policy.

In this model NGOs are able to impact policy outcomes in principle but they are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors.

5.4 Discussion of the Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction and the research methodology chapter, the first methodology selected was replaced by one more suitable for the specific situation in Yasuní. The first methodology was based on the assumption that respondents could be divided in three different groups: people from ENGOs, people from the government and other respondents. The first group could provide an EGO-perception of ENGO-influence on the negotiations. The second group would give an ALTER-perception, the view from people in the government on ENGO-influence. The third group consisting of specialists could provide a more objective view, the Causal Analysis. This Causal Analysis would be a researcher’s assessment of NGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews. This methodology was used by Arts (1998) to analyse NGO influence on international conventions. Initially, this methodology appeared to provide an adequate examination of ENGO influence in Yasuní. While the international environmental negotiations and the negotiations concerning Yasuní looked rather similar beforehand, in the practice the international dimension was non-existent. This led to several complications: instead of resembling international political negotiations it was more similar to regional politics; where one small group of people that knows each other well, an ‘elite,’ governed Yasuní. This small group of people dominated the negotiations, but did not stick to one position. People changed from influential ENGO jobs to professorships and some even became minister or member of the constitutional assembly or House of Representatives. Furthermore, these changes were not one-way, after a job in the government some people returned to ENGOs. These changes in employment led to new employees bringing their expertise and network with them, and to an exchange of ideas between different groups.

These changes in careers were common; many people did exceed two years in one job, making the planned division between EGO- and ALTER-perception and Causal-Analysis impossible. This was also due to the fact that, during the interviews, many people did not have the kind of job they had during the various events in Yasuní. It was therefore decided to consider a large group respondents as a part of an *elite*. People outside this ‘elite’ considered the other actors as a group where they did not belong to. Therefore the division in three groups was cancelled and all answers from respondents were equally analysed.

The main source of data in this thesis consisted of semi-structured interviews, using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008). During the interviews it seemed impossible to structure

an interview accordingly. Many people gave their version of events, which had to be structured into the framework to present the results.

The original plan for this thesis was to interview the three main actors in Yasuní: NGOs, governmental bodies and oil companies. Due to circumstances the latter could not be interviewed. New licenses were given to oil companies during the fieldwork. This made it impossible for an outsider to have meetings with them, oil companies were too afraid any outcome might influence their new contracts. This reduced the interviewed participating parties to two: NGOs and governmental bodies.

Another restricting factor was Ecuador's political situation in October 2010. On 30 September 2010 an attempted coupe d'état was executed by the police. During this chaos there was even an attempted murder on the president. The weeks following 30 September it was impossible to contact governmental bodies for an interview, and later in November and December people were still less open than they might have been beforehand. Therefore only a few names are mentioned in this thesis, the names of politicians openly talking about the times they were minister. Other actors wanted to remain low profile and anonymous. Guaranteeing their anonymity made them more open, so more reliable information could be retrieved.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the most important consequences of this thesis. It starts with conclusions on the scientific objective: answers on the research questions. Subsequently hints for further research will be given and finally recommendations for ENGOs active in Yasuní are presented.

6.1 To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 1: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” This will be done first for the three topics and later a general answer will be presented.

In the Zona Intangible the influence of ENGOs was low when the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used. ENGOs participated in the negotiation but without noticeable effect on the process or outcome. However in the counterfactual analysis it was demonstrated that the creation of final boundaries might have been put off the agenda if it were not for ENGOs. Therefore **the actual influence of ENGOs on the ZI might have been higher, however this is only an indicated guess by the researcher.**

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning block 31 was high: ENGOs participated in the negotiations and had some success in shaping the negotiation process; also the effects of ENGO participation can be linked to the outcome. If it were not for ENGOs the oil in block 31 was currently exploited, destroying the living grounds of the indigenous groups in the area and its fragile ecosystem.

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning Yasuní ITT was high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and they have some success in shaping the negotiation process. ENGOs’ effects of participation can be linked to the outcome. Especially in the first phases of the negotiation the role of ENGOs was significant. However their role weakened, the policy goals of ENGOs are still largely represented by the government on this topic.

ENGO influence in Yasuní is case specific, their influence was different in all three cases. However ENGOs had high influence in two of the three cases, therefore it is possible to conclude that **ENGOs have significant overall influence on governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní.**

6.2 What factors explain ENGOs influence on the governmental decisions concerning oil exploitation in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 2: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?”

The enabling factors found in this thesis are in sequence of importance: the **personal network** of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence. People involved in Yasuní form a small *elite*; everyone knows each other. This enables the exchange of information and enlarges the possibilities of ENGO employees to join important meetings. The importance of the fact that all actors in this political arena are just a phone call away is hard to overestimate.

Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation for the negotiations. Especially for block 31 a lot of research has been executed by ENGOs on the effects of oil extraction and road construction on the natural and cultural environment of Yasuní. No other

group has delivered so much valuable scientific information. Whereas the government takes the decisions in Yasuní, their decisions are based on the information delivered by ENGOS.

The **Stage of negotiation** was also of large importance: when ENGOS joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher. Important is that ENGOS did often join early, except for the Zona Intangible discussion. Yasuní ITT underlines the importance of joining early in these negotiations. ENGOS only joined early phases of the negotiation but their influence of the outcome was still large because they designed the outline of the entire plan.

The **easy access of ENGOS to negotiations** enhanced their influence. This can be linked to the personal network of ENGO employees and the network of the ENGOS. The rules of access are rather informal or non-existing, which makes it easier for non-governmental actors to joined when compared to other negotiations.

Acting as a **watchdog** is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions. When ENGOS were excluded from the decision-making they controlled the government. As soon as the government did something undesired by ENGOS they started actions to influence the government.

Opposite the enabling factors are the restricting factors; the most important restricting factors. These are listed hereunder:

The single most important factor is the presence of very high **economic stakes** in Yasuní. These make it harder for ENGOS to join the decision-making process and to influence the outcomes. This factor has a lot of overlap with the **political stakes** in Yasuní, which are mainly of an economic character.

The small **financial capabilities** of ENGOS compared to the government and oil companies restrict ENGOS' political influence. The amount of money available for demonstrations, research and lobby-activities is restricted, especially compared to the budget of the other actors like the government and oil companies.

ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor. With better coordination the influence of ENGOS could have been higher and more precisely focussed on important issues. Also the overlap of scientific research would have been reduced.

The **lack of continuity within ENGOS** led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOS. Since the personal network is the most important enabling factor of political influence in Yasuní, the turnover rate of employees is a severe threat to the positions of ENGOS.

The bad atmosphere between ENGOS and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. Since 2008 the role of ENGOS in the decision-making process has been diminished. The authoritarian style of the government does not recognize the role of ENGOS and other groups from civil society. This effectively destroyed the strong ties between the Correa administration and ENGOS, this is a critical problem for ENGOS in the near future.

6.3 Conclusions regarding the used model and methodology

The original theoretical model should be adapted to increase its explanatory power while keeping it simple. Two groups of NGOs should be included in the model: one group aiming to keep the oil underground (ENGOS) and a second group aiming at extraction with minimum social and environmental impact (NGOs). This separation between more radical and more pragmatic NGOs can also be found in governance literature.

For succeeding studies a methodology that recognizes the fact that the people in power consists of an actual elite would be preferable. The initial methodology from Arts (1998) was not applicable in the case of Yasuní. In the methodology should be recognized that people in important positions change their jobs often, making a distinction between governmental employees and ENGO employees impossible.

The changing opinion of the Ecuadorian government should also be recognized in advance: Ecuador has changed five times of president during the investigated processes (1999-2011). Therefore a model should recognize that the government is not an unchanging or stable actor. The framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was highly suited to this research. It supported and guided this research, even without making major adaptations. Only the procedural issues of the final agreement were not used, since they were not discussed in any of the three cases.

6.3 Recommendations for ENGOs

Research goal two was formulating recommendations for ENGOs in cases similar to Yasuní. Hereunder four brief recommendations extracted from this thesis are formulated.

1 invest in an extensive personal network existing of other people in the political arena, this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions

2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs.

3 join early in negotiations. The more early ENGOs join the better the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals.

4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice. This is needed to tackle the difference in funds.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Ego-Perception

Name of Organization:

What kind of NGO:

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway? How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the initial position of key actors? Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What specific achievements did this NGO make concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de esta ONG en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of this NGO concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande esta ONG en Yasuní?

What documents or policy did you change; How?

Que documentos o gestión cambió esta ONG; Cómo?

What would have happened without this NGO / no NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la influencia de esta ONG?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

What factors explain your political influence, Why?

Qué factores pueden explicar el influencia de las ONGs; Porqué?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influencia politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

Alter-Perception and Specialists Interviews

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ITT, ZI & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influence politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

➔ Checking claims made by discussed NGO in previous interviews

Appendix 2: List of interviewed groups

List of interviewed organizations:

ENGOs and Social movements

Acción Ecológica
Amazonia por la vida
Ciudadanos por la vida
EcoCiencia
Fundación Natura
Fundación Pachamama
FondoAmbiental
Instituto de estudios ecologistas de tercer mundo
Oilwatch
Save America's Forests
Secretaría de Pueblos
WCS-Ecuador
WWF

Government

Co-authors of Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Yasuní ITT committee
Committee de gestion de Yasuní (Yasuní's Biosphere Reserve management committee)
Ministry of environment
Ministry of cultural and natural heritage
Ministry of mining and energy
Ministry of politics

Specialists

University of San Francisco de Quito
University Andina Simon Bolivar
FLACSO
Boston University
Tiputini Biodiversity station
Radio France Internacional
Wereldomroep Nederland / VPRO

List of organizations that gave lectures on this specific topic, including groups that were active in Yasuní but did no longer have the knowledge required for this thesis.

CEDA (Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental)
Conservation International
Ecoflex
EcoFund
IEETM
International Alert
Plataforma de Responsabilidad Social
UNDP
UNDP-PPD

The Political Influence of ENGOs on Oil Extraction in Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve:

Can ENGOs keep the oil underground?



Pascal ten Have BSc

870220312130

Supervisor: Dr. Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers

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for Lucero

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Summary

Yasuni's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet. It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. Yasuni consists of Yasuni National Park and a Waorani Ethnic Reserve, an indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani are the Taromenane and Tagaeri, two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation. Yasuni's staggering richness does not only lie above ground; under the soil are vast amounts of crude oil that put Yasuni's future on the line. Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuni: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and Yasuni-ITT. This thesis aims at explaining the role of ENGOs (Environmental NGOs) in the decision-making processes in Yasuni. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following two questions: *To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* and *What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* This analytical and explanatory study describes the extent of the ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuni. In addition, it also tries to explain the factors that determine this political influence.

To answer the research questions a theoretical framework has been created based on the following concepts: *power, influence, political influence, political arena, policy network, ENGOs*. These concepts all came together in the influence of ENGOs on environmental negotiations. The works of Arts (1998) and Betsill and Corell (2008) form the scientific backbone of this thesis. The theoretical model aims at explaining the influence of ENGOs on the main actor in these decision-making processes: the government.

The first set of data was retrieved from semi-structured interviews with key actors on the three different topics in Yasuni. This data was used to examine the influence of ENGOs on: issue framing, agenda setting, the position of key actors and on the final agreement. With these results the decision-making process is reconstructed, the influence on all different phases is analysed and a counterfactual analysis of ENGO influence was made. The second set of data consists of factors explaining ENGO influence, which have also been retrieved from interviews. In the discussion these are combined with the eight factors Betsill and Corell extracted from several case studies about the political influence of NGOs on environmental negotiations.

This analysis provided the following results. The influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process of the Zona-Intangible was low: while ENGOs participated in the negotiations, there was no effect on the process or outcome. Conversely, ENGO influence in block 31 was high, ENGOs had both influence on the process and the outcome. ENGO influence on Yasuni ITT has also been high: ENGOs participated in the negotiation and had some success in the negotiation process. Also the participation of ENGOs could be linked to the outcome. This demonstrates that ENGO influence is case-specific.

ENGO influence is enabled by: 1 The *personal network* of ENGO employees; 2 *Scientific research* done by ENGOs; 3 the *Stage of negotiation*; 4 The *easy access of ENGOs to negotiations*; 5 Acting as a *watchdog*. The factors restricting ENGO influenced are listed in order of importance: 1 The *high economic stakes*; 2 The *small financial capabilities* of ENGOs; 3 the *poor ENGO-coordination*; 4 The *lack of continuity within ENGOs*; 5 *The tense relations between ENGOs and the government* of the last years.

Finally, four recommendations for ENGOs have been formulated: 1 invest in an extensive personal network; this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions. 2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, as this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs. 3 join in early on negotiations. The earlier ENGOs join, the more the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals. 4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice.

1. Introduction

Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet (Finer et al., 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Acosta 2010; Larrea, 2010). It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. (Villavicencio, 2010; Acosta et al. 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). Yasuní consists of Yasuní National Park and an Ethnic Reserve for the Waorani indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani, the Taromenane and Tagaeri, are two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation (Proaño Garcia and Colleoni, 2008, Martinez, 2010, Rommel 2007). They live in Yasuní together with over 1300 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and more than 100.000 species of insects (del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010). One hectare in Yasuní has as many as 650 tree species, an number higher than the number of tree species of Canada and the U.S.A. combined (Bass et al. 2010, del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010; McSweeney and Pearson, 2009).

Yasuní's staggering richness lies not only above ground; below the soil vast amounts of crude oil put Yasuní's future on the line (New Internationalist, 2008, Finer, 2010, Bass et al., 2010). Although the area is formally protected at the regional, national and international level, oil concessions have been given to a variety of oil companies (Finer, 2009). And as these oil blocks were designated before Yasuní was a formally protected area, protecting this area from destruction by oil companies is problematic (Acosta, 2010; Rommel, 2007).

Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuní: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and the Yasuní-ITT. These three topics will be further elaborated in the following section.

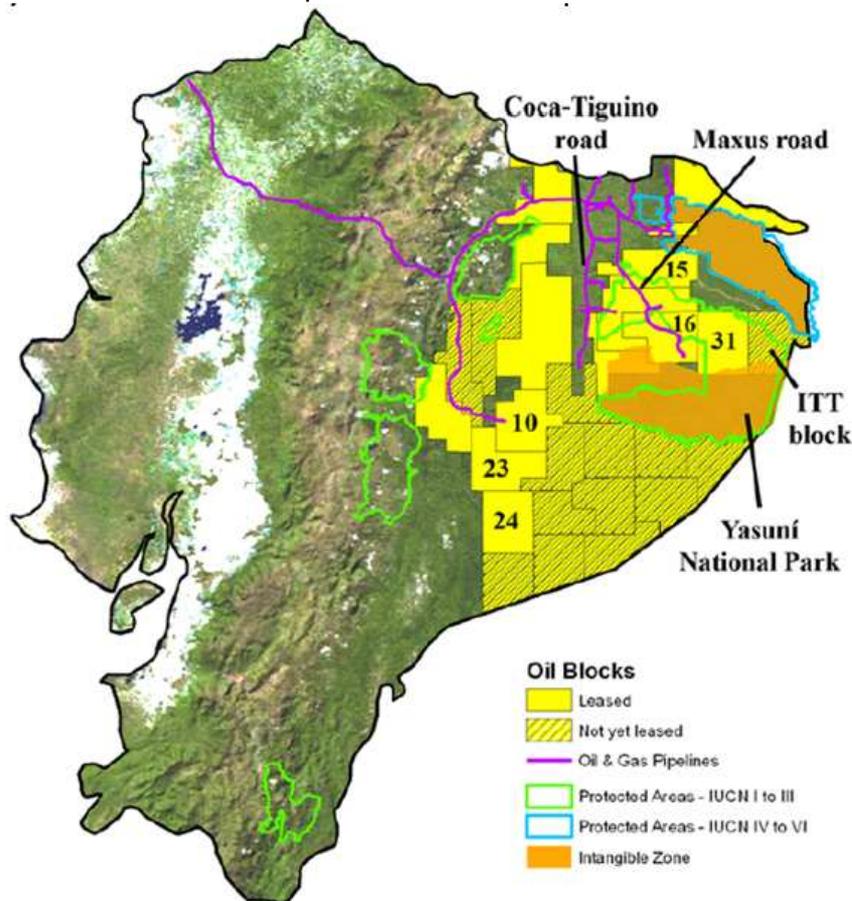


Figure 1: Oil and gas blocks in Ecuador. (Finer et al., 2008)

1.1 Zona Intangible

The indicated zones (former parts of oil blocks) in figure 1 are declared No-Go-Zones for oil exploitation in Yasuní: Zonas Intangibles. The northern No-Go-Zone, La Zona Intangible Cuyabeno falls outside the boundaries of Yasuní, whereas the southern No-Go-Zone, la Zona Intangible Tagaeri- Taromenane (ZI) consists of a substantial part of the Man and Biosphere Reserve (Finer et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Rommel, 2007). This thesis will only focus on the southern ZI, as the northern is not located in Yasuní. This No-Go-Zone was created by the ministry of environment to conserve the Tagaeri and Taromenane, and the forest they live from (Rommel, 2007). Although created in 1999 it took until 2007 to draw its final boundaries, but since then it finally seems to be protected adequately. It encompasses 7580km² and covers the complete southern half of the National Park and a part of the Woarani territory (Finer et al., 2009). As can be seen in figure 2 there are not only oil blocks that have yet to be leased in the southern Zona Intangible, parts of the oil blocks 16, 31 and ITT and almost half of block 17 also fall within the southern No-Go-Zone, this placed major oil reserves in block 17 and block-ITT (Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini) off limits (Finer et al., 2009).

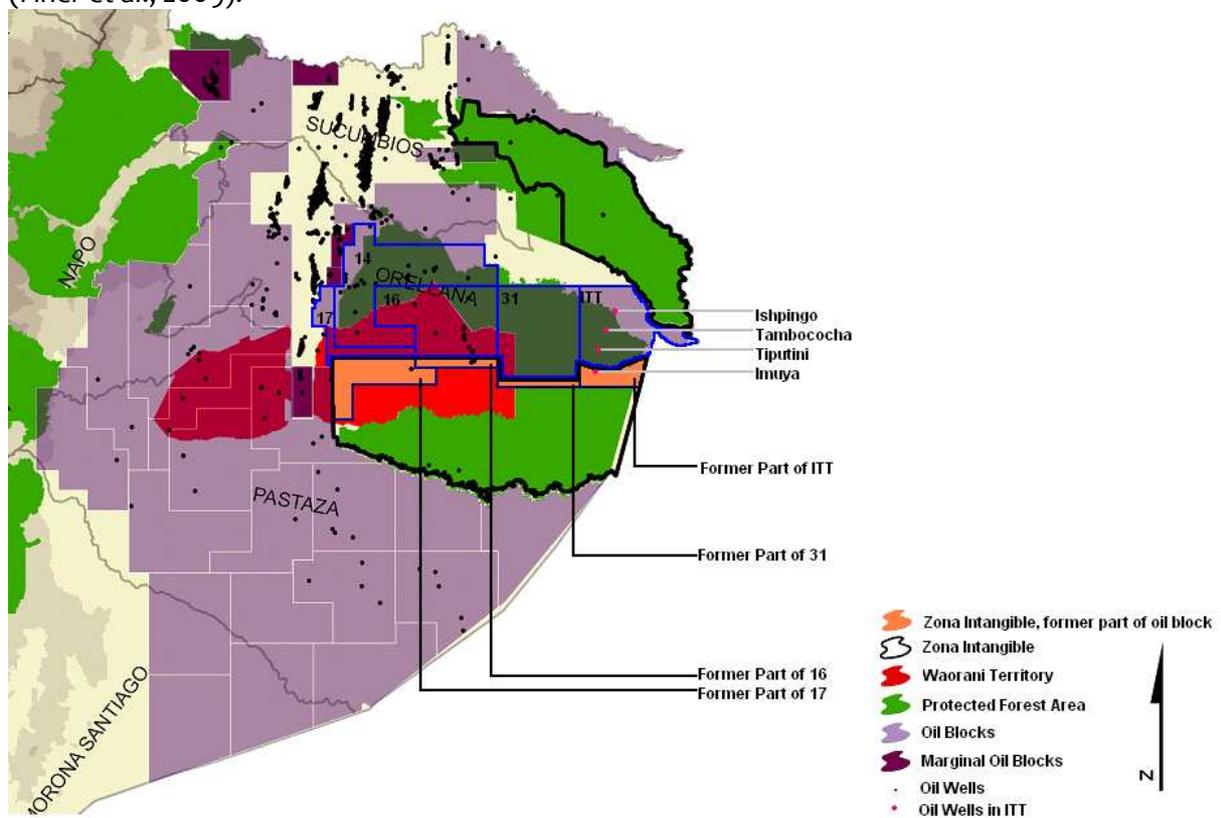


Figure 2: Zona Intangible and the consequences for oil production in Yasuní (Accion Ecologica 2008)

1.2 Block 31

Block 31 is one of the largest oil blocks in Yasuní, although only in size. The amount of oil in block 31 is hardly enough to break even when exploited (Martinez, 2010). It is a very strategic block, however, as it is close to block ITT, in which 20 percent of the remaining oil of Ecuador is located (see 1.3). Therefore a long struggle has been going on to stop the exploitation.

In 1996, the government released block 31, and it was given to the Argentinean company Perez Companc. In 2002, block 31 was taken over by Petrobras who executed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for the construction of an oil road, which started a large controversy. Many different groups joined to stop this road, ranging from NGOs, Social movements, and indigenous communities to famous international scientists (Finer et al. 2009).

Despite these lawsuits and protests, Petrobras started developing the road and clearing primary forest in May 2005, from the banks of the river Napo to the border of Yasuní National Park. At that time, Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of presidency. His successor Alfredo Palacio, reconsidered the issue and authorized development of these fields only under the condition that no roads were constructed and the production plant was outside the national park. In the following year a new EIS was executed and permit was given, based on a new plan that did not involve roads. Surprisingly, however, a year later the new president Rafael Correa announced that Petrobras terminated its contract and returned block 31 to the state (Finer et al., 2009).

1.3 Yasuní-ITT

Next to block 31, under the North-Eastern part of Yasuní National Park called Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) lies one of the biggest remaining oil fields with at least 846 million barrels with a total value of more than 72 billion US dollars, accounting for twenty percent of the remaining oil reserves. (Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer, 2010; Bass et al., 2010; New Internationalist 2008). Since Ecuador is an oil dependent economy, it needs this income to invest in education, healthcare and energy (de Hierro, 2010).

However, a ground-breaking initiative has been developed to generate income without exploiting this oil, and thereby protecting Yasuní's fragile biodiversity. The use of the crude oil in Yasuní would result in the release of 407.000.000 Metric tons of carbon dioxide, which could retrieve 7.2 billion US dollars on the international carbon market. However, as the carbon market only recognizes already emitted CO₂, the idea arose to place the CO₂ not emitted from Yasuní on the voluntary carbon market (Acosta, 2010). Foreign investments in this so-called "Yasuní Guarantee Certificate" will generate enough income to relieve the need for extraction (del Hierro, 2010).

The collected funds would be managed by a trust fund headed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which would invest the money in long-term development plans. The oil-based energy would be replaced by hydro-electrical, geo-thermal, solar and biomass energy. A million hectares would be reforested and protecting fourteen natural reserves and indigenous lands. This will result in the protection of 36 percent of Ecuador, and finally a revolutionary new development strategy (del Hierro, 2010). Since ITT is bordering the Intangible Zone, it would therefore create a rather large area free of oil development. It would also make the exploitation of bordering oil fields, like block 31, unprofitable and thereby would preserve these areas too (Finer et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol does not recognize the Yasuní Guarantee Certificates. Ecuador also tried to get this initiative recognized under REDD, however it was not accepted since it is not sufficiently focused on deforestation. For the climate agreements in Mexico 2010 Ecuador hoped to get it recognized as a new initiative next to the existing REDD and REDD+, however Ecuador did not succeed (Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). The search for investors and funding, is still on going.

1.4 Aim of the research

As shown above, the three battles are faced with an open end, and while the official facts can be presented, it remains unclear how and why things were decided. A relevant yet unanswered question is: what was and will be the role of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Social movements in Yasuní?

This thesis investigates the political influence of the various ENGOS on policy- and decision making concerning the oil extraction in Yasuní. Yasuní is a natural area of global importance and can serve as a flagship for nature conservation. Yasuní's uncontacted indigenous people and biodiversity are threatened by oil extraction. Nevertheless it can serve as an example on how nature can be protected although it is under high pressure. ENGOS acting on local, national and global level are

trying to conserve the indigenous living grounds of the voluntary isolated tribes and Yasuní's unique biodiversity.

This paper focuses on creating understanding of the political influence of ENGOs on oil extraction in Yasuní, and aims at formulating recommendations for the involved ENGOs to enhance their political influence in similar political arenas in the near future. Hopefully this might influence the outcome in Yasuní or at least provide ENGOs worldwide with information and recommendations on how to be better prepared for conflicts similar to this one. The aim of this thesis is therefore answering the following two research questions:

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

This study is analytical and explanatory. It describes the extend of ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuní in addition it also tries to explain what factors determine this political influence.

To answer these questions a qualitative research project is carried out, using interviews, and primary and secondary texts. Especially for the first questions semi-structured into-depth interviews are of high importance. Staff from ENGOs, governmental bodies and different kinds of specialists were interviewed. The original idea to make a strict distinction between these groups was a lot harder in reality than it seemed beforehand. The initial methodology needed this strict division to analyse the decision-making process from three different angles (see 3.7). However this was not the case. For example: scientists were former NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past, people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. Therefore a new methodology will be introduced to analyse the retrieved data more securely, without making divisions for theory's sake while such division does not exist in reality. Finally, a reconstruction of the decision-making process of all three themes (Zona-Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní-ITT) will be made. Overall, the research questions will be answered by analysing the role of ENGOs in this decision-making process. Additionally, this thesis presents recommendations for Ecuadorian ENGOs to enlarge their influence.

This thesis focuses on Yasuní: the Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve, which consists of Yasuní National Park, Waorani Reserve and a 10 kilometre buffer on the west, north and south side. Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve boasts uncontacted indigenous people, an unique biodiversity and both producing oil blocks and blocks that might produce in the near future.

The researched period lies between January 1999, the time of the ministerial decree that declared a large area of Yasuní a Zona Intangible until March 2011, the end of this fieldwork period.

Several factors made it harder to execute the research needed for this thesis. On September 30th 2010 a coup d'état and a personal assault on the president just failed. This created a tense political situation which made it harder to contact governmental representatives. People that gave interviews were less open than normally, which makes it hard to check if the given information is correct.

When the tension became less and less during the following weeks the tension among oil-producers grew tenser since new contracts were given for the next ten years. This made it impossible to contact oil-companies since new information could harm their contract. Therefore the initial idea to include oil-companies had to be changed.

The internal tension on Yasuní-ITT has also risen since Germany, the largest confirmed donor retreated. This did not only cost a lot of money but also implied that other countries and donors drew back.

2. Theoretical Framework

The introduction shows that there are many things at stake in Yasuní. A large variety of actors strives to see their own, often conflicting, goals achieved. Since not each and every one of these goals can be achieved, all actors attempt to influence the people that make the final decision. Although one actor may have more chance to influence a decision maker than another, this does not mean that he will certainly achieve his goals. When different actors are competing in this way, and if their access to resources and information is unequal, there will inevitably be a large difference in their influence on decision-making (Connell and Smith, 2006). Thus, there are power inequalities in this field; some have more power than others. To understand why this occurs, it's important to focus on the concept of power. What is power and what does power do are relevant questions in this context. These and other questions relating to power and influence will be answered in this chapter as well as the other relevant concepts that can help explain the role of ENGOs in environmental negotiations.

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Power Literature

Why is power studied to such a large extent? To put it very boldly: All aspects of social life are based upon power (Kidd et al., 2010 p. 4). This statement indicates how important power may be in everyday life. When the topic of power arises, it is often immediately associated with politics, but there is a major difference between power and politics. "Power is about getting what you want, and politics is about how and why different groups struggle to get what they want." (Kidd et al., 2010, p.5). This definition of power is very broad, and while many scientist would not agree on it, many of them would agree that this broadly is what power is about.

Deep inside, everybody has an idea of power, and of its opposite: powerlessness. We call people powerful when they can execute power over others, and consider those who cannot the powerless. In an average society the latter group is the vast majority (Kidd et al., 2010). Powerless is 'without power' just as "dark" is defined as "without light". This implies that we all know what power is and we can describe it without problems. We also know many of the manifestations of power.

In the social and political sciences, however, power is an 'essentially contested concept' (Ashe et al., 1999 p. 69). According to Kidd et al. (2010, p.7) five general themes can be distinguished within power literature:

1. Power and agency (individuals) – how much of a say do ordinary people have over their actions on a day-to-day basis? How much agency (or freedom/free will) do they have?
2. Power and structure (society) – how rooted and integral are power relationships within the overall make-up of society as a whole? To what extent does society as a thing weigh down upon individuals, regulating their decisions, actions and options?
3. Power and domination – what happens if people step out of line? How are they punished? Do some groups benefit from the punishing of others?
4. Power and empowerment – should we see power as a tool to use against others or as a way to make decisions about and for ourselves? Is it a matter of having power over what others do or is it power to do something for ourselves?
5. Power and identity – how does having power, struggling for power or being the objects of someone else's power make us who we are? What is the relationship between power and how we come to see ourselves in society: our identity?

According to Stephen Lukes (1974) these kinds of power can be gained through two different ways: power can either be obtained through battle, struggle and the possible resistance of others, or be the outcome of an agreement, it is not held by some over and at expense of others

who have none of it. Banfield (2009 p.9) puts it as follows: “Power is the ability to establish control. So who has power controls the situation, this person can do what he wants, not only within its own life but also with the lives of others and sometimes even with society.”

Thus it can be concluded that power is a vital topic in people’s life, this might explain why science’s early interest in studying power.

It is commonly accepted among scientists that modern power literature goes back to the 16th century when Machiavelli published “The Prince” (Bejan, 2010). Only twenty years later Thomas Hobbes published his renowned book “Leviathan”. These two authors started the first discussion in power literature, one that would continue for many years. On the one hand Machiavelli focused on strategies while Hobbes centred his book on notions. Arguably, Machiavelli’s focus point was the question *what does power do* while Hobbes tried to figure out what power actually is (Bejan, 2010; Clegg, 1989; Machiavelli, 2005). Given this, Machiavelli was in many ways a militarist while Hobbes was an early modernist, always looking to the answer to the question “what is power?” and with a strict sense of order. Modernists were not interested in what power does and how power could be used effectively for one’s own goals (Clegg, 1989; Giddens, 1990).

This chapter will continue with scholars inspired by the school of Hobbes since the “what is power” question is more relevant, particularly considering that Machiavelli focused largely on matters of military power. Hobbes’ book led to philosophical and sociological discussions on what power is and how it is executed. Machiavelli’s book is more practical hand guide on how to gain power, how to execute and how to maintain it. Although interesting, it is of lesser relevance for this thesis. Clegg (1989) states that Hobbes way of thinking led to modern power literature in which power is initiated by human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators. Various modern scholars use mathematic equations to specify the level of power or influence, for example Becker (1983) and Arts (1998).

Hobbes’ book led to several major discussions within sociology, discussions that are still held by scientists today: Is power distributed among many or held by an elite? Is power intentional or not intentional? Is power confined to decision making or is it evident in non-decision making? Is power constant over time? (Clegg, 1989) Before the end of this theoretical framework these questions will be answered.

The answer to the question: “Is power distributed among many or held by an elite” requires a brief overview of the elitist and pluralist theories. The publication C. Wright Mills’ book “The Power Elite” can be seen as the start of modern elitist theory (Clegg, 1989). This theory states that power in society is distributed among a small ruling elite (Wright Mills, 1956). Although the elite has changed from kings, dukes and monks to presidents, CEOs and bankers it is still omnipresent (Bottomore, 1993). But is it really? Dahl (1961) is a well-known supporter and one of the founders of the pluralist theory. In his book “Who Governs?”, he claims that power is not held by an elite, as was thought before, but by a very large group. This publication received much critique; many scientists argued that his findings were case-specific (Clegg, 1989). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) observed that where one group of scientists concluded that power was largely diffused in their cases and others assumed that it was extremely centralized, this difference would not be due to a case specific difference, but rather to predetermination in the research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Under the approach of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the researcher should neither begin by asking “who rules?”, as the elitist does, nor by enquiring “does anyone have power?”, as the pluralist does, since these questions already determine the outcome.

The next big contribution to the power debate was by Steven Lukes. Lukes’ influential book “Power: a Radical View” (1974) can help answer many of the remaining questions above, including: “is power intentional or non-intentional?” and “is power confined to decision making or

is it evident in non-decision making?” The book divides power into three different dimensions: In the first dimension the exercise of power occurs in observable overt conflicts between actors of key issues; in the second the exercise of power occurs in observable overt or covert conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues and in the third the power is exercised to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist. (Clegg, 1989; Connell and Smith, 2006)

The first dimension is the one Robert Dahl (1957, p. 203) used: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. This is a very clear and obvious form of power. A good example is a police officer that commands people to turn right; all people will follow his orders even though they would not have done so when it was not told to them by this police officer. Betsill and Corell (2008 p.24) state: “influence occurs when one actor intentionally communicates to another so as to alter the latter’s behaviour from what would have occurred otherwise.” Banfield (2009) adds: “What is A’s ability to achieve the intended result? And what is his ability to achieve it without incurring disadvantages (“costs”) which he regards as equal or greater than the advantage of the result.” This essentially comes down to: the more power A has the more abilities it has to influence the behaviour of B without negative consequences.

Lukes states that this definition of power is blind; it does not see all the less obvious ways in which one can influence another actor. To put it in a political perspective, it does not show the various and less obvious ways in which a political agenda can be controlled in a political system (Lukes, 1974; Clegg, 1989). To overcome this weakness, the first dimension is supplemented with a second dimension, which Lukes characterizes as the exercise of power that occurs in observable open or hidden conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues. This implies that one should not only look at what is done and which decisions are made, but also at what is not done and which decisions are not taken. The fact that a specific item never reaches the political agenda, or that a decision taken about something is never taken, can be the influence of one of the actors. This all goes beyond the visible and obvious exercise of power characteristics of the first dimension. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz previously introduced this as “the second face of power”: the not taken decisions. They discovered that, hidden from the public, an elite influences agenda-setting and in this way exerts its power on society (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962)

So far we have two dimensions, or the two faces of power. One open and obvious that is observable, and one that is hidden and which might also be called “non-decision making”, where conflicts are suppressed and it is prevented that a decision will be taken (Connell and Smith, 2006). Where Bachrach and Baratz (1962) stop with two dimensions or faces of power, Lukes (1974) was still not content, he felt that there were still some aspects of power not brought to light. Therefore he introduced a third dimension of power, characterized by the idea of a hidden conflict that affects interests. Latent conflict exists when there would be a conflict of wants or preferences between those exercising and those subject to power if the latter were to become aware of their interests. This is the power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist.

Linking these three dimensions, Lukes defines the underlying concept of power as: “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests” (Lukes, 1974, p. 27) The interesting aspect of this definition lies in the “contrary to B’s interests,” which is rather clear in the first dimension when the outcome of B is decided completely by A, and in the second dimension when B’s interest is never uttered, never placed on the agenda. In the third dimension, however, it is not clear that someone has gained or someone lost; this kind of power may be exercised even if B does not feel it.

The question: “is power constant over time?” can be answered rather easily. No one king stays in power over time and only a few presidents reign longer than eight years. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) are the first that state that power is not constant over time: it comes, fluctuates and finally diminishes.

“Does one need to exercise power to have power?” is a question that continues to divide scholars. The differences between Dahl (1957, p. 203) and Druckman and Rozelle (in: Tedeschi, 2008) are a clear illustration. As mentioned above Dahl (1957) defines power as: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. Druckman and Rozelle, on the other hand use the concept of “resources”, and in which way these can influence decision makers. They define power as following (quoted from Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3): “Power as control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others”. The difference between the two definitions can be explained by the emphasis of exercising power or influence on the one hand (Dahl) and on the other an emphasis on having power. This difference is called the episodic versus dispositional concept of power (Clegg, 1989) The dispositional school claims that one can be powerful without actually exercising power. A clear example is a nation-state that is powerful in the region because it has a substantial army, not because it uses it (Tedeschi, 2008). In this line of reasoning it can be said that those that hold political power are generally accepted by all other political actors, such as a part of the voters in a democracy. In politics this will mean that they are in control of relevant offices, resources and decision-making apparatus.

For the supporters of the episodic school, however, it is impossible to assess the capability of a player if that capability is not applied. One cannot count and add up a player’s power as if it were money and subsequently forecast outcomes. There is no one-to-one relation found between the resources an actor has and the outcomes it achieves. “A concept of power without the notion of influence is therefore misleading” (Arts, 1998, p.57).

Power is not only a topic in the power literature, research on power is also done in the regime and institutional literature. The power of actors on the development and effectiveness of regimes is studied by scholars (Mitchell, 2003). Mitchell (2003) for example recognizes the role of the interests of states and the efforts of individuals and groups to influence the outcome of International Environmental Agreements (IEAs).

2.2 The Concept of Influence

Now that it is clear what power is and what it does, it is time to introduce the most important concept of this thesis: influence.

The difference between power and influence can briefly be explained as follows. Power is “control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others” (Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3). On the other hand “Influence means the modification of one actor’s behaviour by that of another” (Arts, 1998 p. 57). This extended definition forms an underlying principle for this thesis, and hereunder the concept of influence will be further developed.

Arts (1998, p. 57) also adds the following to the definition of influence given above:

“Influence is to be distinguished from power. Power means capability; it is the aggregate of political resources that are available to an actor. (...) Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent.”

To complete this list of definitions used in this thesis the final difference between political power and political influence will also be given by Arts (1998, p 58):

“Political power refers to a more or less permanent ability to influence policy outcomes, whereas political influence refers to an episodic effect on decision-making”.

Influence can be organized in the same way as power in the previous chapter, using the three dimensions of power. First the openly executed influence between actors. This focuses on the behaviour of actors in decision-making, mainly on key situations. The execution of influence is

often observable: policy preferences are demonstrated through political actions (Lukes, 1974 p. 15)

The two dimensional view of power focuses on decision-making and non-decision-making. This second dimension looks at current and potential issues, both overt and covert. The emphasis in this dimension still are the policy preferences of the actors (Lukes, 1974).

In the three dimensional view of power the two dimensional view of power is expanded with latent conflicts. It also recognizes next to the subjective interests like policy preferences the “real” interests of actors outside the decision-making process (Lukes, 1974).

Giddens (1990) claims that actors are constrained to act, and thereby influence, within given rules and with the existing division of resources. This means they cannot just do what they like and use all resources they want: their political influence is restricted, they have to behave according the rules of the game and according the distribution of resources (Arts, 1998). This distribution of resources in the practice means that actors have only restricted money, supporters, logistics etc. to influence decision-making. This means that they have to use their resources wisely and within the rules of the game.

All actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave. An actor can be part of the political discussion and can join all meetings or one might be excluded from all formal meetings. Rules of the game can be transparent for all actors, but can also be non-transparent, meaning that not all players know what the rules are (Larson, 2010). Rules of the game can be altered by (a group of) players with sufficient power: the rules of the game change over time, with changing society and changing actors. In some cases a single actor can even change the rules of the game, this is normally a governmental player (Boix, 1999; Larson, 2010). Hence rules of the game are the institutional environment that determines what strategy an actor can use and what resources it will use to achieve its policy goals (Williamson, 2010). “Institutions in this context are a set of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that define social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices and guide interaction among the occupants of individual roles. Structures of property rights, electoral systems, and practices relating to marriage and the family are all examples of institutions in this sense. Institutions in this sense must not be confused with organizations construed as material entities with employees, offices, equipment, budgets, and (often) legal personality” (Young, 2002 p. 5).

2.3 Political Arena and Policy Network

Political actors can meet in two different settings, in a political arena or in a policy network. Political arena is a commonly used metaphor in political science, it refers to the battlefield of ancient gladiators, where all the actors compete and try to win while they are restricted by certain rules. The political struggle is quite similar. The political players meet to make a decision or to develop specific policy. The players focus on specific outcomes in the form of a decision or policy. Another similarity is that all players try to win which comes down to influencing the policy or decision to such an extent that their policy goals are met best. The fourth and final similarity is that all actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave etc. (Arts, 1998). A political arena can be defined as follows (Arts, 1998, p. 55): “[...] a formal meeting places of political players who struggle, debate, negotiate, and decide on policy issues and in doing so, are bound to given rules (although these might be changed by players as well).”

In recent times the term policy network gained recognition. Börzel (1998 p. 254) has the following definition: “a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-

operation is the best way to achieve common goals". It has to be stressed that most definitions are controversial, and so an alternative definition will be given from Arts (1998, p.56): "a more or less stable social system in which mutually dependent public and private players address policy issues and programmes". Börzel (1998) states that several scientists consider policy networks as a simple metaphor to indicate that policymaking is done by a large number of different actors all with different roles and stakes. While Börzel (1998) recognizes many forms of policy networks, for this thesis the form of policy network that seems to be most appropriate is a policy network as a form of governance. Several types of governance in and by networks can be distinguished (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). These refer to networks of public and of private organizations, and of mixes of these two. Networks of public policy organizations, the one that seems relevant for this thesis, have been considered to be the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p 148). The typical mode of interaction between the actors is through negotiations (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004).

According to the definition of Kenis and Schneider (1991 p. 36) policy networks are "webs of relatively stable and on-going relationships which mobilize and pool dispersed resources so that the collective (or parallel) actions can be orchestrated towards the solution of a common policy". This means that a policy network includes all actors involved in the policy making process. They are mainly characterized by informal interactions between public and private actors with distinctive but interdependent interests, who strive to solve problems of collective action on a central, non-hierarchical level (Börzel, 1998). This implies that there is no longer a central role for the government, where the government has a hierarchical power over other players. This fits well in the on-going debate surrounding the existence of a key role of governmental institutions (Segebart, 2008).

2.4 Policy and the Policy Cycle

A well-known concept in policy studies is to simplify the policy-making process in a series of stages: the policy cycle (Crabbé and Leroy, 2008). Generally the stages are: agenda-setting, policy making, the forming of opinions, policy implementation and the stage that consists of autonomous developments and policy outcomes. From this stage, the cycle starts anew by the setting of a new agenda, as can be seen in figure 2. All of this is of importance for this thesis, but some important processes are not recognized in this cycle, or at least not made explicit. First the stage of issue-framing, that refers to how the issue is conceptualized before, during and after the negotiation process. A frame is "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment" (Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 33). By framing (or re-framing) environmental problems, NGOs can highlight particular aspects of a problem such as the driving causes or who has the responsibility to act, thereby establishing the boundaries in which others have to respond (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Issue framing may occur before negotiations or during the negotiation-process, which means an issue can be re-framed. Agenda setting is recognized in the policy cycle but influencing key-actors is not explicitly included. Many groups try to influence the main actors during the negotiation-process. NGOs among others use this as a strategy to achieve their policy-goals (Betsill and Corell, 2008). The next section introduces the main actor of this thesis.

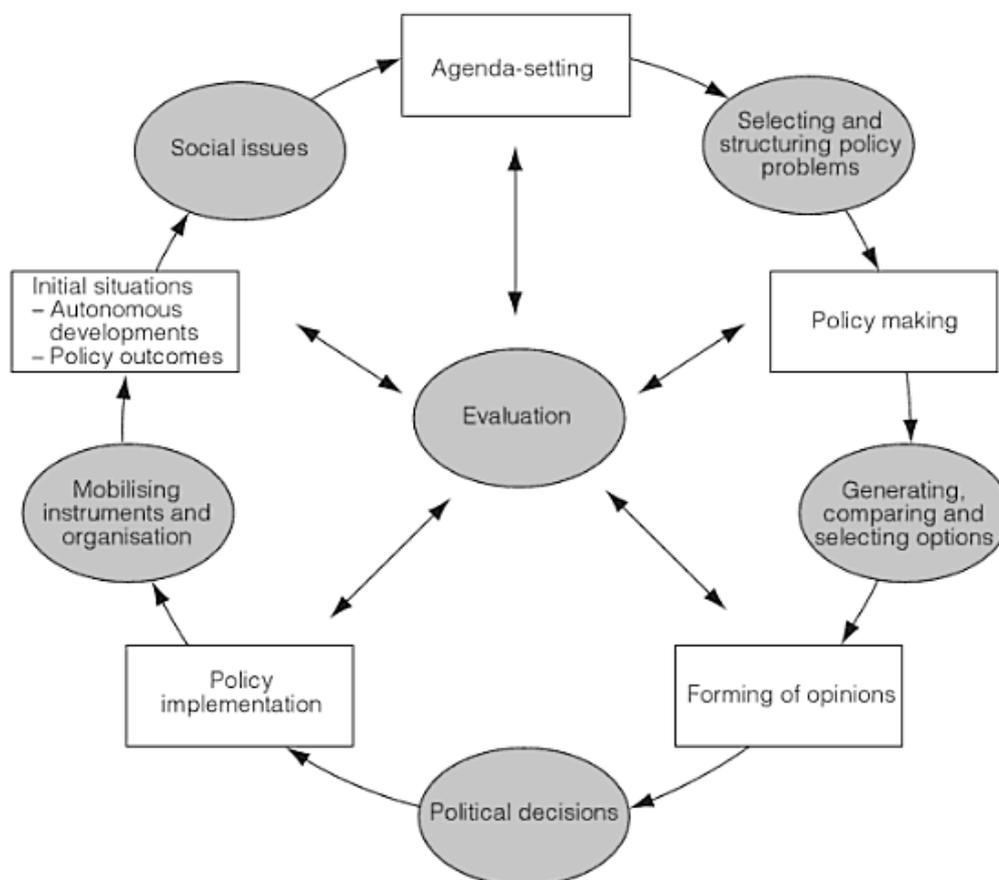


Figure 3: The policy cycle From Crabbé and Leroy (2008 p.3)

2.5 NGOs, ENGOs and Social movements

With power and influence defined, the next big concept for this thesis is that of NGOs. Many scholars recognize the NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, as one of the most important political players these days. The practical definition of an NGO, however, is intensely disputed. (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). Many definitions of NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) exist; every case might even need its own tailor-made definition, including and excluding desired groups. This spectrum of definitions ranges from almost including every group to almost excluding all : some authors argue that even soccer-clubs might fall under the umbrella of NGOs (Kidd et al., 2010; Arts, 1998). Arts (1998) on the other hand uses an extended definition of NGO, or in his case, global NGO: “[...] a global NGO is defined as a promotional pressure group which seeks to influence political decision-making on certain issues at global level. In the case of the UNFCCC and CBD we deal with welfare, communal and issue-specific organizations (respectively development, indigenous, environmental and conservation groups)”.

The definition of NGO used in this study has mostly been drawn from Arts’ definition of global NGOs given above, since it mainly focuses on the political role of NGOs where other definitions focus on the role of NGOs in society. In order to filter relevant NGOs without excluding other potential groups, the following definition, adapted from Arts (1998), is most suitable: “a NGO can be defined as a pressure group that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making.” NGOs fitting the latter definition can basically be divided in two groups: protest groups and pressure groups. Protest groups are groups that are outside the political arena and try to change policy by demonstration, contest and sometimes violence. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are in the political arena and try to change policy from within. This latter group can be divided further: in advocacy and lobby groups. Advocacy groups act as advocates for their cause mainly in

official events. Lobby groups try to influence individual policy- and decision-makers in an informal way (Arts, 1998). It is not clear whether groups inside the political arena are more effective than groups outside. Insiders have more and better access to decision-makers but they have to act responsibly and may lose their independence. Kidd et al. (2010) states that it is probable, however that many outsiders groups want to become part of the 'inside' groups.

In modern governance theory another split between NGOs is made, Visseren-Hamakers (2009) for example makes the difference between campaigning and collaborative NGOs, the first group represents pure conservation NGOs. One could think of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth. The second group consists of NGOs that create partnerships for example the World Wildlife Fund. Also Van Huijstee (2010) and Humphreys (2006) recognize two groups of NGOs, in this thesis they will be divided in "campaigning NGOs" and "collaborative NGOs".

Closely related to NGOs but crucially different are social movements. Contrary to NGOs, social movements normally have no strict hierarchy. These groups consist of like-minded people who seek to influence policy-making on a narrow range of issues. Although seeking to influence policy and policy-makers, they are not interested in becoming policy makers (Kidd et al., 2010). When using the definition above, however, social movements might also be classified as NGOs .

Social movements and NGOs can also be divided into sectional and promotional pressure groups. Sectional groups protect the interests of their members, such as labour unions, or a group of indigenous people that fight for protection of their lands. Promotional groups exist to promote a cause they believe is neglected by the government, for example Greenpeace and Amnesty International (Kidd et. al., 2010). These examples show that sectional groups often tend towards social movements while promotional groups lean towards NGOs.

So how important are NGOs and social movements in political decision making on environmental matters? While the pluralists' perception that pressure groups and social movements play a vital role in the political decision making is true to form, it is also recognized by many that better environmental outcomes are achieved when NGOs and social movements are involved in decision-making (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). All those groups with environmental focus normally are called ENGOS (Betsill and Corell, 2001). From now on, since principally NGOs with environmental goals are studied the term ENGO will be used: ENGOS can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seek to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts.

2.6 ENGO influence on environmental negotiations

Most scientific literature has focused on the power of states, and what factors might explain the power of these states (Kidd et al., 2010). Military, economic and political are the most important resources states have to execute power (Kidd et al., 2010). Nowadays it is recognized that not only states have power, and non-state actors can also shape governmental outcomes. Like states, NGOs have access to a range of resources that can give them influence. While NGOs do not have military power, some of them do have significant economic resources; these are mostly NGOs in the private sector, but some are environmental NGOs like Greenpeace and WWF. Rather than economic and military resources, the most important resources for NGOs are commonly recognized as knowledge and information. This specialized knowledge and information is used to influence governmental decision-makers (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the relationship between power (capabilities) and influence is not direct. The question is how to translate the capabilities into influence (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Holsti (1988) distinguishes six strategies that states can use to exercise influence: persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and the use of force. Betsill and Corell (2008) translate these to NGOs and they conclude that persuasion is the most used among NGOs. NGOs spend a large amount of time trying to influence decision-makers. The use of force, often used by states, is not a possible option for NGOs (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Power in relation to International Environmental Agreements is already discussed briefly in 2.1. Also the role of NGOs is underwritten in this regime theory. NGOs for example provide information, conduct research, and propose and evaluate policies, actions that introduce both ideas and political pressure into negotiations (Mitchell, 2003).

Arts (1998) divides the explanatory factors of political influence into three levels: the arena level, level of the outcome and the context level, which is a quite detailed division (see 2.8). Instead, Betsill and Corell (2008) make another division by identifying firstly the participation in negotiations and secondly the effect on the behaviour of other actors.

Betsill and Corell (2008, p.189) identified eight most often mentioned factors that could explain the political influence of NGOs through comparisons between different negotiation cases. It has to be said that their study mainly focuses on Environmental NGOs and that it is just the top of the iceberg of factors that could influence NGO influence, but it gives a good overview on the influence of Environmental NGOs especially when it comes down to forest related cases. The factors most often mentioned by key-informants in the research of Betsill and Corell are explained below (2008).

Several experts state that *NGO coordination* between like-minded enhances the influence on negotiations: they speak with one joined and therefore stronger voice. However in the cases researched by Betsill and Corell (2008) and Arts (2001, in: Betsill and Corell 2008) NGO coordination has only a neutral effect. They claim that NGOs have achieved all levels of influence whether they did or did not coordinate, so an NGO can have large influence without coordinating its actions. Coordinating NGO strategies seems hard: even among NGOs with common interests, a consensus between a large NGO with many resources and a small NGO focussing on the situation on the ground is hard to reach (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

There are no set *rules of access* governing NGO participation in international environmental negotiation (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Habitually NGO access is created ad hoc in international negotiations, and therefore it varies greatly, making it easier to study. Repeatedly it is assumed that more restricted access leads to lesser influence. Betsill and Corell (2008) showed that this relation is more complex. They claim that when NGOs are actively invited and stimulated to participate, their influence grows; in these cases NGOs were seen as important partners to achieve a common goal. On the other hand when states restrict NGO access, NGOs frequently overcome: they changed strategies and therefore less access did not constrain NGOs to influence the negotiations. This is remarkable when one notices the amount of energy and time NGOs dedicate to get a more open access to decision-making processes. They believe that more access leads to more influence but it is shown that this is not necessarily the case. The key to success lies in convincing states and decision-makers that NGOs can be an effective partner in making better decisions or implementing these, then states will actively facilitate NGOs to participate and that will lead to an increased influence. Christensen (2006) states that with soft-law real rules of access often do not exist, it is not made explicit who can and who cannot join the decision-making process, however in some certification schemes this is very well defined (Yale Program on Forest Policy and Governance, 2008).

The cases of Betsill and Corell (2008) hint that there is a relation between the *stage of negotiation* and the influence of NGOs. Two different stages can be distinguished. The first one being a formulation phase “where participants agree upon a framework for the negotiations” and a detail phase “where they bargain over the specifics of the final text” (Betsill and Corell, 2008, p.193). NGOs are seen to have more influence in the earlier stage than in the detail phase where governments are trying to solve core issues, when the tone of the negotiations is much harder. Betsill and Corell (2008) argues that the later stages are more heavily politicized, which may lead to less people to decide on the core issues (Betsill and Corell, 2008). They claim that the peak of NGO influence lies in the agenda-setting phase, the phase before the actual negotiation. NGOs co-decide what will and what will not be discussed: they identify problems and call upon states to act. This does not mean that NGOs do not have influence in the real decision but their greatest

effect is on agenda-setting, particularly when agenda-setting is defined as an on-going process rather than a distinct stage of policy making that ends once negotiation begins (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Political stakes are seen as a major factor shaping political influence. When the negotiations are in an early stage and the aims are still vague NGOs can influence the decision making to a larger extent than when the stakes are higher. Initial agreements where general principles are articulated, new organizations and decision-making processes are established can relatively easily be influenced by NGOs, as these do not require fundamental behavioural change from the government. When an NGO tries to bind a governmental body to specific commitments the stakes are higher. However, when governments have (positive) experiences working with NGOs they tend more often to work with them when there are higher stakes (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

If there is *institutional overlap*, and NGOs do not have the possibility to influence the negotiations directly, they can influence negotiations indirectly by influencing related institutions, if they. The overlap between the WTO and international trade regimes, for example, restrains the influence of Environmental NGOs while enlarging the influence of NGOs representing business/industry (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Competition from other NGOs can make it more difficult to influence negotiations since NGOs will be speaking with a diffuse voice, or all NGOs might be competing for the same financial funds or want different outcomes of the negotiation. However, NGO influence is not necessarily constrained when there is competition from other NGOs (NGO influence is not a zero-sum game) (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

When an NGO forms strong *alliances with key governmental bodies* their influence increases greatly (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Yanacolpulos, 2005). NGOs can shape the position of a state, either directly or through the public opinion and media. NGO influence increases when proposals are written that resonate the interests of the government, creating a sound basis for cooperation. NGOs and governments can both be working together and working against each other, there is no generalization possible and it has to be determined case to case.

The last mentioned factor that determines political influence is the *level of contention*. This often comes down to NGOs having more influence if there are no economic interests at stake. This factor is really relevant for this study since the potential oil revenues are a large economic interest. Short-term costs and revenues have higher priority than long term costs and benefits, and if NGOs manage to frame their claims consistently, their influence increases (Betsill and Corell, 2008). There may also be contention over sovereignty of states or lands of indigenous people. Protecting indigenous people can be threatening to states, but still NGOs often succeed (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Next to these factors, many others are mentioned by other articles. However, they are not the most relevant for this thesis and will only be mentioned shortly. From the work of Widener (2009-1) an extra factor can be added: *scale of operation*. Some NGOs work on a higher scale and want to influence other things than NGOs that work on a lower scale. The first group might want to influence international policy while the second group focuses on the situation on the ground.

Financial capabilities of a NGO play a large role in their effectiveness. The more financial funds a NGOs has, the more effective it can work, and therefore the more influence it has (Silva, 1997).

Related are the *organisational capabilities* of NGOs, the better it is organised the more influence it can execute (Silva, 1997).

A factor that most influences the effectiveness of the influence is the *availability of expertise*. With more expertise an organization has better knowledge of what to do and how to do it. This has positive influence on the effectiveness and the amount of power since others might act upon the NGO (Silva, 1997).

There is one final group of factors that must be mentioned, but that are very different from the other factors: *contextual factors*. These factors are not controlled by any player within a political arena and might enable some actors' influence while at the same time restricting the influence of other actors.

With all the theory of this thesis introduced it is now the place to conceptualize the theory. To conceptualize the theory, a definition of political influence is needed for this thesis. Political influence is chosen since it implies executed power on chosen topics. Since the focus of this thesis closely relates to Arts book “The Political Influence of Global NGOs” (1998) his definition of political influence concerning global NGOs will be given (Arts, 1998, p.58): ... *political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to an outcome in treaty formation and implementation, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned.*” This definition can be largely used, with a minor adaptation, to define political influence in this thesis.

Arts adds that it is possible to rewrite this definition in terms of the so-called counterfactual. Then political influence implies that the policy outcomes are more in line with the desired outcomes of an actor than it would have been if he had not intervened. To put it more simple and general, the player did matter and did make a difference. Arts (1998 p. 59) adds something that is very important for this specific case: “it should be stressed that the achievement of one’s goal might not only cover the realization of a desired outcome, but the prevention of an undesired one as well”.

In this thesis political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned

In Arts (1998, p. 60) the selective nature of agenda-setting is accepted at the theoretical level, but barely covered by the empirical research. In this thesis a different approach is chosen, since the most important possible achievement of the NGOs might be influencing the agenda setting and issue framing (Kidd et. al., 2010; Connelly and Smith, 2006; Betsill and Corell 2001). The political arena perspective will be used in this thesis since it recognizes the central role of the government. The main focus of this thesis is the influence of NGOs on the government, both intentional and un-intentional. The question if power is intentional or non-intentional is not very relevant for this study which focuses on NGO power. One can claim that all power is intentional since all organisations have their own policy goals they want to achieve, and are therefore intentionally exercising power. On the other hand NGOs have a lot of unintentional power, it can be seen as influence as a side effect, it might change the political climate or discussion unintentionally. Unintentional influence also includes negative influence in the way that this influence will make it harder to achieve its policy goals. Nevertheless a large (and the most important) part of the influence is intentional, since it is focussed on specific actors to achieve policy-goals. (Clegg, 1989).

In this thesis a whole range of different NGOs is trying to influence the outcome in Yasuní. Therefore it is hard to know which groups to include and which to exclude. In Ecuador NGOs have emerged over the last twenty years as leading actors in development. Their numbers rose greatly as did the variety in types of NGOs. Their role in policy making and grass roots organizing also became more fundamental with the retreat of the state. Now NGOs are looking for ways to find new forms of collaboration with the government. At this time NGOs can be seen as one of the most important links between grassroots and the government (Keese and Argudo, 2006).

For this thesis, groups that fit the definition of NGO from the theoretical framework are included:

“ENGOs can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts”

Social movements fit this definition and are therefore included under the caller of NGO although it is recognized that they are essentially different from NGOs. In Yasuní they have the same objectives and work more or less in the same way. Not all NGOs have the same objectives in

Yasuní, they can roughly be divided in three groups. The first group is made up by organisations in favour of oil exploitation: the money gained by the oil exploitation is needed in Ecuador. This group is called *extractivistas* (those in favour of oil extraction). The second group wants to keep the oil under the ground, the so-called *ecologistas*. This group consists of people that consider the social impacts on the indigenous people in Yasuní too large and of groups that want to conserve the unique biodiversity. In reality most groups share both reasons, some have more environmental focus and others a more social focus.

The third group consists of groups that are divided; the so-called *ambientalistas*, and normally the consensus of these groups is exploitation with minimum impact. A lot of NGOs and Social movements fall under this group.

Since the *extractivistas* do not have a lot of support among Ecuadorian NGOs, and the fact that this thesis focuses on Environmental NGOs; *extractivistas* NGOs will not be studied in this thesis, it solely focuses on the *ecologistas* and *ambientalistas* NGOs, as these groups have environmental objectives, the one rather radical the other more mild. To make this clear in the rest of the study these two groups will be called ENGOS: Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations.

2.7 The conceptual model

The conceptual model presented is in line with a political arena rather than with a policy network. A disadvantage of the political arena is that it gives the impression that players, roles, rules and outcomes are fixed, however in reality these factors are to a large extent fluid. The policy network theory recognizes this, but also questions the central role of governmental bodies (Arts, 1998; Börzel, 1998 and Segebart, 2008). In this case the government can still be seen as the central player, making the political arena is the better alternative for this thesis.

This study focuses on the influence of ENGOS on the government and not on all kinds of mutual relations between the government, ENGOS and other players. It also must be stressed that although some problems in Yasuní might have been privatized in the past, for example the government retreat from negotiations between Indigenous movements and oil companies in the past, but at this moment the state is the unquestioned central player. Therefore the political arena is more suitable since it makes the government the central player and leaves enough room to study the influence of the other players including ENGOS on the government and therefore on the policy.

The theoretical model underneath (figure 4) is based on ENGO influence on Climate and Biodiversity Conventions (Arts, 1998, p. 71). This model fits in the pluralist view on power and influence: many actors co-decide and have influence.

The upper part of the model consists of external events and trends, a major factor influencing negotiations. A shift of or within the government, changed economic circumstances or a shift in the environment (local, national or global) can completely change the discussion.

Instead of an international focus as in Arts (1998), this thesis focuses at three different levels, the regional, national and international level. On all three levels are actors trying to influence the outcome. These levels are not strictly divided. A group that mostly focuses on the regional situation might seek international attention for its cause. The same can be said for international NGOs that participate in the global discussion, they might also work in small communities in Yasuní. It has to be said that although the problem takes place in three different levels the national level is the most important, and therefore has the most attention in this thesis. This is because the regional level mainly focuses on the execution of the nationally designed policy and that on the international level the ENGO actors have a lesser voice.

It is recognized that the group *others* is rather broad, and consists of many groups. However in this thesis all these groups are lumped together to get a clearer insight in the role of ENGOS: the main actors of this thesis. This choice might have influenced the research outcomes since this thesis solely focuses on the role of ENGOS. The influence of NGOs that, for example, aim at oil extraction is not investigated.

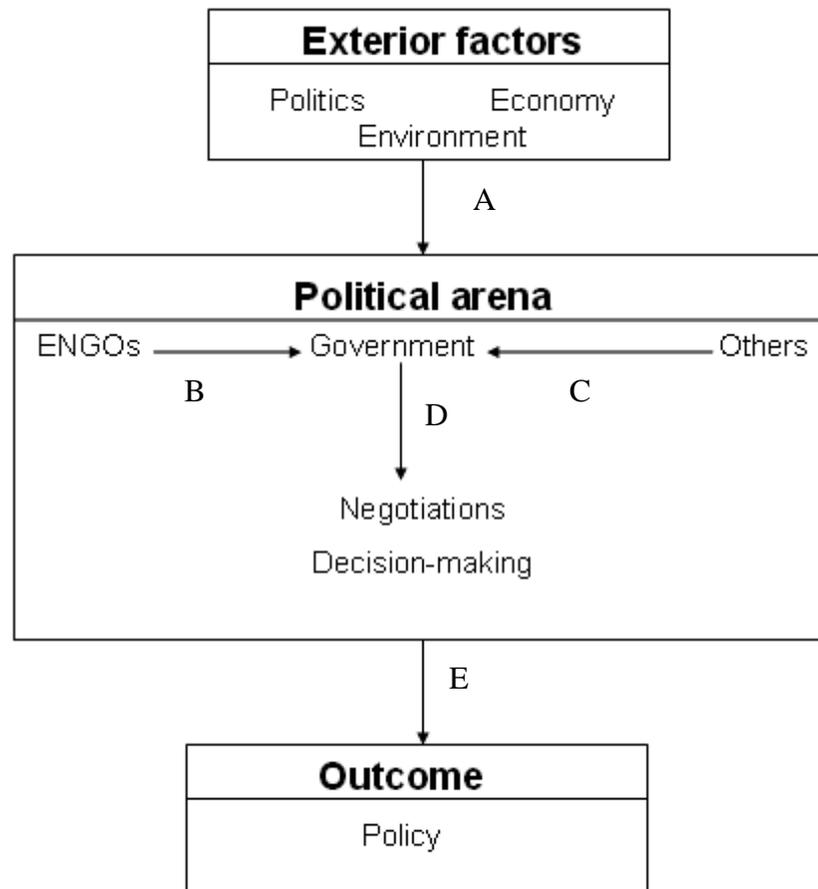


Figure 4: Main issues concerning decision-making in a political arena with NGOs (based on Arts, 1998 p.71)

Arrow (A): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors can be political, economic, environmental; and they may not be fixed, what constrains one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis etc.

Arrow (B): political influence. This is the political influence of ENGOs on the government, this includes agenda-setting and issue framing. This is the main focus of the research.

Arrow (C): political influence. This is the political influence of other actors on the government, in this thesis this group mainly consists of oil companies and their affiliates like *extractivistas* NGOs. It has to be stressed that arrow (B) and (C) are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “ENGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given the formal status and position a government has. In reality, however governments do influence other players and ENGOs, but it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (D): engage in. All actors including the government engage in negotiations and decision-making. The government is the leading actor and can determine the outcomes the most. The outcome depends largely on the nature of the negotiations, and on the nature of the actors involved.

Arrow (E): leads to. The policy processes lead to outcomes in this case: policy.

In this model ENGOs can impact policy outcomes in principle, but are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors. This thesis focuses on the national level while the

international and local levels are recognized, whereas Arts' (1998) model focuses solely on the international level.

Apart from this, two other large differences exist between Arts' model and the one used in this thesis. The upper part of Arts' model consists of the international system, which in turn consists of "events and trends", and a part called "structure". Structure is divided in the distribution of resources, regimes and the rules of the game. Leaving out this structure increases the explanatory power of the central part of this model while at the same time simplifying it. Now the focus is more on the political arena, and everything influencing this arena is regarded as a given trend or event: something that changes the political arena and therefore the terms for negotiations. The other large difference between this model and that of Arts is that there is no feedback between the outcomes of the negotiation and the events and trends. Since the contextual factors are regarded as given circumstances, and this thesis is a short term research, it goes too far to for this thesis to assume that the policy influences these events and trends. The events and trends in this case are highly unpredictable. Giving the model a feedback loop might suggest that they are predictable.

To give some more context to the two research questions they will be placed in figure 4. Question 1 verifies if arrow B does exist and how large it is, in other words: how influential are ENGOs. Question 2 tries to explain arrow B: what factors can explain the influence of ENGOs. The research questions are repeated hereunder.

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology for data collection and data analysis will be presented.

3.1 Assessing the Extent of Political Influence of NGOs

This chapter will present the methodology used to answer research question 1. During the fieldwork it became apparent that the method chosen to analyse the data from the interviews was not applicable in this thesis. Therefore the data will be studied in another way than was intended. The methodology chosen beforehand will be introduced first in this chapter. Then the weaknesses experienced during the fieldwork will be discussed and finally the adapted methodology will be introduced

3.1.1 Original methodology

The normal procedure of comparing cases with and without NGO influence is not applicable since all three investigated cases are unique (Finer et al., 2009; Arts, 1998; Yin, 1994). So when the commonly used comparative case analysis is not applicable, what method is most appropriate? In modern political literature three different methods to assess political influence can be distinguished: the reputation, position and decision-making methods (Arts, 1998).

The reputation method connects power with reputation, it states that what counts in social relations is the mutual perception of power. In other words: if one is regarded influential by others he will be treated as such. The same is true for the opposite, if one is regarded powerless (Arts, 1998). Using opinions of selected key figures one assesses the influence of several actors in a given community (Peters, 1999). A major weakness is the subjectivity of this study; it is completely based on the opinion of others, and it does not say much about the factual influence of an actor. An advantage is the easy way in which one can collect data. Simply by getting the reputation of having influence it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, only the reputation is enough to enhance one's influence (Peters, 1999).

The position method assumes that political influence is based on the position taken by the actors, this position directly influences access to authorities, information and other resources. The closer one is to the authorities and the more information and resources one has, the stronger one's influence is. Using this method, a kind of hierarchy can be designed to rank all actors. For example a president has more influence than a minister, who has more influence than a lobbyist and so forth (Arts, 1998). The position method has a high reliability since it is easy for organisations to pinpoint the crucial, and therefore influential, positions. The major critique on this method is that it easily assesses one's position but not the influence one executes (Peters, 1999). It is easily argued that all majors have a different level of influence while they all have the same positions, so there have to be more factors. Another critique is that it does not discriminate between different issues and political arena since respondents are only asked to assess the power of actors in general. (Arts, 1998)

These two commonly used methods are designed to analyse actors' political influence, but they do not automatically say something about who really influences a political decision (Peters, 1999; Arts, 1998). While position can certainly affect political influence it does not necessarily say much about the control of outcomes. A valid argument for this is that not all members control the outcomes of decision to the same extent, even though they have formally the same position; this differs from case to case.

Incorporating the weaknesses of the latter two methods, the decision-making method aims at analysing decision in specific issue-areas in order to reconstruct the contribution of players to the

final outcome. It assesses to what extent the actors' interventions were successful in the decision making process. This assessment is used to reconstruct the relative influence of each actor. Because key issues and key decisions are studied, the influence of political players is considered to be politically relevant (Arts, 1998; Peters, 1999). Data is generally collected by interviews with actors and decision makers and the analysis of policy documents, interviews with more objective specialists can also be used. However, the decision-making method is also criticized, mainly by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who pinpoint that agenda setting is also influence. Another kind of critique is that one can achieve policy goals without exercising influence: it is hard to separate the extent to which one has achieved one's goal and the influence one had on that outcome (Peters, 1999).

The methods described above all have their advantages and disadvantages, and since every case needs another method, in the practice these three methods are often mixed by picking and combining relevant elements. Originally, a variation on the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal analysis, in short EAC Method, was used for this thesis. This qualitative method combines the three modern methods of analysing political influence. The methodology concerning the EAC Method is developed by Arts (1998). In his book Arts also assesses political influence of ENGOs in a rather complex political arena: the climate and biodiversity conventions. With several adaptations this methodology can be used for this study. A strong point of this methodology is that it studies the same political influence from three completely different angles, which seriously reduces the change of inaccuracies. However in Bas Arts (1998) and this thesis it is not so clear who achieved what specific result in the designed policy.

The EAC methodology works as follows.

Ego-perception

In this qualitative technique a number of selected key respondents of NGOs are asked to assess their own influence on the governmental decisions regarding oil production in Yasuní. Then they will get the opportunity to elaborate on their examples of NGO influence. These interviews will create a list of so-called *ego-perceptions*. Both the quality and quantity of these ENGO claims are taken into account in the assessment (Arts, 1998). These interviews will be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline, in this thesis table 3.

Alter-perception

After selecting a group of key respondents representing government the respondents will assess the political influence of ENGOs active in Yasuní. These result in a list representing alter-perception. Again, both the quality and quantity of these claims on NGO influence are taken into account in the assessment. For this part, other players assess both the reputation of NGOs and the factual achievement of their policy goals (Arts, 1998).

These outcomes can confirm, reject or add to the claims of the NGOs. This is the first control on the claims made by the key informants of the NGOs (Arts, 1998). These interviews in which ENGO influence will be assessed will also be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline.

Causal analysis

Finally, the NGO influence will be subjected to a second control of the NGO claims, the so-called causal analysis. This is done to verify if ENGOs really did influence the policy in the way they claim.

Causal analysis is structured in the following way: First it is checked if an NGO achieved their goals regarding policy, and to what extent. The achievement of these goals is divided in two groups: enhancing a desired 'good' or preventing an undesired 'bad'. The Causal analysis helps to judge the political influence of NGOs. For this thesis, this control will be based on the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) in table 3.

The ego-perception, alter-perception and the causal analysis all point out whether there is in fact an influence of NGOs. If the alter-perception and causal analysis indicate that there was no influence it might be concluded that there was no influence although the ego-perception might claim the opposite. The situation changes where the alter-perception and causal analysis differ, then it is up to the analyst to decide which should prevail. In general the causal analysis is dominant over the alter-perception since it is based on objective documents instead of on subjective visions of key informants. However this dominance also depends on the quality of data as these might differ (Arts, 1998; Steinberg, 2004).

To put this all in perspective, it should be recognized that any assessment of political influence is after all only an informed guess (Arts, 1998). One can never be sure of having included all relevant visible and invisible factors and actors in the analysis, especially in cases like this one, where objectivity is hard to find and transparency is not a common phenomenon. Even scientific judgements on political influence remain guesses. But they are ‘informed’ at least, as the political processes concerned are analysed as thoroughly as possible. (Arts, 1998)

Ego-perception	Views of ENGO representatives with regard to their own political influence (claims)
Alter-perception	Views of government representatives with regard to the political influence of ENGOs (first control of ENGO claims)
Causal analysis	Researcher’s assessment of ENGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews (second control)

3.1.2 The problem between the methodology and the circumstances in the field

The EAC-methodology is based on a strict separation between people working in NGOs, government or other players. While this separation might have existed at an international level or in the nineteen nineties when Arts (1998) carried out his study, the interviews for this thesis showed something completely different for Ecuador. Of the 18 interviewed people 13 worked a long time within another group. For example, scientists were also NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. This made it illogical to pretend there is a hard distinction between the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal-analysis group. There were two possibilities to solve this friction between the methodology and the situation in the field. The first one was to just make a distinction of all interviews in one of the three groups. This could be done according to the current job, which has as a weakness that this was not the job the people had during the events. The second one is trying to group the people in their most meaningful group, the one they worked in during the events or their most influential job. However, this would make the influence of the researcher to unintentionally manipulate the data too large. The second possibility is to look for an alternative methodology that would solve this problem. Since there were interviews done with a very broad group of people one could assume that the truth was captured within the data derived from these interviews. Since almost all people worked at different type of jobs, the data derived from the interviews was more objective than assumed before starting the fieldwork. There were no large differences in the reconstruction of events between the point of view of a former minister and an NGO-employee. Therefore it is chosen to use all data from the interviews to reconstruct the decision-making process. This methodology will be elaborated on in the following section.

3.1.3 Alternative methodology

The methodology, aiming at answering research question 1, was adapted to solve this problem is derived from Betsill and Corell (2008), who studied several cases in which the NGO influence on environmental negotiations was central. During this research a methodology was developed to systematically analyse NGO-influence. The data needed for this is the same as Arts (1998) used and consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews with government delegates, ENGOs and specialists. Since the framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was used during the interviews to systematize the data it could easily be fit to this methodology.

Also the research task is the same: analyse evidence of ENGO influence. Only the methodology is different. The methodology is based on two different dimensions. The first is process tracing: here the participation of ENGOs will be linked to their influence using causal mechanisms to explain this influence. The other analysis is the counterfactual analysis: answering the question “what would have happened if ENGOs had not participated in the negotiations?” This separation will be held during the analysis of the results and the conclusion on the first research question of this thesis. In table 2 an overview of the research strategy, the data type, the data sources and the methodology is given.

Table 2: Strategies for gathering and analysing data on (E)NGO influence (cells contain examples of questions researchers might ask. From: Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 28)

Triangulation by:	Intentional communication by NGOs/NGO participants	Behaviour of other actors/global attainment
<i>Research task: Gather evidence of NGO influence along two dimensions</i>		
Data type	<i>Activities:</i> How did NGOs communicate with other actors?	<i>Outcome:</i> Does the final agreement contain text drafted by NGOs? Does the final agreement reflect NGO goals and principles?
	<i>Access:</i> What opportunities did NGOs have to communicate with other actors?	<i>Process:</i> Did negotiators discuss issues proposed by NGOs (or cease to discuss issues opposed by NGOs)? Did NGOs coin terms that became part of the negotiating jargon? Did NGOs shape the positions of key states?
	<i>Recourses:</i> What sources of leverage did NGOs use in communicating with other actors?	
Data source	<i>Primary texts</i> (e.g., draft decisions, country position statements, the final agreement, (NGO) lobbying materials)	
	<i>Secondary texts</i> (e.g.[...]media reports, press releases)	
	<i>Interviews</i> (government delegates, observers, NGOs) <i>Researcher observations</i> during the negotiations	
<i>Research task: analyse evidence of NGO influence</i>		
Methodology	<i>Process tracing</i> What were the causal mechanisms linking NGO participation in [...] environmental negotiations with their influence?	<i>Counterfactual analysis</i> What would have happened if NGOs had not participated in the negotiations?

In this thesis the extent of political influence is not directly measured or asked in interviews, solely whether there was influence. Table 3, shown below, was used as a framework to systematically analyse the political influence of ENGOs during interviews. The influence of ENGOs was investigated for the five recognized phases: Issue framing, agenda setting, position of key actors, final agreement/procedural issues and final agreement/ substantive issues. In the framework presented in table 3, several questions are presented for all these phases to help the systematic analysis. These questions are answered as part of the results of this thesis.

Claims made by all respondents were verified so that in the end a conclusion could be drawn about the level of influence. Therefore it was chosen to keep the data collection as qualitative as possible with the only exception that the data derived from interviews was used to differentiate between low, moderate and high ENGO influence, as is done in table 4, based on the framework designed by Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 38). The input for this scheme is the completely filled in framework of table 3, which points out if there was ENGO influence, and in what phase. Together these two tables form a complete methodology that enables the researcher to systematically investigate ENGO influence.

Three final schemes will be made one for “La Zona Intangible”, one for Block 31 and the last one for Yasuní-ITT. The conclusion will be drawn when the final scheme of each topic will be linked to table 4. This will lead to three end conclusions of ENGO influence of low, moderate or high, on all three subtopics, and thereby to an answer on research question 1.

Table 3: Indicators of NGO influence (quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 34,35)

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

Table 4: Determining the level of NGO influence (Quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p.38)

	Low	Moderate	High
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate and have some success in shaping the negotiating process but not the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiating process • NGOs' effects of participation can be linked to outcome
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a no on all the outcome indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a yes on one or both of the outcome indicators

3.8 Assessing the Explanatory Factors of NGO Influence

This section introduces the methodology used to answer research question two: What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni? This is done after the first research question is answered being: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” The second question tries to explain the political influence of ENGOs.

To collect the data used to answer the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” all interviewees were asked for the factors that can explain ENGO-influence. This resulted in a ranking of mentioned factors. This list, combined with the list from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used to draw conclusions on the explanatory factors of ENGO-influence.

During the interviews people were asked which factors might have explained the political influence of ENGOs in the Yasuní case, and in interviews with ENGOs which factors might have explained their specific influence. This was done for both enabling and restricting factors. These factors are investigated using interviews, with the data from these interviews one can study how ENGOs have influenced both the negotiation process (through issue framing, agenda setting and shaping the positions of other actors) as well as the outcome (procedural and substantive elements of the final text) of the negotiations concerning the production of oil in Yasuní (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Finally in the discussion a distinction will be made for the explanatory factors for the three sub-topics since not every factor might be as important, or even present, in all three cases.

3.9 Research Strategy

Three different subtopics will be investigated in this thesis, all three very important to answer the research questions. The first will be the construction of “la Zona Intangible” (No-Go Zone), an area that cannot be developed because of the uncontacted indigenous people living there. The construction of this No-Go Zone and the construction of its final boundaries were negotiations where various NGOs tried to influence the outcome. This decision places several oil fields off limits for exploitation.

The second theme is block 31, an oil block that is not yet exploited within the National Park. Previously Petrobras owned it but after a negotiation process between Petrobras, the Ecuadorian government and NGOs Petrobras decided to give block 31 back to the Ecuadorian state.

The third theme concerns Yasuní-ITT. This initiative proposes to keep all the oil in the ITT field underground and let other countries pay half of the expected revenues. This money will be guarded by the UNDP and will be invested in sustainable development projects in Ecuador.

The investigation will be done according to the research strategy designed by Betsill and Corell (2008). Process tracing will be important in this thesis, by reconstructing the process the role of ENGOs and their influence can be analysed. Another important methodology is the counterfactual analysis: asking the question: “what would have happened without ENGOs?” This latter strategy is of major importance for the first research question.

3.10 Data Collection

As can be seen in table 2, the data source consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews. Interviews are especially important to retrieve data for this thesis, used to reconstruct the decision-making process and to answer finally the question “what would have happened without ENGOs?”

18 interviews were held. Since people were also asked about former work-experience an extended list of institutions were analysed, of which a complete list can be found in Appendix 2. This list shows that in fact a substantial larger group of ENGOs, governmental bodies and specialists were interviewed.

To avoid an “in crowd,” people were asked who their “opponents” are or with whom they disagree. To include important people the interviewees were asked to name the actors that facilitated the process. This is called snowball sampling, but with the slight difference that in this way opponents are also selected. This is done to counter the most common flaw: the dependence on the first sample of interviewees and their contacts (Kumar, 2005). This is a very useful method for decision-making and for groups that are not completely understood how they interact.

The texts used in this thesis were almost without an exception of Ecuadorian origin and therefore written in Spanish. Primary texts in this thesis mainly consist of formal governmental decisions, decrees by secretaries of state and lobbying material from a range of actors. Secondary texts are mainly media reports, press releases, documentaries and other articles.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected for this thesis is purely qualitative. First the data analysis for the first research question will be given and in the sub-chapter thereafter the data analysis for the explanatory factors of political influence will be given.

The data used to answer research question 1 consists of interviews and primary and secondary texts, this will be used in two different ways. With all these data the decision-making process will be reconstructed. Since many interviewees wanted to be anonymous and unrecognizable it is impossible to use many quotes since names are easily obtained from these. However all data will only be presented if it is verifiable. So the results are a reconstruction of the decision-making process and with extra stress on the role of ENGOs in this. The decision-making process is be divided in five phases, corresponding to table 3: Issue framing, agenda setting, influence on key actors, and the procedural issues and substantive issues of the final agreement.

The results used to answer research question 2 consist of the factors mentioned during the interviews that could explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. A ranking will be made of these factors with the number of times it is mentioned. A conclusion will be drawn using these factors and linking them with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008). Together with the decision-making process it will be made clear which factors are of more and lesser importance.

4. Results

This chapter shows all results from interviews concerning the influence of ENGOs more in depth and with more details, and is structured as table from Betsill and Corell (2008); see p29. This is done three times, each time for the three different subtopics: Zona-Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní-ITT. These extended reconstruction will be used to fill in a complete framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) that will be presented with the conclusions. Later an analysis will be given on what would have happened without ENGOs, the counterfactual analysis. This is done for all three topics. The analysis starts with the issue framing of Yasuní as a whole and the role of ENGOs, because this can be seen as the start of the three topics. First Yasuní as a whole was framed, and later the entire decision-making process for all three topics started, including the framing of the specific issue.

4.1 ENGO influence on framing Yasuní

ENGOs have claimed to influence the framing of Yasuní National Park as (one of) the place(s) with the highest biodiversity in the world, and as a special issue of the New Internationalist. Many initiatives to frame Yasuní as the most biodiverse place on the planet came from civil society like “Yasuní Green Gold”, “el Yasuní depende de tí”, “Expedición Andarele” and “Yasuní por la vida”. The four highest Google hits for “Yasuní” are on number one “live Yasuní” from the ENGO Finding Species. Number two is from Wikipedia, the third is “SOS Yasuní” from the Ecuadorian ENGO Acción Ecologica. The fourth is “Save Yasuní” from the American ENGO “Save America’s Forests”. The first government controlled hit can be found on the eight place.

The same can be said about books; most of the books and articles written about Yasuní are written or compiled by ENGOs (3 respondents). Only since Yasuní ITT the government has written more about Yasuní. New social media become increasingly more important as a source of information, especially for the younger more cosmopolite generation. On Facebook all hits except one (Wikipedia) are from ENGOs and Social movements. Twitter is less used, three groups use “Yasuní” name: one movie that wants to promote the ITT initiative from civil society, one high school project that aims at the same goals and the official, however not active, Yasuní-ITT-account from the Ecuadorian government. Remarkable is that all except the one aiming at fundraising for the Yasuní movie are not used since October 2010. The same is true for the Facebook accounts.

The scientist concerned for Yasuní (SCY) possibly made the highest contribution to frame Yasuní as a unique place with an extraordinary biodiversity. The findings from this report that concludes that Yasuní is the place with the highest biodiversity known to men, is quoted in almost every article related to Yasuní (Acosta, 2010; Acosta et al., 2010; Larrea, 2010; Honty, 2010; Martinez, 2010; Villavicencio, 2010; Bass et al., 2009; Finer et al., 2009; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Yasuní ITT, 2009; Finer et al., 2008). But SCY is not a science-based initiative. It was initiated by two ENGOs from the USA: Finding Species and Save America’s Forests. It was also the work of ENGOs that seven famous and respected scientists joined the campaign and wrote letters to stop the construction of Petrobras’ oil road in block 31. These letters even ended as a news article in the New York Times (New York Times, 17 Feb. 2005)

Even the government uses a lot of material provided by ENGOs, in the airport of San Francisco de Orellana or shortly Rio Coca, the gateway city to Yasuní, the entire airport is decorated by photos from Finding Species.

Another remarkable achievement is the sheer number of stickers, posters etc. provided by ENGOs. Stickers provided by ENGOs can be found on lampposts throughout cities and posters are hung in many important buildings, especially in the governmental hub of Quito and larger cities in the Amazon. Hereunder in figure 5 a timeline is presented with all the important dates from Ecuadorian politics and the three different subtopics.

Timeline Yasuní

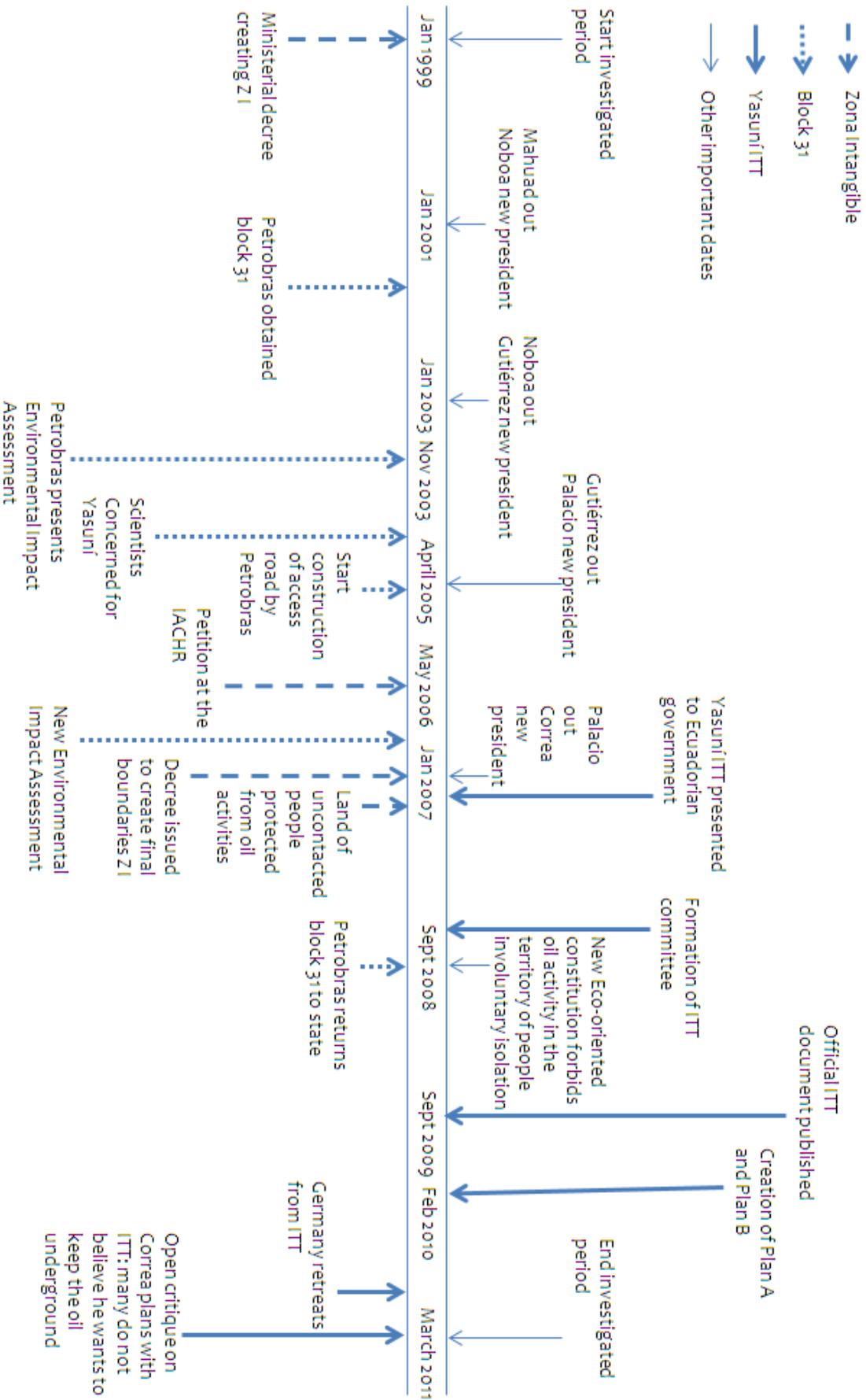


Figure 5: Timeline of Yasuní with all important events concerning the Zona Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní ITT

4.2 Process tracing of La Zona Intangible

The first theme that will be discussed is the one that has its roots deepest in history, La Zona-Intangible. Its roots go back almost thirty years when indigenous people started to ask for an oil moratorium. In January 1999 “La Zona-Intangible” (ZI) was created by a decree of the minister of environment (Yolanda Kakabadse) in order to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane. Although it was decided that the Zona-Intangible was to be located in the southern part of Yasuní it did not yet get fixed borders. Since the created no-go zone did not have borders it was impossible to enforce the laws protecting this area and illegal logging, for example, took a rise. In 2006 more than ten logging camps were present in the Zona-Intangible. On the May 1st, 2006 a group of Ecuadorian activists petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to intervene and force the Ecuadorian government to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane from all different threats. On the tenth of May, 2006 the IACHR called on the Ecuadorian government to adopt specific ‘precautionary measures’ in order to protect the indigenous tribes by putting measures into practice to prevent the entry of outsiders, such as loggers and oil workers into their territory (Bass et al., 2010; Finer et al., 2009; Narvaéz, 2009; interviews with 6 respondents). In January 2007, eight years after the Zona-Intangible had been created, the president signed a decree to draw its final boundaries. This was followed in April 2007 by a new policy on uncontacted people of the Ecuadorian government, which places their territories off-limits to extractive activities (Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 3 respondents). In the following months a logger was killed just outside the Zona-Intangible. It became obvious that the ZI did not cover the complete living grounds of the Tagaeri and Taromenane. In March 2008 the implementation of the IACHR’s precautionary measures started, creating the first military control point to protect the ZI in April 2008, and it stopped the illegal logging effectively (Finer et al., 2009; Proaño and Colleoni, 2008; interviews with 4 respondents). Ecuador’s new constitution created under president Correa from September 2008 forbids all extractive activities within the territory of indigenous people living in voluntary isolation, and calls the violation of these right ethnocide (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008; Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 4 respondents)

4.3 Results on ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible

This chapter demonstrates all results concerning the Zona-Intangible, using Betsill and Corell’s (2008) framework (table 3). This table forms the red line of this chapter. The five table heads are converted in five sub-chapters and will discuss the main issues from table 3. It starts with issue framing then, agenda setting, the position of key actors followed by the final agreement procedural and later substantive issues. One part of the scheme from Betsill and Corell (2008) has been adapted, under agenda setting the “terms of debate” have not been included. This is done since the majority of the respondents did not understand the answer or did not know what to answer. Since this led to a shortage of usable results it has been chosen to not include this in neither the results nor the discussion.

The information for this chapter consists of 7 interviews that gave substantial information about the ZI, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.3.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning La Zona Intangible

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

First there was the idea from ENGOs and indigenous groups that wanted an oil moratorium in the entire Amazon. This idea had been around since the 1970s. In 1964 Chevron-Texaco was working in the Ecuadorian Amazon under the name of Texpet. The operations were mainly in the northern part of the Amazon near Lago Agrio, and caused an ecological disaster. Hundreds of millions litres of water were polluted and the nature and people suffered severely. This induced the activism of people living in the southern parts of the Amazon, who did not want the fate of their northern

neighbours. Their solution, supported by ENGOs like Oilwatch and Acción Ecológica, was a moratorium for oil in the entire Amazon (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews). The government did not agree and wanted the oil extracted to fund necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure. (7 interviews)

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

When Yolanda Kakabadse came into office in August 1998 she saw the problems, and wanted to protect the uncontacted indigenous people, but also other indigenous groups and Yasuni's fragile ecosystem. All protected areas in Ecuador are under direct control of the minister of environment. Therefore she had the power to declare two areas no-go-zone for development, particularly since uncontacted people were living there. The Intangible Zones are something different than an oil-moratorium, so there was a noticeable shift on the issue. First the government changed its opinion, from exploitation to preservation, however 5 different presidents led the government during the negotiations, inducing several severe shifts in the government perception (5 interviews). Secondly a large group of ENGOs did agree on the official governmental plans, although not all (4 interviews). Finally, oil companies strongly opposed to the plans of a ZI, this did not change during the negotiations (7 interviews).

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The role of ENGOs on the agenda setting of La Zona Intangible seems to be marginal, except from raising a discussion about an oil moratorium in the Ecuadorian Amazon. However, that discussion started in the 1980s and nothing had been done until 1999, when the minister of environment made the decree declaring two No-Go-Zones. It looks like ENGOs and indigenous groups started the discussion and when the right person had the power to make a change a part of the initial plan was executed. However direct influence on the issue framing by ENGOs seems rather unlikely (Bass et al, 2010; Finer et al, 2009; 10 interviews).

ENGO influence on issue framing?

No, ENGOs started the discussion on oil a moratorium, but it cannot be proven to have influenced the idea of a ZI.

4.3.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning La Zona Intangible

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

The minister of environment that created the ZI, Yolanda Kakabadse, did that on her own initiative although here goals were almost identical to that of many ENGOs and indigenous groups she states. Since the Man and Biosphere Reserve fell under her jurisdiction she could "finally" create a No-Go-Zone. She was the one that brought the idea of a ZI to the attention of the community. These statements from Kakabadse are underwritten by all 6 other respondents.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The construction of a no-go-zone was put on the agenda, but there was not a real negotiation. The minister of environment formulated a decree and that was executed. The creation of an oil moratorium for the entire Amazon never entered the agenda although it was often suggested by environmental groups. Two ENGOs, Fundación Natura and EcoCiencia, gave technical assistance to Yolanda Kakabadse when she was minister of Environment in 1999 to design the Zona Intangible of Yasuni and the Zona-Intangible Cuyabeno (Narvaéz, 2009). Oil-companies also tried change the boundaries so that oil wells were not placed off limits (lobbying material of Andes Petroleum; 7 interviews).

After 7 years without definitive frontiers the creation of these boundaries was put on the agenda again by ENGOs, first without success but after a government change it was formulated as a priority by the government.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

The role of ENGOs in shaping the agenda is not completely clear: they did start the discussion of the oil moratorium, but this was never put on the agenda. The no-go-zones came from within the government, and while there might be indirect influence of ENGOs in framing the issue of oil extraction, biodiversity and uncontacted people, this is not evident.

Acción Ecológica, an Ecuadorian ENGO, opposed the creation of a ZI that did not cover the entire Ecuadorian Amazon was stated by 3 respondents not affiliated with Acción Ecológica. This led to a diffuse sound from ENGOs being split in two groups at that time. One group was pro-ZI, since they believed that it was the best they could achieve, the other group consisted of ENGOs and indigenous groups that disapproved the ZI because it was not ambitious enough. According to the three respondents this led to tension between ENGOs and made it harder to influence the government and impossible to claim that either group did influence the government decisively. A high civil servant gives the following explanation: “In 2004 a coalition of civil activists: *el grupo de vigilancia* and an indigenous movement: *las indígenas de seis lados* took action, this was the impulse to restart the discussion of the ZI boundaries. Later many ENGOs, scientists, and other civil society groups joined the discussion. At this time the process to draw borders was started again but the president at that time, Lucio Gutiérrez was not interested in the theme. In the end of 2006 it was restarted again from nothing under president Palacio, here the foundations were laid that led under the boundaries of the ZI under president Correa”.

Two respondents, state that the formation of the borders of the ZI in 2006 was placed on the agenda by ENGOs. Another source state that the force behind the creation of the boundaries were not ENGOs although he knows ENGOs claim this but the sub-secretary of the minister of environment at that time, first months of 2007. On this statement the former two state they had contacts within the government that could speed things up.

The second agenda, with the boundaries of the ZI, might be shaped by ENGOs, they raised the topic again in 2006 but did not succeed. A year later with a new government they did succeed, but it is not clear if this is due to ENGOs, or to a new government that wanted to solve this problem created by former governments. People in interviews disagree on this; it is possible that certain ENGOs are overestimating their influence while other players underestimate their influence. However, it looks like ENGOs could only succeed in their goals if they had powerful contacts within the government. And these newly installed governmental employees already had the same opinion. ENGOs seem to have functioned as a watchdog at this time, unable to achieve their goals single-handedly, but with the right governmental people in place they might have sped up the process (interviews).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, the agenda was set and dominated by the government, however at times ENGOs functioned as a watchdog to ensure that the creation of boundaries was not completely off the agenda.

4.3.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning La Zona Intangible

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government formulated the idea of creating a no-go-zone, so that might be their initial position in this case. Many ENGOs had the same opinion, although definitely not all. Several ENGOs especially Acción Ecológica considered the plans were not ambitious enough. So a pragmatic (and *ambientalistas*) group of ENGOs went for the governmental plans since it was a lot better than nothing and they feared that when they would be too ambitious they might have ended empty-handed. The last key actor in this are oil companies, who wanted to secure their investments and their oil-blocks. Therefore they wanted no Zona-Intangible but when it would be created at least outside their oil blocks (lobby materials Andes Petroleum, interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

One can be certain that the oil companies did not change their opinion; they wanted to stop the creation of the ZI and to reformulate the boundaries to exclude some important oil wells. The opinion of ENGOs did not change either, the two groups remained existing next to each other. The only actor that did change (their opinion) was the Ecuadorian government, which was led by 5 different presidents during the negotiations of 1999 until 2007. No other change was noticed only that the two governments from Noboa and Gutierrez (January 21, 2000 until April 20, 2005) had no priorities creating the ZI's final boundaries. This finally changed in 2006 under the presidency of Palacio. The process restarted and the complete process was successfully finished under President Correa in 2007. One respondent shows that the most important trigger to restart the negotiation in 2006 were new oil explorations in block 14 and 17, that would fall in the ZI, but since it did not have boundaries the oil companies could still try to erect an oil post. This made all actors aware that nothing had been solved yet.

Half of block 14 and 17 fell within the supposed boundaries of the ZI. The oil companies wanted to fix this problem legally, but the government did not want that, and ENGOs were exercising pressure at that time to finally create some borders. Since the official aim of the ZI was to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane the government sent airplanes to scout them from the air. All living grounds of these people were to be protected by the ZI, and the borders were drawn by minister Alban, an eco-orientated minister that already played a key role in block 31.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs tried to shape the position of the government especially under president Gutierrez, this failed several times. When Palacio came into office some people within the government were open to idea of drawing the ZI's boundaries. This made it easier for ENGOs to join meetings. The influence of ENGOs is discussed severely, more than a few people from ENGOs claimed to have played a key role in drawing the borders of the ZI. Not only several people from the government but also more objective specialists oppose this claim. They state that the role of some individual governmental players was more substantial and that these ENGO-employees are severely overestimating their influence. The specialists seem to have a better overview of the negotiation process, and therefore it can be argued that reality resembles their reconstruction.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did try to influence the government, but the government only changed when a new president was installed.

4.3.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning La Zona Intangible

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed.

4.3.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning La Zona Intangible

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The opinion of the majority of ENGOs is resembled in the final agreement, a no-go-zone for development and oil exploitation in Yasuní to protect the (uncontacted) indigenous people and the environment. However some wanted a more ambitious plan.

After an exhausting process and eight years, the borders were drawn of the ZI just about the time oil companies started new explorations. Several oil fields were placed off-limits by the final boundaries of the ZI for example half of block 14 and the Imuya post in the ITT block. This was celebrated as a victory by many ENGOs (interviews).

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Except from joining some meetings and functioning as a watchdog, the role of ENGOs might be rather small. There is some evidence that ENGOs sped up the process of drawing the borders, however no new decisions were made purely because ENGOs promoted it (interviews). In the literature very little can be found from the hands of ENGO concerning the ZI. In comparison to Yasuni-ITT and Block 31 also very little can be found on the websites of ENGOs, as well in other materials distributed by ENGOs.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the content of the agreement was not changed by ENGO influence, although they might have speeded it up in the final stage

4.4 Counterfactual analysis in La Zona Intangible

What would have happened to la Zona Intangible without the participation of ENGOs? Indigenous movements, not ENGOs, started the discussion of an oil moratorium; ENGOs joined later.

It might be that the focus shifted a bit towards nature conservation instead of the living grounds of indigenous people, but in practise it comes down to the same: a large part of the Biosphere Reserve needed extra protection.

The agenda setting might not have differed a lot in the beginning, since the minister of environment raised the whole topic, but in a later stage ENGOs were functioning as a watchdog. Making sure the drawing of the boundaries was never completely off the agenda. But did that make a difference? In 2007 a green government was installed led by Raphael Correa, with or without ENGOs protecting parts of this fragile ecosystem better was one of its teams priorities. ENGOs were not able to change the position of the government possibly also due to the fact that five presidents led the country during the negotiation. No time was available to strengthen their network within the government. It is hard to say if ENGO participation made a difference to the solution, most respondents from ENGOs and other institutions agree that it was almost an entirely government led process. ENGOs were free to join in meetings, but only if they knew the right people in the government could they really exercise influence. Therefore one can conclude that already conservation-orientated people were in the governmental staff when the boundaries were drawn, they may have succeeded without the ENGOs.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible seems to be low: ENGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome. In this case ENGOs did join in the negotiation process, but they do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators. However, who knows what would have happened without ENGOs keeping this topic on the agenda during the political difficult years between 1999 and 2006?

4.5 Process tracing of Block 31

The subsequent topic that will be discussed consists of a series of the negotiations concerning Block 31. The invested period for Block 31 starts in 2003 when Petrobras takes over block 31 from Perez Companc, reaches its summit with the battle for block 31 which makes Petrobras decide to return block 31 and ends in 2011 when this block is still state-owned but not yet leased. Why is there so much hassle about block 31 when it has been proven that the amount of oil in this block is hardly enough to financially break even (Rival, 2010)? Block 31 is the gateway to the large

adjacent reserves in block ITT. To extract the heavy crude of ITT lighter oil is needed to create a mix that is easy to pump up. However when block ITT would not be exploited, block 31 would lose its strategic value and would not be exploited either (1 interview).

This issue commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road, but before the government approved the EIS, Petrobras started the construction of this oil road. What happened afterwards and what was the role of ENGOs in all this?

As stated above the process started when Perez Companc, an Argentinean oil company, sold the exploitation rights of block 31 to Petrobras in 2002 (interviews; Finer et al. 2009). Petrobras presented an Environmental Impact Study in 2003 for the oil reserves of Nenke and Apaika. This study called for the construction of an access road into the National Park (4 interviews; Finer et al., 2009). At that moment the real negotiation started.

To prevent this road an extended research was started involving 59 scientists with experience in Yasuní, called the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní (SCY). The American ENGOs Finding Species and Save America's Forests initiated this initiative. The SCY created an unsolicited Technical Advisory Report regarding the plans for block 31. This report concluded that the greatest threat for the area were the direct and indirect effects of access roads. Later the Smithsonian Institute and The Association for Tropical Biology also published science based letters opposing to this access road (4 interviews; SCY; Finer et al., 2009).

Around the same time several Ecuadorian ENGOs started a lawsuit challenging the fact the relocation of a new processing facility required for the project into the park without proper studies. A second lawsuit was started by human right groups focussing on Constitutional violations of the project (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009).

The Grupo Asesor Técnico de Parque Nacional Yasuní (GAT) was one of the first to know what was going on. This group consisting of ENGOs, universities, local governments and civil right groups were the first ones to know that Petrobras already started with the construction of the not yet approved access road in May 2005. Together with the president of the national park they informed the government demanding that no roads were to be allowed in the National Park. They also demanded reduced impact for the oil pipe. Despite being informed the government did not take a strong position in this issue, they did not force Petrobras to stop (2 interviews). This road reached the northern frontier of Yasuní National Park, and Petrobras was seeking the final permit that would allow them to enter the National Park (Finer et al., 2009). The other permits had already been signed by the minister of Environment, and several details were changed during a meeting with the GAT. Meanwhile ENGOs from the GAT formed a coalition called Amigos de Yasuní and accused the universities and governmental bodies of being environmental unfriendly. Wildlife Conservation Society-Ecuador (WCS) had to change director and the Universidad Pontificia Católica resigned from the GAT (1 interview). Although struggling with internal unrest the GAT demanded that Petrobras would not cross the Rio Tiputini, and when Petrobras did start the road between Rio Tiputini and the National Park the GAT demanded a suspension of their licenses, and that no final license would be given.

At this time President Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of office by the Ecuadorian people and was replaced by Alfredo Palacio: a radical change. Palacio re-examined the oil access road issue in block 31. "On 7 July 2005 the newly installed minister of Environment informed Petrobras that they were not authorized to construct the processing facility or road into the park and instead had to develop a road-less entry design with the processing facility located outside the park" (Finer et al., 2009 p.12). This new minister did not know much about Yasuní and its problems and was introduced to all this material by ENGOs.

“Less than a week later, over 150 Waorani marched through the streets of Quito to protest the Petrobras project and delivered a letter to the government calling for a 10 year moratorium on new oil projects in their territory” (Finer et al., 2009 p.12).

In September 2006 Petrobras submitted a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for a processing facility outside the National Park and for helicopter access to the drilling platforms instead of a road. (ENGO petition 22 march 2007; Finer et al., 2009). Letters were sent by ENGOs in September 2006 to point out the weaknesses and threats from the new Ecological Assessment of Petrobras. However, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment disagreed and discarded the letters from the scientists and ENGOs involved (interview, Save America’s Forests). Why did Petrobras leave block 31 after having invested more than \$200 million? Several versions of this story are told.

1 Ana Alban, the minister of environment under the presidents Palacio and Correa did not like Petrobras and the way they operated. Therefore she never gave the final license needed to access the National Park. Petrobras tired of waiting returned the block to the Ecuadorian state (1 interview)

2 While starting the construction Petrobras used boats a lot bigger that was allowed in the contract. Petrobras also dumped several barrels of diesel in the Rio Napo, these nonconformities were pointed out to the minister of environment by ENGOs, leading to the suspension of the license for 2 years. Not being able to work would cost a lot of money and therefore Petrobras decided to return block 31 (1 interview)

#3 When this license was issued by the minister of environment it was not yet backed up by local governments what was necessary for its validity. One local civil servant in the Amazonian town of Rio Coca did not want to sign this license. According to two respondents he saw the destruction created by oil companies in the Amazon and wanted to protect the area he grew up in. Unfortunately his motives are not verifiable. Remarkably he was the only one allowed to sign the local license for Petrobras. So when the final license was given, it was not yet backed up legally on a local level, making block 31’s oil production illegal (2 interviews).

4 In October 2007 the minister of environment issued the license. This triggered a new round of ENGO petitions and actions. In September 2008 President Correa suddenly declared that Petrobras resigned and had returned block 31 to the Ecuadorian state (Finer, 2009; ENGO petition 22 march 2007).

Knowing that all interviewees only knew their own side of the story, the truth has to be a combination of these three stories. This all finally caused Petrobras to terminate its contract. Directly afterwards block 31 was transferred to state-owned Petroamazonas SA.

With the new 2008 constitution in place, which forbids oil extraction in protected areas, block 31 seems to be protected sufficiently. However an exception was built-in, it allows drilling to proceed if it was petitioned by the President and declared in the national interest by the Congress, which may call for a national referendum if deemed necessary (Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews, Constitution of Ecuador, 2008).

4.6 Results on ENGO influence on Block 31

The information for this chapter consists of 5 interviews that gave substantial information about block 31, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

The 5 main sources unanimously explain that this topic commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road. Before the government approved the EIS Petrobras started the construction of this oil road.

4.6.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Block 31

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

Oil production in block 31 seemed to be the best option for the Ecuadorian government and oil companies, and at that time the government did not oppose construction of an access road (5 interviews). ENGOs and indigenous organisations fiercely opposed to these plans. The GAT opposed to the construction of an access road, not to oil extraction.

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

All five respondents, underwrite the importance of *Scientists concerned for Yasuní*: an initiative by Finding Species and Save America's Forests, two American ENGOs. They created a unsolicited Technical Advisory Report that consisted of scientific research of 59 well-known researchers on the biodiversity of Yasuní. The words that framed the complete Yasuní-issue was uttered here first: "Yasuní has the highest known biodiversity of the planet". All 5 respondents noticed a change in the governmental approach: from oil-production with an access road to a more environmental approach. Also people from within the government and opponents of the SCY underwrite their significance for framing Yasuní as one of the most biodiverse places on the planet and defining the direct and indirect consequences of roads as its biggest threat. This strengthened the GAT's and ENGOs' claim to stop the construction of roads. Again the change from the Gutiérrez presidency to Palacio's did also make a large difference, Palacio was more eco-oriented and under his presidency Petrobras was suddenly expected to present greener plans.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The ENGO induced the SCY frame into the entire discussion and also later discussions about oil exploitation in Yasuní (5 interviews). This putted the creation of an access road and oil-production in a completely different light. However other actions by a variety of ENGOs made the Ecuadorian people aware of the problems in block 31 (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009). The latter might be less obvious but it also activated another group of people that might have made the difference in a later stadium: civil activists, civil servants and ordinary citizens. 1 respondent also emphasized the importance of large actions of the ENGO-indigenous coalition, this made people aware of the risks for the people living in Yasuní and the environment.

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, ENGOs did influence the issue framing of block 31, especially in the role of SCY and activist ENGOs.

4.6.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Block 31

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

Three respondents claimed that the SCY played a key role, however one stated that the actions by other ENGOs did catch the eye earlier. It was also stated that the issue came to the attention of the community when Petrobras applied for the environmental license. This was also the first time national newspapers wrote about it. However it became a major topic on an international scale when Finding Species and Save America's Forests joined the campaign and sponsored the study of the SCY. This led to a storm of national and international media attention, and also reached many people from within the government. So the scale was determined by the SCY while it might not have been the first moment for Ecuadorians to hear about block 31. The attention generated

by the SCY was later used by other ENGOs and civil society organisations to find a large audience and impact during their actions.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The most important is the construction of an oil road and the EIS placed on the agenda by Petrobras and the alternative: extraction without roads was placed on the agenda by the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

ENGOs tried to influence decision-making by starting lawsuits at different times, lobbying, supplying scientific research and actions to influence the public opinion and the government. They also joined a large number of meetings (Finer et al., 2009; 7 interviews). Later when the inexperienced Alban became minister of environment ENGOs introduced her to the topic, framing her mind-set against oil extraction, Petrobras etc. (1 interview).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

Yes, indirectly through the GAT and also directly with a lot of interaction between the government and ENGOs.

4.6.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Block 31

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government and Petrobras wanted to extract the oil. The GAT allowed extraction but opposed to the idea of an access road. ENGOs generally opposed both (interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

A respondent involved in the first negotiation phase gave the following reconstruction: “When Petrobras announced in a meeting with the president of the National Park that the construction of the access road already had been started the latter informed the government. A series of discussions and meetings started, consisting of Petrobras, government representatives and the GAT. The first demand of the GAT was no access roads within the National Park. The oil pipe could be constructed with reduced impact. The government acted weak and did not have strict demands on how things should be executed.”

The government made a radical change when president Gutierrez was replaced by Palacio. They became greener and stricter. ENGOs did not change their position much; at times they became more or less active. This was called opportunism by the GAT blaming ENGOs for only taking interest in Yasuní when things were going wrong and taking all credits. This demonstrates a growing tension within the GAT between ENGOs, universities and governmental bodies and a tension between groups inside and outside the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. All these played a role, the sheer number of actions might have influenced the general opinion, the official governmental opinion and the opinion of individual decision-makers, as is pointed out in the reconstruction option 3. 1 respondent from a ENGO explained that a large action about block 16 created a coalition between ENGOs and indigenous people, these groups started an even larger protest to protect block 31, this coalition wanted to stop the oil-extraction altogether. The actions were based on the fact that in Brazil it is illegal to drill for oil in protected areas. Petrobras, owned for 50% by the Brazilian state, was using double standards.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

Yes, ENGOs did not only raise the issue and frame the topic in an environmental way, but also pointed out a lot of things to the government; their lobby and negotiation seemed effective. The strongest example is that Alban was introduced to the topic by ENGOs

4.6.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues Block 31

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (5 interviews). Although the GAT consisted partly of ENGOs, this only applied to earlier negotiations.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs in the negotiations was never discussed and therefore not formalised either.

4.6.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues of Block 31

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

It very much does, no oil has been exploited, no road entered Yasuní, Petrobras returned block 31 to the state, oil exploitation without access roads became the standard option for the government. It looks like an outright success story, yet in the near future Petroamazonas might start the exploitation, block 31 is not officially protected from oil companies.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. ENGOs were present in staggering numbers; over 50 national and international ENGOs joined the campaign. The most important actions might have been in the meeting rooms with ministers and high officials. There they could shape the discussion and supply the decision-makers with essential (scientific) information. 3 respondents also demonstrated that many things that were illegal or non-conform Petrobras' contract, this lead to governmental sanctions and actions. 3 respondents underline the role of ENGOs in supplying scientific data about the effects of oil roads. 2 mention the intensive media offense and the role of the SCY.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, the final result is in line with ENGOs' policy goals, and they played a substantial role in the negotiation process.

4.7 Counterfactual analysis in Block 31

What would have happened without ENGOs? 4 respondents answered that question and all of them said that the oil in block 31 would already have been exploited, using an oil access road. Having seen and processed all data and after reading many articles it still seems to be true. The role of ENGOs within and outside the GAT was so large that it changed the complete decision-making process; it almost became dominated by ENGOs. What would the government have done without knowing that Yasuní was one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, and without the attention it created? Probably business as usual: let the oil get exploited and demand a percentage of the revenues. ENGOs were the one to point out all Petrobras' unconformities, and without that information the IEA would be approved easily. On all key moments the role of ENGOs was substantial, and throughout the process they were functioning as a watchdog.

Many people tried to explain what happened at times, but with incomplete data they could not trace the complete process, and luck seems to play a large role. However what seemed miracles for many people, e.g. the returning of block 31 by Petrobras or the suspension of the license, was the uncoordinated work of ENGOs and other civil society organisations. Their influence on

individual decision-makers, such as minister Alban or the civil servant responsible for the license in Rio Coca, seems to be large. Not only direct but also indirect influence played a role. The discussion was held on the terms set by ENGOs. Thus without ENGOs the discussion would not have been broader than an effective way to extract oil, and that is what would have been happened. The exploitation of two wells in block 31 connected by a road.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on all the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators.

4.8 Process tracing of Yasuní ITT

This chapter does not aim at describing the technical details of the proposal, sufficient articles have been written about it, many of them almost identical (Sevilla, 2010; Larrea, 2010; Acosta et al., 2009; Martinez, 2010; Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer et al., 2008; Friedman Rudovsky, 2007; Rival, 2010).

In the literature concerning Yasuní-ITT some attention has been given to the first stage of the Initiative, how the idea to protect Yasuní's Biodiversity from oil extraction became a viable proposal (Acosta, 2010). However the decision-making process has not been discussed. This will be the first attempt to reconstruct the decision-making process from an idea of many up to the situation of Yasuní ITT at this moment.

The following is from a personal interview with Alberto Acosta, the minister of energy and mines that presented the ITT Initiative to the Ecuadorian president and the Ecuadorian house-of-representatives, also used is Acosta's 2010 article about the *prologue* of the initiative.

According to Acción Ecológica the ITT has three histories, they will be mentioned throughout this chapter, demonstrating a new phase has started.

4.8.1 Part 1 of the History of ITT

The idea, the basis of the ITT Initiative has been slowly constructed over many years by civil society. This idea presented in January 2007 to the Ecuadorian government is a child of many fathers. It is certain that the basis of this idea lies in the old idea of suspending oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazon. At one point, at one time, one person had been completely filled with indignation and shouted, "Stop the exploitation!" This resistance settled in the minds of many Amazonian communities. Their arguments were clear, oil exploitation was affecting the nature and environment they were living in. Their health suffered under the pollution and oil companies were one of the main contributors to the construction of the Amazon. The image of evil of these groups was Texaco, one of the world's main oil companies, nowadays a part of Chevron. Texaco worked between 1964 and 1990 in the Ecuadorian Amazon, in this time-span in constructed 339 oil wells in 430.000 hectares to extract around one and a half billion barrels of crude oil. This led to the pollution of billions of barrels of water (Acosta, 2010; Crude the movie, 2009; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). While it is impossible to put a price on life and nature, it seems clear that Texaco's activities destructed millions worth of life, water and nature through contamination of water, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and death of animals. The health of people in this area also suffered severely: 31 percent of the people close to oil extraction activity suffer from cancer, compared to a 12.3 percent national average. This adds up to 27 billion dollar, the amount demanded from Texaco by the Ecuadorian and especially Amazonian people (Acosta, 2010).

This all does not even include the social consequences like: sexual violence from oil workers, spontaneous abortions, discrimination and racism, forced replacements, destructive influences only local culture and languages and on the social cohesion. It even led to the extermination of

the local tribes the “Tetes” and the “Sansahuaris”. To eliminate all these problems in the future an oil moratorium has been proposed for all hydrocarbon activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This is the prerequisite history that is needed to understand the ITT Initiative (Acosta, 2010; 2 interviews), and that it is the idea of many. Now the real birth of the initiative will be reconstructed.

In 2000 *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (post-petroleum Ecuador, an alternative development plan) was published, three years later it was presented to the minister of environment by three Ecuadorian NGOs: Pachamama, CDES (Centro de Derechos Economico y Sociales) and Acción Ecológica. At the same time the indigenous community of Sarayaku started a lawsuit against the Argentinean oil company CGC in the IACHR. This resulted in a proposal of not exploiting Yasuní’s oil, led by the NGO Oilwatch (Acosta, 2010; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). At this time many NGOs thought that there was too much focus on block 31 and too little on ITT, therefore a campaign was started led by Acción Ecológica.

This idea of an oil moratorium was incorporated in the election campaign of *Movimiento País*, nowadays *Alianza Pais* the political party led by, now president, Rafael Correa. Their governmental plans 2007-2011 want “*declare a minimum of 40% of the national territory protected area to conserve the biodiversity and heritage of Ecuador*”. They also wanted to incorporate Ecuador’s nature and environment in economic and productive politics. This is not simply suspending oil exploitation. It aimed at optimizing the existing oil posts instead of maximizing the sheer number of oil posts. These plans also imply an oil moratorium for the south and middle of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Although the Yasuní ITT is an idea of many, if it had parents these would have been Esperanza Martinez, president of the NGO Acción Ecológica and Alberto Acosta, former minister of mining and energy and former president of the constitutional assembly (5 interviews). Acosta always had a lot of contact with Acción Ecológica, and his wife worked there at the time. In this group the idea existed to keep oil under ground and maybe already especially about block ITT. Acosta had already written several books about this issue, and when he became minister he had an opening to introduce this idea. The discussion to keep the oil underground has been led by NGOs.

In September 2009 an official document called “Yasuní-ITT Initiative: A big idea from a small country” edited by the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of environment was presented. This documents aims at preserving 38 percent of Ecuador’s territory. It is important to remember that the most relevant details of this document had been formulated long before Correa became president (3 interviews; Acosta, 2010).

Already in December 2006, Martinez gave the following guidelines to the future minister of energy and mines Acosta, from Acosta and Martinez (2010 p. 18):

- 1 *Declare the moratorium as policy aimed at protecting and conserving collective rights*
- 2 *Present internationally a proposal as an effort of Ecuador to meet three global goals: the reduction of greenhouse gasses, the conservation of biodiversity and security of indigenous people*
- 3 *Construct a commission, together with the ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs that makes an global assessment of Yasuní National Park and its population and identify the problems. Formulate necessary actions for local people, secure that they are covered by the state and not by multinationals.*
- 4 *Create an international agenda to present the proposal with as a goal that it becomes recognized as beneficent on an international level, translate this to an economic compensation that enables Ecuador to execute the initiative.*
- 5 *Analyse distinct economic options: selling crude in the soil, carbon compensation, and cancellation of external hesitation.*
- 6 *Inaugurate a sub secretary of Clean Energy, Decentralization and Low Impact, as a signal to the transition to a new petroleum model...*

These are very specific objectives, seeking to protect the life of uncontacted indigenous tribes, the protection of one of the most biodiverse zones of the planet and to avoid the emission of 410 million tons of CO₂.

4.8.2 Part 2 of the History of ITT

The second phase started when more data was collected to create a better proposal. A lot of information was based on the research done to prevent the oil access road in block 31. In this phase the Ecuadorian state became the main actor, instead of civil society and ENGOs.

In April 2007 Rafael Correa stated that although previous administrations had begun to elaborate plans to extract the oil in ITT, the first option would be to keep the oil underground in exchange for international compensation (Finer et al., 2009).

This led to the presentation of the ITT Initiative by Acosta to the Ecuadorian government on June 5, 2007 and later of the presentation to the world by President Correa. The ITT Initiative consisted of two options at the time: A- keep the oil underground by using the ITT Initiative and B- exploiting the oil using a multinational alliance. On November 20, the oil lobby convinced the president to exclude oil reserve Tiputini from the ITT project. At the same time Correa was received full of enthusiasm at the OPEC and UN top meetings, so the role of the president was already ambiguous. The initiative also knew a large number of ups and downs during that first year, at times convinced by their right, at times full of doubt (interview; Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009). The first idea was to incorporate the value of Yasuní's environmental services, the ENGO *Earth Economics* joined in November 2007 and calculated the value of the environmental services in the entire Biosphere Reserve. The value of these services exceeded the value of oil at least two times. However no funds can be found for the funding of environmental services (interview).

The project was consolidated with the formation of a new commission on 29 July 2008 headed by ex-mayor of Quito Roque Sevilla and included some (former) ENGO members like Yolanda Kakabadse, founder of the ENGOs *Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano* and *Fundación Natura*; and Natalia Greene from the ENGO *Pachamama* (Yasuní ITT Initiative).

The goal of this commission was to create a concrete proposal to keep the oil underground in ITT, this was partly funded by *La cooperación técnica Española* and the GTZ (the Spanish and German International Cooperation). This group gave the proposal time and space to crystallize. At this point the idea of an international trust fund supervised by the United Nations was first raised. The focus on environmental services was replaced by a compensation of \$350 million per year for 10 years, based on gaining half of the income it would gain through exploitation, based on the oil price of mid-2007. In late 2008 the strategy was based on carbon markets. Ecuador proposed the creation of "Yasuní Guarantee Certificates" (YGC) for the CO₂ locked in ITT. These YGCs could be sold to compensate non-emitted CO₂. The money would go into a trust fund and the interest of these funds would be used to fund sustainable development (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009).

Two of the most important articles on which the final ITT Initiative was built are the one from Acosta, Gudynas, Martinez and Vogel (2009): *leaving the oil under ground or the search for a lost paradise: elements for an economic and political proposal for the Initiative for not exploiting the crude of IT*, and Larrea and Warnars (2009) *Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Avoiding emissions by keeping petroleum underground*.

4.8.3 Part 3 of the History of ITT

The third phase starts when the government adapts the original proposal and introduces Plan B, extracting ITT's oil as a viable option. At this time the role of ENGOs also changes fundamentally: instead of seeing the government as a partner they see them as opponents. The international community does not believe that Ecuador still aims at keeping the crude in the subsoil. The setup of plan A is complicated, so complicated even that people within the government do not fully comprehend how it functions (interviews). Since 3 February, 2010 it is organized in the following way. Plan A is led by the ministry of environment and works in 3 groups. First: the political

committee, including ministers from involved ministries. Second: the technical committee, technical advisors and specialists, including the technical director Carlos Larrea. And third: the negotiation committee, negotiators and public relation specialists aiming at fundraising (3 interviews). Plan B is organized more effectively, it is run by the state-owned oil companies and aims at investigating how the oil should be exploited (interview).

The role of president Correa is crucial in this, although he became president with the campaign aiming at preserving Yasuní, he does not appear to fully support the ITT Initiative. One day he claims he created the ITT Initiative himself, and taking all credits in big international meetings, while the next he declares on state television that he wants to extract ITT's oil. Correa also cut out all ENGOs from the negotiation process, while they were main actors in the earliest stage, and important advisors later in the process (2 interviews).

The following critique from ENGOs has been uttered on the changed plans. The first initiative aimed at preserving the culture of indigenous groups, a focus lost in the newer proposals. Secondly the original initiative aims at a non-extractive economy, in the newer plans mining is an alternative for hydrocarbon activities. Finally plan B is introduced and developed at the same time as the "keeping the oil underground option" (2 interviews).

People that were involved from the beginning or an early stage only utter critique about this stage. Acosta resigned from all official jobs, as did Falconí. The ENGO of Martinez is chased by the police, and smeared by the government, which tries to make it illegal. Yolanda Kakabadse, now president of WWF international, talks about the smokescreen of the Yasuní ITT Initiative: the extraction of oil in the Amazon always had been the unofficial goal (Hoy 2 March 2011).

At this point, also the international community that needed to fund the ITT Initiative seems to lose confidence. As a first question: it is hard to explain why oil extraction in ITT should be forbidden while it can be done in block 31 and block Armadillo, as the current plan proposes. In both blocks the biodiversity is similar and uncontacted indigenous people also live there. And shouldn't Yasuní be protected sufficiently being a UNESCO site and a National Park? Secondly international actors begin to see that the president does not want to keep the oil underground and that opponents of the ITT Initiative are gaining strength. Many people in favour of the ITT Initiative have been removed from official positions. Germany, the first country to commit, willing to donate \$50 million a year, retreated from the project, not trusting Ecuador's commitment for keeping the oil underground indefinitely. This is a bad signal to all other potential donors and makes it harder to convince them to contribute, if even the self-declared leader on climate change does not want to contribute, why would other countries take the risk? (Schalatek, 2010)

4.9 Results on ENGO influence on Yasuní ITT

The information for this chapter consists of 10 interviews that gave substantial information about Yasuní ITT, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.9.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Yasuní ITT

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

7 respondents pointed out that ENGOs and indigenous groups aimed at a moratorium for Yasuní. 3 did not mention the initial point of view of ENGOs. All 10 respondents state that the government and oil companies wanted to extract the oil from block ITT in the near future. One respondent gave the following overview: "it started with Plan Verde, a plan for an alternative economy: joint initiative of ENGOs, indigenous argue for an oil stop for more than 20 years. Thus, first there was an idea of alternative non-oil economy with human rights, more development and biodiversity conservation. Later this crystallized as Yasuní-ITT"

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

With Alberto Acosta as minister of energy and mines, the possibility to keep the oil underground and get financial compensation to do this became the official framing of oil exploitation in Yasuní.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

Alberto Acosta was closely in touch with ENGOs and the idea of many, mentioned by Acosta, was largely influenced by ENGOs and their employees. It has been stated by multiple respondents that the ITT Initiative would not have been launched without ENGOs

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, the idea was largely created/influenced by multiple ENGOs and ENGO-related groups.

4.9.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Yasuní ITT

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

All respondents state that Alberto Acosta presented the ITT Initiative to the community, however the president did the international campaign and presented it to the United Nations. Since Acosta used the opening he had being the minister of energy and mines to present “this idea of many”, he is the one that presented the issue.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

Keeping the oil underground was placed on the agenda as a serious option for the ITT oil block. Another item that was mentioned was the alternative development model, one that does not depend on extractivism and is sustainable on a social, cultural and environmental level. Later in the process the president put the exploitation of ITT’s oil back on the agenda by developing plan B at the same time.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

Especially in early stages, ENGOs and people from ENGOs joined meetings. This allowed them to shape the agenda at times, however 3 respondents pointed out that they could not change much about the agenda and 2 respondents pointed out that they could not change anything at all. From early on, since the presentation of the Initiative to the House of Representatives and the President the agenda has been controlled by the government.

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, or at least ENGO influence on the agenda setting seems to be marginal. Only some influential people with ENGO and governmental ties were able to shape the agenda to some extent.

4.9.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Yasuní ITT

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government is without doubt the key actor in this negotiation, before Correa became president Ecuador wanted to extract the oil in block ITT. At the start of the negotiations discussed in this thesis the government’s official position to try to keep the oil underground. ENGOs supported this idea, and oil companies opposed.

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

Also in this negotiation, the government did change their opinion during the negotiation, a difference is however that this time these changes were not induced by a change in administration. The pro-oil voices within the government led by Correa gained power while those in favour of keeping the oil underground resigned from official positions. ENGOs and the oil companies did not change their positions.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

Half of the respondents (5) stated that ENGOs were not involved, and another 4 said that they wanted to join but were excluded by the government; this is not true, however it demonstrates the marginal role played by ENGOs. The later in the process the smaller the role of ENGOs was, until at this time they do not even play a role anymore. The ITT Initiative is now completely controlled by the government. Some respondents talk about hijacking plans from civil society and by that paralyzing the green and left opposition. They state that this is the official policy towards civil society by this administration.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did not have enough power or influence to change the position of key actors, even the “idea of many” had to be presented by someone from within the government, only he could change other governmental actors.

4.9.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning Yasuní ITT

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed, however people from ENGOs did get official jobs but not because they were from ENGOs, only because they knew the right people (3 interviews).

4.9.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning Yasuní ITT

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The newer the official documents are the less it reflects the opinion of ENGOs. Even more important the probability that the ITT Initiative will be executed seems smaller every day. However the respondents from ENGO still hope the Initiative will be put into practise.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Only some people from ENGOs to write the first version, and were not able influence the position of the government. The scientific basis of these discussion however has been laid by ENGOs, therefore the influence of ENGOs on the proposal is rather substantial. ENGO influence on the chances the ITT Initiative will be executed is close to zero.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, however ENGOs do not have influence on the chances of success of the ITT Initiative, they did contribute to the basis and official text of the ITT Initiative. Although their role was not formal and they were not officially included, some influential people from ENGOs: Kakabadse, Greene, Martinez could influence the final text of the Initiative.

4.10 Counterfactual analysis of Yasuní ITT

What would have happened if no ENGOs were involved in the decision-making process? It is the question if an idea like the ITT Initiative would have crystalized without ENGOs. Indigenous movements might have taken over the role but it would have looked different then. The role of ENGOs in the discussion prior to the negotiations was crucial, although an “idea of many”; many of those “many” came from ENGOs. It is demonstrated that before Alberto Acosta became minister he was already influenced by Martinez, the director of Acción Ecológica. If this would not have happened he might have acted the same, however it demonstrates how interwoven ENGOs

were in this stage. It is the question if anything might have started without the preparing role of ENGOs.

Later in the process the role of ENGOs becomes less powerful. The commission that wrote the final text of the initiative that was presented September 22 2009 also consisted of people from ENGOs or with strong ties to ENGOs, without these people the initiative might have looked a lot less like the initial idea. ENGOs admit that they already lost grip on the process at that time, which indicates that it would not have gone different without ENGOs. In the last phase the role of ENGOs was marginal or even non-existing, this reduces the need for a counterfactual analysis of this phase.

It can be concluded that the initial phase without ENGOs would have been completely different, and since the first phase is often one of the most important: without an start there is not anything; it can be concluded that without ENGOs no ITT Initiative would ever have been presented.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on one of the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators. However it is not felt by many people involved, ENGOs seem to have played a role of high influence. This is based on the entire process and does not reflect the current role of ENGOs, which seems to be marginal.

4.11 Results on the explanatory factors of ENGO influence

In this chapter the results from the second research question will be presented. This consists of the data derived during the 18 interviews with people from ENGOs, the government and specialists. All interviewees were asked whether they could think of factors that could explain the political influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process in Yasuní. They were also asked what factors could explain the lack of ENGO-influence. These restricting factors are needed in order to give a complete picture of the decision-making process; using only enabling factors will not give a true image of what happened. The results on these two questions will be presented in the section hereunder. All respondents could give as many answers as they liked, therefore the number of factors will not add up to 18.

This discussion aims at answering the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” Here the results from the interviews are combined with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008) and the judgement of the researcher.

Table 5 and table 6 underneath show the results from the respondents, including the general explanation. These are the pure results. However, this chapter will go one step deeper and try to analyse what enabling and restricting factors played a large role in ENGO influence in Yasuní. The number of times a factor has been mentioned does not necessarily represent its importance, it is merely an indicator. This chapter will use these results as a tool to explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. The analysis of these factors starts with the enabling factors, presented hereunder in table 5.

Table 5: Explanatory factors of ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Individual actions	4	Individual actions of ENGO-employee made a difference
2	Contextual factors	3	Mentioned: media and public opinion
	Coincidence	3	Mentioned: miracle, coincidence, luck
	Access to negotiations	3	Easy to join negotiations
	Personal network	3	Through the personal network of ENGO-employees influence was exercised
	Scientific research	3	A lot of research done by ENGOs, so the discussion is based on their information
7	Institutional network	2	Through the network of the ENGO influence was exercised
	Stage of negotiations	2	Joined early and therefore a larger influence
	Watchdog	2	Controlling the government and taking actions when things do not go well
10	Alliances with key governmental bodies	1	An alliance with a governmental player makes it easier to influence governmental decisions
	Confidence between actors	1	NGOs that trusted each other worked together and could enlarge their influence
	In touch with grassroots movements	1	Knows what happens within Yasuní and good contact with indigenous people
	Lot of knowledge and experience	1	Most experience within this field by some ENGOs
	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as good coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Scale of operation	1	More influence on a detailed level
	Well-known ENGO	1	When needed people could find the ENGO

The most important enabling factors that explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní will be discussed.

Most often mentioned and of a rather high importance are *individual actions*. However, most mentioned does not mean these are most important, it only indicates that the individual actions are highly visible. Margot Bass and Matt Finer for example started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní together as a personal initiative. Events like these are highly visible and are of importance. Nevertheless they could only have success when other people or institutions were also working on the same topic. Rather remarkable is that the people that did those individual actions or were involved in individual actions often mentioned *coincidence* as a large explaining factor, often unaware of actions or activities undertaken by others. Instead, a person that had a good overview of the negotiations in Yasuní only mentioned *coincidence* once; he explained that the success of ENGOs depended on so many factors that some luck was necessary to achieve its goals. He explained that the right political climate is needed, the right influential people on the right jobs, a network reaching into the government, some help from the public opinion and the media, enough financial resources at that time. When all these things came together one might call it *luck* or *coincidence* he said. That is true: **many different variables together explain the change of success of ENGOs.**

It is rather easy for ENGOs in Ecuador to join negotiations, *access to negotiations* are therefore an important factor. This is called *rules of access* in Betsill and Corell (2008). They state that ENGO influence is enhanced when ENGO participation is facilitated. This is what happened in Yasuní too. ENGOs could join official meetings of several ministers easily. Even some international actors could join official meetings on a tourist visa, while they were on holiday (interview). Nonetheless

it becomes more difficult every year for ENGOs to join these meetings. The government becomes more and more closed. **The easy access of ENGOs to negotiations enhanced their influence.**

Almost certainly the most important factor to explain ENGO influence is the personal network of ENGO-employees. As can be seen in the negotiations concerning block 31 and Yasuní ITT, the connections of people from ENGOs played a decisive role. According to an Ecuadorian political analyst, this is because Ecuador is ruled by an elite (Natalia Greene, interview). Everyone from this elite knows everybody else. With the Rafael Correa's new government many people from ENGOs and universities were able to join this elite. People from ENGOs became minister, high civil servant, or member of the House of Representatives or the constitutional assembly. With these people in place it became easier to invite other people from ENGOs to join the decision-making process. These people on key positions enabled ENGOs to influence the government from within and to join more closed meetings. This also comes back in two other factors: *alliances with key governmental bodies* and *the institutional network*. This easy-access has been restricted in recent years since the president thought the influence of the civil society groups were too large. **The personal network of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence.**

One of the most influential activities undertaken by ENGOs is *scientific research*, the negotiations of block 31 and Yasuní ITT are built on a fundament of scientific research done by different ENGOs. The recommendations and conclusions from these reports can be found in official government texts like the results from the SCY in the official text for Yasuní ITT. **Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation to the negotiation.** This is also underlined by another mentioned factor: *knowledge and experience of ENGOs*.

The *stage of negotiations* could also explain ENGO influence, especially on Yasuní ITT. ENGOs were active and influential in a very early stage. Although their influence diminished during the negotiations they already had so much influence in the beginning, the final document still represents much of their position. **When ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher.**

The final important enabling factor is being a *watchdog*. Several ENGOs are continuously controlling governmental functioning, when decisions are taken opposing ENGOs' policy goals actions are taken. Some respondents call this opportunism but it looks like it works pretty well, however it is also important that other groups work all the time, not only when action is needed. **Acting as a watchdog is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions.**

Other mentioned factors do not seem to have played a large role in Yasuní. *Being in touch with grassroots movements*, *Confidence between actors*, *ENGO-coordination*, *Being a well-known ENGO* do not appear to have played a decisive role. *ENGO-coordination* in fact, is also mentioned as a restricting factor.

Restricting factors are also of importance explaining the political influence of ENGOs. In the case of Yasuní the following factors respondents mentioned the following factors, including a brief explanation (table 6).

Table 6: Restricting factors for ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Economic stakes	4	The economic stakes are high in Yasuní, this makes it hard to influence governmental decisions
2	Political stakes	3	The political stakes are high in Yasuní making it hard to influence decisions
3	Financial capabilities	2	Both mentioned as a lack of funds
4	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as a lack of coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Bad atmosphere between ENGOs and government	1	This restricted the influence of ENGOs
	Lack of continuity within ENGOs	1	A restricting factor

The most often mentioned factor: *economic stakes* also seems to be the most important. The economic stakes in Yasuní are high. Ecuador is a poor country and needs income from oil to fund education, healthcare and energy. With already 20 percent of the oil reserves in ITT the economic stakes are enormous. The political stakes in the case of Yasuní do not differ much from the economic stakes because the political stakes are in essence also economic: the money is needed by the government, raising the political stakes. Betsill and Corell also state that ENGO influence is constrained where economic interests are at stake. **The economic stakes in Yasuní are high; this restricts ENGO influence.** At the same time the influence of the oil-lobby is enhanced by these high economic stakes. This is scientifically underwritten by Betsill and Corell (2008).

In comparison to the government and oil companies, ENGOs have little *financial capabilities*. This lack of funds also restricts the functioning of ENGOs in Yasuní. **The small financial capabilities of ENGOs, compared to those of the government and oil companies, restrict the influence of ENGOs.**

The lack of *ENGO-coordination* also seems to restrict ENGO influence. Although Betsill and Corell state that it has a neutral effect it seems to restrict ENGO influence a bit, with coordinated actions more impact could be achieved. In the case of the ZI several groups of ENGOs demanded different things, making a diffuse sound and creating a competition of ENGOs for governmental attention. Although also mentioned as an enabling factor **ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor.**

This bad coordination has its basis in the *lack of continuity within ENGOs*, another mentioned factor. With new people aboard ENGOs every few months no strong alliance between ENGOs could be build. Because many people changed jobs very often not a lot of experience could be gained in a specific topic, this also restricted ENGO influence. **The lack of continuity within ENGOs led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs.**

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. It became harder to join meetings and ENGOs have less access to key governmental actors.

Hereunder the explanatory factors will be analysed for all three cases separately. The difference in the three cases lies in the enabling factors, the restricting factors seem to be the same among the three cases, these say more about Yasuní as a political arena than over the cases separately. Therefore the following three sections focus on the enabling factors.

Not all enabling and restricting factors are of the same importance for all three cases. In the case of the Zona Intangible one seems to be the single most important: **acting as a watchdog**. Without ENGOs participating in the negotiations the creation of the final boundaries of the Z I might have

gotten off the agenda resulting in a Zona Intangible without boundaries. This would have made it impossible to protect this area from loggers and even worse, oil exploitation.

For the decision-making process concerning block 31 other factors have been important. The **individual actions** mentioned above mostly concerned block 31. Margot Bass and Matt Finer that started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní initiative. Their effort made a large difference on the negotiations. It included many more actors, the issue was reframed: from normal oil production to the destruction of a natural area with an unique biodiversity. **The personal network of some ENGO employees was also of major importance**, several ENGO employees knew people within the government, this made it easier to access negotiations. This **access to the negotiation** enabled ENGOs to execute a lot of influence: all different groups of people could join formal meetings with the GAT and the minister of environment, especially when Alban became minister. ENGOs introduced her to the problems from an ENGO perspective, making a powerful ally of her. Finally **a lot of scientific research was executed** to investigate the influence of oil extraction and the construction of roads on biodiversity and the indigenous people of this region. Later this knowledge was used in the discussion of Yasuní ITT and the Zona Intangible (see 5.1).

For the Yasuní ITT initiative two factors enabled the large influence of ENGOs. First the **stage of negotiations** at which ENGOs joined. ENGOs were part of the group that created the initial idea. Later several ENGO employees were part of the ITT committee, enabling ENGOs to project their ideals and policy goals on this official governmental document. All **this was possible due to the personal network of some key actors** like Esperanza Martinez, Alberto Acosta and Yolanda Kakabadse.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results will be analysed using the literature presented in the theoretical framework. Also the contribution of this thesis to the literature will be discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The three different cases cannot be seen completely separated from each other. As can be seen in the timeline in figure 5, the three cases have a lot of overlap in both time and actors. Also the same contextual factors influence the three different negotiations, often in a similar manner. With a greener president ENGOs gain influence, with a less eco-oriented president they lose power. New laws, for example, also apply to all three cases. This however is already recognized in the theoretical model in figure 4, whereas the influence between the cases has not been studied yet. In this chapter the interdependence and influence of the different cases will be discussed.

The Zona Intangible did influence the other cases; first it set an example for conservation in the region. Secondly, it placed an important oil well in block 31 off limits, Imuya. Since then people no longer talk about block ITTI but about ITT.

From ENGO's perspective the central case in Yasuní is block 31. The start of these negotiations started the active role of ENGOs in Yasuní, where previous decision-making (for the ZI) took place without ENGOs. **While ENGOs tried to frame the issue of block 31, they actually framed the larger issue of oil production in Yasuní.** The SCY wanted to preserve block 31, and did research in Yasuní to use the results as lobby material. The outcomes of their research, "Yasuní has an unique biodiversity and its greatest threat are roads" are still quoted. These results were even used for official government policy for the Zona Intangible and Yasuní ITT. One can state that **the scientific research done for block 31 is the backbone of Ecuador's policy concerning Yasuní.** The success of ENGOs on block 31 positively influenced the chances of conservation for the ZI and ITT. Only after the successes in block 31 the final boundaries of the ZI were finally drawn. The battle of block 31 made ENGOs the most experienced actors in Yasuní. With the new governments of Palacio and Correa they could gain influence because they knew how things worked, and the history of the negotiation was also know to them.

Another remarkable similarity between the three cases are the actors, not only on an organizational level, but specially on a personal level. Some key actors come back in all three negotiations. They could even have a different role in all three negotiations.

At one time some people thought that block 31 got too much attention, at that time ITT became more important in the negotiations. In January 2007 the focus changed from block 31 to Yasuní ITT. **The interdependence of block 31 and Yasuní ITT is very large.** They are destined to the same future, either oil extraction or conservation. Basically what will happen to block ITT will happen to block 31. When the ITT initiative will be executed the extraction of oil in 31 would no longer be profitable. When ITT will be extracted the oil from block 31 will be used to mix 31's lighter oil with the heavy crude from ITT.

Since Petrobras returned block 31 to the state and the official document of Yasuní ITT is published the influence of ENGOs diminished. The Correa administration excluded ENGOs from the decision-making process and eco-oriented ministers and advisers were replaced. What this will mean for the future is still unknown.

The three dimensions of power from Lukes (1974) can also be found in the case of Yasuní. The first dimension is most seen in Yasuní: the openly executed influence between actors. The government is the central player in this dimension, it states what other actors should do and what decisions will be taken. The second dimension can also be found, many decisions are not taken, the final boundaries of the ZI took eight years; eight years in which no decision has been taken

because those boundaries were not in line with the policy preferences of the government and oil companies. The same can be said for Yasuní ITT, it has not yet been started because there is a covert conflict within the government and between all actors. Some do not want to keep the oil underground: no decision on the activation of Yasuní ITT is in line with their policy preferences. The third dimension of power is hardest to observe; however, in the Yasuní case, the “real” interests are overt. The separation of the actors in two groups have been made earlier in this thesis, groups that want to extract the oil and the groups that want to keep the oil under ground. Later a third group was added that wants to extract the oil with minimum social and environmental impact. This separation reflects the “real” interests of the actors. The extraction of Yasuní’s oil has long been a latent conflict, however in the investigated period it was clearly overt. Before 1999 many conflicts have been latent, but since block 31 everything happens more openly. Except for the conflicts within the Correa administration: these best represent the third dimension of power in this thesis.

Some political scientists in Ecuador, for example Natalia Greene (interview), recognize the existence of an elite that rules Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a small group of people in which everybody knows each other; these people rule the country, or rule a theme like nature conservation. This implies that the ideas from Wright Mills (1956) are still applicable for Ecuador. In this thesis special attention has been given to ask open questions to verify if in Ecuador the pluralist theory, the elitist theory or a hybrid is most relevant. Therefore neither the elitist question “who rules?” is asked nor “does anyone have power?” like a pluralist would ask.

The choice for a political arena has been a good choice for this thesis, although the situation sometimes resembles a policy network. However the central player is most certainly the Ecuadorian government, therefore there is as strict hierarchy of actors. For Yasuní it is as follows: on top are the governmental players, underneath international players like UNDP or UNESCO, followed by powerful groups and businesses, ranging from oil companies to powerful indigenous organizations, ending with NGOs. Another hint that it is not a policy network is the fact that the public and private players are not mutually dependent, in fact the government can do what it wants. At times this provokes an intense reaction by other players, but it does not mean that the policy will be changed.

Whereas Arts (2008) solely focuses on intentional influence, this thesis also underlines the importance of the unintentional influence of ENGOs. Some ENGOs, especially those with a more radical view had a lot of unwanted unintentional influence on the negotiation. They radicalized, which made cooperation with some other actors impossible. This history has been repeated by several respondents and demonstrated the important role of Acción Ecológica. The discussion whether influence has to be intentional can be explained for Yasuní. Many groups try to influence the decision-making and the key actor: the government. This is done because these groups want to achieve their policy goals. However aiming at positive influence they might at times experience unexpected and unwanted side effects. For example in the discussion of the ZI the claims made by Acción Ecológica to make the entire Amazon a No-Go Zone for development almost ruined the chances to create the actual ZI. Therefore the importance of unintentional influence in this thesis is rather large.

The distinction made in governance literature between NGOs that work in partnerships and NGOs that focus more on action has also been found in this thesis. Van Huijstee (2010); Visseren-Hamakers (2009); and Humphreys (2006) have found a similar distinction. In Ecuador partnerships are still rare, especially in the Yasuní region. However a group of NGOs cooperates more with the government and others, whereas the second group solely consists of more radical NGOs. In time partnerships might be a part of the Ecuadorian NGO-landscape. The terms “collaborative” and “campaigning” NGO seem to suit the situation in Ecuador.

The results from this thesis can be linked to the outcomes of Betsill and Corell (2008). The latter found eight factors that can explain political influence of NGOs, and also a brief explanation of how these factors explain political influence. In this thesis a number of these factors are mentioned by respondents, six of these have also been listed by Betsill and Corell.

ENGO coordination had a neutral effect according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in this thesis however it was mentioned as a restricting factor. The lack of coordination was restricting the influence of ENGOs on the government according to the respondents. In Yasuní's case it seems to be a restricting factor rather than an factor with a neutral effect. Betsill and Corell (2008) did mention that all levels of ENGO influence were achieved under varying levels of ENGO coordination, in Yasuní the influence of ENGOs could have been higher if the actions of like-minded ENGOs were more synchronized.

Betsill and Corell state that ENGO influence is enhanced when active steps are taken to facilitate NGO participation. In Yasuní it was at times facilitated like in the Yasuní ITT committee, at times it was not facilitated but the participation of ENGOs was still high. While Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence does not decline, in Yasuní ENGO influence declined with more restrictive rules of access, particularly in the last 3 years.

Betsill and Corell (2008) underwrite the importance of joining the negotiations in an early phase, however this is often not enough to achieve influence in a later phase. The same can be seen in Yasuní, and especially in Yasuní ITT. ENGOs joined early but over time the policy less and less resembles the ENGOs' opinion.

The political and economic stakes are very high in Yasuní, this reduces influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), and that is true. The government and other players are less open to the ideas from ENGOs since so much money and power is at stake.

Alliances with key governmental bodies enhances influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in Ecuador this is done at times, although only mentioned by one respondent. This implies that it is not the most usual way to influence the government in Yasuní.

The last two factors from Betsill and Corell (2008), *institutional overlap* and *competition from other NGOs* have not been found in this thesis. However the competition from other NGOs might have played a role in the drawing of the ZI's final boundaries. Two groups of ENGOs had completely different goals, protecting the proposed area or protecting the entire Amazon. This battle between ENGOs did no good for the negotiation, but the goal of the larger group was reached: protecting the proposed area. Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence is not a zero-sum game and that competition between NGOs does not necessarily constrain NGO influence.

5.2 Contribution to the literature

This thesis investigated the decision-making process of the major issues in Yasuní: la Zona Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní ITT. This is one of the first investigations to combine these three major cases, and the first that analyses the decision-making process of these cases. Also the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has not been studied widely yet. Other than the works of Narvaez (2007) and Lara (2007) the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has only been touched superficially. This is the first complete overview of the last twelve years in Yasuní. The timeline created for this thesis is also a novelty. It is of importance that these cases finally have been linked formally since the negotiations influenced each other, although it was not yet recognized.

This thesis is also another verification of explanatory factors, Betsill and Corell (2008) do not mention the personal network of ENGO employees, while in Ecuador this is the single most important enabling factor for ENGO influence. This might be a valuable addition to the list of Betsill and Corell (2008). Many others (6 out of 8) have also been found in this thesis; underlining the quality of Betsill and Corell's (2008) list.

The use of Arts' (1998) model demonstrated that there is a large difference in the area of research between Arts' and this research. His methodology was not applicable to the situation in Ecuador where there is no strict boundary between ENGO-people and governmental or other employees. This behaviour of Ecuadorian decision-makers might not be typically Ecuadorian, this happens among many political players in environmental issues (Carter, 2008). The distinction between two types of NGOs, one more pragmatic the other more radical in its message has not only been found in this thesis but is a mayor area of investigation. Van Huijstee (2010) and Visseren-Hamakers (2008) have found the same outcome in their investigation. Humphreys (2006) also investigated this phenomenon in governance.

5.3 Discussion of the Model

The model used in this thesis was adapted from Arts (1998) before carrying out the research, and was a useful simplification of the reality. However further adaptations could be made to enlarge the explanatory power of the model; it makes the model more suited for Yasuní. To introduce this model, it is necessary to understand the background of the situation in Ecuador. Figure 6 below provides a schematic guide to reading the following section.

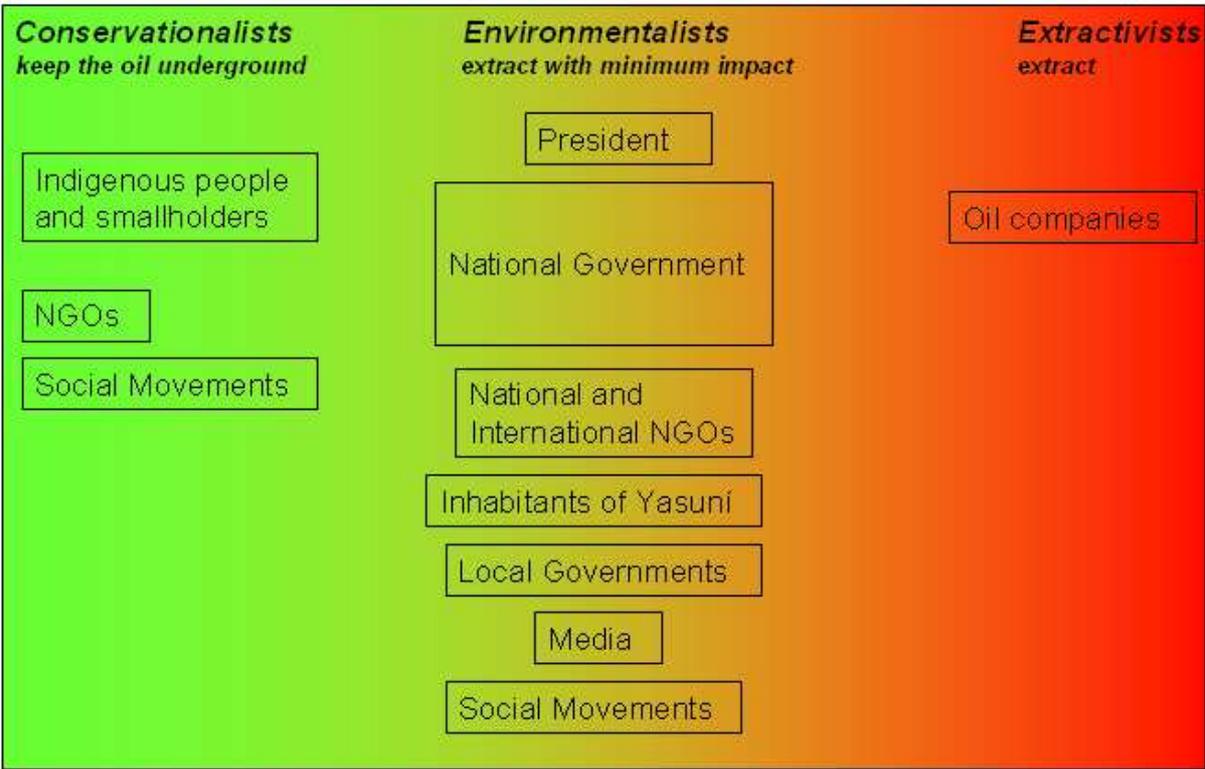


Figure 6: The major actors of this thesis

Three different groups can be categorized in Yasuní, those in favour of extracting Yasuní's oil, *extractivists*; those that want to keep the oil underground, *conservationalists* and those to want to extract the oil but with minimum impact: *environmentalists*. The *extractivists* consist, nowadays, solely of oil companies. The *conservationalists*, consist of some NGOs, some social movements and indigenous people and smallholders living in the Amazon. Here the distinction between NGOs and social movements is used since these behave differently. Social movements in Ecuador often represent an group of people, like the social movements of indigenous or women. If policy is designed that touches these people in a negative way, actions are taken whereas NGOs work with projects on specific themes. However this distinction not needed for the entire thesis, since for Yasuní these groups have similar goals. However, several people interviewed for this thesis worked both at NGOs and at social movements. The *environmentalists* are the most diverse

group. They consist of some inhabitants, governmental actors and NGOs that believe in oil extraction with minimum impact; some NGOs, social movements and governmental bodies that believe in a pragmatic approach, where minimum impact extraction is the best they can achieve; and actors that reached this consensus since they are internally divided: such as the national government, the media and the president. This is a rather strange claim, but it seems that the president of Ecuador swings back and forth between keeping the oil underground and extracting it. The National Government at this time consists of both pro-oil people and pro-conservation people.

This new knowledge can lead to a new model, still simple but with some nuance. While the basic structure remains the same, the grey scale from figure 6 are included to indicate the political opinion of these groups. The second difference is that NGOs are split in ENGOs and NGOs. The first group consists of campaigning NGOs the second of collaborative NGOs, this same distinction can be found in governance literature (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009). Separating these two groups of NGOs enlarges the explanatory power of this model without making it overly complicated. The main focus for this research would lie on the political influence of ENGOs instead of NGOs. The adapted model is showed hereunder in figure 7. A final change is that this model acknowledges that the government makes the final decisions, rather than participating in negotiations (arrow V, explained below).

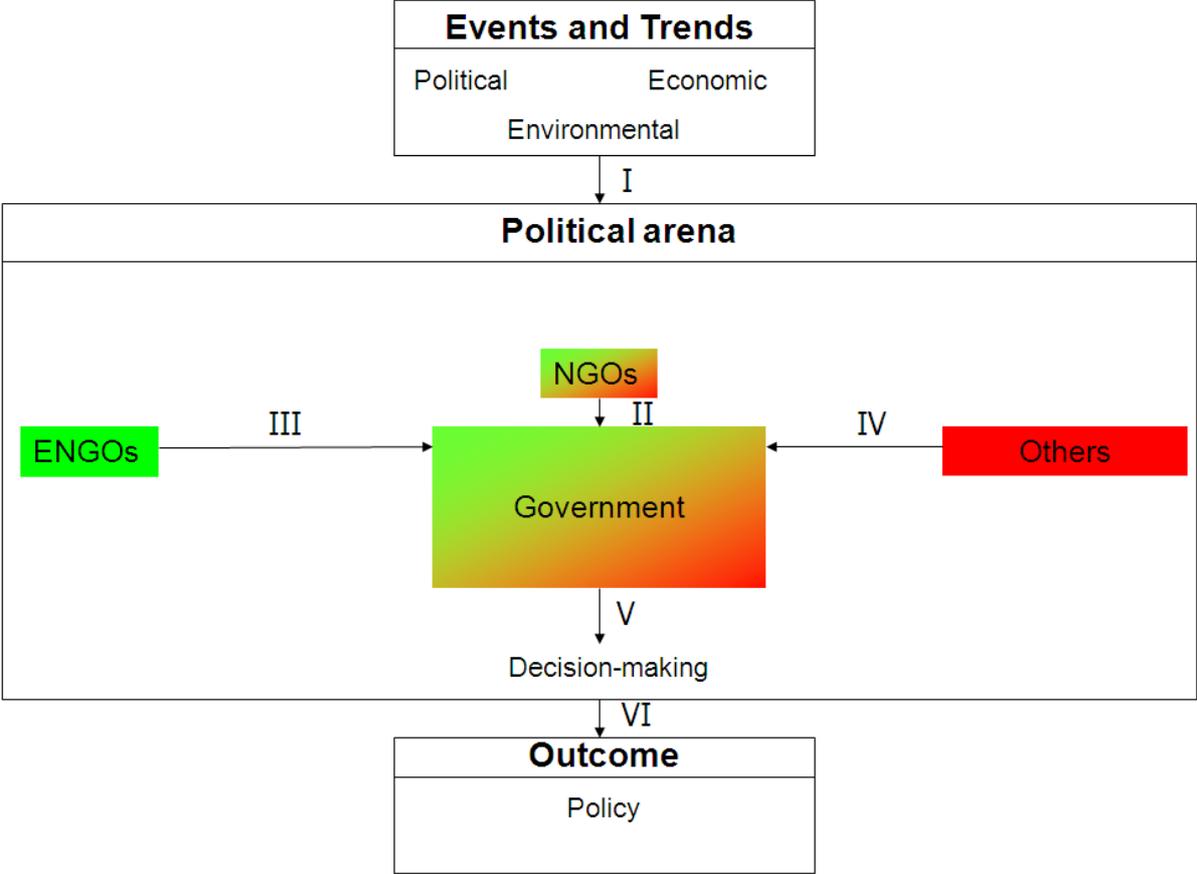


Figure 7: The adapted theoretical model

Arrow (I): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are all political, economic, environmental factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors may not be fixed, what is a constraint for one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis, etc.

Arrow (II): *political influence*. This is the political influence of *collaborative* NGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing.

Arrow (III): *political influence*. This is the political influence of (*campaigning*) ENGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing. This arrow is the main focus of the research. In the governance literature this group can also be called campaigning NGOs (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009)

Arrow (IV): *political influence*. This is the political influence of actors other than NGOs on the government (primarily oil companies, for a detailed list, see figure 6). It has to be stressed that arrows II, III and IV are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given its formal status and position. However governments do in reality influence other players and NGOs it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (V): *does*. The government is the most important actor in decision-making, but during the process it might be influenced.

Arrow (VI): *leads to*. The policy processes lead to policy.

In this model NGOs are able to impact policy outcomes in principle but they are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors.

5.4 Discussion of the Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction and the research methodology chapter, the first methodology selected was replaced by one more suitable for the specific situation in Yasuní. The first methodology was based on the assumption that respondents could be divided in three different groups: people from ENGOs, people from the government and other respondents. The first group could provide an EGO-perception of ENGO-influence on the negotiations. The second group would give an ALTER-perception, the view from people in the government on ENGO-influence. The third group consisting of specialists could provide a more objective view, the Causal Analysis. This Causal Analysis would be a researcher’s assessment of NGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews. This methodology was used by Arts (1998) to analyse NGO influence on international conventions. Initially, this methodology appeared to provide an adequate examination of ENGO influence in Yasuní. While the international environmental negotiations and the negotiations concerning Yasuní looked rather similar beforehand, in the practice the international dimension was non-existent. This led to several complications: instead of resembling international political negotiations it was more similar to regional politics; where one small group of people that knows each other well, an ‘elite,’ governed Yasuní. This small group of people dominated the negotiations, but did not stick to one position. People changed from influential ENGO jobs to professorships and some even became minister or member of the constitutional assembly or House of Representatives. Furthermore, these changes were not one-way, after a job in the government some people returned to ENGOs. These changes in employment led to new employees bringing their expertise and network with them, and to an exchange of ideas between different groups.

These changes in careers were common; many people did exceed two years in one job, making the planned division between EGO- and ALTER-perception and Causal-Analysis impossible. This was also due to the fact that, during the interviews, many people did not have the kind of job they had during the various events in Yasuní. It was therefore decided to consider a large group respondents as a part of an *elite*. People outside this ‘elite’ considered the other actors as a group where they did not belong to. Therefore the division in three groups was cancelled and all answers from respondents were equally analysed.

The main source of data in this thesis consisted of semi-structured interviews, using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008). During the interviews it seemed impossible to structure

an interview accordingly. Many people gave their version of events, which had to be structured into the framework to present the results.

The original plan for this thesis was to interview the three main actors in Yasuní: NGOs, governmental bodies and oil companies. Due to circumstances the latter could not be interviewed. New licenses were given to oil companies during the fieldwork. This made it impossible for an outsider to have meetings with them, oil companies were too afraid any outcome might influence their new contracts. This reduced the interviewed participating parties to two: NGOs and governmental bodies.

Another restricting factor was Ecuador's political situation in October 2010. On 30 September 2010 an attempted coupe d'état was executed by the police. During this chaos there was even an attempted murder on the president. The weeks following 30 September it was impossible to contact governmental bodies for an interview, and later in November and December people were still less open than they might have been beforehand. Therefore only a few names are mentioned in this thesis, the names of politicians openly talking about the times they were minister. Other actors wanted to remain low profile and anonymous. Guaranteeing their anonymity made them more open, so more reliable information could be retrieved.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the most important consequences of this thesis. It starts with conclusions on the scientific objective: answers on the research questions. Subsequently hints for further research will be given and finally recommendations for ENGOs active in Yasuní are presented.

6.1 To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 1: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” This will be done first for the three topics and later a general answer will be presented.

In the Zona Intangible the influence of ENGOs was low when the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used. ENGOs participated in the negotiation but without noticeable effect on the process or outcome. However in the counterfactual analysis it was demonstrated that the creation of final boundaries might have been put off the agenda if it were not for ENGOs. Therefore **the actual influence of ENGOs on the ZI might have been higher, however this is only an indicated guess by the researcher.**

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning block 31 was high: ENGOs participated in the negotiations and had some success in shaping the negotiation process; also the effects of ENGO participation can be linked to the outcome. If it were not for ENGOs the oil in block 31 was currently exploited, destroying the living grounds of the indigenous groups in the area and its fragile ecosystem.

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning Yasuní ITT was high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and they have some success in shaping the negotiation process. ENGOs’ effects of participation can be linked to the outcome. Especially in the first phases of the negotiation the role of ENGOs was significant. However their role weakened, the policy goals of ENGOs are still largely represented by the government on this topic.

ENGO influence in Yasuní is case specific, their influence was different in all three cases. However ENGOs had high influence in two of the three cases, therefore it is possible to conclude that **ENGOs have significant overall influence on governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní.**

6.2 What factors explain ENGOs influence on the governmental decisions concerning oil exploitation in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 2: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?”

The enabling factors found in this thesis are in sequence of importance: the **personal network** of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence. People involved in Yasuní form a small *elite*; everyone knows each other. This enables the exchange of information and enlarges the possibilities of ENGO employees to join important meetings. The importance of the fact that all actors in this political arena are just a phone call away is hard to overestimate.

Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation for the negotiations. Especially for block 31 a lot of research has been executed by ENGOs on the effects of oil extraction and road construction on the natural and cultural environment of Yasuní. No other

group has delivered so much valuable scientific information. Whereas the government takes the decisions in Yasuní, their decisions are based on the information delivered by ENGOS.

The **Stage of negotiation** was also of large importance: when ENGOS joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher. Important is that ENGOS did often join early, except for the Zona Intangible discussion. Yasuní ITT underlines the importance of joining early in these negotiations. ENGOS only joined early phases of the negotiation but their influence of the outcome was still large because they designed the outline of the entire plan.

The **easy access of ENGOS to negotiations** enhanced their influence. This can be linked to the personal network of ENGO employees and the network of the ENGOS. The rules of access are rather informal or non-existing, which makes it easier for non-governmental actors to join when compared to other negotiations.

Acting as a **watchdog** is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions. When ENGOS were excluded from the decision-making they controlled the government. As soon as the government did something undesired by ENGOS they started actions to influence the government.

Opposite the enabling factors are the restricting factors; the most important restricting factors. These are listed hereunder:

The single most important factor is the presence of very high **economic stakes** in Yasuní. These make it harder for ENGOS to join the decision-making process and to influence the outcomes. This factor has a lot of overlap with the **political stakes** in Yasuní, which are mainly of an economic character.

The small **financial capabilities** of ENGOS compared to the government and oil companies restrict ENGOS' political influence. The amount of money available for demonstrations, research and lobby-activities is restricted, especially compared to the budget of the other actors like the government and oil companies.

ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor. With better coordination the influence of ENGOS could have been higher and more precisely focussed on important issues. Also the overlap of scientific research would have been reduced.

The **lack of continuity within ENGOS** led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOS. Since the personal network is the most important enabling factor of political influence in Yasuní, the turnover rate of employees is a severe threat to the positions of ENGOS.

The bad atmosphere between ENGOS and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. Since 2008 the role of ENGOS in the decision-making process has been diminished. The authoritarian style of the government does not recognize the role of ENGOS and other groups from civil society. This effectively destroyed the strong ties between the Correa administration and ENGOS, this is a critical problem for ENGOS in the near future.

6.3 Conclusions regarding the used model and methodology

The original theoretical model should be adapted to increase its explanatory power while keeping it simple. Two groups of NGOs should be included in the model: one group aiming to keep the oil underground (ENGOS) and a second group aiming at extraction with minimum social and environmental impact (NGOS). This separation between more radical and more pragmatic NGOs can also be found in governance literature.

For succeeding studies a methodology that recognizes the fact that the people in power consists of an actual elite would be preferable. The initial methodology from Arts (1998) was not applicable in the case of Yasuní. In the methodology should be recognized that people in important positions change their jobs often, making a distinction between governmental employees and ENGO employees impossible.

The changing opinion of the Ecuadorian government should also be recognized in advance: Ecuador has changed five times of president during the investigated processes (1999-2011). Therefore a model should recognize that the government is not an unchanging or stable actor. The framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was highly suited to this research. It supported and guided this research, even without making major adaptations. Only the procedural issues of the final agreement were not used, since they were not discussed in any of the three cases.

6.3 Recommendations for ENGOs

Research goal two was formulating recommendations for ENGOs in cases similar to Yasuní. Hereunder four brief recommendations extracted from this thesis are formulated.

1 invest in an extensive personal network existing of other people in the political arena, this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions

2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs.

3 join early in negotiations. The more early ENGOs join the better the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals.

4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice. This is needed to tackle the difference in funds.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Ego-Perception

Name of Organization:

What kind of NGO:

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What specific achievements did this NGO make concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de esta ONG en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of this NGO concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande esta ONG en Yasuní?

What documents or policy did you change; How?

Que documentos o gestión cambió esta ONG; Cómo?

What would have happened without this NGO / no NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la influencia de esta ONG?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

What factors explain your political influence, Why?

Qué factores pueden explicar el influencia de las ONGs; Porqué?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influencia politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

Alter-Perception and Specialists Interviews

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ITT, ZI & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influence politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

➔ Checking claims made by discussed NGO in previous interviews

Appendix 2: List of interviewed groups

List of interviewed organizations:

ENGOs and Social movements

Acción Ecológica
Amazonia por la vida
Ciudadanos por la vida
EcoCiencia
Fundación Natura
Fundación Pachamama
FondoAmbiental
Instituto de estudios ecologistas de tercer mundo
Oilwatch
Save America's Forests
Secretaría de Pueblos
WCS-Ecuador
WWF

Government

Co-authors of Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Yasuní ITT committee
Committee de gestion de Yasuní (Yasuní's Biosphere Reserve management committee)
Ministry of environment
Ministry of cultural and natural heritage
Ministry of mining and energy
Ministry of politics

Specialists

University of San Francisco de Quito
University Andina Simon Bolivar
FLACSO
Boston University
Tiputini Biodiversity station
Radio France Internacional
Wereldomroep Nederland / VPRO

List of organizations that gave lectures on this specific topic, including groups that were active in Yasuní but did no longer have the knowledge required for this thesis.

CEDA (Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental)
Conservation International
Ecoflex
EcoFund
IEETM
International Alert
Plataforma de Responsabilidad Social
UNDP
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The Political Influence of ENGOs on Oil Extraction in Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve:

Can ENGOs keep the oil underground?



Pascal ten Have BSc

870220312130

Supervisor: Dr. Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers

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for Lucero

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Summary

Yasuni's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet. It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. Yasuni consists of Yasuni National Park and a Waorani Ethnic Reserve, an indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani are the Taromenane and Tagaeri, two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation. Yasuni's staggering richness does not only lie above ground; under the soil are vast amounts of crude oil that put Yasuni's future on the line. Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuni: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and Yasuni-ITT. This thesis aims at explaining the role of ENGOS (Environmental NGOs) in the decision-making processes in Yasuni. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following two questions: *To what extent did ENGOS influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* and *What factors explain the political influence of ENGOS on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* This analytical and explanatory study describes the extent of the ENGOS' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuni. In addition, it also tries to explain the factors that determine this political influence.

To answer the research questions a theoretical framework has been created based on the following concepts: *power, influence, political influence, political arena, policy network, ENGOS*. These concepts all came together in the influence of ENGOS on environmental negotiations. The works of Arts (1998) and Betsill and Corell (2008) form the scientific backbone of this thesis. The theoretical model aims at explaining the influence of ENGOS on the main actor in these decision-making processes: the government.

The first set of data was retrieved from semi-structured interviews with key actors on the three different topics in Yasuni. This data was used to examine the influence of ENGOS on: issue framing, agenda setting, the position of key actors and on the final agreement. With these results the decision-making process is reconstructed, the influence on all different phases is analysed and a counterfactual analysis of ENGO influence was made. The second set of data consists of factors explaining ENGO influence, which have also been retrieved from interviews. In the discussion these are combined with the eight factors Betsill and Corell extracted from several case studies about the political influence of NGOs on environmental negotiations.

This analysis provided the following results. The influence of ENGOS on the decision-making process of the Zona-Intangible was low: while ENGOS participated in the negotiations, there was no effect on the process or outcome. Conversely, ENGO influence in block 31 was high, ENGOS had both influence on the process and the outcome. ENGO influence on Yasuni ITT has also been high: ENGOS participated in the negotiation and had some success in the negotiation process. Also the participation of ENGOS could be linked to the outcome. This demonstrates that ENGO influence is case-specific.

ENGO influence is enabled by: 1 The *personal network* of ENGO employees; 2 *Scientific research* done by ENGOS; 3 the *Stage of negotiation*; 4 The *easy access of ENGOS to negotiations*; 5 Acting as a *watchdog*. The factors restricting ENGO influenced are listed in order of importance: 1 The *high economic stakes*; 2 The *small financial capabilities* of ENGOS; 3 the *poor ENGO-coordination*; 4 The *lack of continuity within ENGOS*; 5 *The tense relations between ENGOS and the government* of the last years.

Finally, four recommendations for ENGOS have been formulated: 1 invest in an extensive personal network; this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions. 2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOS, as this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOS. 3 join in early on negotiations. The earlier ENGOS join, the more the final document will be in line with ENGOS' policy goals. 4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOS and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice.

1. Introduction

Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet (Finer et al., 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Acosta 2010; Larrea, 2010). It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. (Villavicencio, 2010; Acosta et al. 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). Yasuní consists of Yasuní National Park and an Ethnic Reserve for the Waorani indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani, the Taromenane and Tagaeri, are two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation (Proaño Garcia and Colleoni, 2008, Martinez, 2010, Rommel 2007). They live in Yasuní together with over 1300 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and more than 100.000 species of insects (del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010). One hectare in Yasuní has as many as 650 tree species, an number higher than the number of tree species of Canada and the U.S.A. combined (Bass et al. 2010, del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010; McSweeney and Pearson, 2009).

Yasuní's staggering richness lies not only above ground; below the soil vast amounts of crude oil put Yasuní's future on the line (New Internationalist, 2008, Finer, 2010, Bass et al., 2010). Although the area is formally protected at the regional, national and international level, oil concessions have been given to a variety of oil companies (Finer, 2009). And as these oil blocks were designated before Yasuní was a formally protected area, protecting this area from destruction by oil companies is problematic (Acosta, 2010; Rommel, 2007).

Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuní: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and the Yasuní-ITT. These three topics will be further elaborated in the following section.

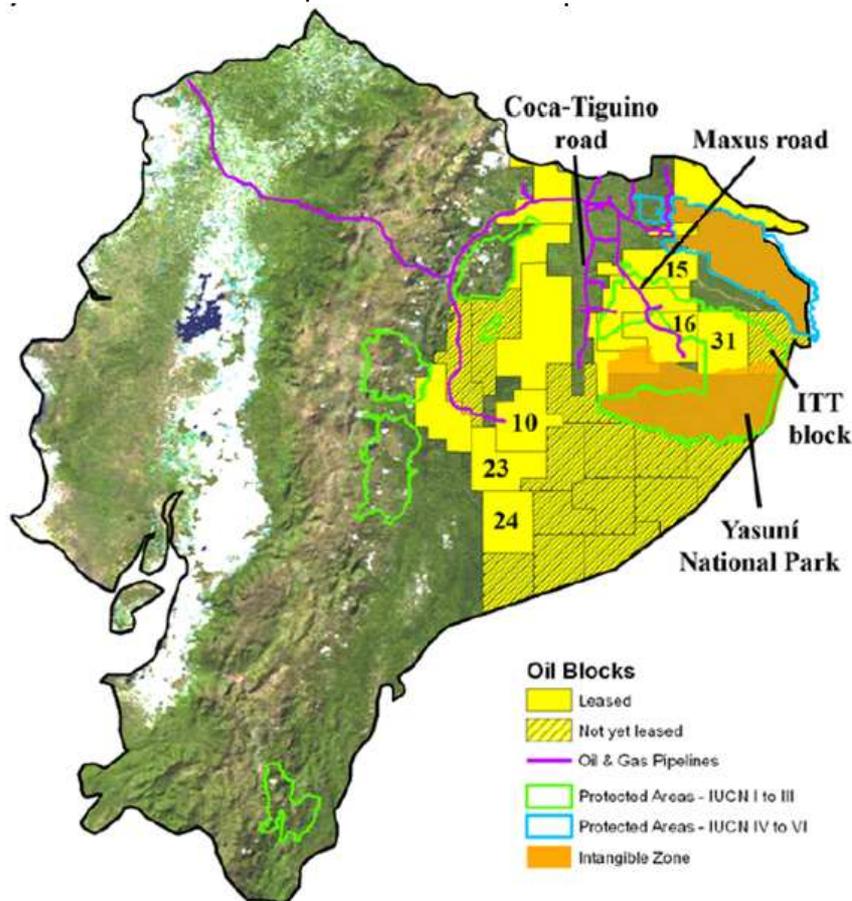


Figure 1: Oil and gas blocks in Ecuador. (Finer et al., 2008)

1.1 Zona Intangible

The indicated zones (former parts of oil blocks) in figure 1 are declared No-Go-Zones for oil exploitation in Yasuní: Zonas Intangibles. The northern No-Go-Zone, La Zona Intangible Cuyabeno falls outside the boundaries of Yasuní, whereas the southern No-Go-Zone, la Zona Intangible Tagaeri- Taromenane (ZI) consists of a substantial part of the Man and Biosphere Reserve (Finer et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Rommel, 2007). This thesis will only focus on the southern ZI, as the northern is not located in Yasuní. This No-Go-Zone was created by the ministry of environment to conserve the Tagaeri and Taromenane, and the forest they live from (Rommel, 2007). Although created in 1999 it took until 2007 to draw its final boundaries, but since then it finally seems to be protected adequately. It encompasses 7580km² and covers the complete southern half of the National Park and a part of the Woarani territory (Finer et al., 2009). As can be seen in figure 2 there are not only oil blocks that have yet to be leased in the southern Zona Intangible, parts of the oil blocks 16, 31 and ITT and almost half of block 17 also fall within the southern No-Go-Zone, this placed major oil reserves in block 17 and block-ITT (Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini) off limits (Finer et al., 2009).

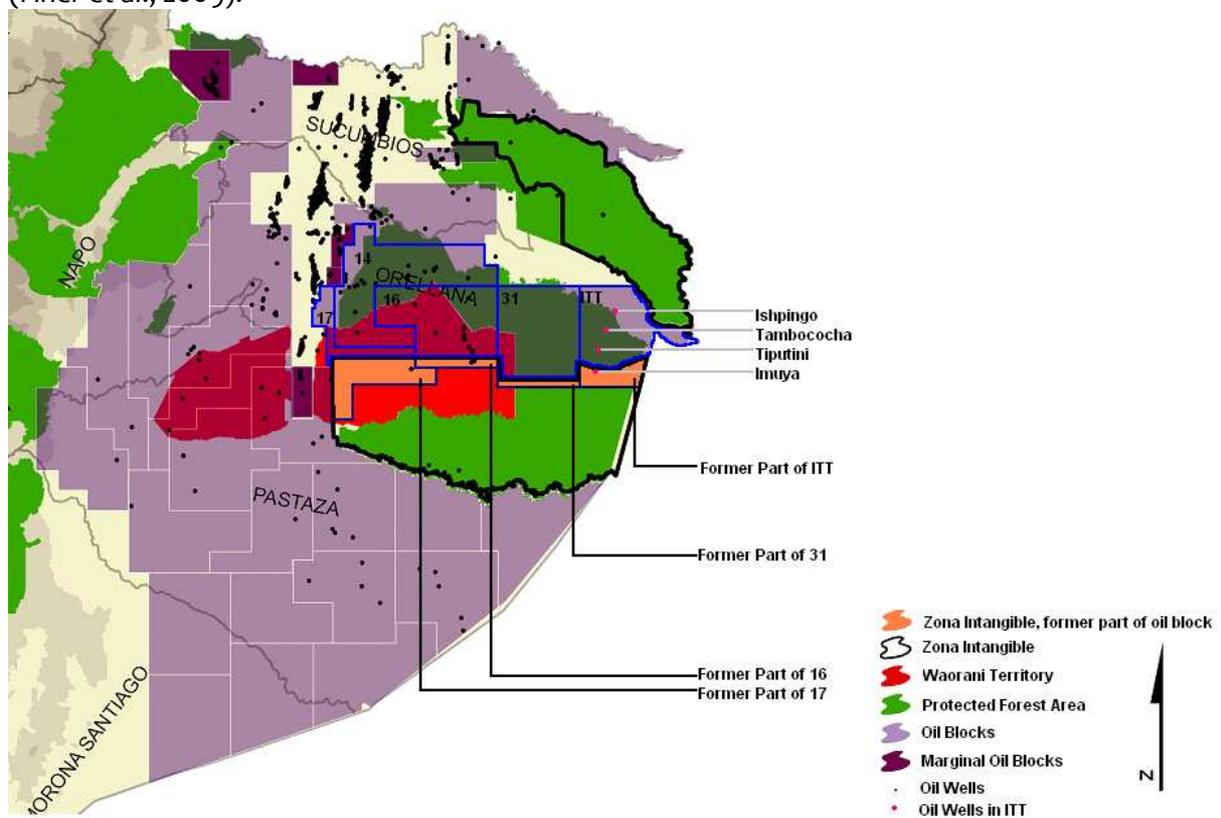


Figure 2: Zona Intangible and the consequences for oil production in Yasuní (Accion Ecologica 2008)

1.2 Block 31

Block 31 is one of the largest oil blocks in Yasuní, although only in size. The amount of oil in block 31 is hardly enough to break even when exploited (Martinez, 2010). It is a very strategic block, however, as it is close to block ITT, in which 20 percent of the remaining oil of Ecuador is located (see 1.3). Therefore a long struggle has been going on to stop the exploitation.

In 1996, the government released block 31, and it was given to the Argentinean company Perez Companc. In 2002, block 31 was taken over by Petrobras who executed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for the construction of an oil road, which started a large controversy. Many different groups joined to stop this road, ranging from NGOs, Social movements, and indigenous communities to famous international scientists (Finer et al. 2009).

Despite these lawsuits and protests, Petrobras started developing the road and clearing primary forest in May 2005, from the banks of the river Napo to the border of Yasuní National Park. At that time, Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of presidency. His successor Alfredo Palacio, reconsidered the issue and authorized development of these fields only under the condition that no roads were constructed and the production plant was outside the national park. In the following year a new EIS was executed and permit was given, based on a new plan that did not involve roads. Surprisingly, however, a year later the new president Rafael Correa announced that Petrobras terminated its contract and returned block 31 to the state (Finer et al., 2009).

1.3 Yasuní-ITT

Next to block 31, under the North-Eastern part of Yasuní National Park called Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) lies one of the biggest remaining oil fields with at least 846 million barrels with a total value of more than 72 billion US dollars, accounting for twenty percent of the remaining oil reserves. (Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer, 2010; Bass et al., 2010; New Internationalist 2008). Since Ecuador is an oil dependent economy, it needs this income to invest in education, healthcare and energy (de Hierro, 2010).

However, a ground-breaking initiative has been developed to generate income without exploiting this oil, and thereby protecting Yasuní's fragile biodiversity. The use of the crude oil in Yasuní would result in the release of 407.000.000 Metric tons of carbon dioxide, which could retrieve 7.2 billion US dollars on the international carbon market. However, as the carbon market only recognizes already emitted CO₂, the idea arose to place the CO₂ not emitted from Yasuní on the voluntary carbon market (Acosta, 2010). Foreign investments in this so-called "Yasuní Guarantee Certificate" will generate enough income to relieve the need for extraction (del Hierro, 2010).

The collected funds would be managed by a trust fund headed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which would invest the money in long-term development plans. The oil-based energy would be replaced by hydro-electrical, geo-thermal, solar and biomass energy. A million hectares would be reforested and protecting fourteen natural reserves and indigenous lands. This will result in the protection of 36 percent of Ecuador, and finally a revolutionary new development strategy (del Hierro, 2010). Since ITT is bordering the Intangible Zone, it would therefore create a rather large area free of oil development. It would also make the exploitation of bordering oil fields, like block 31, unprofitable and thereby would preserve these areas too (Finer et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol does not recognize the Yasuní Guarantee Certificates. Ecuador also tried to get this initiative recognized under REDD, however it was not accepted since it is not sufficiently focused on deforestation. For the climate agreements in Mexico 2010 Ecuador hoped to get it recognized as a new initiative next to the existing REDD and REDD+, however Ecuador did not succeed (Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). The search for investors and funding, is still on going.

1.4 Aim of the research

As shown above, the three battles are faced with an open end, and while the official facts can be presented, it remains unclear how and why things were decided. A relevant yet unanswered question is: what was and will be the role of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Social movements in Yasuní?

This thesis investigates the political influence of the various ENGOS on policy- and decision making concerning the oil extraction in Yasuní. Yasuní is a natural area of global importance and can serve as a flagship for nature conservation. Yasuní's uncontacted indigenous people and biodiversity are threatened by oil extraction. Nevertheless it can serve as an example on how nature can be protected although it is under high pressure. ENGOS acting on local, national and global level are

trying to conserve the indigenous living grounds of the voluntary isolated tribes and Yasuní's unique biodiversity.

This paper focuses on creating understanding of the political influence of ENGOs on oil extraction in Yasuní, and aims at formulating recommendations for the involved ENGOs to enhance their political influence in similar political arenas in the near future. Hopefully this might influence the outcome in Yasuní or at least provide ENGOs worldwide with information and recommendations on how to be better prepared for conflicts similar to this one. The aim of this thesis is therefore answering the following two research questions:

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

This study is analytical and explanatory. It describes the extend of ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuní in addition it also tries to explain what factors determine this political influence.

To answer these questions a qualitative research project is carried out, using interviews, and primary and secondary texts. Especially for the first questions semi-structured into-depth interviews are of high importance. Staff from ENGOs, governmental bodies and different kinds of specialists were interviewed. The original idea to make a strict distinction between these groups was a lot harder in reality than it seemed beforehand. The initial methodology needed this strict division to analyse the decision-making process from three different angles (see 3.7). However this was not the case. For example: scientists were former NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past, people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. Therefore a new methodology will be introduced to analyse the retrieved data more securely, without making divisions for theory's sake while such division does not exist in reality. Finally, a reconstruction of the decision-making process of all three themes (Zona-Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní-ITT) will be made. Overall, the research questions will be answered by analysing the role of ENGOs in this decision-making process. Additionally, this thesis presents recommendations for Ecuadorian ENGOs to enlarge their influence.

This thesis focuses on Yasuní: the Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve, which consists of Yasuní National Park, Waorani Reserve and a 10 kilometre buffer on the west, north and south side. Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve boasts uncontacted indigenous people, an unique biodiversity and both producing oil blocks and blocks that might produce in the near future.

The researched period lies between January 1999, the time of the ministerial decree that declared a large area of Yasuní a Zona Intangible until March 2011, the end of this fieldwork period.

Several factors made it harder to execute the research needed for this thesis. On September 30th 2010 a coup d'état and a personal assault on the president just failed. This created a tense political situation which made it harder to contact governmental representatives. People that gave interviews were less open than normally, which makes it hard to check if the given information is correct.

When the tension became less and less during the following weeks the tension among oil-producers grew tenser since new contracts were given for the next ten years. This made it impossible to contact oil-companies since new information could harm their contract. Therefore the initial idea to include oil-companies had to be changed.

The internal tension on Yasuní-ITT has also risen since Germany, the largest confirmed donor retreated. This did not only cost a lot of money but also implied that other countries and donors drew back.

2. Theoretical Framework

The introduction shows that there are many things at stake in Yasuní. A large variety of actors strives to see their own, often conflicting, goals achieved. Since not each and every one of these goals can be achieved, all actors attempt to influence the people that make the final decision. Although one actor may have more chance to influence a decision maker than another, this does not mean that he will certainly achieve his goals. When different actors are competing in this way, and if their access to resources and information is unequal, there will inevitably be a large difference in their influence on decision-making (Connell and Smith, 2006). Thus, there are power inequalities in this field; some have more power than others. To understand why this occurs, it's important to focus on the concept of power. What is power and what does power do are relevant questions in this context. These and other questions relating to power and influence will be answered in this chapter as well as the other relevant concepts that can help explain the role of ENGOs in environmental negotiations.

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Power Literature

Why is power studied to such a large extent? To put it very boldly: All aspects of social life are based upon power (Kidd et al., 2010 p. 4). This statement indicates how important power may be in everyday life. When the topic of power arises, it is often immediately associated with politics, but there is a major difference between power and politics. "Power is about getting what you want, and politics is about how and why different groups struggle to get what they want." (Kidd et al., 2010, p.5). This definition of power is very broad, and while many scientist would not agree on it, many of them would agree that this broadly is what power is about.

Deep inside, everybody has an idea of power, and of its opposite: powerlessness. We call people powerful when they can execute power over others, and consider those who cannot the powerless. In an average society the latter group is the vast majority (Kidd et al., 2010). Powerless is 'without power' just as "dark" is defined as "without light". This implies that we all know what power is and we can describe it without problems. We also know many of the manifestations of power.

In the social and political sciences, however, power is an 'essentially contested concept' (Ashe et al., 1999 p. 69). According to Kidd et al. (2010, p.7) five general themes can be distinguished within power literature:

1. Power and agency (individuals) – how much of a say do ordinary people have over their actions on a day-to-day basis? How much agency (or freedom/free will) do they have?
2. Power and structure (society) – how rooted and integral are power relationships within the overall make-up of society as a whole? To what extent does society as a thing weigh down upon individuals, regulating their decisions, actions and options?
3. Power and domination – what happens if people step out of line? How are they punished? Do some groups benefit from the punishing of others?
4. Power and empowerment – should we see power as a tool to use against others or as a way to make decisions about and for ourselves? Is it a matter of having power over what others do or is it power to do something for ourselves?
5. Power and identity – how does having power, struggling for power or being the objects of someone else's power make us who we are? What is the relationship between power and how we come to see ourselves in society: our identity?

According to Stephen Lukes (1974) these kinds of power can be gained through two different ways: power can either be obtained through battle, struggle and the possible resistance of others, or be the outcome of an agreement, it is not held by some over and at expense of others

who have none of it. Banfield (2009 p.9) puts it as follows: “Power is the ability to establish control. So who has power controls the situation, this person can do what he wants, not only within its own life but also with the lives of others and sometimes even with society.”

Thus it can be concluded that power is a vital topic in people’s life, this might explain why science’s early interest in studying power.

It is commonly accepted among scientists that modern power literature goes back to the 16th century when Machiavelli published “The Prince” (Bejan, 2010). Only twenty years later Thomas Hobbes published his renowned book “Leviathan”. These two authors started the first discussion in power literature, one that would continue for many years. On the one hand Machiavelli focused on strategies while Hobbes centred his book on notions. Arguably, Machiavelli’s focus point was the question *what does power do* while Hobbes tried to figure out what power actually is (Bejan, 2010; Clegg, 1989; Machiavelli, 2005). Given this, Machiavelli was in many ways a militarist while Hobbes was an early modernist, always looking to the answer to the question “what is power?” and with a strict sense of order. Modernists were not interested in what power does and how power could be used effectively for one’s own goals (Clegg, 1989; Giddens, 1990).

This chapter will continue with scholars inspired by the school of Hobbes since the “what is power” question is more relevant, particularly considering that Machiavelli focused largely on matters of military power. Hobbes’ book led to philosophical and sociological discussions on what power is and how it is executed. Machiavelli’s book is more practical hand guide on how to gain power, how to execute and how to maintain it. Although interesting, it is of lesser relevance for this thesis. Clegg (1989) states that Hobbes way of thinking led to modern power literature in which power is initiated by human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators. Various modern scholars use mathematic equations to specify the level of power or influence, for example Becker (1983) and Arts (1998).

Hobbes’ book led to several major discussions within sociology, discussions that are still held by scientists today: Is power distributed among many or held by an elite? Is power intentional or not intentional? Is power confined to decision making or is it evident in non-decision making? Is power constant over time? (Clegg, 1989) Before the end of this theoretical framework these questions will be answered.

The answer to the question: “Is power distributed among many or held by an elite” requires a brief overview of the elitist and pluralist theories. The publication C. Wright Mills’ book “The Power Elite” can be seen as the start of modern elitist theory (Clegg, 1989). This theory states that power in society is distributed among a small ruling elite (Wright Mills, 1956). Although the elite has changed from kings, dukes and monks to presidents, CEOs and bankers it is still omnipresent (Bottomore, 1993). But is it really? Dahl (1961) is a well-known supporter and one of the founders of the pluralist theory. In his book “Who Governs?”, he claims that power is not held by an elite, as was thought before, but by a very large group. This publication received much critique; many scientists argued that his findings were case-specific (Clegg, 1989). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) observed that where one group of scientists concluded that power was largely diffused in their cases and others assumed that it was extremely centralized, this difference would not be due to a case specific difference, but rather to predetermination in the research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Under the approach of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the researcher should neither begin by asking “who rules?”, as the elitist does, nor by enquiring “does anyone have power?”, as the pluralist does, since these questions already determine the outcome.

The next big contribution to the power debate was by Steven Lukes. Lukes’ influential book “Power: a Radical View” (1974) can help answer many of the remaining questions above, including: “is power intentional or non-intentional?” and “is power confined to decision making or

is it evident in non-decision making?” The book divides power into three different dimensions: In the first dimension the exercise of power occurs in observable overt conflicts between actors of key issues; in the second the exercise of power occurs in observable overt or covert conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues and in the third the power is exercised to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist. (Clegg, 1989; Connell and Smith, 2006)

The first dimension is the one Robert Dahl (1957, p. 203) used: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. This is a very clear and obvious form of power. A good example is a police officer that commands people to turn right; all people will follow his orders even though they would not have done so when it was not told to them by this police officer. Betsill and Corell (2008 p.24) state: “influence occurs when one actor intentionally communicates to another so as to alter the latter’s behaviour from what would have occurred otherwise.” Banfield (2009) adds: “What is A’s ability to achieve the intended result? And what is his ability to achieve it without incurring disadvantages (“costs”) which he regards as equal or greater than the advantage of the result.” This essentially comes down to: the more power A has the more abilities it has to influence the behaviour of B without negative consequences.

Lukes states that this definition of power is blind; it does not see all the less obvious ways in which one can influence another actor. To put it in a political perspective, it does not show the various and less obvious ways in which a political agenda can be controlled in a political system (Lukes, 1974; Clegg, 1989). To overcome this weakness, the first dimension is supplemented with a second dimension, which Lukes characterizes as the exercise of power that occurs in observable open or hidden conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues. This implies that one should not only look at what is done and which decisions are made, but also at what is not done and which decisions are not taken. The fact that a specific item never reaches the political agenda, or that a decision taken about something is never taken, can be the influence of one of the actors. This all goes beyond the visible and obvious exercise of power characteristics of the first dimension. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz previously introduced this as “the second face of power”: the not taken decisions. They discovered that, hidden from the public, an elite influences agenda-setting and in this way exerts its power on society (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962)

So far we have two dimensions, or the two faces of power. One open and obvious that is observable, and one that is hidden and which might also be called “non-decision making”, where conflicts are suppressed and it is prevented that a decision will be taken (Connell and Smith, 2006). Where Bachrach and Baratz (1962) stop with two dimensions or faces of power, Lukes (1974) was still not content, he felt that there were still some aspects of power not brought to light. Therefore he introduced a third dimension of power, characterized by the idea of a hidden conflict that affects interests. Latent conflict exists when there would be a conflict of wants or preferences between those exercising and those subject to power if the latter were to become aware of their interests. This is the power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist.

Linking these three dimensions, Lukes defines the underlying concept of power as: “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests” (Lukes, 1974, p. 27) The interesting aspect of this definition lies in the “contrary to B’s interests,” which is rather clear in the first dimension when the outcome of B is decided completely by A, and in the second dimension when B’s interest is never uttered, never placed on the agenda. In the third dimension, however, it is not clear that someone has gained or someone lost; this kind of power may be exercised even if B does not feel it.

The question: “is power constant over time?” can be answered rather easily. No one king stays in power over time and only a few presidents reign longer than eight years. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) are the first that state that power is not constant over time: it comes, fluctuates and finally diminishes.

“Does one need to exercise power to have power?” is a question that continues to divide scholars. The differences between Dahl (1957, p. 203) and Druckman and Rozelle (in: Tedeschi, 2008) are a clear illustration. As mentioned above Dahl (1957) defines power as: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. Druckman and Rozelle, on the other hand use the concept of “resources”, and in which way these can influence decision makers. They define power as following (quoted from Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3): “Power as control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others”. The difference between the two definitions can be explained by the emphasis of exercising power or influence on the one hand (Dahl) and on the other an emphasis on having power. This difference is called the episodic versus dispositional concept of power (Clegg, 1989) The dispositional school claims that one can be powerful without actually exercising power. A clear example is a nation-state that is powerful in the region because it has a substantial army, not because it uses it (Tedeschi, 2008). In this line of reasoning it can be said that those that hold political power are generally accepted by all other political actors, such as a part of the voters in a democracy. In politics this will mean that they are in control of relevant offices, resources and decision-making apparatus.

For the supporters of the episodic school, however, it is impossible to assess the capability of a player if that capability is not applied. One cannot count and add up a player’s power as if it were money and subsequently forecast outcomes. There is no one-to-one relation found between the resources an actor has and the outcomes it achieves. “A concept of power without the notion of influence is therefore misleading” (Arts, 1998, p.57).

Power is not only a topic in the power literature, research on power is also done in the regime and institutional literature. The power of actors on the development and effectiveness of regimes is studied by scholars (Mitchell, 2003). Mitchell (2003) for example recognizes the role of the interests of states and the efforts of individuals and groups to influence the outcome of International Environmental Agreements (IEAs).

2.2 The Concept of Influence

Now that it is clear what power is and what it does, it is time to introduce the most important concept of this thesis: influence.

The difference between power and influence can briefly be explained as follows. Power is “control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others” (Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3). On the other hand “Influence means the modification of one actor’s behaviour by that of another” (Arts, 1998 p. 57). This extended definition forms an underlying principle for this thesis, and hereunder the concept of influence will be further developed.

Arts (1998, p. 57) also adds the following to the definition of influence given above:

“Influence is to be distinguished from power. Power means capability; it is the aggregate of political resources that are available to an actor. (...) Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent.”

To complete this list of definitions used in this thesis the final difference between political power and political influence will also be given by Arts (1998, p 58):

“Political power refers to a more or less permanent ability to influence policy outcomes, whereas political influence refers to an episodic effect on decision-making”.

Influence can be organized in the same way as power in the previous chapter, using the three dimensions of power. First the openly executed influence between actors. This focuses on the behaviour of actors in decision-making, mainly on key situations. The execution of influence is

often observable: policy preferences are demonstrated through political actions (Lukes, 1974 p. 15)

The two dimensional view of power focuses on decision-making and non-decision-making. This second dimension looks at current and potential issues, both overt and covert. The emphasis in this dimension still are the policy preferences of the actors (Lukes, 1974).

In the three dimensional view of power the two dimensional view of power is expanded with latent conflicts. It also recognizes next to the subjective interests like policy preferences the “real” interests of actors outside the decision-making process (Lukes, 1974).

Giddens (1990) claims that actors are constrained to act, and thereby influence, within given rules and with the existing division of resources. This means they cannot just do what they like and use all resources they want: their political influence is restricted, they have to behave according the rules of the game and according the distribution of resources (Arts, 1998). This distribution of resources in the practice means that actors have only restricted money, supporters, logistics etc. to influence decision-making. This means that they have to use their resources wisely and within the rules of the game.

All actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave. An actor can be part of the political discussion and can join all meetings or one might be excluded from all formal meetings. Rules of the game can be transparent for all actors, but can also be non-transparent, meaning that not all players know what the rules are (Larson, 2010). Rules of the game can be altered by (a group of) players with sufficient power: the rules of the game change over time, with changing society and changing actors. In some cases a single actor can even change the rules of the game, this is normally a governmental player (Boix, 1999; Larson, 2010). Hence rules of the game are the institutional environment that determines what strategy an actor can use and what resources it will use to achieve its policy goals (Williamson, 2010). “Institutions in this context are a set of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that define social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices and guide interaction among the occupants of individual roles. Structures of property rights, electoral systems, and practices relating to marriage and the family are all examples of institutions in this sense. Institutions in this sense must not be confused with organizations construed as material entities with employees, offices, equipment, budgets, and (often) legal personality” (Young, 2002 p. 5).

2.3 Political Arena and Policy Network

Political actors can meet in two different settings, in a political arena or in a policy network. Political arena is a commonly used metaphor in political science, it refers to the battlefield of ancient gladiators, where all the actors compete and try to win while they are restricted by certain rules. The political struggle is quite similar. The political players meet to make a decision or to develop specific policy. The players focus on specific outcomes in the form of a decision or policy. Another similarity is that all players try to win which comes down to influencing the policy or decision to such an extent that their policy goals are met best. The fourth and final similarity is that all actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave etc. (Arts, 1998). A political arena can be defined as follows (Arts, 1998, p. 55): “[...] a formal meeting places of political players who struggle, debate, negotiate, and decide on policy issues and in doing so, are bound to given rules (although these might be changed by players as well).”

In recent times the term policy network gained recognition. Börzel (1998 p. 254) has the following definition: “a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-

operation is the best way to achieve common goals". It has to be stressed that most definitions are controversial, and so an alternative definition will be given from Arts (1998, p.56): "a more or less stable social system in which mutually dependent public and private players address policy issues and programmes". Börzel (1998) states that several scientists consider policy networks as a simple metaphor to indicate that policymaking is done by a large number of different actors all with different roles and stakes. While Börzel (1998) recognizes many forms of policy networks, for this thesis the form of policy network that seems to be most appropriate is a policy network as a form of governance. Several types of governance in and by networks can be distinguished (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). These refer to networks of public and of private organizations, and of mixes of these two. Networks of public policy organizations, the one that seems relevant for this thesis, have been considered to be the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p 148). The typical mode of interaction between the actors is through negotiations (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004).

According to the definition of Kenis and Schneider (1991 p. 36) policy networks are "webs of relatively stable and on-going relationships which mobilize and pool dispersed resources so that the collective (or parallel) actions can be orchestrated towards the solution of a common policy". This means that a policy network includes all actors involved in the policy making process. They are mainly characterized by informal interactions between public and private actors with distinctive but interdependent interests, who strive to solve problems of collective action on a central, non-hierarchical level (Börzel, 1998). This implies that there is no longer a central role for the government, where the government has a hierarchical power over other players. This fits well in the on-going debate surrounding the existence of a key role of governmental institutions (Segebart, 2008).

2.4 Policy and the Policy Cycle

A well-known concept in policy studies is to simplify the policy-making process in a series of stages: the policy cycle (Crabbé and Leroy, 2008). Generally the stages are: agenda-setting, policy making, the forming of opinions, policy implementation and the stage that consists of autonomous developments and policy outcomes. From this stage, the cycle starts anew by the setting of a new agenda, as can be seen in figure 2. All of this is of importance for this thesis, but some important processes are not recognized in this cycle, or at least not made explicit. First the stage of issue-framing, that refers to how the issue is conceptualized before, during and after the negotiation process. A frame is "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment" (Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 33). By framing (or re-framing) environmental problems, NGOs can highlight particular aspects of a problem such as the driving causes or who has the responsibility to act, thereby establishing the boundaries in which others have to respond (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Issue framing may occur before negotiations or during the negotiation-process, which means an issue can be re-framed. Agenda setting is recognized in the policy cycle but influencing key-actors is not explicitly included. Many groups try to influence the main actors during the negotiation-process. NGOs among others use this as a strategy to achieve their policy-goals (Betsill and Corell, 2008). The next section introduces the main actor of this thesis.

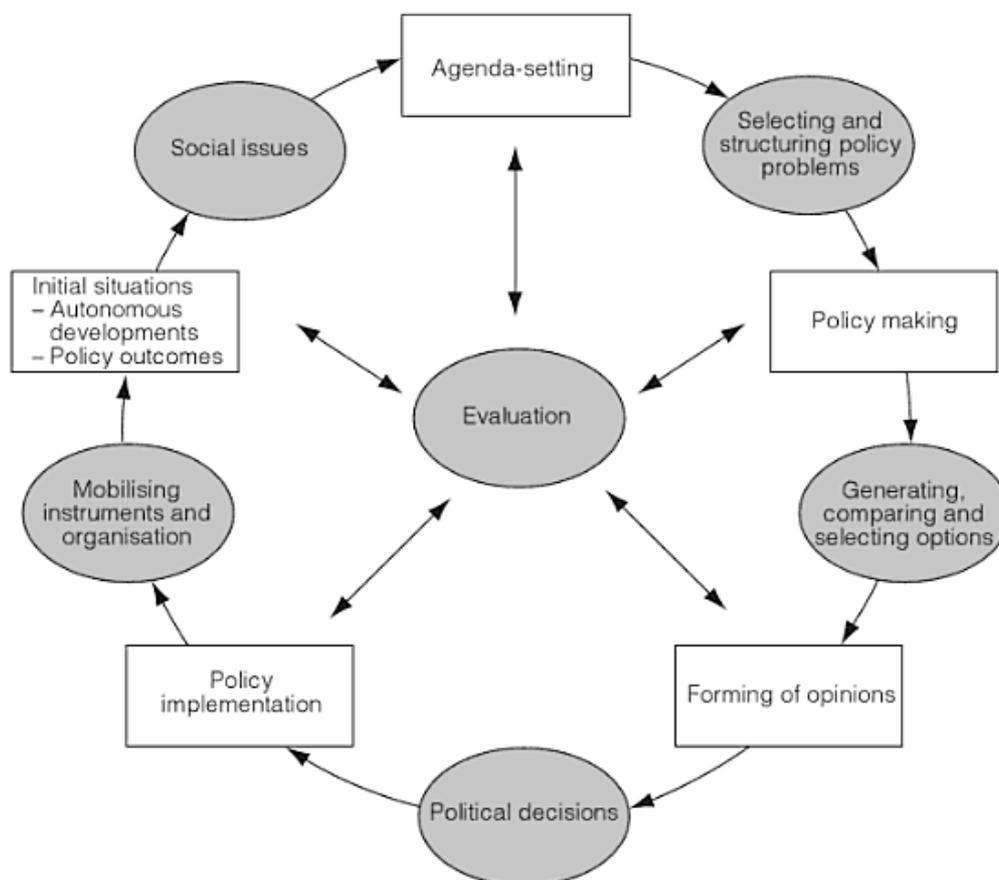


Figure 3: The policy cycle From Crabbé and Leroy (2008 p.3)

2.5 NGOs, ENGOs and Social movements

With power and influence defined, the next big concept for this thesis is that of NGOs. Many scholars recognize the NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, as one of the most important political players these days. The practical definition of an NGO, however, is intensely disputed. (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). Many definitions of NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) exist; every case might even need its own tailor-made definition, including and excluding desired groups. This spectrum of definitions ranges from almost including every group to almost excluding all : some authors argue that even soccer-clubs might fall under the umbrella of NGOs (Kidd et al., 2010; Arts, 1998). Arts (1998) on the other hand uses an extended definition of NGO, or in his case, global NGO: “[...] a global NGO is defined as a promotional pressure group which seeks to influence political decision-making on certain issues at global level. In the case of the UNFCCC and CBD we deal with welfare, communal and issue-specific organizations (respectively development, indigenous, environmental and conservation groups)”.

The definition of NGO used in this study has mostly been drawn from Arts’ definition of global NGOs given above, since it mainly focuses on the political role of NGOs where other definitions focus on the role of NGOs in society. In order to filter relevant NGOs without excluding other potential groups, the following definition, adapted from Arts (1998), is most suitable: “a NGO can be defined as a pressure group that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making.” NGOs fitting the latter definition can basically be divided in two groups: protest groups and pressure groups. Protest groups are groups that are outside the political arena and try to change policy by demonstration, contest and sometimes violence. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are in the political arena and try to change policy from within. This latter group can be divided further: in advocacy and lobby groups. Advocacy groups act as advocates for their cause mainly in

official events. Lobby groups try to influence individual policy- and decision-makers in an informal way (Arts, 1998). It is not clear whether groups inside the political arena are more effective than groups outside. Insiders have more and better access to decision-makers but they have to act responsibly and may lose their independence. Kidd et al. (2010) states that it is probable, however that many outsiders groups want to become part of the 'inside' groups.

In modern governance theory another split between NGOs is made, Visseren-Hamakers (2009) for example makes the difference between campaigning and collaborative NGOs, the first group represents pure conservation NGOs. One could think of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth. The second group consists of NGOs that create partnerships for example the World Wildlife Fund. Also Van Huijstee (2010) and Humphreys (2006) recognize two groups of NGOs, in this thesis they will be divided in "campaigning NGOs" and "collaborative NGOs".

Closely related to NGOs but crucially different are social movements. Contrary to NGOs, social movements normally have no strict hierarchy. These groups consist of like-minded people who seek to influence policy-making on a narrow range of issues. Although seeking to influence policy and policy-makers, they are not interested in becoming policy makers (Kidd et al., 2010). When using the definition above, however, social movements might also be classified as NGOs .

Social movements and NGOs can also be divided into sectional and promotional pressure groups. Sectional groups protect the interests of their members, such as labour unions, or a group of indigenous people that fight for protection of their lands. Promotional groups exist to promote a cause they believe is neglected by the government, for example Greenpeace and Amnesty International (Kidd et. al., 2010). These examples show that sectional groups often tend towards social movements while promotional groups lean towards NGOs.

So how important are NGOs and social movements in political decision making on environmental matters? While the pluralists' perception that pressure groups and social movements play a vital role in the political decision making is true to form, it is also recognized by many that better environmental outcomes are achieved when NGOs and social movements are involved in decision-making (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). All those groups with environmental focus normally are called ENGOS (Betsill and Corell, 2001). From now on, since principally NGOs with environmental goals are studied the term ENGO will be used: ENGOS can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seek to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts.

2.6 ENGO influence on environmental negotiations

Most scientific literature has focused on the power of states, and what factors might explain the power of these states (Kidd et al., 2010). Military, economic and political are the most important resources states have to execute power (Kidd et al., 2010). Nowadays it is recognized that not only states have power, and non-state actors can also shape governmental outcomes. Like states, NGOs have access to a range of resources that can give them influence. While NGOs do not have military power, some of them do have significant economic resources; these are mostly NGOs in the private sector, but some are environmental NGOs like Greenpeace and WWF. Rather than economic and military resources, the most important resources for NGOs are commonly recognized as knowledge and information. This specialized knowledge and information is used to influence governmental decision-makers (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the relationship between power (capabilities) and influence is not direct. The question is how to translate the capabilities into influence (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Holsti (1988) distinguishes six strategies that states can use to exercise influence: persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and the use of force. Betsill and Corell (2008) translate these to NGOs and they conclude that persuasion is the most used among NGOs. NGOs spend a large amount of time trying to influence decision-makers. The use of force, often used by states, is not a possible option for NGOs (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Power in relation to International Environmental Agreements is already discussed briefly in 2.1. Also the role of NGOs is underwritten in this regime theory. NGOs for example provide information, conduct research, and propose and evaluate policies, actions that introduce both ideas and political pressure into negotiations (Mitchell, 2003).

Arts (1998) divides the explanatory factors of political influence into three levels: the arena level, level of the outcome and the context level, which is a quite detailed division (see 2.8). Instead, Betsill and Corell (2008) make another division by identifying firstly the participation in negotiations and secondly the effect on the behaviour of other actors.

Betsill and Corell (2008, p.189) identified eight most often mentioned factors that could explain the political influence of NGOs through comparisons between different negotiation cases. It has to be said that their study mainly focuses on Environmental NGOs and that it is just the top of the iceberg of factors that could influence NGO influence, but it gives a good overview on the influence of Environmental NGOs especially when it comes down to forest related cases. The factors most often mentioned by key-informants in the research of Betsill and Corell are explained below (2008).

Several experts state that *NGO coordination* between like-minded enhances the influence on negotiations: they speak with one joined and therefore stronger voice. However in the cases researched by Betsill and Corell (2008) and Arts (2001, in: Betsill and Corell 2008) NGO coordination has only a neutral effect. They claim that NGOs have achieved all levels of influence whether they did or did not coordinate, so an NGO can have large influence without coordinating its actions. Coordinating NGO strategies seems hard: even among NGOs with common interests, a consensus between a large NGO with many resources and a small NGO focussing on the situation on the ground is hard to reach (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

There are no set *rules of access* governing NGO participation in international environmental negotiation (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Habitually NGO access is created ad hoc in international negotiations, and therefore it varies greatly, making it easier to study. Repeatedly it is assumed that more restricted access leads to lesser influence. Betsill and Corell (2008) showed that this relation is more complex. They claim that when NGOs are actively invited and stimulated to participate, their influence grows; in these cases NGOs were seen as important partners to achieve a common goal. On the other hand when states restrict NGO access, NGOs frequently overcome: they changed strategies and therefore less access did not constrain NGOs to influence the negotiations. This is remarkable when one notices the amount of energy and time NGOs dedicate to get a more open access to decision-making processes. They believe that more access leads to more influence but it is shown that this is not necessarily the case. The key to success lies in convincing states and decision-makers that NGOs can be an effective partner in making better decisions or implementing these, then states will actively facilitate NGOs to participate and that will lead to an increased influence. Christensen (2006) states that with soft-law real rules of access often do not exist, it is not made explicit who can and who cannot join the decision-making process, however in some certification schemes this is very well defined (Yale Program on Forest Policy and Governance, 2008).

The cases of Betsill and Corell (2008) hint that there is a relation between the *stage of negotiation* and the influence of NGOs. Two different stages can be distinguished. The first one being a formulation phase “where participants agree upon a framework for the negotiations” and a detail phase “where they bargain over the specifics of the final text” (Betsill and Corell, 2008, p.193). NGOs are seen to have more influence in the earlier stage than in the detail phase where governments are trying to solve core issues, when the tone of the negotiations is much harder. Betsill and Corell (2008) argues that the later stages are more heavily politicized, which may lead to less people to decide on the core issues (Betsill and Corell, 2008). They claim that the peak of NGO influence lies in the agenda-setting phase, the phase before the actual negotiation. NGOs co-decide what will and what will not be discussed: they identify problems and call upon states to act. This does not mean that NGOs do not have influence in the real decision but their greatest

effect is on agenda-setting, particularly when agenda-setting is defined as an on-going process rather than a distinct stage of policy making that ends once negotiation begins (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Political stakes are seen as a major factor shaping political influence. When the negotiations are in an early stage and the aims are still vague NGOs can influence the decision making to a larger extent than when the stakes are higher. Initial agreements where general principles are articulated, new organizations and decision-making processes are established can relatively easily be influenced by NGOs, as these do not require fundamental behavioural change from the government. When an NGO tries to bind a governmental body to specific commitments the stakes are higher. However, when governments have (positive) experiences working with NGOs they tend more often to work with them when there are higher stakes (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

If there is *institutional overlap*, and NGOs do not have the possibility to influence the negotiations directly, they can influence negotiations indirectly by influencing related institutions, if they. The overlap between the WTO and international trade regimes, for example, restrains the influence of Environmental NGOs while enlarging the influence of NGOs representing business/industry (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Competition from other NGOs can make it more difficult to influence negotiations since NGOs will be speaking with a diffuse voice, or all NGOs might be competing for the same financial funds or want different outcomes of the negotiation. However, NGO influence is not necessarily constrained when there is competition from other NGOs (NGO influence is not a zero-sum game) (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

When an NGO forms strong *alliances with key governmental bodies* their influence increases greatly (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Yanacolpulos, 2005). NGOs can shape the position of a state, either directly or through the public opinion and media. NGO influence increases when proposals are written that resonate the interests of the government, creating a sound basis for cooperation. NGOs and governments can both be working together and working against each other, there is no generalization possible and it has to be determined case to case.

The last mentioned factor that determines political influence is the *level of contention*. This often comes down to NGOs having more influence if there are no economic interests at stake. This factor is really relevant for this study since the potential oil revenues are a large economic interest. Short-term costs and revenues have higher priority than long term costs and benefits, and if NGOs manage to frame their claims consistently, their influence increases (Betsill and Corell, 2008). There may also be contention over sovereignty of states or lands of indigenous people. Protecting indigenous people can be threatening to states, but still NGOs often succeed (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Next to these factors, many others are mentioned by other articles. However, they are not the most relevant for this thesis and will only be mentioned shortly. From the work of Widener (2009-1) an extra factor can be added: *scale of operation*. Some NGOs work on a higher scale and want to influence other things than NGOs that work on a lower scale. The first group might want to influence international policy while the second group focuses on the situation on the ground.

Financial capabilities of a NGO play a large role in their effectiveness. The more financial funds a NGOs has, the more effective it can work, and therefore the more influence it has (Silva, 1997).

Related are the *organisational capabilities* of NGOs, the better it is organised the more influence it can execute (Silva, 1997).

A factor that most influences the effectiveness of the influence is the *availability of expertise*. With more expertise an organization has better knowledge of what to do and how to do it. This has positive influence on the effectiveness and the amount of power since others might act upon the NGO (Silva, 1997).

There is one final group of factors that must be mentioned, but that are very different from the other factors: *contextual factors*. These factors are not controlled by any player within a political arena and might enable some actors' influence while at the same time restricting the influence of other actors.

With all the theory of this thesis introduced it is now the place to conceptualize the theory. To conceptualize the theory, a definition of political influence is needed for this thesis. Political influence is chosen since it implies executed power on chosen topics. Since the focus of this thesis closely relates to Arts book “The Political Influence of Global NGOs” (1998) his definition of political influence concerning global NGOs will be given (Arts, 1998, p.58): ... *political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to an outcome in treaty formation and implementation, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned.*” This definition can be largely used, with a minor adaptation, to define political influence in this thesis.

Arts adds that it is possible to rewrite this definition in terms of the so-called counterfactual. Then political influence implies that the policy outcomes are more in line with the desired outcomes of an actor than it would have been if he had not intervened. To put it more simple and general, the player did matter and did make a difference. Arts (1998 p. 59) adds something that is very important for this specific case: “it should be stressed that the achievement of one’s goal might not only cover the realization of a desired outcome, but the prevention of an undesired one as well”.

In this thesis political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned

In Arts (1998, p. 60) the selective nature of agenda-setting is accepted at the theoretical level, but barely covered by the empirical research. In this thesis a different approach is chosen, since the most important possible achievement of the NGOs might be influencing the agenda setting and issue framing (Kidd et. al., 2010; Connelly and Smith, 2006; Betsill and Corell 2001). The political arena perspective will be used in this thesis since it recognizes the central role of the government. The main focus of this thesis is the influence of NGOs on the government, both intentional and un-intentional. The question if power is intentional or non-intentional is not very relevant for this study which focuses on NGO power. One can claim that all power is intentional since all organisations have their own policy goals they want to achieve, and are therefore intentionally exercising power. On the other hand NGOs have a lot of unintentional power, it can be seen as influence as a side effect, it might change the political climate or discussion unintentionally. Unintentional influence also includes negative influence in the way that this influence will make it harder to achieve its policy goals. Nevertheless a large (and the most important) part of the influence is intentional, since it is focussed on specific actors to achieve policy-goals. (Clegg, 1989).

In this thesis a whole range of different NGOs is trying to influence the outcome in Yasuní. Therefore it is hard to know which groups to include and which to exclude. In Ecuador NGOs have emerged over the last twenty years as leading actors in development. Their numbers rose greatly as did the variety in types of NGOs. Their role in policy making and grass roots organizing also became more fundamental with the retreat of the state. Now NGOs are looking for ways to find new forms of collaboration with the government. At this time NGOs can be seen as one of the most important links between grassroots and the government (Keese and Argudo, 2006).

For this thesis, groups that fit the definition of NGO from the theoretical framework are included:

“ENGOs can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts”

Social movements fit this definition and are therefore included under the caller of NGO although it is recognized that they are essentially different from NGOs. In Yasuní they have the same objectives and work more or less in the same way. Not all NGOs have the same objectives in

Yasuní, they can roughly be divided in three groups. The first group is made up by organisations in favour of oil exploitation: the money gained by the oil exploitation is needed in Ecuador. This group is called *extractivistas* (those in favour of oil extraction). The second group wants to keep the oil under the ground, the so-called *ecologistas*. This group consists of people that consider the social impacts on the indigenous people in Yasuní too large and of groups that want to conserve the unique biodiversity. In reality most groups share both reasons, some have more environmental focus and others a more social focus.

The third group consists of groups that are divided; the so-called *ambientalistas*, and normally the consensus of these groups is exploitation with minimum impact. A lot of NGOs and Social movements fall under this group.

Since the *extractivistas* do not have a lot of support among Ecuadorian NGOs, and the fact that this thesis focuses on Environmental NGOs; *extractivistas* NGOs will not be studied in this thesis, it solely focuses on the *ecologistas* and *ambientalistas* NGOs, as these groups have environmental objectives, the one rather radical the other more mild. To make this clear in the rest of the study these two groups will be called ENGOS: Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations.

2.7 The conceptual model

The conceptual model presented is in line with a political arena rather than with a policy network. A disadvantage of the political arena is that it gives the impression that players, roles, rules and outcomes are fixed, however in reality these factors are to a large extent fluid. The policy network theory recognizes this, but also questions the central role of governmental bodies (Arts, 1998; Börzel, 1998 and Segebart, 2008). In this case the government can still be seen as the central player, making the political arena is the better alternative for this thesis.

This study focuses on the influence of ENGOS on the government and not on all kinds of mutual relations between the government, ENGOS and other players. It also must be stressed that although some problems in Yasuní might have been privatized in the past, for example the government retreat from negotiations between Indigenous movements and oil companies in the past, but at this moment the state is the unquestioned central player. Therefore the political arena is more suitable since it makes the government the central player and leaves enough room to study the influence of the other players including ENGOS on the government and therefore on the policy.

The theoretical model underneath (figure 4) is based on ENGO influence on Climate and Biodiversity Conventions (Arts, 1998, p. 71). This model fits in the pluralist view on power and influence: many actors co-decide and have influence.

The upper part of the model consists of external events and trends, a major factor influencing negotiations. A shift of or within the government, changed economic circumstances or a shift in the environment (local, national or global) can completely change the discussion.

Instead of an international focus as in Arts (1998), this thesis focuses at three different levels, the regional, national and international level. On all three levels are actors trying to influence the outcome. These levels are not strictly divided. A group that mostly focuses on the regional situation might seek international attention for its cause. The same can be said for international NGOs that participate in the global discussion, they might also work in small communities in Yasuní. It has to be said that although the problem takes place in three different levels the national level is the most important, and therefore has the most attention in this thesis. This is because the regional level mainly focuses on the execution of the nationally designed policy and that on the international level the ENGO actors have a lesser voice.

It is recognized that the group *others* is rather broad, and consists of many groups. However in this thesis all these groups are lumped together to get a clearer insight in the role of ENGOS: the main actors of this thesis. This choice might have influenced the research outcomes since this thesis solely focuses on the role of ENGOS. The influence of NGOs that, for example, aim at oil extraction is not investigated.

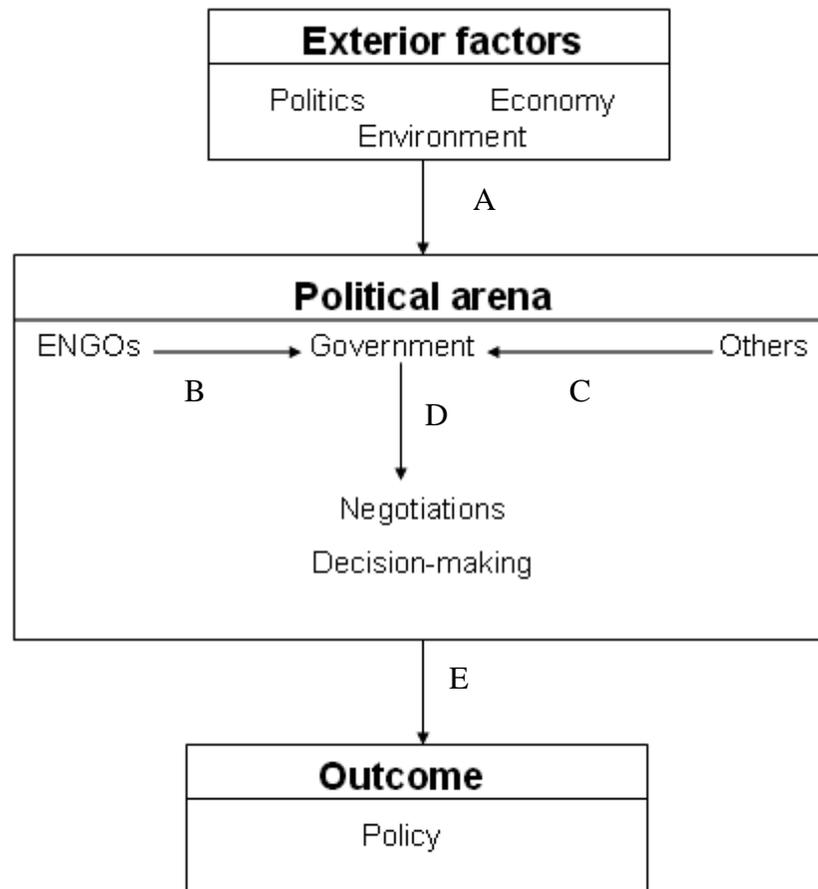


Figure 4: Main issues concerning decision-making in a political arena with NGOs (based on Arts, 1998 p.71)

Arrow (A): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors can be political, economic, environmental; and they may not be fixed, what constrains one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis etc.

Arrow (B): political influence. This is the political influence of ENGOs on the government, this includes agenda-setting and issue framing. This is the main focus of the research.

Arrow (C): political influence. This is the political influence of other actors on the government, in this thesis this group mainly consists of oil companies and their affiliates like *extractivistas* NGOs. It has to be stressed that arrow (B) and (C) are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “ENGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given the formal status and position a government has. In reality, however governments do influence other players and ENGOs, but it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (D): engage in. All actors including the government engage in negotiations and decision-making. The government is the leading actor and can determine the outcomes the most. The outcome depends largely on the nature of the negotiations, and on the nature of the actors involved.

Arrow (E): leads to. The policy processes lead to outcomes in this case: policy.

In this model ENGOs can impact policy outcomes in principle, but are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors. This thesis focuses on the national level while the

international and local levels are recognized, whereas Arts' (1998) model focuses solely on the international level.

Apart from this, two other large differences exist between Arts' model and the one used in this thesis. The upper part of Arts' model consists of the international system, which in turn consists of "events and trends", and a part called "structure". Structure is divided in the distribution of resources, regimes and the rules of the game. Leaving out this structure increases the explanatory power of the central part of this model while at the same time simplifying it. Now the focus is more on the political arena, and everything influencing this arena is regarded as a given trend or event: something that changes the political arena and therefore the terms for negotiations. The other large difference between this model and that of Arts is that there is no feedback between the outcomes of the negotiation and the events and trends. Since the contextual factors are regarded as given circumstances, and this thesis is a short term research, it goes too far to for this thesis to assume that the policy influences these events and trends. The events and trends in this case are highly unpredictable. Giving the model a feedback loop might suggest that they are predictable.

To give some more context to the two research questions they will be placed in figure 4. Question 1 verifies if arrow B does exist and how large it is, in other words: how influential are ENGOs. Question 2 tries to explain arrow B: what factors can explain the influence of ENGOs. The research questions are repeated hereunder.

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology for data collection and data analysis will be presented.

3.1 Assessing the Extent of Political Influence of NGOs

This chapter will present the methodology used to answer research question 1. During the fieldwork it became apparent that the method chosen to analyse the data from the interviews was not applicable in this thesis. Therefore the data will be studied in another way than was intended. The methodology chosen beforehand will be introduced first in this chapter. Then the weaknesses experienced during the fieldwork will be discussed and finally the adapted methodology will be introduced

3.1.1 Original methodology

The normal procedure of comparing cases with and without NGO influence is not applicable since all three investigated cases are unique (Finer et al., 2009; Arts, 1998; Yin, 1994). So when the commonly used comparative case analysis is not applicable, what method is most appropriate? In modern political literature three different methods to assess political influence can be distinguished: the reputation, position and decision-making methods (Arts, 1998).

The reputation method connects power with reputation, it states that what counts in social relations is the mutual perception of power. In other words: if one is regarded influential by others he will be treated as such. The same is true for the opposite, if one is regarded powerless (Arts, 1998). Using opinions of selected key figures one assesses the influence of several actors in a given community (Peters, 1999). A major weakness is the subjectivity of this study; it is completely based on the opinion of others, and it does not say much about the factual influence of an actor. An advantage is the easy way in which one can collect data. Simply by getting the reputation of having influence it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, only the reputation is enough to enhance one's influence (Peters, 1999).

The position method assumes that political influence is based on the position taken by the actors, this position directly influences access to authorities, information and other resources. The closer one is to the authorities and the more information and resources one has, the stronger one's influence is. Using this method, a kind of hierarchy can be designed to rank all actors. For example a president has more influence than a minister, who has more influence than a lobbyist and so forth (Arts, 1998). The position method has a high reliability since it is easy for organisations to pinpoint the crucial, and therefore influential, positions. The major critique on this method is that it easily assesses one's position but not the influence one executes (Peters, 1999). It is easily argued that all majors have a different level of influence while they all have the same positions, so there have to be more factors. Another critique is that it does not discriminate between different issues and political arena since respondents are only asked to assess the power of actors in general. (Arts, 1998)

These two commonly used methods are designed to analyse actors' political influence, but they do not automatically say something about who really influences a political decision (Peters, 1999; Arts, 1998). While position can certainly affect political influence it does not necessarily say much about the control of outcomes. A valid argument for this is that not all members control the outcomes of decision to the same extent, even though they have formally the same position; this differs from case to case.

Incorporating the weaknesses of the latter two methods, the decision-making method aims at analysing decision in specific issue-areas in order to reconstruct the contribution of players to the

final outcome. It assesses to what extent the actors' interventions were successful in the decision making process. This assessment is used to reconstruct the relative influence of each actor. Because key issues and key decisions are studied, the influence of political players is considered to be politically relevant (Arts, 1998; Peters, 1999). Data is generally collected by interviews with actors and decision makers and the analysis of policy documents, interviews with more objective specialists can also be used. However, the decision-making method is also criticized, mainly by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who pinpoint that agenda setting is also influence. Another kind of critique is that one can achieve policy goals without exercising influence: it is hard to separate the extent to which one has achieved one's goal and the influence one had on that outcome (Peters, 1999).

The methods described above all have their advantages and disadvantages, and since every case needs another method, in the practice these three methods are often mixed by picking and combining relevant elements. Originally, a variation on the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal analysis, in short EAC Method, was used for this thesis. This qualitative method combines the three modern methods of analysing political influence. The methodology concerning the EAC Method is developed by Arts (1998). In his book Arts also assesses political influence of ENGOs in a rather complex political arena: the climate and biodiversity conventions. With several adaptations this methodology can be used for this study. A strong point of this methodology is that it studies the same political influence from three completely different angles, which seriously reduces the change of inaccuracies. However in Bas Arts (1998) and this thesis it is not so clear who achieved what specific result in the designed policy.

The EAC methodology works as follows.

Ego-perception

In this qualitative technique a number of selected key respondents of NGOs are asked to assess their own influence on the governmental decisions regarding oil production in Yasuní. Then they will get the opportunity to elaborate on their examples of NGO influence. These interviews will create a list of so-called *ego-perceptions*. Both the quality and quantity of these ENGO claims are taken into account in the assessment (Arts, 1998). These interviews will be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline, in this thesis table 3.

Alter-perception

After selecting a group of key respondents representing government the respondents will assess the political influence of ENGOs active in Yasuní. These result in a list representing alter-perception. Again, both the quality and quantity of these claims on NGO influence are taken into account in the assessment. For this part, other players assess both the reputation of NGOs and the factual achievement of their policy goals (Arts, 1998).

These outcomes can confirm, reject or add to the claims of the NGOs. This is the first control on the claims made by the key informants of the NGOs (Arts, 1998). These interviews in which ENGO influence will be assessed will also be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline.

Causal analysis

Finally, the NGO influence will be subjected to a second control of the NGO claims, the so-called causal analysis. This is done to verify if ENGOs really did influence the policy in the way they claim.

Causal analysis is structured in the following way: First it is checked if an NGO achieved their goals regarding policy, and to what extent. The achievement of these goals is divided in two groups: enhancing a desired 'good' or preventing an undesired 'bad'. The Causal analysis helps to judge the political influence of NGOs. For this thesis, this control will be based on the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) in table 3.

The ego-perception, alter-perception and the causal analysis all point out whether there is in fact an influence of NGOs. If the alter-perception and causal analysis indicate that there was no influence it might be concluded that there was no influence although the ego-perception might claim the opposite. The situation changes where the alter-perception and causal analysis differ, then it is up to the analyst to decide which should prevail. In general the causal analysis is dominant over the alter-perception since it is based on objective documents instead of on subjective visions of key informants. However this dominance also depends on the quality of data as these might differ (Arts, 1998; Steinberg, 2004).

To put this all in perspective, it should be recognized that any assessment of political influence is after all only an informed guess (Arts, 1998). One can never be sure of having included all relevant visible and invisible factors and actors in the analysis, especially in cases like this one, where objectivity is hard to find and transparency is not a common phenomenon. Even scientific judgements on political influence remain guesses. But they are ‘informed’ at least, as the political processes concerned are analysed as thoroughly as possible. (Arts, 1998)

Ego-perception	Views of ENGO representatives with regard to their own political influence (claims)
Alter-perception	Views of government representatives with regard to the political influence of ENGOs (first control of ENGO claims)
Causal analysis	Researcher’s assessment of ENGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews (second control)

3.1.2 The problem between the methodology and the circumstances in the field

The EAC-methodology is based on a strict separation between people working in NGOs, government or other players. While this separation might have existed at an international level or in the nineteen nineties when Arts (1998) carried out his study, the interviews for this thesis showed something completely different for Ecuador. Of the 18 interviewed people 13 worked a long time within another group. For example, scientists were also NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. This made it illogical to pretend there is a hard distinction between the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal-analysis group. There were two possibilities to solve this friction between the methodology and the situation in the field. The first one was to just make a distinction of all interviews in one of the three groups. This could be done according to the current job, which has as a weakness that this was not the job the people had during the events. The second one is trying to group the people in their most meaningful group, the one they worked in during the events or their most influential job. However, this would make the influence of the researcher to unintentionally manipulate the data too large. The second possibility is to look for an alternative methodology that would solve this problem. Since there were interviews done with a very broad group of people one could assume that the truth was captured within the data derived from these interviews. Since almost all people worked at different type of jobs, the data derived from the interviews was more objective than assumed before starting the fieldwork. There were no large differences in the reconstruction of events between the point of view of a former minister and an NGO-employee. Therefore it is chosen to use all data from the interviews to reconstruct the decision-making process. This methodology will be elaborated on in the following section.

3.1.3 Alternative methodology

The methodology, aiming at answering research question 1, was adapted to solve this problem is derived from Betsill and Corell (2008), who studied several cases in which the NGO influence on environmental negotiations was central. During this research a methodology was developed to systematically analyse NGO-influence. The data needed for this is the same as Arts (1998) used and consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews with government delegates, ENGOs and specialists. Since the framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was used during the interviews to systematize the data it could easily be fit to this methodology.

Also the research task is the same: analyse evidence of ENGO influence. Only the methodology is different. The methodology is based on two different dimensions. The first is process tracing: here the participation of ENGOs will be linked to their influence using causal mechanisms to explain this influence. The other analysis is the counterfactual analysis: answering the question “what would have happened if ENGOs had not participated in the negotiations?” This separation will be held during the analysis of the results and the conclusion on the first research question of this thesis. In table 2 an overview of the research strategy, the data type, the data sources and the methodology is given.

Table 2: Strategies for gathering and analysing data on (E)NGO influence (cells contain examples of questions researchers might ask. From: Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 28)

Triangulation by:	Intentional communication by NGOs/NGO participants	Behaviour of other actors/global attainment
<i>Research task: Gather evidence of NGO influence along two dimensions</i>		
Data type	<i>Activities:</i> How did NGOs communicate with other actors?	<i>Outcome:</i> Does the final agreement contain text drafted by NGOs? Does the final agreement reflect NGO goals and principles?
	<i>Access:</i> What opportunities did NGOs have to communicate with other actors?	<i>Process:</i> Did negotiators discuss issues proposed by NGOs (or cease to discuss issues opposed by NGOs)? Did NGOs coin terms that became part of the negotiating jargon? Did NGOs shape the positions of key states?
	<i>Recourses:</i> What sources of leverage did NGOs use in communicating with other actors?	
Data source	<i>Primary texts</i> (e.g., draft decisions, country position statements, the final agreement, (NGO) lobbying materials)	
	<i>Secondary texts</i> (e.g.[...]media reports, press releases)	
	<i>Interviews</i> (government delegates, observers, NGOs) <i>Researcher observations</i> during the negotiations	
<i>Research task: analyse evidence of NGO influence</i>		
Methodology	<i>Process tracing</i> What were the causal mechanisms linking NGO participation in [...] environmental negotiations with their influence?	<i>Counterfactual analysis</i> What would have happened if NGOs had not participated in the negotiations?

In this thesis the extent of political influence is not directly measured or asked in interviews, solely whether there was influence. Table 3, shown below, was used as a framework to systematically analyse the political influence of ENGOs during interviews. The influence of ENGOs was investigated for the five recognized phases: Issue framing, agenda setting, position of key actors, final agreement/procedural issues and final agreement/ substantive issues. In the framework presented in table 3, several questions are presented for all these phases to help the systematic analysis. These questions are answered as part of the results of this thesis.

Claims made by all respondents were verified so that in the end a conclusion could be drawn about the level of influence. Therefore it was chosen to keep the data collection as qualitative as possible with the only exception that the data derived from interviews was used to differentiate between low, moderate and high ENGO influence, as is done in table 4, based on the framework designed by Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 38). The input for this scheme is the completely filled in framework of table 3, which points out if there was ENGO influence, and in what phase. Together these two tables form a complete methodology that enables the researcher to systematically investigate ENGO influence.

Three final schemes will be made one for “La Zona Intangible”, one for Block 31 and the last one for Yasuní-ITT. The conclusion will be drawn when the final scheme of each topic will be linked to table 4. This will lead to three end conclusions of ENGO influence of low, moderate or high, on all three subtopics, and thereby to an answer on research question 1.

Table 3: Indicators of NGO influence (quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 34,35)

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

Table 4: Determining the level of NGO influence (Quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p.38)

	Low	Moderate	High
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate and have some success in shaping the negotiating process but not the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiating process • NGOs' effects of participation can be linked to outcome
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a no on all the outcome indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a yes on one or both of the outcome indicators

3.8 Assessing the Explanatory Factors of NGO Influence

This section introduces the methodology used to answer research question two: What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni? This is done after the first research question is answered being: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” The second question tries to explain the political influence of ENGOs.

To collect the data used to answer the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” all interviewees were asked for the factors that can explain ENGO-influence. This resulted in a ranking of mentioned factors. This list, combined with the list from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used to draw conclusions on the explanatory factors of ENGO-influence.

During the interviews people were asked which factors might have explained the political influence of ENGOs in the Yasuní case, and in interviews with ENGOs which factors might have explained their specific influence. This was done for both enabling and restricting factors. These factors are investigated using interviews, with the data from these interviews one can study how ENGOs have influenced both the negotiation process (through issue framing, agenda setting and shaping the positions of other actors) as well as the outcome (procedural and substantive elements of the final text) of the negotiations concerning the production of oil in Yasuní (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Finally in the discussion a distinction will be made for the explanatory factors for the three sub-topics since not every factor might be as important, or even present, in all three cases.

3.9 Research Strategy

Three different subtopics will be investigated in this thesis, all three very important to answer the research questions. The first will be the construction of “la Zona Intangible” (No-Go Zone), an area that cannot be developed because of the uncontacted indigenous people living there. The construction of this No-Go Zone and the construction of its final boundaries were negotiations where various NGOs tried to influence the outcome. This decision places several oil fields off limits for exploitation.

The second theme is block 31, an oil block that is not yet exploited within the National Park. Previously Petrobras owned it but after a negotiation process between Petrobras, the Ecuadorian government and NGOs Petrobras decided to give block 31 back to the Ecuadorian state.

The third theme concerns Yasuní-ITT. This initiative proposes to keep all the oil in the ITT field underground and let other countries pay half of the expected revenues. This money will be guarded by the UNDP and will be invested in sustainable development projects in Ecuador.

The investigation will be done according to the research strategy designed by Betsill and Corell (2008). Process tracing will be important in this thesis, by reconstructing the process the role of ENGOs and their influence can be analysed. Another important methodology is the counterfactual analysis: asking the question: “what would have happened without ENGOs?” This latter strategy is of major importance for the first research question.

3.10 Data Collection

As can be seen in table 2, the data source consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews. Interviews are especially important to retrieve data for this thesis, used to reconstruct the decision-making process and to answer finally the question “what would have happened without ENGOs?”

18 interviews were held. Since people were also asked about former work-experience an extended list of institutions were analysed, of which a complete list can be found in Appendix 2. This list shows that in fact a substantial larger group of ENGOs, governmental bodies and specialists were interviewed.

To avoid an “in crowd,” people were asked who their “opponents” are or with whom they disagree. To include important people the interviewees were asked to name the actors that facilitated the process. This is called snowball sampling, but with the slight difference that in this way opponents are also selected. This is done to counter the most common flaw: the dependence on the first sample of interviewees and their contacts (Kumar, 2005). This is a very useful method for decision-making and for groups that are not completely understood how they interact.

The texts used in this thesis were almost without an exception of Ecuadorian origin and therefore written in Spanish. Primary texts in this thesis mainly consist of formal governmental decisions, decrees by secretaries of state and lobbying material from a range of actors. Secondary texts are mainly media reports, press releases, documentaries and other articles.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected for this thesis is purely qualitative. First the data analysis for the first research question will be given and in the sub-chapter thereafter the data analysis for the explanatory factors of political influence will be given.

The data used to answer research question 1 consists of interviews and primary and secondary texts, this will be used in two different ways. With all these data the decision-making process will be reconstructed. Since many interviewees wanted to be anonymous and unrecognizable it is impossible to use many quotes since names are easily obtained from these. However all data will only be presented if it is verifiable. So the results are a reconstruction of the decision-making process and with extra stress on the role of ENGOs in this. The decision-making process is divided in five phases, corresponding to table 3: Issue framing, agenda setting, influence on key actors, and the procedural issues and substantive issues of the final agreement.

The results used to answer research question 2 consist of the factors mentioned during the interviews that could explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. A ranking will be made of these factors with the number of times it is mentioned. A conclusion will be drawn using these factors and linking them with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008). Together with the decision-making process it will be made clear which factors are of more and lesser importance.

4. Results

This chapter shows all results from interviews concerning the influence of ENGOs more in depth and with more details, and is structured as table from Betsill and Corell (2008); see p29. This is done three times, each time for the three different subtopics: Zona-Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní-ITT. These extended reconstruction will be used to fill in a complete framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) that will be presented with the conclusions. Later an analysis will be given on what would have happened without ENGOs, the counterfactual analysis. This is done for all three topics. The analysis starts with the issue framing of Yasuní as a whole and the role of ENGOs, because this can be seen as the start of the three topics. First Yasuní as a whole was framed, and later the entire decision-making process for all three topics started, including the framing of the specific issue.

4.1 ENGO influence on framing Yasuní

ENGOs have claimed to influence the framing of Yasuní National Park as (one of) the place(s) with the highest biodiversity in the world, and as a special issue of the New Internationalist. Many initiatives to frame Yasuní as the most biodiverse place on the planet came from civil society like “Yasuní Green Gold”, “el Yasuní depende de tí”, “Expedición Andarele” and “Yasuní por la vida”. The four highest Google hits for “Yasuní” are on number one “live Yasuní” from the ENGO Finding Species. Number two is from Wikipedia, the third is “SOS Yasuní” from the Ecuadorian ENGO Acción Ecologica. The fourth is “Save Yasuní” from the American ENGO “Save America’s Forests”. The first government controlled hit can be found on the eight place.

The same can be said about books; most of the books and articles written about Yasuní are written or compiled by ENGOs (3 respondents). Only since Yasuní ITT the government has written more about Yasuní. New social media become increasingly more important as a source of information, especially for the younger more cosmopolite generation. On Facebook all hits except one (Wikipedia) are from ENGOs and Social movements. Twitter is less used, three groups use “Yasuní” name: one movie that wants to promote the ITT initiative from civil society, one high school project that aims at the same goals and the official, however not active, Yasuní-ITT-account from the Ecuadorian government. Remarkable is that all except the one aiming at fundraising for the Yasuní movie are not used since October 2010. The same is true for the Facebook accounts.

The scientist concerned for Yasuní (SCY) possibly made the highest contribution to frame Yasuní as a unique place with an extraordinary biodiversity. The findings from this report that concludes that Yasuní is the place with the highest biodiversity known to men, is quoted in almost every article related to Yasuní (Acosta, 2010; Acosta et al., 2010; Larrea, 2010; Honty, 2010; Martinez, 2010; Villavicencio, 2010; Bass et al., 2009; Finer et al., 2009; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Yasuní ITT, 2009; Finer et al., 2008). But SCY is not a science-based initiative. It was initiated by two ENGOs from the USA: Finding Species and Save America’s Forests. It was also the work of ENGOs that seven famous and respected scientists joined the campaign and wrote letters to stop the construction of Petrobras’ oil road in block 31. These letters even ended as a news article in the New York Times (New York Times, 17 Feb. 2005)

Even the government uses a lot of material provided by ENGOs, in the airport of San Francisco de Orellana or shortly Rio Coca, the gateway city to Yasuní, the entire airport is decorated by photos from Finding Species.

Another remarkable achievement is the sheer number of stickers, posters etc. provided by ENGOs. Stickers provided by ENGOs can be found on lampposts throughout cities and posters are hung in many important buildings, especially in the governmental hub of Quito and larger cities in the Amazon. Hereunder in figure 5 a timeline is presented with all the important dates from Ecuadorian politics and the three different subtopics.

Timeline Yasuní

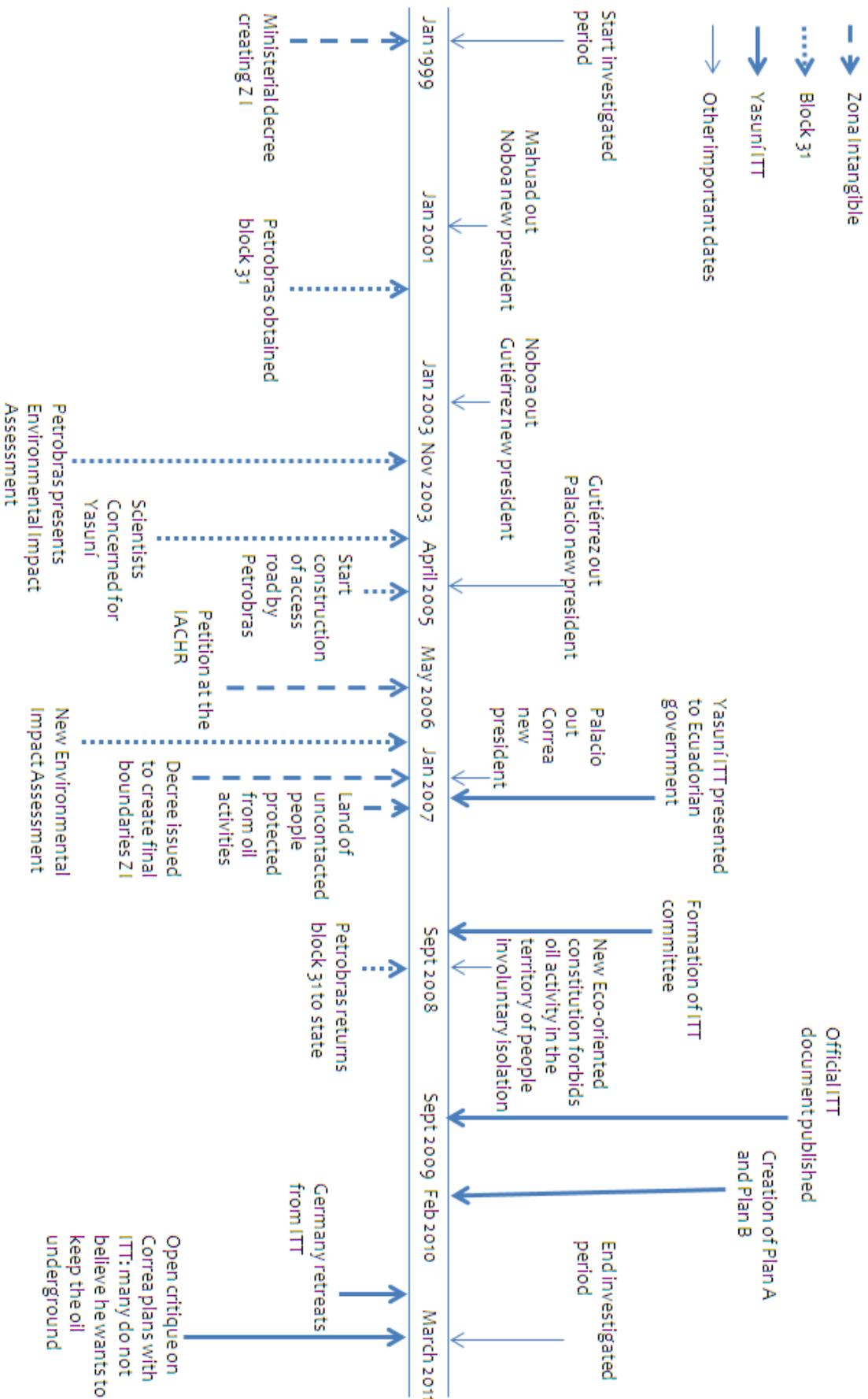


Figure 5: Timeline of Yasuní with all important events concerning the Zona Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní ITT

4.2 Process tracing of La Zona Intangible

The first theme that will be discussed is the one that has its roots deepest in history, La Zona-Intangible. Its roots go back almost thirty years when indigenous people started to ask for an oil-moratorium. In January 1999 “La Zona-Intangible” (ZI) was created by a decree of the minister of environment (Yolanda Kakabadse) in order to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane. Although it was decided that the Zona-Intangible was to be located in the southern part of Yasuní it did not yet get fixed borders. Since the created no-go zone did not have borders it was impossible to enforce the laws protecting this area and illegal logging, for example, took a rise. In 2006 more than ten logging camps were present in the Zona-Intangible. On the May 1st, 2006 a group of Ecuadorian activists petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to intervene and force the Ecuadorian government to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane from all different threats. On the tenth of May, 2006 the IACHR called on the Ecuadorian government to adopt specific ‘precautionary measures’ in order to protect the indigenous tribes by putting measures into practice to prevent the entry of outsiders, such as loggers and oil workers into their territory (Bass et al., 2010; Finer et al., 2009; Narvaéz, 2009; interviews with 6 respondents). In January 2007, eight years after the Zona-Intangible had been created, the president signed a decree to draw its final boundaries. This was followed in April 2007 by a new policy on uncontacted people of the Ecuadorian government, which places their territories off-limits to extractive activities (Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 3 respondents). In the following months a logger was killed just outside the Zona-Intangible. It became obvious that the ZI did not cover the complete living grounds of the Tagaeri and Taromenane. In March 2008 the implementation of the IACHR’s precautionary measures started, creating the first military control point to protect the ZI in April 2008, and it stopped the illegal logging effectively (Finer et al., 2009; Proaño and Colleoni, 2008; interviews with 4 respondents). Ecuador’s new constitution created under president Correa from September 2008 forbids all extractive activities within the territory of indigenous people living in voluntary isolation, and calls the violation of these right ethnocide (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008; Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 4 respondents)

4.3 Results on ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible

This chapter demonstrates all results concerning the Zona-Intangible, using Betsill and Corell’s (2008) framework (table 3). This table forms the red line of this chapter. The five table heads are converted in five sub-chapters and will discuss the main issues from table 3. It starts with issue framing then, agenda setting, the position of key actors followed by the final agreement procedural and later substantive issues. One part of the scheme from Betsill and Corell (2008) has been adapted, under agenda setting the “terms of debate” have not been included. This is done since the majority of the respondents did not understand the answer or did not know what to answer. Since this led to a shortage of usable results it has been chosen to not include this in neither the results nor the discussion.

The information for this chapter consists of 7 interviews that gave substantial information about the ZI, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.3.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning La Zona Intangible

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

First there was the idea from ENGOs and indigenous groups that wanted an oil moratorium in the entire Amazon. This idea had been around since the 1970s. In 1964 Chevron-Texaco was working in the Ecuadorian Amazon under the name of Texpet. The operations were mainly in the northern part of the Amazon near Lago Agrio, and caused an ecological disaster. Hundreds of millions litres of water were polluted and the nature and people suffered severely. This induced the activism of people living in the southern parts of the Amazon, who did not want the fate of their northern

neighbours. Their solution, supported by ENGOs like Oilwatch and Acción Ecológica, was a moratorium for oil in the entire Amazon (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews). The government did not agree and wanted the oil extracted to fund necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure. (7 interviews)

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

When Yolanda Kakabadse came into office in August 1998 she saw the problems, and wanted to protect the uncontacted indigenous people, but also other indigenous groups and Yasuni's fragile ecosystem. All protected areas in Ecuador are under direct control of the minister of environment. Therefore she had the power to declare two areas no-go-zone for development, particularly since uncontacted people were living there. The Intangible Zones are something different than an oil-moratorium, so there was a noticeable shift on the issue. First the government changed its opinion, from exploitation to preservation, however 5 different presidents led the government during the negotiations, inducing several severe shifts in the government perception (5 interviews). Secondly a large group of ENGOs did agree on the official governmental plans, although not all (4 interviews). Finally, oil companies strongly opposed to the plans of a ZI, this did not change during the negotiations (7 interviews).

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The role of ENGOs on the agenda setting of La Zona Intangible seems to be marginal, except from raising a discussion about an oil moratorium in the Ecuadorian Amazon. However, that discussion started in the 1980s and nothing had been done until 1999, when the minister of environment made the decree declaring two No-Go-Zones. It looks like ENGOs and indigenous groups started the discussion and when the right person had the power to make a change a part of the initial plan was executed. However direct influence on the issue framing by ENGOs seems rather unlikely (Bass et al, 2010; Finer et al, 2009; 10 interviews).

ENGO influence on issue framing?

No, ENGOs started the discussion on oil a moratorium, but it cannot be proven to have influenced the idea of a ZI.

4.3.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning La Zona Intangible

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

The minister of environment that created the ZI, Yolanda Kakabadse, did that on her own initiative although here goals were almost identical to that of many ENGOs and indigenous groups she states. Since the Man and Biosphere Reserve fell under her jurisdiction she could "finally" create a No-Go-Zone. She was the one that brought the idea of a ZI to the attention of the community. These statements from Kakabadse are underwritten by all 6 other respondents.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The construction of a no-go-zone was put on the agenda, but there was not a real negotiation. The minister of environment formulated a decree and that was executed. The creation of an oil moratorium for the entire Amazon never entered the agenda although it was often suggested by environmental groups. Two ENGOs, Fundación Natura and EcoCiencia, gave technical assistance to Yolanda Kakabadse when she was minister of Environment in 1999 to design the Zona Intangible of Yasuni and the Zona-Intangible Cuyabeno (Narvaéz, 2009). Oil-companies also tried change the boundaries so that oil wells were not placed off limits (lobbying material of Andes Petroleum; 7 interviews).

After 7 years without definitive frontiers the creation of these boundaries was put on the agenda again by ENGOs, first without success but after a government change it was formulated as a priority by the government.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

The role of ENGOs in shaping the agenda is not completely clear: they did start the discussion of the oil moratorium, but this was never put on the agenda. The no-go-zones came from within the government, and while there might be indirect influence of ENGOs in framing the issue of oil extraction, biodiversity and uncontacted people, this is not evident.

Acción Ecológica, an Ecuadorian ENGO, opposed the creation of a ZI that did not cover the entire Ecuadorian Amazon was stated by 3 respondents not affiliated with Acción Ecológica. This led to a diffuse sound from ENGOs being split in two groups at that time. One group was pro-ZI, since they believed that it was the best they could achieve, the other group consisted of ENGOs and indigenous groups that disapproved the ZI because it was not ambitious enough. According to the three respondents this led to tension between ENGOs and made it harder to influence the government and impossible to claim that either group did influence the government decisively. A high civil servant gives the following explanation: “In 2004 a coalition of civil activists: *el grupo de vigilancia* and an indigenous movement: *las indígenas de seis lados* took action, this was the impulse to restart the discussion of the ZI boundaries. Later many ENGOs, scientists, and other civil society groups joined the discussion. At this time the process to draw borders was started again but the president at that time, Lucio Gutiérrez was not interested in the theme. In the end of 2006 it was restarted again from nothing under president Palacio, here the foundations were laid that led under the boundaries of the ZI under president Correa”.

Two respondents, state that the formation of the borders of the ZI in 2006 was placed on the agenda by ENGOs. Another source state that the force behind the creation of the boundaries were not ENGOs although he knows ENGOs claim this but the sub-secretary of the minister of environment at that time, first months of 2007. On this statement the former two state they had contacts within the government that could speed things up.

The second agenda, with the boundaries of the ZI, might be shaped by ENGOs, they raised the topic again in 2006 but did not succeed. A year later with a new government they did succeed, but it is not clear if this is due to ENGOs, or to a new government that wanted to solve this problem created by former governments. People in interviews disagree on this; it is possible that certain ENGOs are overestimating their influence while other players underestimate their influence. However, it looks like ENGOs could only succeed in their goals if they had powerful contacts within the government. And these newly installed governmental employees already had the same opinion. ENGOs seem to have functioned as a watchdog at this time, unable to achieve their goals single-handedly, but with the right governmental people in place they might have sped up the process (interviews).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, the agenda was set and dominated by the government, however at times ENGOs functioned as a watchdog to ensure that the creation of boundaries was not completely off the agenda.

4.3.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning La Zona Intangible

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government formulated the idea of creating a no-go-zone, so that might be their initial position in this case. Many ENGOs had the same opinion, although definitely not all. Several ENGOs especially Acción Ecológica considered the plans were not ambitious enough. So a pragmatic (and *ambientalistas*) group of ENGOs went for the governmental plans since it was a lot better than nothing and they feared that when they would be too ambitious they might have ended empty-handed. The last key actor in this are oil companies, who wanted to secure their investments and their oil-blocks. Therefore they wanted no Zona-Intangible but when it would be created at least outside their oil blocks (lobby materials Andes Petroleum, interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

One can be certain that the oil companies did not change their opinion; they wanted to stop the creation of the ZI and to reformulate the boundaries to exclude some important oil wells. The opinion of ENGOs did not change either, the two groups remained existing next to each other. The only actor that did change (their opinion) was the Ecuadorian government, which was led by 5 different presidents during the negotiations of 1999 until 2007. No other change was noticed only that the two governments from Noboa and Gutierrez (January 21, 2000 until April 20, 2005) had no priorities creating the ZI's final boundaries. This finally changed in 2006 under the presidency of Palacio. The process restarted and the complete process was successfully finished under President Correa in 2007. One respondent shows that the most important trigger to restart the negotiation in 2006 were new oil explorations in block 14 and 17, that would fall in the ZI, but since it did not have boundaries the oil companies could still try to erect an oil post. This made all actors aware that nothing had been solved yet.

Half of block 14 and 17 fell within the supposed boundaries of the ZI. The oil companies wanted to fix this problem legally, but the government did not want that, and ENGOs were exercising pressure at that time to finally create some borders. Since the official aim of the ZI was to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane the government sent airplanes to scout them from the air. All living grounds of these people were to be protected by the ZI, and the borders were drawn by minister Alban, an eco-orientated minister that already played a key role in block 31.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs tried to shape the position of the government especially under president Gutierrez, this failed several times. When Palacio came into office some people within the government were open to idea of drawing the ZI's boundaries. This made it easier for ENGOs to join meetings. The influence of ENGOs is discussed severely, more than a few people from ENGOs claimed to have played a key role in drawing the borders of the ZI. Not only several people from the government but also more objective specialists oppose this claim. They state that the role of some individual governmental players was more substantial and that these ENGO-employees are severely overestimating their influence. The specialists seem to have a better overview of the negotiation process, and therefore it can be argued that reality resembles their reconstruction.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did try to influence the government, but the government only changed when a new president was installed.

4.3.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning La Zona Intangible

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed.

4.3.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning La Zona Intangible

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The opinion of the majority of ENGOs is resembled in the final agreement, a no-go-zone for development and oil exploitation in Yasuní to protect the (uncontacted) indigenous people and the environment. However some wanted a more ambitious plan.

After an exhausting process and eight years, the borders were drawn of the ZI just about the time oil companies started new explorations. Several oil fields were placed off-limits by the final boundaries of the ZI for example half of block 14 and the Imuya post in the ITT block. This was celebrated as a victory by many ENGOs (interviews).

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Except from joining some meetings and functioning as a watchdog, the role of ENGOs might be rather small. There is some evidence that ENGOs sped up the process of drawing the borders, however no new decisions were made purely because ENGOs promoted it (interviews). In the literature very little can be found from the hands of ENGO concerning the ZI. In comparison to Yasuni-ITT and Block 31 also very little can be found on the websites of ENGOs, as well in other materials distributed by ENGOs.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the content of the agreement was not changed by ENGO influence, although they might have speeded it up in the final stage

4.4 Counterfactual analysis in La Zona Intangible

What would have happened to la Zona Intangible without the participation of ENGOs? Indigenous movements, not ENGOs, started the discussion of an oil moratorium; ENGOs joined later.

It might be that the focus shifted a bit towards nature conservation instead of the living grounds of indigenous people, but in practise it comes down to the same: a large part of the Biosphere Reserve needed extra protection.

The agenda setting might not have differed a lot in the beginning, since the minister of environment raised the whole topic, but in a later stage ENGOs were functioning as a watchdog. Making sure the drawing of the boundaries was never completely off the agenda. But did that make a difference? In 2007 a green government was installed led by Raphael Correa, with or without ENGOs protecting parts of this fragile ecosystem better was one of its teams priorities. ENGOs were not able to change the position of the government possibly also due to the fact that five presidents led the country during the negotiation. No time was available to strengthen their network within the government. It is hard to say if ENGO participation made a difference to the solution, most respondents from ENGOs and other institutions agree that it was almost an entirely government led process. ENGOs were free to join in meetings, but only if they knew the right people in the government could they really exercise influence. Therefore one can conclude that already conservation-orientated people were in the governmental staff when the boundaries were drawn, they may have succeeded without the ENGOs.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible seems to be low: ENGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome. In this case ENGOs did join in the negotiation process, but they do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators. However, who knows what would have happened without ENGOs keeping this topic on the agenda during the political difficult years between 1999 and 2006?

4.5 Process tracing of Block 31

The subsequent topic that will be discussed consists of a series of the negotiations concerning Block 31. The invested period for Block 31 starts in 2003 when Petrobras takes over block 31 from Perez Companc, reaches its summit with the battle for block 31 which makes Petrobras decide to return block 31 and ends in 2011 when this block is still state-owned but not yet leased. Why is there so much hassle about block 31 when it has been proven that the amount of oil in this block is hardly enough to financially break even (Rival, 2010)? Block 31 is the gateway to the large

adjacent reserves in block ITT. To extract the heavy crude of ITT lighter oil is needed to create a mix that is easy to pump up. However when block ITT would not be exploited, block 31 would lose its strategic value and would not be exploited either (1 interview).

This issue commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road, but before the government approved the EIS, Petrobras started the construction of this oil road. What happened afterwards and what was the role of ENGOs in all this?

As stated above the process started when Perez Companc, an Argentinean oil company, sold the exploitation rights of block 31 to Petrobras in 2002 (interviews; Finer et al. 2009). Petrobras presented an Environmental Impact Study in 2003 for the oil reserves of Nenke and Apaika. This study called for the construction of an access road into the National Park (4 interviews; Finer et al., 2009). At that moment the real negotiation started.

To prevent this road an extended research was started involving 59 scientists with experience in Yasuní, called the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní (SCY). The American ENGOs Finding Species and Save America's Forests initiated this initiative. The SCY created an unsolicited Technical Advisory Report regarding the plans for block 31. This report concluded that the greatest threat for the area were the direct and indirect effects of access roads. Later the Smithsonian Institute and The Association for Tropical Biology also published science based letters opposing to this access road (4 interviews; SCY; Finer et al., 2009).

Around the same time several Ecuadorian ENGOs started a lawsuit challenging the fact the relocation of a new processing facility required for the project into the park without proper studies. A second lawsuit was started by human right groups focussing on Constitutional violations of the project (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009).

The Grupo Asesor Técnico de Parque Nacional Yasuní (GAT) was one of the first to know what was going on. This group consisting of ENGOs, universities, local governments and civil right groups were the first ones to know that Petrobras already started with the construction of the not yet approved access road in May 2005. Together with the president of the national park they informed the government demanding that no roads were to be allowed in the National Park. They also demanded reduced impact for the oil pipe. Despite being informed the government did not take a strong position in this issue, they did not force Petrobras to stop (2 interviews). This road reached the northern frontier of Yasuní National Park, and Petrobras was seeking the final permit that would allow them to enter the National Park (Finer et al., 2009). The other permits had already been signed by the minister of Environment, and several details were changed during a meeting with the GAT. Meanwhile ENGOs from the GAT formed a coalition called Amigos de Yasuní and accused the universities and governmental bodies of being environmental unfriendly. Wildlife Conservation Society-Ecuador (WCS) had to change director and the Universidad Pontificia Católica resigned from the GAT (1 interview). Although struggling with internal unrest the GAT demanded that Petrobras would not cross the Rio Tiputini, and when Petrobras did start the road between Rio Tiputini and the National Park the GAT demanded a suspension of their licenses, and that no final license would be given.

At this time President Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of office by the Ecuadorian people and was replaced by Alfredo Palacio: a radical change. Palacio re-examined the oil access road issue in block 31. "On 7 July 2005 the newly installed minister of Environment informed Petrobras that they were not authorized to construct the processing facility or road into the park and instead had to develop a road-less entry design with the processing facility located outside the park" (Finer et al., 2009 p.12). This new minister did not know much about Yasuní and its problems and was introduced to all this material by ENGOs.

“Less than a week later, over 150 Waorani marched through the streets of Quito to protest the Petrobras project and delivered a letter to the government calling for a 10 year moratorium on new oil projects in their territory” (Finer et al., 2009 p.12).

In September 2006 Petrobras submitted a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for a processing facility outside the National Park and for helicopter access to the drilling platforms instead of a road. (ENGO petition 22 march 2007; Finer et al., 2009). Letters were sent by ENGOs in September 2006 to point out the weaknesses and threats from the new Ecological Assessment of Petrobras. However, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment disagreed and discarded the letters from the scientists and ENGOs involved (interview, Save America’s Forests). Why did Petrobras leave block 31 after having invested more than \$200 million? Several versions of this story are told.

1 Ana Alban, the minister of environment under the presidents Palacio and Correa did not like Petrobras and the way they operated. Therefore she never gave the final license needed to access the National Park. Petrobras tired of waiting returned the block to the Ecuadorian state (1 interview)

2 While starting the construction Petrobras used boats a lot bigger that was allowed in the contract. Petrobras also dumped several barrels of diesel in the Rio Napo, these nonconformities were pointed out to the minister of environment by ENGOs, leading to the suspension of the license for 2 years. Not being able to work would cost a lot of money and therefore Petrobras decided to return block 31 (1 interview)

#3 When this license was issued by the minister of environment it was not yet backed up by local governments what was necessary for its validity. One local civil servant in the Amazonian town of Rio Coca did not want to sign this license. According to two respondents he saw the destruction created by oil companies in the Amazon and wanted to protect the area he grew up in. Unfortunately his motives are not verifiable. Remarkably he was the only one allowed to sign the local license for Petrobras. So when the final license was given, it was not yet backed up legally on a local level, making block 31’s oil production illegal (2 interviews).

4 In October 2007 the minister of environment issued the license. This triggered a new round of ENGO petitions and actions. In September 2008 President Correa suddenly declared that Petrobras resigned and had returned block 31 to the Ecuadorian state (Finer, 2009; ENGO petition 22 march 2007).

Knowing that all interviewees only knew their own side of the story, the truth has to be a combination of these three stories. This all finally caused Petrobras to terminate its contract. Directly afterwards block 31 was transferred to state-owned Petroamazonas SA.

With the new 2008 constitution in place, which forbids oil extraction in protected areas, block 31 seems to be protected sufficiently. However an exception was built-in, it allows drilling to proceed if it was petitioned by the President and declared in the national interest by the Congress, which may call for a national referendum if deemed necessary (Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews, Constitution of Ecuador, 2008).

4.6 Results on ENGO influence on Block 31

The information for this chapter consists of 5 interviews that gave substantial information about block 31, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

The 5 main sources unanimously explain that this topic commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road. Before the government approved the EIS Petrobras started the construction of this oil road.

4.6.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Block 31

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

Oil production in block 31 seemed to be the best option for the Ecuadorian government and oil companies, and at that time the government did not oppose construction of an access road (5 interviews). ENGOs and indigenous organisations fiercely opposed to these plans. The GAT opposed to the construction of an access road, not to oil extraction.

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

All five respondents, underwrite the importance of *Scientists concerned for Yasuní*: an initiative by Finding Species and Save America's Forests, two American ENGOs. They created a unsolicited Technical Advisory Report that consisted of scientific research of 59 well-known researchers on the biodiversity of Yasuní. The words that framed the complete Yasuní-issue was uttered here first: "Yasuní has the highest known biodiversity of the planet". All 5 respondents noticed a change in the governmental approach: from oil-production with an access road to a more environmental approach. Also people from within the government and opponents of the SCY underwrite their significance for framing Yasuní as one of the most biodiverse places on the planet and defining the direct and indirect consequences of roads as its biggest threat. This strengthened the GAT's and ENGOs' claim to stop the construction of roads. Again the change from the Gutiérrez presidency to Palacio's did also make a large difference, Palacio was more eco-oriented and under his presidency Petrobras was suddenly expected to present greener plans.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The ENGO induced the SCY frame into the entire discussion and also later discussions about oil exploitation in Yasuní (5 interviews). This putted the creation of an access road and oil-production in a completely different light. However other actions by a variety of ENGOs made the Ecuadorian people aware of the problems in block 31 (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009). The latter might be less obvious but it also activated another group of people that might have made the difference in a later stadium: civil activists, civil servants and ordinary citizens. 1 respondent also emphasized the importance of large actions of the ENGO-indigenous coalition, this made people aware of the risks for the people living in Yasuní and the environment.

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, ENGOs did influence the issue framing of block 31, especially in the role of SCY and activist ENGOs.

4.6.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Block 31

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

Three respondents claimed that the SCY played a key role, however one stated that the actions by other ENGOs did catch the eye earlier. It was also stated that the issue came to the attention of the community when Petrobras applied for the environmental license. This was also the first time national newspapers wrote about it. However it became a major topic on an international scale when Finding Species and Save America's Forests joined the campaign and sponsored the study of the SCY. This led to a storm of national and international media attention, and also reached many people from within the government. So the scale was determined by the SCY while it might not have been the first moment for Ecuadorians to hear about block 31. The attention generated

by the SCY was later used by other ENGOs and civil society organisations to find a large audience and impact during their actions.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The most important is the construction of an oil road and the EIS placed on the agenda by Petrobras and the alternative: extraction without roads was placed on the agenda by the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

ENGOs tried to influence decision-making by starting lawsuits at different times, lobbying, supplying scientific research and actions to influence the public opinion and the government. They also joined a large number of meetings (Finer et al., 2009; 7 interviews). Later when the inexperienced Alban became minister of environment ENGOs introduced her to the topic, framing her mind-set against oil extraction, Petrobras etc. (1 interview).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

Yes, indirectly through the GAT and also directly with a lot of interaction between the government and ENGOs.

4.6.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Block 31

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government and Petrobras wanted to extract the oil. The GAT allowed extraction but opposed to the idea of an access road. ENGOs generally opposed both (interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

A respondent involved in the first negotiation phase gave the following reconstruction: “When Petrobras announced in a meeting with the president of the National Park that the construction of the access road already had been started the latter informed the government. A series of discussions and meetings started, consisting of Petrobras, government representatives and the GAT. The first demand of the GAT was no access roads within the National Park. The oil pipe could be constructed with reduced impact. The government acted weak and did not have strict demands on how things should be executed.”

The government made a radical change when president Gutierrez was replaced by Palacio. They became greener and stricter. ENGOs did not change their position much; at times they became more or less active. This was called opportunism by the GAT blaming ENGOs for only taking interest in Yasuní when things were going wrong and taking all credits. This demonstrates a growing tension within the GAT between ENGOs, universities and governmental bodies and a tension between groups inside and outside the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. All these played a role, the sheer number of actions might have influenced the general opinion, the official governmental opinion and the opinion of individual decision-makers, as is pointed out in the reconstruction option 3. 1 respondent from a ENGO explained that a large action about block 16 created a coalition between ENGOs and indigenous people, these groups started an even larger protest to protect block 31, this coalition wanted to stop the oil-extraction altogether. The actions were based on the fact that in Brazil it is illegal to drill for oil in protected areas. Petrobras, owned for 50% by the Brazilian state, was using double standards.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

Yes, ENGOs did not only raise the issue and frame the topic in an environmental way, but also pointed out a lot of things to the government; their lobby and negotiation seemed effective. The strongest example is that Alban was introduced to the topic by ENGOs

4.6.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues Block 31

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (5 interviews). Although the GAT consisted partly of ENGOs, this only applied to earlier negotiations.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs in the negotiations was never discussed and therefore not formalised either.

4.6.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues of Block 31

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

It very much does, no oil has been exploited, no road entered Yasuní, Petrobras returned block 31 to the state, oil exploitation without access roads became the standard option for the government. It looks like an outright success story, yet in the near future Petroamazonas might start the exploitation, block 31 is not officially protected from oil companies.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. ENGOs were present in staggering numbers; over 50 national and international ENGOs joined the campaign. The most important actions might have been in the meeting rooms with ministers and high officials. There they could shape the discussion and supply the decision-makers with essential (scientific) information. 3 respondents also demonstrated that many things that were illegal or non-conform Petrobras' contract, this lead to governmental sanctions and actions. 3 respondents underline the role of ENGOs in supplying scientific data about the effects of oil roads. 2 mention the intensive media offense and the role of the SCY.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, the final result is in line with ENGOs' policy goals, and they played a substantial role in the negotiation process.

4.7 Counterfactual analysis in Block 31

What would have happened without ENGOs? 4 respondents answered that question and all of them said that the oil in block 31 would already have been exploited, using an oil access road. Having seen and processed all data and after reading many articles it still seems to be true. The role of ENGOs within and outside the GAT was so large that it changed the complete decision-making process; it almost became dominated by ENGOs. What would the government have done without knowing that Yasuní was one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, and without the attention it created? Probably business as usual: let the oil get exploited and demand a percentage of the revenues. ENGOs were the one to point out all Petrobras' unconformities, and without that information the IEA would be approved easily. On all key moments the role of ENGOs was substantial, and throughout the process they were functioning as a watchdog.

Many people tried to explain what happened at times, but with incomplete data they could not trace the complete process, and luck seems to play a large role. However what seemed miracles for many people, e.g. the returning of block 31 by Petrobras or the suspension of the license, was the uncoordinated work of ENGOs and other civil society organisations. Their influence on

individual decision-makers, such as minister Alban or the civil servant responsible for the license in Rio Coca, seems to be large. Not only direct but also indirect influence played a role. The discussion was held on the terms set by ENGOs. Thus without ENGOs the discussion would not have been broader than an effective way to extract oil, and that is what would have been happened. The exploitation of two wells in block 31 connected by a road.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on all the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators.

4.8 Process tracing of Yasuní ITT

This chapter does not aim at describing the technical details of the proposal, sufficient articles have been written about it, many of them almost identical (Sevilla, 2010; Larrea, 2010; Acosta et al., 2009; Martinez, 2010; Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer et al., 2008; Friedman Rudovsky, 2007; Rival, 2010).

In the literature concerning Yasuní-ITT some attention has been given to the first stage of the Initiative, how the idea to protect Yasuní's Biodiversity from oil extraction became a viable proposal (Acosta, 2010). However the decision-making process has not been discussed. This will be the first attempt to reconstruct the decision-making process from an idea of many up to the situation of Yasuní ITT at this moment.

The following is from a personal interview with Alberto Acosta, the minister of energy and mines that presented the ITT Initiative to the Ecuadorian president and the Ecuadorian house-of-representatives, also used is Acosta's 2010 article about the *prologue* of the initiative.

According to Acción Ecológica the ITT has three histories, they will be mentioned throughout this chapter, demonstrating a new phase has started.

4.8.1 Part 1 of the History of ITT

The idea, the basis of the ITT Initiative has been slowly constructed over many years by civil society. This idea presented in January 2007 to the Ecuadorian government is a child of many fathers. It is certain that the basis of this idea lies in the old idea of suspending oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazon. At one point, at one time, one person had been completely filled with indignation and shouted, "Stop the exploitation!" This resistance settled in the minds of many Amazonian communities. Their arguments were clear, oil exploitation was affecting the nature and environment they were living in. Their health suffered under the pollution and oil companies were one of the main contributors to the construction of the Amazon. The image of evil of these groups was Texaco, one of the world's main oil companies, nowadays a part of Chevron. Texaco worked between 1964 and 1990 in the Ecuadorian Amazon, in this time-span in constructed 339 oil wells in 430.000 hectares to extract around one and a half billion barrels of crude oil. This led to the pollution of billions of barrels of water (Acosta, 2010; Crude the movie, 2009; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). While it is impossible to put a price on life and nature, it seems clear that Texaco's activities destructed millions worth of life, water and nature through contamination of water, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and death of animals. The health of people in this area also suffered severely: 31 percent of the people close to oil extraction activity suffer from cancer, compared to a 12.3 percent national average. This adds up to 27 billion dollar, the amount demanded from Texaco by the Ecuadorian and especially Amazonian people (Acosta, 2010).

This all does not even include the social consequences like: sexual violence from oil workers, spontaneous abortions, discrimination and racism, forced replacements, destructive influences only local culture and languages and on the social cohesion. It even led to the extermination of

the local tribes the “Tetes” and the “Sansahuaris”. To eliminate all these problems in the future an oil moratorium has been proposed for all hydrocarbon activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This is the prerequisite history that is needed to understand the ITT Initiative (Acosta, 2010; 2 interviews), and that it is the idea of many. Now the real birth of the initiative will be reconstructed.

In 2000 *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (post-petroleum Ecuador, an alternative development plan) was published, three years later it was presented to the minister of environment by three Ecuadorian NGOs: Pachamama, CDES (Centro de Derechos Economico y Sociales) and Acción Ecológica. At the same time the indigenous community of Sarayaku started a lawsuit against the Argentinean oil company CGC in the IACHR. This resulted in a proposal of not exploiting Yasuní’s oil, led by the NGO Oilwatch (Acosta, 2010; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). At this time many NGOs thought that there was too much focus on block 31 and too little on ITT, therefore a campaign was started led by Acción Ecológica.

This idea of an oil moratorium was incorporated in the election campaign of *Movimiento País*, nowadays *Alianza Pais* the political party led by, now president, Rafael Correa. Their governmental plans 2007-2011 want “*declare a minimum of 40% of the national territory protected area to conserve the biodiversity and heritage of Ecuador*”. They also wanted to incorporate Ecuador’s nature and environment in economic and productive politics. This is not simply suspending oil exploitation. It aimed at optimizing the existing oil posts instead of maximizing the sheer number of oil posts. These plans also imply an oil moratorium for the south and middle of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Although the Yasuní ITT is an idea of many, if it had parents these would have been Esperanza Martinez, president of the NGO Acción Ecológica and Alberto Acosta, former minister of mining and energy and former president of the constitutional assembly (5 interviews). Acosta always had a lot of contact with Acción Ecológica, and his wife worked there at the time. In this group the idea existed to keep oil under ground and maybe already especially about block ITT. Acosta had already written several books about this issue, and when he became minister he had an opening to introduce this idea. The discussion to keep the oil underground has been led by NGOs.

In September 2009 an official document called “Yasuní-ITT Initiative: A big idea from a small country” edited by the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of environment was presented. This documents aims at preserving 38 percent of Ecuador’s territory. It is important to remember that the most relevant details of this document had been formulated long before Correa became president (3 interviews; Acosta, 2010).

Already in December 2006, Martinez gave the following guidelines to the future minister of energy and mines Acosta, from Acosta and Martinez (2010 p. 18):

- 1 *Declare the moratorium as policy aimed at protecting and conserving collective rights*
- 2 *Present internationally a proposal as an effort of Ecuador to meet three global goals: the reduction of greenhouse gasses, the conservation of biodiversity and security of indigenous people*
- 3 *Construct a commission, together with the ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs that makes an global assessment of Yasuní National Park and its population and identify the problems. Formulate necessary actions for local people, secure that they are covered by the state and not by multinationals.*
- 4 *Create an international agenda to present the proposal with as a goal that it becomes recognized as beneficent on an international level, translate this to an economic compensation that enables Ecuador to execute the initiative.*
- 5 *Analyse distinct economic options: selling crude in the soil, carbon compensation, and cancellation of external hesitation.*
- 6 *Inaugurate a sub secretary of Clean Energy, Decentralization and Low Impact, as a signal to the transition to a new petroleum model...*

These are very specific objectives, seeking to protect the life of uncontacted indigenous tribes, the protection of one of the most biodiverse zones of the planet and to avoid the emission of 410 million tons of CO₂.

4.8.2 Part 2 of the History of ITT

The second phase started when more data was collected to create a better proposal. A lot of information was based on the research done to prevent the oil access road in block 31. In this phase the Ecuadorian state became the main actor, instead of civil society and ENGOs.

In April 2007 Rafael Correa stated that although previous administrations had begun to elaborate plans to extract the oil in ITT, the first option would be to keep the oil underground in exchange for international compensation (Finer et al., 2009).

This led to the presentation of the ITT Initiative by Acosta to the Ecuadorian government on June 5, 2007 and later of the presentation to the world by President Correa. The ITT Initiative consisted of two options at the time: A- keep the oil underground by using the ITT Initiative and B- exploiting the oil using a multinational alliance. On November 20, the oil lobby convinced the president to exclude oil reserve Tiputini from the ITT project. At the same time Correa was received full of enthusiasm at the OPEC and UN top meetings, so the role of the president was already ambiguous. The initiative also knew a large number of ups and downs during that first year, at times convinced by their right, at times full of doubt (interview; Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009). The first idea was to incorporate the value of Yasuní's environmental services, the ENGO *Earth Economics* joined in November 2007 and calculated the value of the environmental services in the entire Biosphere Reserve. The value of these services exceeded the value of oil at least two times. However no funds can be found for the funding of environmental services (interview).

The project was consolidated with the formation of a new commission on 29 July 2008 headed by ex-mayor of Quito Roque Sevilla and included some (former) ENGO members like Yolanda Kakabadse, founder of the ENGOs *Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano* and *Fundación Natura*; and Natalia Greene from the ENGO *Pachamama* (Yasuní ITT Initiative).

The goal of this commission was to create a concrete proposal to keep the oil underground in ITT, this was partly funded by *La cooperación técnica Española* and the GTZ (the Spanish and German International Cooperation). This group gave the proposal time and space to crystallize. At this point the idea of an international trust fund supervised by the United Nations was first raised. The focus on environmental services was replaced by a compensation of \$350 million per year for 10 years, based on gaining half of the income it would gain through exploitation, based on the oil price of mid-2007. In late 2008 the strategy was based on carbon markets. Ecuador proposed the creation of "Yasuní Guarantee Certificates" (YGC) for the CO₂ locked in ITT. These YGCs could be sold to compensate non-emitted CO₂. The money would go into a trust fund and the interest of these funds would be used to fund sustainable development (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009).

Two of the most important articles on which the final ITT Initiative was built are the one from Acosta, Gudynas, Martinez and Vogel (2009): *leaving the oil under ground or the search for a lost paradise: elements for an economic and political proposal for the Initiative for not exploiting the crude of IT*, and Larrea and Warnars (2009) *Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Avoiding emissions by keeping petroleum underground*.

4.8.3 Part 3 of the History of ITT

The third phase starts when the government adapts the original proposal and introduces Plan B, extracting ITT's oil as a viable option. At this time the role of ENGOs also changes fundamentally: instead of seeing the government as a partner they see them as opponents. The international community does not believe that Ecuador still aims at keeping the crude in the subsoil. The setup of plan A is complicated, so complicated even that people within the government do not fully comprehend how it functions (interviews). Since 3 February, 2010 it is organized in the following way. Plan A is led by the ministry of environment and works in 3 groups. First: the political

committee, including ministers from involved ministries. Second: the technical committee, technical advisors and specialists, including the technical director Carlos Larrea. And third: the negotiation committee, negotiators and public relation specialists aiming at fundraising (3 interviews). Plan B is organized more effectively, it is run by the state-owned oil companies and aims at investigating how the oil should be exploited (interview).

The role of president Correa is crucial in this, although he became president with the campaign aiming at preserving Yasuní, he does not appear to fully support the ITT Initiative. One day he claims he created the ITT Initiative himself, and taking all credits in big international meetings, while the next he declares on state television that he wants to extract ITT's oil. Correa also cut out all ENGOs from the negotiation process, while they were main actors in the earliest stage, and important advisors later in the process (2 interviews).

The following critique from ENGOs has been uttered on the changed plans. The first initiative aimed at preserving the culture of indigenous groups, a focus lost in the newer proposals. Secondly the original initiative aims at a non-extractive economy, in the newer plans mining is an alternative for hydrocarbon activities. Finally plan B is introduced and developed at the same time as the "keeping the oil underground option" (2 interviews).

People that were involved from the beginning or an early stage only utter critique about this stage. Acosta resigned from all official jobs, as did Falconí. The ENGO of Martinez is chased by the police, and smeared by the government, which tries to make it illegal. Yolanda Kakabadse, now president of WWF international, talks about the smokescreen of the Yasuní ITT Initiative: the extraction of oil in the Amazon always had been the unofficial goal (Hoy 2 March 2011).

At this point, also the international community that needed to fund the ITT Initiative seems to lose confidence. As a first question: it is hard to explain why oil extraction in ITT should be forbidden while it can be done in block 31 and block Armadillo, as the current plan proposes. In both blocks the biodiversity is similar and uncontacted indigenous people also live there. And shouldn't Yasuní be protected sufficiently being a UNESCO site and a National Park? Secondly international actors begin to see that the president does not want to keep the oil underground and that opponents of the ITT Initiative are gaining strength. Many people in favour of the ITT Initiative have been removed from official positions. Germany, the first country to commit, willing to donate \$50 million a year, retreated from the project, not trusting Ecuador's commitment for keeping the oil underground indefinitely. This is a bad signal to all other potential donors and makes it harder to convince them to contribute, if even the self-declared leader on climate change does not want to contribute, why would other countries take the risk? (Schalatek, 2010)

4.9 Results on ENGO influence on Yasuní ITT

The information for this chapter consists of 10 interviews that gave substantial information about Yasuní ITT, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.9.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Yasuní ITT

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

7 respondents pointed out that ENGOs and indigenous groups aimed at a moratorium for Yasuní. 3 did not mention the initial point of view of ENGOs. All 10 respondents state that the government and oil companies wanted to extract the oil from block ITT in the near future. One respondent gave the following overview: "it started with Plan Verde, a plan for an alternative economy: joint initiative of ENGOs, indigenous argue for an oil stop for more than 20 years. Thus, first there was an idea of alternative non-oil economy with human rights, more development and biodiversity conservation. Later this crystallized as Yasuní-ITT"

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

With Alberto Acosta as minister of energy and mines, the possibility to keep the oil underground and get financial compensation to do this became the official framing of oil exploitation in Yasuní.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

Alberto Acosta was closely in touch with ENGOs and the idea of many, mentioned by Acosta, was largely influenced by ENGOs and their employees. It has been stated by multiple respondents that the ITT Initiative would not have been launched without ENGOs

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, the idea was largely created/influenced by multiple ENGOs and ENGO-related groups.

4.9.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Yasuní ITT

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

All respondents state that Alberto Acosta presented the ITT Initiative to the community, however the president did the international campaign and presented it to the United Nations. Since Acosta used the opening he had being the minister of energy and mines to present “this idea of many”, he is the one that presented the issue.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

Keeping the oil underground was placed on the agenda as a serious option for the ITT oil block. Another item that was mentioned was the alternative development model, one that does not depend on extractivism and is sustainable on a social, cultural and environmental level. Later in the process the president put the exploitation of ITT’s oil back on the agenda by developing plan B at the same time.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

Especially in early stages, ENGOs and people from ENGOs joined meetings. This allowed them to shape the agenda at times, however 3 respondents pointed out that they could not change much about the agenda and 2 respondents pointed out that they could not change anything at all. From early on, since the presentation of the Initiative to the House of Representatives and the President the agenda has been controlled by the government.

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, or at least ENGO influence on the agenda setting seems to be marginal. Only some influential people with ENGO and governmental ties were able to shape the agenda to some extent.

4.9.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Yasuní ITT

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government is without doubt the key actor in this negotiation, before Correa became president Ecuador wanted to extract the oil in block ITT. At the start of the negotiations discussed in this thesis the government’s official position to try to keep the oil underground. ENGOs supported this idea, and oil companies opposed.

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

Also in this negotiation, the government did change their opinion during the negotiation, a difference is however that this time these changes were not induced by a change in administration. The pro-oil voices within the government led by Correa gained power while those in favour of keeping the oil underground resigned from official positions. ENGOs and the oil companies did not change their positions.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

Half of the respondents (5) stated that ENGOs were not involved, and another 4 said that they wanted to join but were excluded by the government; this is not true, however it demonstrates the marginal role played by ENGOs. The later in the process the smaller the role of ENGOs was, until at this time they do not even play a role anymore. The ITT Initiative is now completely controlled by the government. Some respondents talk about hijacking plans from civil society and by that paralyzing the green and left opposition. They state that this is the official policy towards civil society by this administration.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did not have enough power or influence to change the position of key actors, even the “idea of many” had to be presented by someone from within the government, only he could change other governmental actors.

4.9.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning Yasuní ITT

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed, however people from ENGOs did get official jobs but not because they were from ENGOs, only because they knew the right people (3 interviews).

4.9.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning Yasuní ITT

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The newer the official documents are the less it reflects the opinion of ENGOs. Even more important the probability that the ITT Initiative will be executed seems smaller every day. However the respondents from ENGO still hope the Initiative will be put into practise.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Only some people from ENGOs to write the first version, and were not able influence the position of the government. The scientific basis of these discussion however has been laid by ENGOs, therefore the influence of ENGOs on the proposal is rather substantial. ENGO influence on the chances the ITT Initiative will be executed is close to zero.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, however ENGOs do not have influence on the chances of success of the ITT Initiative, they did contribute to the basis and official text of the ITT Initiative. Although their role was not formal and they were not officially included, some influential people from ENGOs: Kakabadse, Greene, Martinez could influence the final text of the Initiative.

4.10 Counterfactual analysis of Yasuní ITT

What would have happened if no ENGOs were involved in the decision-making process? It is the question if an idea like the ITT Initiative would have crystalized without ENGOs. Indigenous movements might have taken over the role but it would have looked different then. The role of ENGOs in the discussion prior to the negotiations was crucial, although an “idea of many”; many of those “many” came from ENGOs. It is demonstrated that before Alberto Acosta became minister he was already influenced by Martinez, the director of Acción Ecológica. If this would not have happened he might have acted the same, however it demonstrates how interwoven ENGOs

were in this stage. It is the question if anything might have started without the preparing role of ENGOs.

Later in the process the role of ENGOs becomes less powerful. The commission that wrote the final text of the initiative that was presented September 22 2009 also consisted of people from ENGOs or with strong ties to ENGOs, without these people the initiative might have looked a lot less like the initial idea. ENGOs admit that they already lost grip on the process at that time, which indicates that it would not have gone different without ENGOs. In the last phase the role of ENGOs was marginal or even non-existing, this reduces the need for a counterfactual analysis of this phase.

It can be concluded that the initial phase without ENGOs would have been completely different, and since the first phase is often one of the most important: without an start there is not anything; it can be concluded that without ENGOs no ITT Initiative would ever have been presented.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on one of the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators. However it is not felt by many people involved, ENGOs seem to have played a role of high influence. This is based on the entire process and does not reflect the current role of ENGOs, which seems to be marginal.

4.11 Results on the explanatory factors of ENGO influence

In this chapter the results from the second research question will be presented. This consists of the data derived during the 18 interviews with people from ENGOs, the government and specialists. All interviewees were asked whether they could think of factors that could explain the political influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process in Yasuní. They were also asked what factors could explain the lack of ENGO-influence. These restricting factors are needed in order to give a complete picture of the decision-making process; using only enabling factors will not give a true image of what happened. The results on these two questions will be presented in the section hereunder. All respondents could give as many answers as they liked, therefore the number of factors will not add up to 18.

This discussion aims at answering the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” Here the results from the interviews are combined with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008) and the judgement of the researcher.

Table 5 and table 6 underneath show the results from the respondents, including the general explanation. These are the pure results. However, this chapter will go one step deeper and try to analyse what enabling and restricting factors played a large role in ENGO influence in Yasuní. The number of times a factor has been mentioned does not necessarily represent its importance, it is merely an indicator. This chapter will use these results as a tool to explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. The analysis of these factors starts with the enabling factors, presented hereunder in table 5.

Table 5: Explanatory factors of ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Individual actions	4	Individual actions of ENGO-employee made a difference
2	Contextual factors	3	Mentioned: media and public opinion
	Coincidence	3	Mentioned: miracle, coincidence, luck
	Access to negotiations	3	Easy to join negotiations
	Personal network	3	Through the personal network of ENGO-employees influence was exercised
	Scientific research	3	A lot of research done by ENGOs, so the discussion is based on their information
7	Institutional network	2	Through the network of the ENGO influence was exercised
	Stage of negotiations	2	Joined early and therefore a larger influence
	Watchdog	2	Controlling the government and taking actions when things do not go well
10	Alliances with key governmental bodies	1	An alliance with a governmental player makes it easier to influence governmental decisions
	Confidence between actors	1	NGOs that trusted each other worked together and could enlarge their influence
	In touch with grassroots movements	1	Knows what happens within Yasuní and good contact with indigenous people
	Lot of knowledge and experience	1	Most experience within this field by some ENGOs
	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as good coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Scale of operation	1	More influence on a detailed level
	Well-known ENGO	1	When needed people could find the ENGO

The most important enabling factors that explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní will be discussed.

Most often mentioned and of a rather high importance are *individual actions*. However, most mentioned does not mean these are most important, it only indicates that the individual actions are highly visible. Margot Bass and Matt Finer for example started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní together as a personal initiative. Events like these are highly visible and are of importance. Nevertheless they could only have success when other people or institutions were also working on the same topic. Rather remarkable is that the people that did those individual actions or were involved in individual actions often mentioned *coincidence* as a large explaining factor, often unaware of actions or activities undertaken by others. Instead, a person that had a good overview of the negotiations in Yasuní only mentioned *coincidence* once; he explained that the success of ENGOs depended on so many factors that some luck was necessary to achieve its goals. He explained that the right political climate is needed, the right influential people on the right jobs, a network reaching into the government, some help from the public opinion and the media, enough financial resources at that time. When all these things came together one might call it *luck* or *coincidence* he said. That is true: **many different variables together explain the change of success of ENGOs.**

It is rather easy for ENGOs in Ecuador to join negotiations, *access to negotiations* are therefore an important factor. This is called *rules of access* in Betsill and Corell (2008). They state that ENGO influence is enhanced when ENGO participation is facilitated. This is what happened in Yasuní too. ENGOs could join official meetings of several ministers easily. Even some international actors could join official meetings on a tourist visa, while they were on holiday (interview). Nonetheless

it becomes more difficult every year for ENGOs to join these meetings. The government becomes more and more closed. **The easy access of ENGOs to negotiations enhanced their influence.**

Almost certainly the most important factor to explain ENGO influence is the personal network of ENGO-employees. As can be seen in the negotiations concerning block 31 and Yasuní ITT, the connections of people from ENGOs played a decisive role. According to an Ecuadorian political analyst, this is because Ecuador is ruled by an elite (Natalia Greene, interview). Everyone from this elite knows everybody else. With the Rafael Correa's new government many people from ENGOs and universities were able to join this elite. People from ENGOs became minister, high civil servant, or member of the House of Representatives or the constitutional assembly. With these people in place it became easier to invite other people from ENGOs to join the decision-making process. These people on key positions enabled ENGOs to influence the government from within and to join more closed meetings. This also comes back in two another factors: *alliances with key governmental bodies* and *the institutional network*. This easy-access has been restricted in recent years since the president thought the influence of the civil society groups were too large. **The personal network of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence.**

One of the most influential activities undertaken by ENGOs is *scientific research*, the negotiations of block 31 and Yasuní ITT are built on a fundament of scientific research done by different ENGOs. The recommendations and conclusions from these reports can be found in official government texts like the results from the SCY in the official text for Yasuní ITT. **Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation to the negotiation.** This is also underlined by another mentioned factor: *knowledge and experience of ENGOs*.

The *stage of negotiations* could also explain ENGO influence, especially on Yasuní ITT. ENGOs were active and influential in a very early stage. Although their influence diminished during the negotiations they already had so much influence in the beginning, the final document still represents much of their position. **When ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher.**

The final important enabling factor is being a *watchdog*. Several ENGOs are continuously controlling governmental functioning, when decisions are taken opposing ENGOs' policy goals actions are taken. Some respondents call this opportunism but it looks like it works pretty well, however it is also important that other groups work all the time, not only when action is needed. **Acting as a watchdog is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions.**

Other mentioned factors do not seem to have played a large role in Yasuní. *Being in touch with grassroots movements*, *Confidence between actors*, *ENGO-coordination*, *Being a well-known ENGO* do not appear to have played a decisive role. *ENGO-coordination* in fact, is also mentioned as a restricting factor.

Restricting factors are also of importance explaining the political influence of ENGOs. In the case of Yasuní the following factors respondents mentioned the following factors, including a brief explanation (table 6).

Table 6: Restricting factors for ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Economic stakes	4	The economic stakes are high in Yasuní, this makes it hard to influence governmental decisions
2	Political stakes	3	The political stakes are high in Yasuní making it hard to influence decisions
3	Financial capabilities	2	Both mentioned as a lack of funds
4	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as a lack of coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Bad atmosphere between ENGOs and government	1	This restricted the influence of ENGOs
	Lack of continuity within ENGOs	1	A restricting factor

The most often mentioned factor: *economic stakes* also seems to be the most important. The economic stakes in Yasuní are high. Ecuador is a poor country and needs income from oil to fund education, healthcare and energy. With already 20 percent of the oil reserves in ITT the economic stakes are enormous. The political stakes in the case of Yasuní do not differ much from the economic stakes because the political stakes are in essence also economic: the money is needed by the government, raising the political stakes. Betsill and Corell also state that ENGO influence is constrained where economic interests are at stake. **The economic stakes in Yasuní are high; this restricts ENGO influence.** At the same time the influence of the oil-lobby is enhanced by these high economic stakes. This is scientifically underwritten by Betsill and Corell (2008).

In comparison to the government and oil companies, ENGOs have little *financial capabilities*. This lack of funds also restricts the functioning of ENGOs in Yasuní. **The small financial capabilities of ENGOs, compared to those of the government and oil companies, restrict the influence of ENGOs.**

The lack of *ENGO-coordination* also seems to restrict ENGO influence. Although Betsill and Corell state that it has a neutral effect it seems to restrict ENGO influence a bit, with coordinated actions more impact could be achieved. In the case of the ZI several groups of ENGOs demanded different things, making a diffuse sound and creating a competition of ENGOs for governmental attention. Although also mentioned as an enabling factor **ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor.**

This bad coordination has its basis in the *lack of continuity within ENGOs*, another mentioned factor. With new people aboard ENGOs every few months no strong alliance between ENGOs could be build. Because many people changed jobs very often not a lot of experience could be gained in a specific topic, this also restricted ENGO influence. **The lack of continuity within ENGOs led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs.**

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. It became harder to join meetings and ENGOs have less access to key governmental actors.

Hereunder the explanatory factors will be analysed for all three cases separately. The difference in the three cases lies in the enabling factors, the restricting factors seem to be the same among the three cases, these say more about Yasuní as a political arena than over the cases separately. Therefore the following three sections focus on the enabling factors.

Not all enabling and restricting factors are of the same importance for all three cases. In the case of the Zona Intangible one seems to be the single most important: **acting as a watchdog.** Without ENGOs participating in the negotiations the creation of the final boundaries of the Z I might have

gotten off the agenda resulting in a Zona Intangible without boundaries. This would have made it impossible to protect this area from loggers and even worse, oil exploitation.

For the decision-making process concerning block 31 other factors have been important. The **individual actions** mentioned above mostly concerned block 31. Margot Bass and Matt Finer that started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní initiative. Their effort made a large difference on the negotiations. It included many more actors, the issue was reframed: from normal oil production to the destruction of a natural area with an unique biodiversity. **The personal network of some ENGO employees was also of major importance**, several ENGO employees knew people within the government, this made it easier to access negotiations. This **access to the negotiation** enabled ENGOs to execute a lot of influence: all different groups of people could join formal meetings with the GAT and the minister of environment, especially when Alban became minister. ENGOs introduced her to the problems from an ENGO perspective, making a powerful ally of her. Finally **a lot of scientific research was executed** to investigate the influence of oil extraction and the construction of roads on biodiversity and the indigenous people of this region. Later this knowledge was used in the discussion of Yasuní ITT and the Zona Intangible (see 5.1).

For the Yasuní ITT initiative two factors enabled the large influence of ENGOs. First the **stage of negotiations** at which ENGOs joined. ENGOs were part of the group that created the initial idea. Later several ENGO employees were part of the ITT committee, enabling ENGOs to project their ideals and policy goals on this official governmental document. All **this was possible due to the personal network of some key actors** like Esperanza Martinez, Alberto Acosta and Yolanda Kakabadse.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results will be analysed using the literature presented in the theoretical framework. Also the contribution of this thesis to the literature will be discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The three different cases cannot be seen completely separated from each other. As can be seen in the timeline in figure 5, the three cases have a lot of overlap in both time and actors. Also the same contextual factors influence the three different negotiations, often in a similar manner. With a greener president ENGOs gain influence, with a less eco-oriented president they lose power. New laws, for example, also apply to all three cases. This however is already recognized in the theoretical model in figure 4, whereas the influence between the cases has not been studied yet. In this chapter the interdependence and influence of the different cases will be discussed.

The Zona Intangible did influence the other cases; first it set an example for conservation in the region. Secondly, it placed an important oil well in block 31 off limits, Imuya. Since then people no longer talk about block ITTI but about ITT.

From ENGO's perspective the central case in Yasuní is block 31. The start of these negotiations started the active role of ENGOs in Yasuní, where previous decision-making (for the ZI) took place without ENGOs. **While ENGOs tried to frame the issue of block 31, they actually framed the larger issue of oil production in Yasuní.** The SCY wanted to preserve block 31, and did research in Yasuní to use the results as lobby material. The outcomes of their research, "Yasuní has an unique biodiversity and its greatest threat are roads" are still quoted. These results were even used for official government policy for the Zona Intangible and Yasuní ITT. One can state that **the scientific research done for block 31 is the backbone of Ecuador's policy concerning Yasuní.** The success of ENGOs on block 31 positively influenced the chances of conservation for the ZI and ITT. Only after the successes in block 31 the final boundaries of the ZI were finally drawn. The battle of block 31 made ENGOs the most experienced actors in Yasuní. With the new governments of Palacio and Correa they could gain influence because they knew how things worked, and the history of the negotiation was also know to them.

Another remarkable similarity between the three cases are the actors, not only on an organizational level, but specially on a personal level. Some key actors come back in all three negotiations. They could even have a different role in all three negotiations.

At one time some people thought that block 31 got too much attention, at that time ITT became more important in the negotiations. In January 2007 the focus changed from block 31 to Yasuní ITT. **The interdependence of block 31 and Yasuní ITT is very large.** They are destined to the same future, either oil extraction or conservation. Basically what will happen to block ITT will happen to block 31. When the ITT initiative will be executed the extraction of oil in 31 would no longer be profitable. When ITT will be extracted the oil from block 31 will be used to mix 31's lighter oil with the heavy crude from ITT.

Since Petrobras returned block 31 to the state and the official document of Yasuní ITT is published the influence of ENGOs diminished. The Correa administration excluded ENGOs from the decision-making process and eco-oriented ministers and advisers were replaced. What this will mean for the future is still unknown.

The three dimensions of power from Lukes (1974) can also be found in the case of Yasuní. The first dimension is most seen in Yasuní: the openly executed influence between actors. The government is the central player in this dimension, it states what other actors should do and what decisions will be taken. The second dimension can also be found, many decisions are not taken, the final boundaries of the ZI took eight years; eight years in which no decision has been taken

because those boundaries were not in line with the policy preferences of the government and oil companies. The same can be said for Yasuní ITT, it has not yet been started because there is a covert conflict within the government and between all actors. Some do not want to keep the oil underground: no decision on the activation of Yasuní ITT is in line with their policy preferences. The third dimension of power is hardest to observe; however, in the Yasuní case, the “real” interests are overt. The separation of the actors in two groups have been made earlier in this thesis, groups that want to extract the oil and the groups that want to keep the oil under ground. Later a third group was added that wants to extract the oil with minimum social and environmental impact. This separation reflects the “real” interests of the actors. The extraction of Yasuní’s oil has long been a latent conflict, however in the investigated period it was clearly overt. Before 1999 many conflicts have been latent, but since block 31 everything happens more openly. Except for the conflicts within the Correa administration: these best represent the third dimension of power in this thesis.

Some political scientists in Ecuador, for example Natalia Greene (interview), recognize the existence of an elite that rules Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a small group of people in which everybody knows each other; these people rule the country, or rule a theme like nature conservation. This implies that the ideas from Wright Mills (1956) are still applicable for Ecuador. In this thesis special attention has been given to ask open questions to verify if in Ecuador the pluralist theory, the elitist theory or a hybrid is most relevant. Therefore neither the elitist question “who rules?” is asked nor “does anyone have power?” like a pluralist would ask.

The choice for a political arena has been a good choice for this thesis, although the situation sometimes resembles a policy network. However the central player is most certainly the Ecuadorian government, therefore there is as strict hierarchy of actors. For Yasuní it is as follows: on top are the governmental players, underneath international players like UNDP or UNESCO, followed by powerful groups and businesses, ranging from oil companies to powerful indigenous organizations, ending with NGOs. Another hint that it is not a policy network is the fact that the public and private players are not mutually dependent, in fact the government can do what it wants. At times this provokes an intense reaction by other players, but it does not mean that the policy will be changed.

Whereas Arts (2008) solely focuses on intentional influence, this thesis also underlines the importance of the unintentional influence of ENGOs. Some ENGOs, especially those with a more radical view had a lot of unwanted unintentional influence on the negotiation. They radicalized, which made cooperation with some other actors impossible. This history has been repeated by several respondents and demonstrated the important role of Acción Ecológica. The discussion whether influence has to be intentional can be explained for Yasuní. Many groups try to influence the decision-making and the key actor: the government. This is done because these groups want to achieve their policy goals. However aiming at positive influence they might at times experience unexpected and unwanted side effects. For example in the discussion of the ZI the claims made by Acción Ecológica to make the entire Amazon a No-Go Zone for development almost ruined the chances to create the actual ZI. Therefore the importance of unintentional influence in this thesis is rather large.

The distinction made in governance literature between NGOs that work in partnerships and NGOs that focus more on action has also been found in this thesis. Van Huijstee (2010); Visseren-Hamakers (2009); and Humphreys (2006) have found a similar distinction. In Ecuador partnerships are still rare, especially in the Yasuní region. However a group of NGOs cooperates more with the government and others, whereas the second group solely consists of more radical NGOs. In time partnerships might be a part of the Ecuadorian NGO-landscape. The terms “collaborative” and “campaigning” NGO seem to suit the situation in Ecuador.

The results from this thesis can be linked to the outcomes of Betsill and Corell (2008). The latter found eight factors that can explain political influence of NGOs, and also a brief explanation of how these factors explain political influence. In this thesis a number of these factors are mentioned by respondents, six of these have also been listed by Betsill and Corell.

ENGO coordination had a neutral effect according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in this thesis however it was mentioned as a restricting factor. The lack of coordination was restricting the influence of ENGOs on the government according to the respondents. In Yasuní's case it seems to be a restricting factor rather than an factor with a neutral effect. Betsill and Corell (2008) did mention that all levels of ENGO influence were achieved under varying levels of ENGO coordination, in Yasuní the influence of ENGOs could have been higher if the actions of like-minded ENGOs were more synchronized.

Betsill and Corell state that ENGO influence is enhanced when active steps are taken to facilitate NGO participation. In Yasuní it was at times facilitated like in the Yasuní ITT committee, at times it was not facilitated but the participation of ENGOs was still high. While Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence does not decline, in Yasuní ENGO influence declined with more restrictive rules of access, particularly in the last 3 years.

Betsill and Corell (2008) underwrite the importance of joining the negotiations in an early phase, however this is often not enough to achieve influence in a later phase. The same can be seen in Yasuní, and especially in Yasuní ITT. ENGOs joined early but over time the policy less and less resembles the ENGOs' opinion.

The political and economic stakes are very high in Yasuní, this reduces influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), and that is true. The government and other players are less open to the ideas from ENGOs since so much money and power is at stake.

Alliances with key governmental bodies enhances influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in Ecuador this is done at times, although only mentioned by one respondent. This implies that it is not the most usual way to influence the government in Yasuní.

The last two factors from Betsill and Corell (2008), *institutional overlap* and *competition from other NGOs* have not been found in this thesis. However the competition from other NGOs might have played a role in the drawing of the ZI's final boundaries. Two groups of ENGOs had completely different goals, protecting the proposed area or protecting the entire Amazon. This battle between ENGOs did no good for the negotiation, but the goal of the larger group was reached: protecting the proposed area. Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence is not a zero-sum game and that competition between NGOs does not necessarily constrain NGO influence.

5.2 Contribution to the literature

This thesis investigated the decision-making process of the major issues in Yasuní: la Zona Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní ITT. This is one of the first investigations to combine these three major cases, and the first that analyses the decision-making process of these cases. Also the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has not been studied widely yet. Other than the works of Narvaez (2007) and Lara (2007) the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has only been touched superficially. This is the first complete overview of the last twelve years in Yasuní. The timeline created for this thesis is also a novelty. It is of importance that these cases finally have been linked formally since the negotiations influenced each other, although it was not yet recognized.

This thesis is also another verification of explanatory factors, Betsill and Corell (2008) do not mention the personal network of ENGO employees, while in Ecuador this is the single most important enabling factor for ENGO influence. This might be a valuable addition to the list of Betsill and Corell (2008). Many others (6 out of 8) have also been found in this thesis; underlining the quality of Betsill and Corell's (2008) list.

The use of Arts' (1998) model demonstrated that there is a large difference in the area of research between Arts' and this research. His methodology was not applicable to the situation in Ecuador where there is no strict boundary between ENGO-people and governmental or other employees. This behaviour of Ecuadorian decision-makers might not be typically Ecuadorian, this happens among many political players in environmental issues (Carter, 2008). The distinction between two types of NGOs, one more pragmatic the other more radical in its message has not only been found in this thesis but is a mayor area of investigation. Van Huijstee (2010) and Visseren-Hamakers (2008) have found the same outcome in their investigation. Humphreys (2006) also investigated this phenomenon in governance.

5.3 Discussion of the Model

The model used in this thesis was adapted from Arts (1998) before carrying out the research, and was a useful simplification of the reality. However further adaptations could be made to enlarge the explanatory power of the model; it makes the model more suited for Yasuní. To introduce this model, it is necessary to understand the background of the situation in Ecuador. Figure 6 below provides a schematic guide to reading the following section.

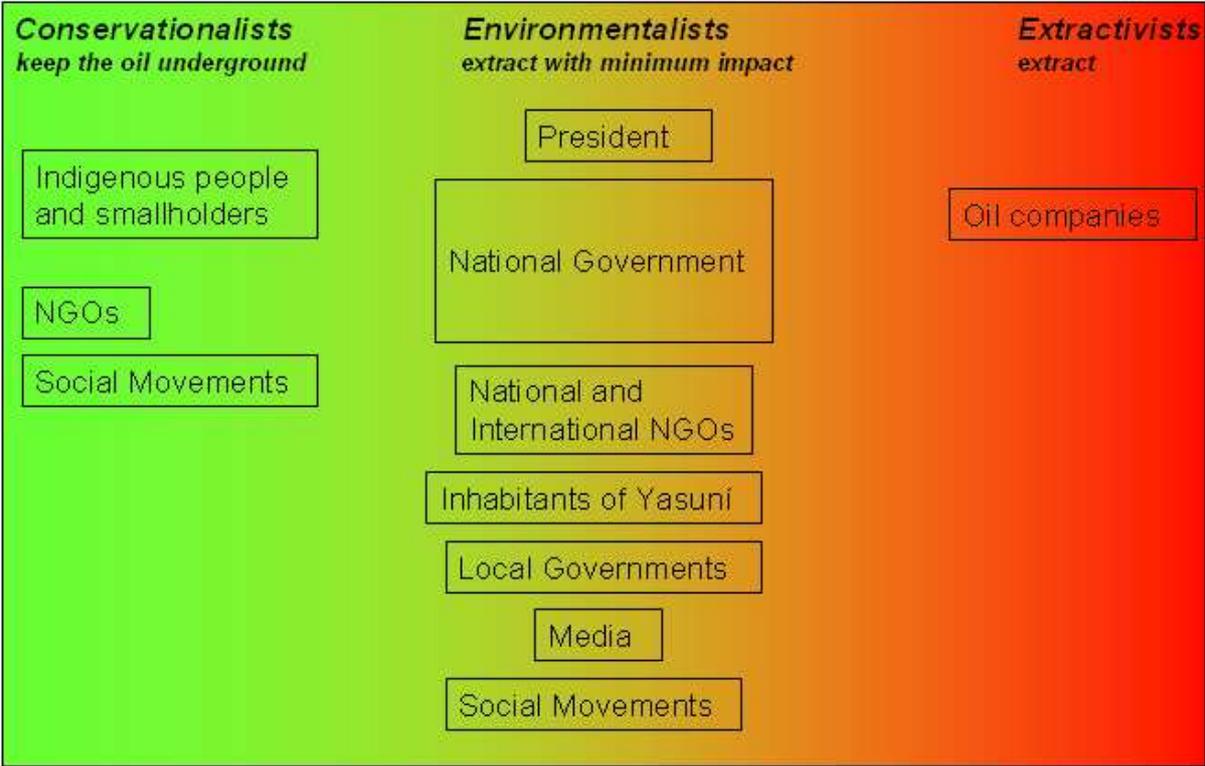


Figure 6: The major actors of this thesis

Three different groups can be categorized in Yasuní, those in favour of extracting Yasuní's oil, *extractivists*; those that want to keep the oil underground, *conservationalists* and those to want to extract the oil but with minimum impact: *environmentalists*. The *extractivists* consist, nowadays, solely of oil companies. The *conservationalists*, consist of some NGOs, some social movements and indigenous people and smallholders living in the Amazon. Here the distinction between NGOs and social movements is used since these behave differently. Social movements in Ecuador often represent an group of people, like the social movements of indigenous or women. If policy is designed that touches these people in a negative way, actions are taken whereas NGOs work with projects on specific themes. However this distinction not needed for the entire thesis, since for Yasuní these groups have similar goals. However, several people interviewed for this thesis worked both at NGOs and at social movements. The *environmentalists* are the most diverse

group. They consist of some inhabitants, governmental actors and NGOs that believe in oil extraction with minimum impact; some NGOs, social movements and governmental bodies that believe in a pragmatic approach, where minimum impact extraction is the best they can achieve; and actors that reached this consensus since they are internally divided: such as the national government, the media and the president. This is a rather strange claim, but it seems that the president of Ecuador swings back and forth between keeping the oil underground and extracting it. The National Government at this time consists of both pro-oil people and pro-conservation people.

This new knowledge can lead to a new model, still simple but with some nuance. While the basic structure remains the same, the grey scale from figure 6 are included to indicate the political opinion of these groups. The second difference is that NGOs are split in ENGOs and NGOs. The first group consists of campaigning NGOs the second of collaborative NGOs, this same distinction can be found in governance literature (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009). Separating these two groups of NGOs enlarges the explanatory power of this model without making it overly complicated. The main focus for this research would lie on the political influence of ENGOs instead of NGOs. The adapted model is showed hereunder in figure 7. A final change is that this model acknowledges that the government makes the final decisions, rather than participating in negotiations (arrow V, explained below).

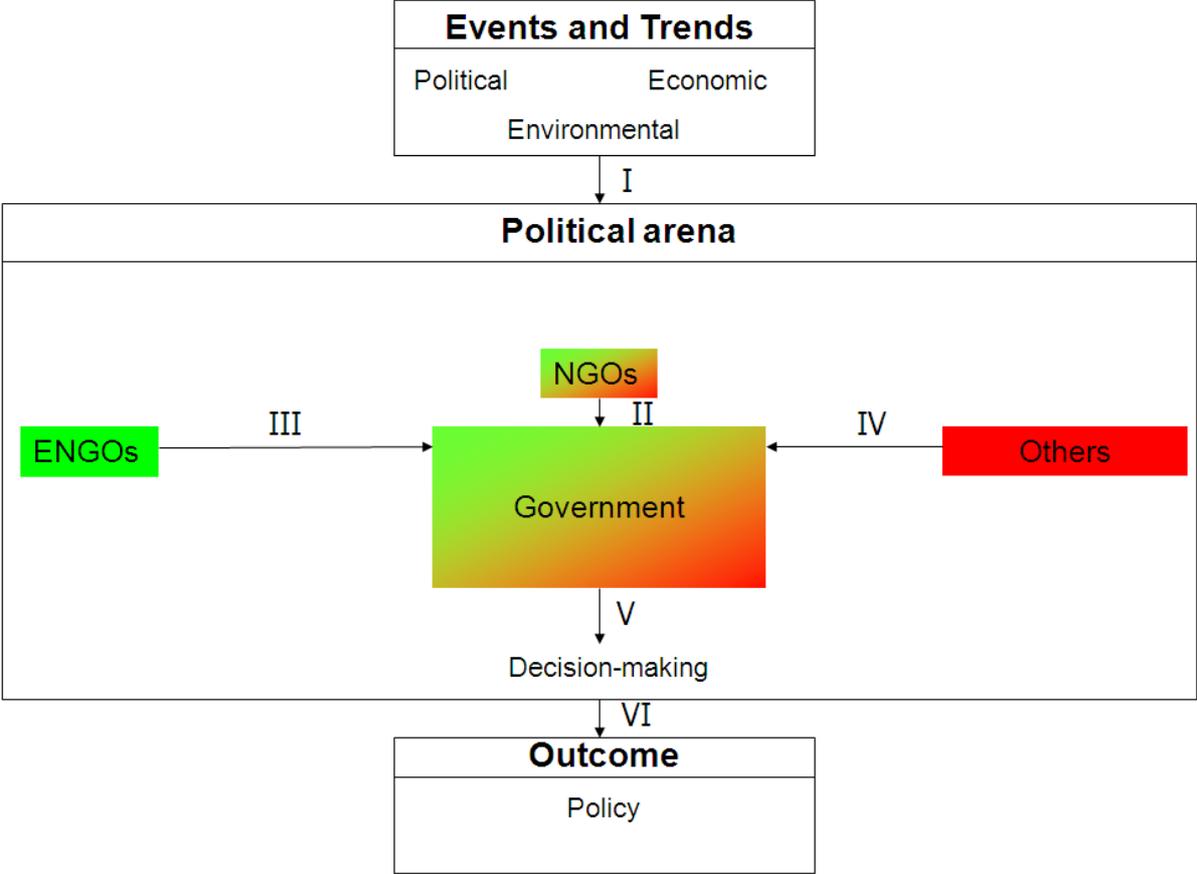


Figure 7: The adapted theoretical model

Arrow (I): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are all political, economic, environmental factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors may not be fixed, what is a constraint for one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis, etc.

Arrow (II): *political influence*. This is the political influence of *collaborative* NGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing.

Arrow (III): *political influence*. This is the political influence of (*campaigning*) ENGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing. This arrow is the main focus of the research. In the governance literature this group can also be called campaigning NGOs (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009)

Arrow (IV): *political influence*. This is the political influence of actors other than NGOs on the government (primarily oil companies, for a detailed list, see figure 6). It has to be stressed that arrows II, III and IV are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given its formal status and position. However governments do in reality influence other players and NGOs it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (V): *does*. The government is the most important actor in decision-making, but during the process it might be influenced.

Arrow (VI): *leads to*. The policy processes lead to policy.

In this model NGOs are able to impact policy outcomes in principle but they are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors.

5.4 Discussion of the Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction and the research methodology chapter, the first methodology selected was replaced by one more suitable for the specific situation in Yasuní. The first methodology was based on the assumption that respondents could be divided in three different groups: people from ENGOs, people from the government and other respondents. The first group could provide an EGO-perception of ENGO-influence on the negotiations. The second group would give an ALTER-perception, the view from people in the government on ENGO-influence. The third group consisting of specialists could provide a more objective view, the Causal Analysis. This Causal Analysis would be a researcher’s assessment of NGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews. This methodology was used by Arts (1998) to analyse NGO influence on international conventions. Initially, this methodology appeared to provide an adequate examination of ENGO influence in Yasuní. While the international environmental negotiations and the negotiations concerning Yasuní looked rather similar beforehand, in the practice the international dimension was non-existent. This led to several complications: instead of resembling international political negotiations it was more similar to regional politics; where one small group of people that knows each other well, an ‘elite,’ governed Yasuní. This small group of people dominated the negotiations, but did not stick to one position. People changed from influential ENGO jobs to professorships and some even became minister or member of the constitutional assembly or House of Representatives. Furthermore, these changes were not one-way, after a job in the government some people returned to ENGOs. These changes in employment led to new employees bringing their expertise and network with them, and to an exchange of ideas between different groups.

These changes in careers were common; many people did exceed two years in one job, making the planned division between EGO- and ALTER-perception and Causal-Analysis impossible. This was also due to the fact that, during the interviews, many people did not have the kind of job they had during the various events in Yasuní. It was therefore decided to consider a large group respondents as a part of an *elite*. People outside this ‘elite’ considered the other actors as a group where they did not belong to. Therefore the division in three groups was cancelled and all answers from respondents were equally analysed.

The main source of data in this thesis consisted of semi-structured interviews, using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008). During the interviews it seemed impossible to structure

an interview accordingly. Many people gave their version of events, which had to be structured into the framework to present the results.

The original plan for this thesis was to interview the three main actors in Yasuní: NGOs, governmental bodies and oil companies. Due to circumstances the latter could not be interviewed. New licenses were given to oil companies during the fieldwork. This made it impossible for an outsider to have meetings with them, oil companies were too afraid any outcome might influence their new contracts. This reduced the interviewed participating parties to two: NGOs and governmental bodies.

Another restricting factor was Ecuador's political situation in October 2010. On 30 September 2010 an attempted coupe d'état was executed by the police. During this chaos there was even an attempted murder on the president. The weeks following 30 September it was impossible to contact governmental bodies for an interview, and later in November and December people were still less open than they might have been beforehand. Therefore only a few names are mentioned in this thesis, the names of politicians openly talking about the times they were minister. Other actors wanted to remain low profile and anonymous. Guaranteeing their anonymity made them more open, so more reliable information could be retrieved.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the most important consequences of this thesis. It starts with conclusions on the scientific objective: answers on the research questions. Subsequently hints for further research will be given and finally recommendations for ENGOs active in Yasuní are presented.

6.1 To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 1: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” This will be done first for the three topics and later a general answer will be presented.

In the Zona Intangible the influence of ENGOs was low when the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used. ENGOs participated in the negotiation but without noticeable effect on the process or outcome. However in the counterfactual analysis it was demonstrated that the creation of final boundaries might have been put off the agenda if it were not for ENGOs. Therefore **the actual influence of ENGOs on the ZI might have been higher, however this is only an indicated guess by the researcher.**

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning block 31 was high: ENGOs participated in the negotiations and had some success in shaping the negotiation process; also the effects of ENGO participation can be linked to the outcome. If it were not for ENGOs the oil in block 31 was currently exploited, destroying the living grounds of the indigenous groups in the area and its fragile ecosystem.

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning Yasuní ITT was high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and they have some success in shaping the negotiation process. ENGOs’ effects of participation can be linked to the outcome. Especially in the first phases of the negotiation the role of ENGOs was significant. However their role weakened, the policy goals of ENGOs are still largely represented by the government on this topic.

ENGO influence in Yasuní is case specific, their influence was different in all three cases. However ENGOs had high influence in two of the three cases, therefore it is possible to conclude that **ENGOs have significant overall influence on governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní.**

6.2 What factors explain ENGOs influence on the governmental decisions concerning oil exploitation in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 2: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?”

The enabling factors found in this thesis are in sequence of importance: the **personal network** of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence. People involved in Yasuní form a small *elite*; everyone knows each other. This enables the exchange of information and enlarges the possibilities of ENGO employees to join important meetings. The importance of the fact that all actors in this political arena are just a phone call away is hard to overestimate.

Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation for the negotiations. Especially for block 31 a lot of research has been executed by ENGOs on the effects of oil extraction and road construction on the natural and cultural environment of Yasuní. No other

group has delivered so much valuable scientific information. Whereas the government takes the decisions in Yasuní, their decisions are based on the information delivered by ENGOs.

The **Stage of negotiation** was also of large importance: when ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher. Important is that ENGOs did often join early, except for the Zona Intangible discussion. Yasuní ITT underlines the importance of joining early in these negotiations. ENGOs only joined early phases of the negotiation but their influence of the outcome was still large because they designed the outline of the entire plan.

The **easy access of ENGOs to negotiations** enhanced their influence. This can be linked to the personal network of ENGO employees and the network of the ENGOs. The rules of access are rather informal or non-existing, which makes it easier for non-governmental actors to join when compared to other negotiations.

Acting as a **watchdog** is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions. When ENGOs were excluded from the decision-making they controlled the government. As soon as the government did something undesired by ENGOs they started actions to influence the government.

Opposite the enabling factors are the restricting factors; the most important restricting factors. These are listed hereunder:

The single most important factor is the presence of very high **economic stakes** in Yasuní. These make it harder for ENGOs to join the decision-making process and to influence the outcomes. This factor has a lot of overlap with the **political stakes** in Yasuní, which are mainly of an economic character.

The small **financial capabilities** of ENGOs compared to the government and oil companies restrict ENGOs' political influence. The amount of money available for demonstrations, research and lobby-activities is restricted, especially compared to the budget of the other actors like the government and oil companies.

ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor. With better coordination the influence of ENGOs could have been higher and more precisely focussed on important issues. Also the overlap of scientific research would have been reduced.

The **lack of continuity within ENGOs** led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs. Since the personal network is the most important enabling factor of political influence in Yasuní, the turnover rate of employees is a severe threat to the positions of ENGOs.

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. Since 2008 the role of ENGOs in the decision-making process has been diminished. The authoritarian style of the government does not recognize the role of ENGOs and other groups from civil society. This effectively destroyed the strong ties between the Correa administration and ENGOs, this is a critical problem for ENGOs in the near future.

6.3 Conclusions regarding the used model and methodology

The original theoretical model should be adapted to increase its explanatory power while keeping it simple. Two groups of NGOs should be included in the model: one group aiming to keep the oil underground (ENGOs) and a second group aiming at extraction with minimum social and environmental impact (NGOs). This separation between more radical and more pragmatic NGOs can also be found in governance literature.

For succeeding studies a methodology that recognizes the fact that the people in power consists of an actual elite would be preferable. The initial methodology from Arts (1998) was not applicable in the case of Yasuní. In the methodology should be recognized that people in important positions change their jobs often, making a distinction between governmental employees and ENGO employees impossible.

The changing opinion of the Ecuadorian government should also be recognized in advance: Ecuador has changed five times of president during the investigated processes (1999-2011). Therefore a model should recognize that the government is not an unchanging or stable actor. The framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was highly suited to this research. It supported and guided this research, even without making major adaptations. Only the procedural issues of the final agreement were not used, since they were not discussed in any of the three cases.

6.3 Recommendations for ENGOs

Research goal two was formulating recommendations for ENGOs in cases similar to Yasuní. Hereunder four brief recommendations extracted from this thesis are formulated.

1 invest in an extensive personal network existing of other people in the political arena, this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions

2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs.

3 join early in negotiations. The more early ENGOs join the better the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals.

4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice. This is needed to tackle the difference in funds.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Ego-Perception

Name of Organization:

What kind of NGO:

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What specific achievements did this NGO make concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de esta ONG en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of this NGO concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande esta ONG en Yasuní?

What documents or policy did you change; How?

Que documentos o gestión cambió esta ONG; Cómo?

What would have happened without this NGO / no NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la influencia de esta ONG?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

What factors explain your political influence, Why?

Qué factores pueden explicar el influencia de las ONGs; Porqué?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influencia politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

Alter-Perception and Specialists Interviews

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ITT, ZI & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influence politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

➔ Checking claims made by discussed NGO in previous interviews

Appendix 2: List of interviewed groups

List of interviewed organizations:

ENGOs and Social movements

Acción Ecológica
Amazonia por la vida
Ciudadanos por la vida
EcoCiencia
Fundación Natura
Fundación Pachamama
FondoAmbiental
Instituto de estudios ecologistas de tercer mundo
Oilwatch
Save America's Forests
Secretaría de Pueblos
WCS-Ecuador
WWF

Government

Co-authors of Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Yasuní ITT committee
Committee de gestion de Yasuní (Yasuní's Biosphere Reserve management committee)
Ministry of environment
Ministry of cultural and natural heritage
Ministry of mining and energy
Ministry of politics

Specialists

University of San Francisco de Quito
University Andina Simon Bolivar
FLACSO
Boston University
Tiputini Biodiversity station
Radio France Internacional
Wereldomroep Nederland / VPRO

List of organizations that gave lectures on this specific topic, including groups that were active in Yasuní but did no longer have the knowledge required for this thesis.

CEDA (Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental)
Conservation International
Ecoflex
EcoFund
IEETM
International Alert
Plataforma de Responsabilidad Social
UNDP
UNDP-PPD

The Political Influence of ENGOs on Oil Extraction in Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve:

Can ENGOs keep the oil underground?



Pascal ten Have BSc

870220312130

Supervisor: Dr. Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers

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for Lucero

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Summary

Yasuni's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet. It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. Yasuni consists of Yasuni National Park and a Waorani Ethnic Reserve, an indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani are the Taromenane and Tagaeri, two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation. Yasuni's staggering richness does not only lie above ground; under the soil are vast amounts of crude oil that put Yasuni's future on the line. Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuni: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and Yasuni-ITT. This thesis aims at explaining the role of ENGOS (Environmental NGOs) in the decision-making processes in Yasuni. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following two questions: *To what extent did ENGOS influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* and *What factors explain the political influence of ENGOS on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* This analytical and explanatory study describes the extent of the ENGOS' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuni. In addition, it also tries to explain the factors that determine this political influence.

To answer the research questions a theoretical framework has been created based on the following concepts: *power, influence, political influence, political arena, policy network, ENGOS*. These concepts all came together in the influence of ENGOS on environmental negotiations. The works of Arts (1998) and Betsill and Corell (2008) form the scientific backbone of this thesis. The theoretical model aims at explaining the influence of ENGOS on the main actor in these decision-making processes: the government.

The first set of data was retrieved from semi-structured interviews with key actors on the three different topics in Yasuni. This data was used to examine the influence of ENGOS on: issue framing, agenda setting, the position of key actors and on the final agreement. With these results the decision-making process is reconstructed, the influence on all different phases is analysed and a counterfactual analysis of ENGO influence was made. The second set of data consists of factors explaining ENGO influence, which have also been retrieved from interviews. In the discussion these are combined with the eight factors Betsill and Corell extracted from several case studies about the political influence of NGOs on environmental negotiations.

This analysis provided the following results. The influence of ENGOS on the decision-making process of the Zona-Intangible was low: while ENGOS participated in the negotiations, there was no effect on the process or outcome. Conversely, ENGO influence in block 31 was high, ENGOS had both influence on the process and the outcome. ENGO influence on Yasuni ITT has also been high: ENGOS participated in the negotiation and had some success in the negotiation process. Also the participation of ENGOS could be linked to the outcome. This demonstrates that ENGO influence is case-specific.

ENGO influence is enabled by: 1 The *personal network* of ENGO employees; 2 *Scientific research* done by ENGOS; 3 the *Stage of negotiation*; 4 The *easy access of ENGOS to negotiations*; 5 Acting as a *watchdog*. The factors restricting ENGO influenced are listed in order of importance: 1 The *high economic stakes*; 2 The *small financial capabilities* of ENGOS; 3 the *poor ENGO-coordination*; 4 The *lack of continuity within ENGOS*; 5 The *tense relations between ENGOS and the government* of the last years.

Finally, four recommendations for ENGOS have been formulated: 1 invest in an extensive personal network; this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions. 2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOS, as this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOS. 3 join in early on negotiations. The earlier ENGOS join, the more the final document will be in line with ENGOS' policy goals. 4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOS and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice.

1. Introduction

Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet (Finer et al., 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Acosta 2010; Larrea, 2010). It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. (Villavicencio, 2010; Acosta et al. 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). Yasuní consists of Yasuní National Park and an Ethnic Reserve for the Waorani indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani, the Taromenane and Tagaeri, are two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation (Proaño Garcia and Colleoni, 2008, Martinez, 2010, Rommel 2007). They live in Yasuní together with over 1300 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and more than 100.000 species of insects (del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010). One hectare in Yasuní has as many as 650 tree species, an number higher than the number of tree species of Canada and the U.S.A. combined (Bass et al. 2010, del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010; McSweeney and Pearson, 2009).

Yasuní's staggering richness lies not only above ground; below the soil vast amounts of crude oil put Yasuní's future on the line (New Internationalist, 2008, Finer, 2010, Bass et al., 2010). Although the area is formally protected at the regional, national and international level, oil concessions have been given to a variety of oil companies (Finer, 2009). And as these oil blocks were designated before Yasuní was a formally protected area, protecting this area from destruction by oil companies is problematic (Acosta, 2010; Rommel, 2007).

Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuní: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and the Yasuní-ITT. These three topics will be further elaborated in the following section.

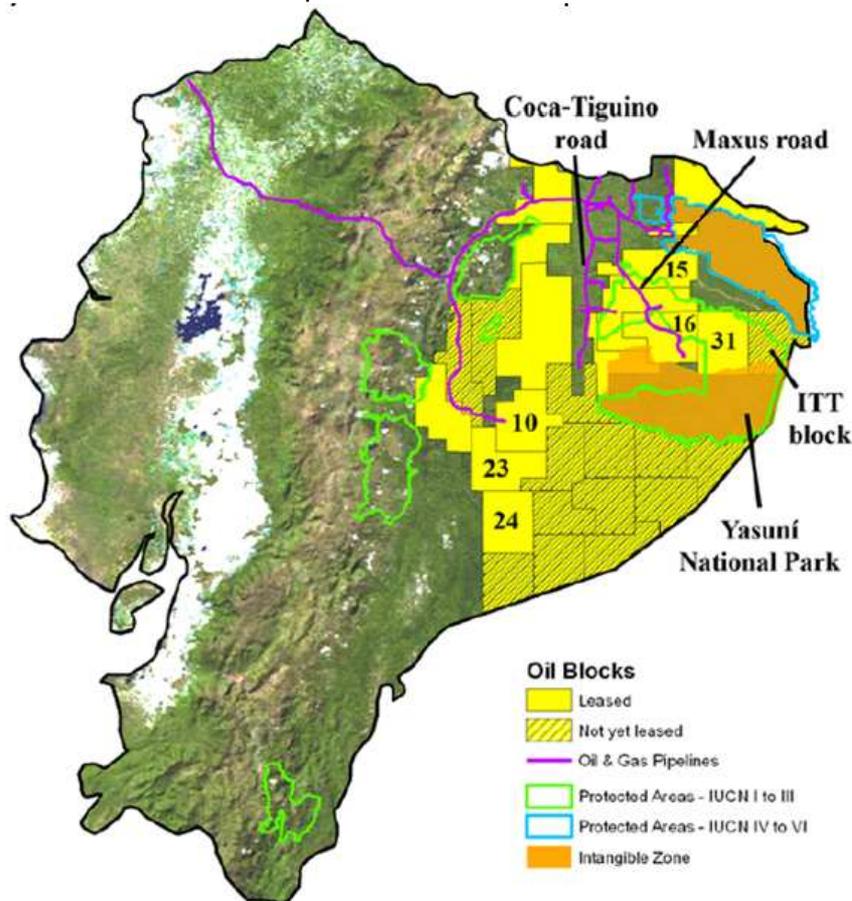


Figure 1: Oil and gas blocks in Ecuador. (Finer et al., 2008)

1.1 Zona Intangible

The indicated zones (former parts of oil blocks) in figure 1 are declared No-Go-Zones for oil exploitation in Yasuní: Zonas Intangibles. The northern No-Go-Zone, La Zona Intangible Cuyabeno falls outside the boundaries of Yasuní, whereas the southern No-Go-Zone, la Zona Intangible Tagaeri- Taromenane (ZI) consists of a substantial part of the Man and Biosphere Reserve (Finer et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Rommel, 2007). This thesis will only focus on the southern ZI, as the northern is not located in Yasuní. This No-Go-Zone was created by the ministry of environment to conserve the Tagaeri and Taromenane, and the forest they live from (Rommel, 2007). Although created in 1999 it took until 2007 to draw its final boundaries, but since then it finally seems to be protected adequately. It encompasses 7580km² and covers the complete southern half of the National Park and a part of the Woarani territory (Finer et al., 2009). As can be seen in figure 2 there are not only oil blocks that have yet to be leased in the southern Zona Intangible, parts of the oil blocks 16, 31 and ITT and almost half of block 17 also fall within the southern No-Go-Zone, this placed major oil reserves in block 17 and block-ITT (Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini) off limits (Finer et al., 2009).

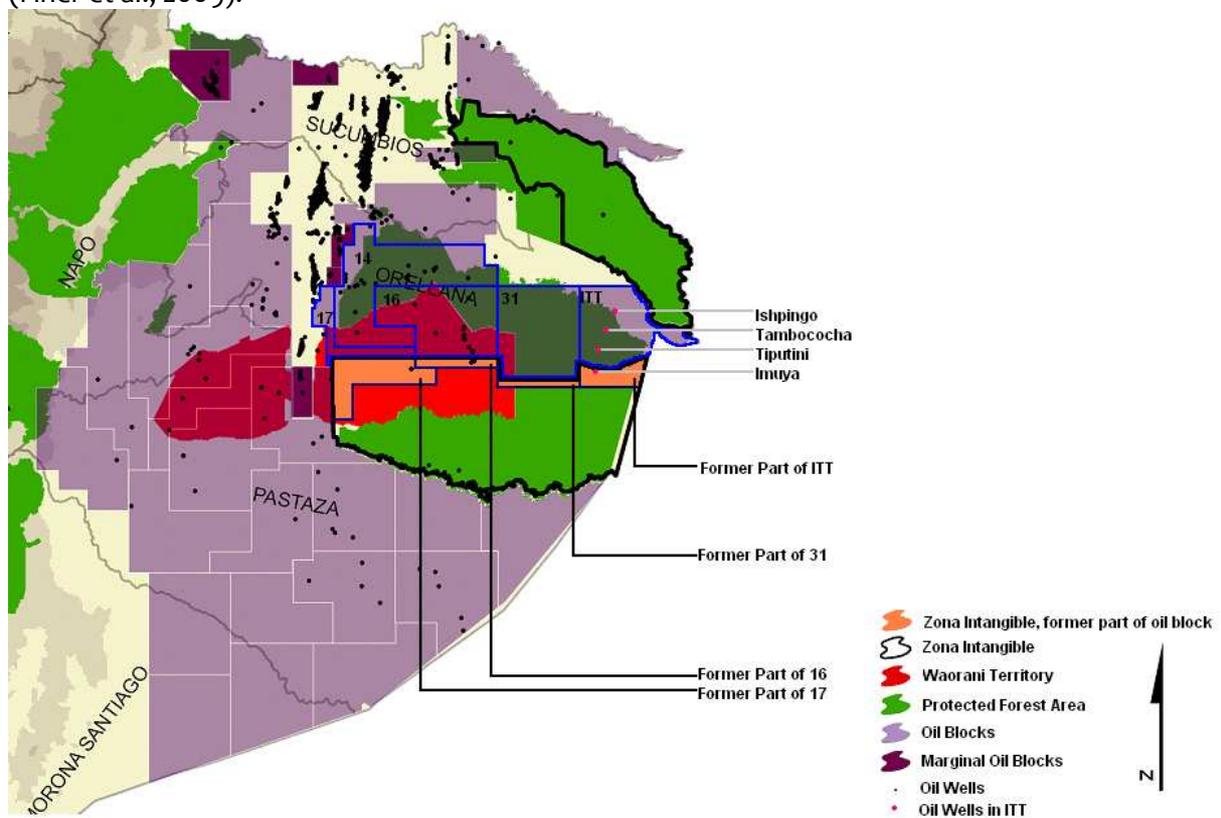


Figure 2: Zona Intangible and the consequences for oil production in Yasuní (Accion Ecologica 2008)

1.2 Block 31

Block 31 is one of the largest oil blocks in Yasuní, although only in size. The amount of oil in block 31 is hardly enough to break even when exploited (Martinez, 2010). It is a very strategic block, however, as it is close to block ITT, in which 20 percent of the remaining oil of Ecuador is located (see 1.3). Therefore a long struggle has been going on to stop the exploitation.

In 1996, the government released block 31, and it was given to the Argentinean company Perez Companc. In 2002, block 31 was taken over by Petrobras who executed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for the construction of an oil road, which started a large controversy. Many different groups joined to stop this road, ranging from NGOs, Social movements, and indigenous communities to famous international scientists (Finer et al. 2009).

Despite these lawsuits and protests, Petrobras started developing the road and clearing primary forest in May 2005, from the banks of the river Napo to the border of Yasuní National Park. At that time, Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of presidency. His successor Alfredo Palacio, reconsidered the issue and authorized development of these fields only under the condition that no roads were constructed and the production plant was outside the national park. In the following year a new EIS was executed and permit was given, based on a new plan that did not involve roads. Surprisingly, however, a year later the new president Rafael Correa announced that Petrobras terminated its contract and returned block 31 to the state (Finer et al., 2009).

1.3 Yasuní-ITT

Next to block 31, under the North-Eastern part of Yasuní National Park called Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) lies one of the biggest remaining oil fields with at least 846 million barrels with a total value of more than 72 billion US dollars, accounting for twenty percent of the remaining oil reserves. (Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer, 2010; Bass et al., 2010; New Internationalist 2008). Since Ecuador is an oil dependent economy, it needs this income to invest in education, healthcare and energy (de Hierro, 2010).

However, a ground-breaking initiative has been developed to generate income without exploiting this oil, and thereby protecting Yasuní's fragile biodiversity. The use of the crude oil in Yasuní would result in the release of 407.000.000 Metric tons of carbon dioxide, which could retrieve 7.2 billion US dollars on the international carbon market. However, as the carbon market only recognizes already emitted CO₂, the idea arose to place the CO₂ not emitted from Yasuní on the voluntary carbon market (Acosta, 2010). Foreign investments in this so-called "Yasuní Guarantee Certificate" will generate enough income to relieve the need for extraction (del Hierro, 2010).

The collected funds would be managed by a trust fund headed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which would invest the money in long-term development plans. The oil-based energy would be replaced by hydro-electrical, geo-thermal, solar and biomass energy. A million hectares would be reforested and protecting fourteen natural reserves and indigenous lands. This will result in the protection of 36 percent of Ecuador, and finally a revolutionary new development strategy (del Hierro, 2010). Since ITT is bordering the Intangible Zone, it would therefore create a rather large area free of oil development. It would also make the exploitation of bordering oil fields, like block 31, unprofitable and thereby would preserve these areas too (Finer et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol does not recognize the Yasuní Guarantee Certificates. Ecuador also tried to get this initiative recognized under REDD, however it was not accepted since it is not sufficiently focused on deforestation. For the climate agreements in Mexico 2010 Ecuador hoped to get it recognized as a new initiative next to the existing REDD and REDD+, however Ecuador did not succeed (Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). The search for investors and funding, is still on going.

1.4 Aim of the research

As shown above, the three battles are faced with an open end, and while the official facts can be presented, it remains unclear how and why things were decided. A relevant yet unanswered question is: what was and will be the role of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Social movements in Yasuní?

This thesis investigates the political influence of the various ENGOS on policy- and decision making concerning the oil extraction in Yasuní. Yasuní is a natural area of global importance and can serve as a flagship for nature conservation. Yasuní's uncontacted indigenous people and biodiversity are threatened by oil extraction. Nevertheless it can serve as an example on how nature can be protected although it is under high pressure. ENGOS acting on local, national and global level are

trying to conserve the indigenous living grounds of the voluntary isolated tribes and Yasuní's unique biodiversity.

This paper focuses on creating understanding of the political influence of ENGOs on oil extraction in Yasuní, and aims at formulating recommendations for the involved ENGOs to enhance their political influence in similar political arenas in the near future. Hopefully this might influence the outcome in Yasuní or at least provide ENGOs worldwide with information and recommendations on how to be better prepared for conflicts similar to this one. The aim of this thesis is therefore answering the following two research questions:

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

This study is analytical and explanatory. It describes the extend of ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuní in addition it also tries to explain what factors determine this political influence.

To answer these questions a qualitative research project is carried out, using interviews, and primary and secondary texts. Especially for the first questions semi-structured into-depth interviews are of high importance. Staff from ENGOs, governmental bodies and different kinds of specialists were interviewed. The original idea to make a strict distinction between these groups was a lot harder in reality than it seemed beforehand. The initial methodology needed this strict division to analyse the decision-making process from three different angles (see 3.7). However this was not the case. For example: scientists were former NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past, people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. Therefore a new methodology will be introduced to analyse the retrieved data more securely, without making divisions for theory's sake while such division does not exist in reality. Finally, a reconstruction of the decision-making process of all three themes (Zona-Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní-ITT) will be made. Overall, the research questions will be answered by analysing the role of ENGOs in this decision-making process. Additionally, this thesis presents recommendations for Ecuadorian ENGOs to enlarge their influence.

This thesis focuses on Yasuní: the Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve, which consists of Yasuní National Park, Waorani Reserve and a 10 kilometre buffer on the west, north and south side. Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve boasts uncontacted indigenous people, an unique biodiversity and both producing oil blocks and blocks that might produce in the near future.

The researched period lies between January 1999, the time of the ministerial decree that declared a large area of Yasuní a Zona Intangible until March 2011, the end of this fieldwork period.

Several factors made it harder to execute the research needed for this thesis. On September 30th 2010 a coup d'état and a personal assault on the president just failed. This created a tense political situation which made it harder to contact governmental representatives. People that gave interviews were less open than normally, which makes it hard to check if the given information is correct.

When the tension became less and less during the following weeks the tension among oil-producers grew tenser since new contracts were given for the next ten years. This made it impossible to contact oil-companies since new information could harm their contract. Therefore the initial idea to include oil-companies had to be changed.

The internal tension on Yasuní-ITT has also risen since Germany, the largest confirmed donor retreated. This did not only cost a lot of money but also implied that other countries and donors drew back.

2. Theoretical Framework

The introduction shows that there are many things at stake in Yasuní. A large variety of actors strives to see their own, often conflicting, goals achieved. Since not each and every one of these goals can be achieved, all actors attempt to influence the people that make the final decision. Although one actor may have more chance to influence a decision maker than another, this does not mean that he will certainly achieve his goals. When different actors are competing in this way, and if their access to resources and information is unequal, there will inevitably be a large difference in their influence on decision-making (Connell and Smith, 2006). Thus, there are power inequalities in this field; some have more power than others. To understand why this occurs, it's important to focus on the concept of power. What is power and what does power do are relevant questions in this context. These and other questions relating to power and influence will be answered in this chapter as well as the other relevant concepts that can help explain the role of ENGOs in environmental negotiations.

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Power Literature

Why is power studied to such a large extent? To put it very boldly: All aspects of social life are based upon power (Kidd et al., 2010 p. 4). This statement indicates how important power may be in everyday life. When the topic of power arises, it is often immediately associated with politics, but there is a major difference between power and politics. "Power is about getting what you want, and politics is about how and why different groups struggle to get what they want." (Kidd et al., 2010, p.5). This definition of power is very broad, and while many scientist would not agree on it, many of them would agree that this broadly is what power is about.

Deep inside, everybody has an idea of power, and of its opposite: powerlessness. We call people powerful when they can execute power over others, and consider those who cannot the powerless. In an average society the latter group is the vast majority (Kidd et al., 2010). Powerless is 'without power' just as "dark" is defined as "without light". This implies that we all know what power is and we can describe it without problems. We also know many of the manifestations of power.

In the social and political sciences, however, power is an 'essentially contested concept' (Ashe et al., 1999 p. 69). According to Kidd et al. (2010, p.7) five general themes can be distinguished within power literature:

1. Power and agency (individuals) – how much of a say do ordinary people have over their actions on a day-to-day basis? How much agency (or freedom/free will) do they have?
2. Power and structure (society) – how rooted and integral are power relationships within the overall make-up of society as a whole? To what extent does society as a thing weigh down upon individuals, regulating their decisions, actions and options?
3. Power and domination – what happens if people step out of line? How are they punished? Do some groups benefit from the punishing of others?
4. Power and empowerment – should we see power as a tool to use against others or as a way to make decisions about and for ourselves? Is it a matter of having power over what others do or is it power to do something for ourselves?
5. Power and identity – how does having power, struggling for power or being the objects of someone else's power make us who we are? What is the relationship between power and how we come to see ourselves in society: our identity?

According to Stephen Lukes (1974) these kinds of power can be gained through two different ways: power can either be obtained through battle, struggle and the possible resistance of others, or be the outcome of an agreement, it is not held by some over and at expense of others

who have none of it. Banfield (2009 p.9) puts it as follows: “Power is the ability to establish control. So who has power controls the situation, this person can do what he wants, not only within its own life but also with the lives of others and sometimes even with society.”

Thus it can be concluded that power is a vital topic in people’s life, this might explain why science’s early interest in studying power.

It is commonly accepted among scientists that modern power literature goes back to the 16th century when Machiavelli published “The Prince” (Bejan, 2010). Only twenty years later Thomas Hobbes published his renowned book “Leviathan”. These two authors started the first discussion in power literature, one that would continue for many years. On the one hand Machiavelli focused on strategies while Hobbes centred his book on notions. Arguably, Machiavelli’s focus point was the question *what does power do* while Hobbes tried to figure out what power actually is (Bejan, 2010; Clegg, 1989; Machiavelli, 2005). Given this, Machiavelli was in many ways a militarist while Hobbes was an early modernist, always looking to the answer to the question “what is power?” and with a strict sense of order. Modernists were not interested in what power does and how power could be used effectively for one’s own goals (Clegg, 1989; Giddens, 1990).

This chapter will continue with scholars inspired by the school of Hobbes since the “what is power” question is more relevant, particularly considering that Machiavelli focused largely on matters of military power. Hobbes’ book led to philosophical and sociological discussions on what power is and how it is executed. Machiavelli’s book is more practical hand guide on how to gain power, how to execute and how to maintain it. Although interesting, it is of lesser relevance for this thesis. Clegg (1989) states that Hobbes way of thinking led to modern power literature in which power is initiated by human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators. Various modern scholars use mathematic equations to specify the level of power or influence, for example Becker (1983) and Arts (1998).

Hobbes’ book led to several major discussions within sociology, discussions that are still held by scientists today: Is power distributed among many or held by an elite? Is power intentional or not intentional? Is power confined to decision making or is it evident in non-decision making? Is power constant over time? (Clegg, 1989) Before the end of this theoretical framework these questions will be answered.

The answer to the question: “Is power distributed among many or held by an elite” requires a brief overview of the elitist and pluralist theories. The publication C. Wright Mills’ book “The Power Elite” can be seen as the start of modern elitist theory (Clegg, 1989). This theory states that power in society is distributed among a small ruling elite (Wright Mills, 1956). Although the elite has changed from kings, dukes and monks to presidents, CEOs and bankers it is still omnipresent (Bottomore, 1993). But is it really? Dahl (1961) is a well-known supporter and one of the founders of the pluralist theory. In his book “Who Governs?”, he claims that power is not held by an elite, as was thought before, but by a very large group. This publication received much critique; many scientists argued that his findings were case-specific (Clegg, 1989). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) observed that where one group of scientists concluded that power was largely diffused in their cases and others assumed that it was extremely centralized, this difference would not be due to a case specific difference, but rather to predetermination in the research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Under the approach of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the researcher should neither begin by asking “who rules?”, as the elitist does, nor by enquiring “does anyone have power?”, as the pluralist does, since these questions already determine the outcome.

The next big contribution to the power debate was by Steven Lukes. Lukes’ influential book “Power: a Radical View” (1974) can help answer many of the remaining questions above, including: “is power intentional or non-intentional?” and “is power confined to decision making or

is it evident in non-decision making?” The book divides power into three different dimensions: In the first dimension the exercise of power occurs in observable overt conflicts between actors of key issues; in the second the exercise of power occurs in observable overt or covert conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues and in the third the power is exercised to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist. (Clegg, 1989; Connell and Smith, 2006)

The first dimension is the one Robert Dahl (1957, p. 203) used: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. This is a very clear and obvious form of power. A good example is a police officer that commands people to turn right; all people will follow his orders even though they would not have done so when it was not told to them by this police officer. Betsill and Corell (2008 p.24) state: “influence occurs when one actor intentionally communicates to another so as to alter the latter’s behaviour from what would have occurred otherwise.” Banfield (2009) adds: “What is A’s ability to achieve the intended result? And what is his ability to achieve it without incurring disadvantages (“costs”) which he regards as equal or greater than the advantage of the result.” This essentially comes down to: the more power A has the more abilities it has to influence the behaviour of B without negative consequences.

Lukes states that this definition of power is blind; it does not see all the less obvious ways in which one can influence another actor. To put it in a political perspective, it does not show the various and less obvious ways in which a political agenda can be controlled in a political system (Lukes, 1974; Clegg, 1989). To overcome this weakness, the first dimension is supplemented with a second dimension, which Lukes characterizes as the exercise of power that occurs in observable open or hidden conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues. This implies that one should not only look at what is done and which decisions are made, but also at what is not done and which decisions are not taken. The fact that a specific item never reaches the political agenda, or that a decision taken about something is never taken, can be the influence of one of the actors. This all goes beyond the visible and obvious exercise of power characteristics of the first dimension. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz previously introduced this as “the second face of power”: the not taken decisions. They discovered that, hidden from the public, an elite influences agenda-setting and in this way exerts its power on society (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962)

So far we have two dimensions, or the two faces of power. One open and obvious that is observable, and one that is hidden and which might also be called “non-decision making”, where conflicts are suppressed and it is prevented that a decision will be taken (Connell and Smith, 2006). Where Bachrach and Baratz (1962) stop with two dimensions or faces of power, Lukes (1974) was still not content, he felt that there were still some aspects of power not brought to light. Therefore he introduced a third dimension of power, characterized by the idea of a hidden conflict that affects interests. Latent conflict exists when there would be a conflict of wants or preferences between those exercising and those subject to power if the latter were to become aware of their interests. This is the power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist.

Linking these three dimensions, Lukes defines the underlying concept of power as: “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests” (Lukes, 1974, p. 27) The interesting aspect of this definition lies in the “contrary to B’s interests,” which is rather clear in the first dimension when the outcome of B is decided completely by A, and in the second dimension when B’s interest is never uttered, never placed on the agenda. In the third dimension, however, it is not clear that someone has gained or someone lost; this kind of power may be exercised even if B does not feel it.

The question: “is power constant over time?” can be answered rather easily. No one king stays in power over time and only a few presidents reign longer than eight years. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) are the first that state that power is not constant over time: it comes, fluctuates and finally diminishes.

“Does one need to exercise power to have power?” is a question that continues to divide scholars. The differences between Dahl (1957, p. 203) and Druckman and Rozelle (in: Tedeschi, 2008) are a clear illustration. As mentioned above Dahl (1957) defines power as: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. Druckman and Rozelle, on the other hand use the concept of “resources”, and in which way these can influence decision makers. They define power as following (quoted from Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3): “Power as control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others”. The difference between the two definitions can be explained by the emphasis of exercising power or influence on the one hand (Dahl) and on the other an emphasis on having power. This difference is called the episodic versus dispositional concept of power (Clegg, 1989) The dispositional school claims that one can be powerful without actually exercising power. A clear example is a nation-state that is powerful in the region because it has a substantial army, not because it uses it (Tedeschi, 2008). In this line of reasoning it can be said that those that hold political power are generally accepted by all other political actors, such as a part of the voters in a democracy. In politics this will mean that they are in control of relevant offices, resources and decision-making apparatus.

For the supporters of the episodic school, however, it is impossible to assess the capability of a player if that capability is not applied. One cannot count and add up a player’s power as if it were money and subsequently forecast outcomes. There is no one-to-one relation found between the resources an actor has and the outcomes it achieves. “A concept of power without the notion of influence is therefore misleading” (Arts, 1998, p.57).

Power is not only a topic in the power literature, research on power is also done in the regime and institutional literature. The power of actors on the development and effectiveness of regimes is studied by scholars (Mitchell, 2003). Mitchell (2003) for example recognizes the role of the interests of states and the efforts of individuals and groups to influence the outcome of International Environmental Agreements (IEAs).

2.2 The Concept of Influence

Now that it is clear what power is and what it does, it is time to introduce the most important concept of this thesis: influence.

The difference between power and influence can briefly be explained as follows. Power is “control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others” (Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3). On the other hand “Influence means the modification of one actor’s behaviour by that of another” (Arts, 1998 p. 57). This extended definition forms an underlying principle for this thesis, and hereunder the concept of influence will be further developed.

Arts (1998, p. 57) also adds the following to the definition of influence given above:

“Influence is to be distinguished from power. Power means capability; it is the aggregate of political resources that are available to an actor. (...) Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent.”

To complete this list of definitions used in this thesis the final difference between political power and political influence will also be given by Arts (1998, p 58):

“Political power refers to a more or less permanent ability to influence policy outcomes, whereas political influence refers to an episodic effect on decision-making”.

Influence can be organized in the same way as power in the previous chapter, using the three dimensions of power. First the openly executed influence between actors. This focuses on the behaviour of actors in decision-making, mainly on key situations. The execution of influence is

often observable: policy preferences are demonstrated through political actions (Lukes, 1974 p. 15)

The two dimensional view of power focuses on decision-making and non-decision-making. This second dimension looks at current and potential issues, both overt and covert. The emphasis in this dimension still are the policy preferences of the actors (Lukes, 1974).

In the three dimensional view of power the two dimensional view of power is expanded with latent conflicts. It also recognizes next to the subjective interests like policy preferences the “real” interests of actors outside the decision-making process (Lukes, 1974).

Giddens (1990) claims that actors are constrained to act, and thereby influence, within given rules and with the existing division of resources. This means they cannot just do what they like and use all resources they want: their political influence is restricted, they have to behave according the rules of the game and according the distribution of resources (Arts, 1998). This distribution of resources in the practice means that actors have only restricted money, supporters, logistics etc. to influence decision-making. This means that they have to use their resources wisely and within the rules of the game.

All actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave. An actor can be part of the political discussion and can join all meetings or one might be excluded from all formal meetings. Rules of the game can be transparent for all actors, but can also be non-transparent, meaning that not all players know what the rules are (Larson, 2010). Rules of the game can be altered by (a group of) players with sufficient power: the rules of the game change over time, with changing society and changing actors. In some cases a single actor can even change the rules of the game, this is normally a governmental player (Boix, 1999; Larson, 2010). Hence rules of the game are the institutional environment that determines what strategy an actor can use and what resources it will use to achieve its policy goals (Williamson, 2010). “Institutions in this context are a set of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that define social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices and guide interaction among the occupants of individual roles. Structures of property rights, electoral systems, and practices relating to marriage and the family are all examples of institutions in this sense. Institutions in this sense must not be confused with organizations construed as material entities with employees, offices, equipment, budgets, and (often) legal personality” (Young, 2002 p. 5).

2.3 Political Arena and Policy Network

Political actors can meet in two different settings, in a political arena or in a policy network. Political arena is a commonly used metaphor in political science, it refers to the battlefield of ancient gladiators, where all the actors compete and try to win while they are restricted by certain rules. The political struggle is quite similar. The political players meet to make a decision or to develop specific policy. The players focus on specific outcomes in the form of a decision or policy. Another similarity is that all players try to win which comes down to influencing the policy or decision to such an extent that their policy goals are met best. The fourth and final similarity is that all actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave etc. (Arts, 1998). A political arena can be defined as follows (Arts, 1998, p. 55): “[...] a formal meeting places of political players who struggle, debate, negotiate, and decide on policy issues and in doing so, are bound to given rules (although these might be changed by players as well).”

In recent times the term policy network gained recognition. Börzel (1998 p. 254) has the following definition: “a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-

operation is the best way to achieve common goals". It has to be stressed that most definitions are controversial, and so an alternative definition will be given from Arts (1998, p.56): "a more or less stable social system in which mutually dependent public and private players address policy issues and programmes". Börzel (1998) states that several scientists consider policy networks as a simple metaphor to indicate that policymaking is done by a large number of different actors all with different roles and stakes. While Börzel (1998) recognizes many forms of policy networks, for this thesis the form of policy network that seems to be most appropriate is a policy network as a form of governance. Several types of governance in and by networks can be distinguished (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). These refer to networks of public and of private organizations, and of mixes of these two. Networks of public policy organizations, the one that seems relevant for this thesis, have been considered to be the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p 148). The typical mode of interaction between the actors is through negotiations (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004).

According to the definition of Kenis and Schneider (1991 p. 36) policy networks are "webs of relatively stable and on-going relationships which mobilize and pool dispersed resources so that the collective (or parallel) actions can be orchestrated towards the solution of a common policy". This means that a policy network includes all actors involved in the policy making process. They are mainly characterized by informal interactions between public and private actors with distinctive but interdependent interests, who strive to solve problems of collective action on a central, non-hierarchical level (Börzel, 1998). This implies that there is no longer a central role for the government, where the government has a hierarchical power over other players. This fits well in the on-going debate surrounding the existence of a key role of governmental institutions (Segebart, 2008).

2.4 Policy and the Policy Cycle

A well-known concept in policy studies is to simplify the policy-making process in a series of stages: the policy cycle (Crabbé and Leroy, 2008). Generally the stages are: agenda-setting, policy making, the forming of opinions, policy implementation and the stage that consists of autonomous developments and policy outcomes. From this stage, the cycle starts anew by the setting of a new agenda, as can be seen in figure 2. All of this is of importance for this thesis, but some important processes are not recognized in this cycle, or at least not made explicit. First the stage of issue-framing, that refers to how the issue is conceptualized before, during and after the negotiation process. A frame is "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment" (Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 33). By framing (or re-framing) environmental problems, NGOs can highlight particular aspects of a problem such as the driving causes or who has the responsibility to act, thereby establishing the boundaries in which others have to respond (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Issue framing may occur before negotiations or during the negotiation-process, which means an issue can be re-framed. Agenda setting is recognized in the policy cycle but influencing key-actors is not explicitly included. Many groups try to influence the main actors during the negotiation-process. NGOs among others use this as a strategy to achieve their policy-goals (Betsill and Corell, 2008). The next section introduces the main actor of this thesis.

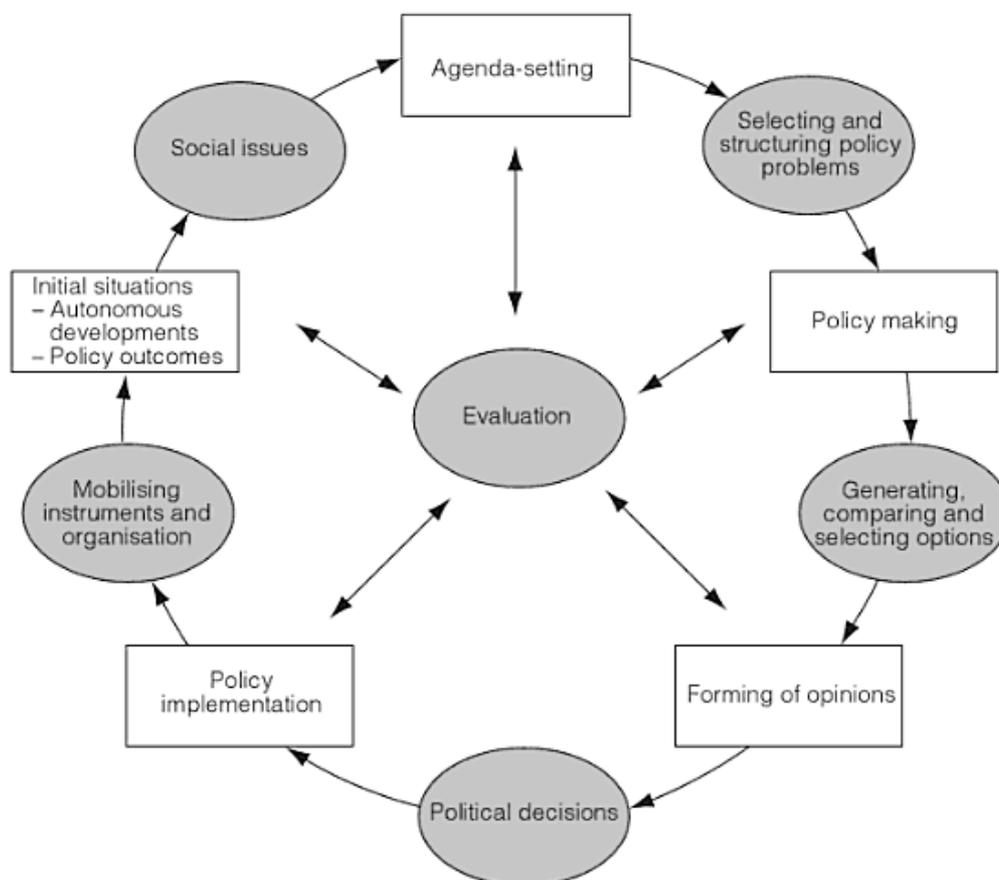


Figure 3: The policy cycle From Crabbé and Leroy (2008 p.3)

2.5 NGOs, ENGOs and Social movements

With power and influence defined, the next big concept for this thesis is that of NGOs. Many scholars recognize the NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, as one of the most important political players these days. The practical definition of an NGO, however, is intensely disputed. (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). Many definitions of NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) exist; every case might even need its own tailor-made definition, including and excluding desired groups. This spectrum of definitions ranges from almost including every group to almost excluding all : some authors argue that even soccer-clubs might fall under the umbrella of NGOs (Kidd et al., 2010; Arts, 1998). Arts (1998) on the other hand uses an extended definition of NGO, or in his case, global NGO: “[...] a global NGO is defined as a promotional pressure group which seeks to influence political decision-making on certain issues at global level. In the case of the UNFCCC and CBD we deal with welfare, communal and issue-specific organizations (respectively development, indigenous, environmental and conservation groups)”.

The definition of NGO used in this study has mostly been drawn from Arts’ definition of global NGOs given above, since it mainly focuses on the political role of NGOs where other definitions focus on the role of NGOs in society. In order to filter relevant NGOs without excluding other potential groups, the following definition, adapted from Arts (1998), is most suitable: “a NGO can be defined as a pressure group that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making.” NGOs fitting the latter definition can basically be divided in two groups: protest groups and pressure groups. Protest groups are groups that are outside the political arena and try to change policy by demonstration, contest and sometimes violence. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are in the political arena and try to change policy from within. This latter group can be divided further: in advocacy and lobby groups. Advocacy groups act as advocates for their cause mainly in

official events. Lobby groups try to influence individual policy- and decision-makers in an informal way (Arts, 1998). It is not clear whether groups inside the political arena are more effective than groups outside. Insiders have more and better access to decision-makers but they have to act responsibly and may lose their independence. Kidd et al. (2010) states that it is probable, however that many outsiders groups want to become part of the 'inside' groups.

In modern governance theory another split between NGOs is made, Visseren-Hamakers (2009) for example makes the difference between campaigning and collaborative NGOs, the first group represents pure conservation NGOs. One could think of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth. The second group consists of NGOs that create partnerships for example the World Wildlife Fund. Also Van Huijstee (2010) and Humphreys (2006) recognize two groups of NGOs, in this thesis they will be divided in "campaigning NGOs" and "collaborative NGOs".

Closely related to NGOs but crucially different are social movements. Contrary to NGOs, social movements normally have no strict hierarchy. These groups consist of like-minded people who seek to influence policy-making on a narrow range of issues. Although seeking to influence policy and policy-makers, they are not interested in becoming policy makers (Kidd et al., 2010). When using the definition above, however, social movements might also be classified as NGOs .

Social movements and NGOs can also be divided into sectional and promotional pressure groups. Sectional groups protect the interests of their members, such as labour unions, or a group of indigenous people that fight for protection of their lands. Promotional groups exist to promote a cause they believe is neglected by the government, for example Greenpeace and Amnesty International (Kidd et. al., 2010). These examples show that sectional groups often tend towards social movements while promotional groups lean towards NGOs.

So how important are NGOs and social movements in political decision making on environmental matters? While the pluralists' perception that pressure groups and social movements play a vital role in the political decision making is true to form, it is also recognized by many that better environmental outcomes are achieved when NGOs and social movements are involved in decision-making (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). All those groups with environmental focus normally are called ENGOS (Betsill and Corell, 2001). From now on, since principally NGOs with environmental goals are studied the term ENGO will be used: ENGOS can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seek to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts.

2.6 ENGO influence on environmental negotiations

Most scientific literature has focused on the power of states, and what factors might explain the power of these states (Kidd et al., 2010). Military, economic and political are the most important resources states have to execute power (Kidd et al., 2010). Nowadays it is recognized that not only states have power, and non-state actors can also shape governmental outcomes. Like states, NGOs have access to a range of resources that can give them influence. While NGOs do not have military power, some of them do have significant economic resources; these are mostly NGOs in the private sector, but some are environmental NGOs like Greenpeace and WWF. Rather than economic and military resources, the most important resources for NGOs are commonly recognized as knowledge and information. This specialized knowledge and information is used to influence governmental decision-makers (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the relationship between power (capabilities) and influence is not direct. The question is how to translate the capabilities into influence (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Holsti (1988) distinguishes six strategies that states can use to exercise influence: persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and the use of force. Betsill and Corell (2008) translate these to NGOs and they conclude that persuasion is the most used among NGOs. NGOs spend a large amount of time trying to influence decision-makers. The use of force, often used by states, is not a possible option for NGOs (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Power in relation to International Environmental Agreements is already discussed briefly in 2.1. Also the role of NGOs is underwritten in this regime theory. NGOs for example provide information, conduct research, and propose and evaluate policies, actions that introduce both ideas and political pressure into negotiations (Mitchell, 2003).

Arts (1998) divides the explanatory factors of political influence into three levels: the arena level, level of the outcome and the context level, which is a quite detailed division (see 2.8). Instead, Betsill and Corell (2008) make another division by identifying firstly the participation in negotiations and secondly the effect on the behaviour of other actors.

Betsill and Corell (2008, p.189) identified eight most often mentioned factors that could explain the political influence of NGOs through comparisons between different negotiation cases. It has to be said that their study mainly focuses on Environmental NGOs and that it is just the top of the iceberg of factors that could influence NGO influence, but it gives a good overview on the influence of Environmental NGOs especially when it comes down to forest related cases. The factors most often mentioned by key-informants in the research of Betsill and Corell are explained below (2008).

Several experts state that *NGO coordination* between like-minded enhances the influence on negotiations: they speak with one joined and therefore stronger voice. However in the cases researched by Betsill and Corell (2008) and Arts (2001, in: Betsill and Corell 2008) NGO coordination has only a neutral effect. They claim that NGOs have achieved all levels of influence whether they did or did not coordinate, so an NGO can have large influence without coordinating its actions. Coordinating NGO strategies seems hard: even among NGOs with common interests, a consensus between a large NGO with many resources and a small NGO focussing on the situation on the ground is hard to reach (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

There are no set *rules of access* governing NGO participation in international environmental negotiation (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Habitually NGO access is created ad hoc in international negotiations, and therefore it varies greatly, making it easier to study. Repeatedly it is assumed that more restricted access leads to lesser influence. Betsill and Corell (2008) showed that this relation is more complex. They claim that when NGOs are actively invited and stimulated to participate, their influence grows; in these cases NGOs were seen as important partners to achieve a common goal. On the other hand when states restrict NGO access, NGOs frequently overcome: they changed strategies and therefore less access did not constrain NGOs to influence the negotiations. This is remarkable when one notices the amount of energy and time NGOs dedicate to get a more open access to decision-making processes. They believe that more access leads to more influence but it is shown that this is not necessarily the case. The key to success lies in convincing states and decision-makers that NGOs can be an effective partner in making better decisions or implementing these, then states will actively facilitate NGOs to participate and that will lead to an increased influence. Christensen (2006) states that with soft-law real rules of access often do not exist, it is not made explicit who can and who cannot join the decision-making process, however in some certification schemes this is very well defined (Yale Program on Forest Policy and Governance, 2008).

The cases of Betsill and Corell (2008) hint that there is a relation between the *stage of negotiation* and the influence of NGOs. Two different stages can be distinguished. The first one being a formulation phase “where participants agree upon a framework for the negotiations” and a detail phase “where they bargain over the specifics of the final text” (Betsill and Corell, 2008, p.193). NGOs are seen to have more influence in the earlier stage than in the detail phase where governments are trying to solve core issues, when the tone of the negotiations is much harder. Betsill and Corell (2008) argues that the later stages are more heavily politicized, which may lead to less people to decide on the core issues (Betsill and Corell, 2008). They claim that the peak of NGO influence lies in the agenda-setting phase, the phase before the actual negotiation. NGOs co-decide what will and what will not be discussed: they identify problems and call upon states to act. This does not mean that NGOs do not have influence in the real decision but their greatest

effect is on agenda-setting, particularly when agenda-setting is defined as an on-going process rather than a distinct stage of policy making that ends once negotiation begins (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Political stakes are seen as a major factor shaping political influence. When the negotiations are in an early stage and the aims are still vague NGOs can influence the decision making to a larger extent than when the stakes are higher. Initial agreements where general principles are articulated, new organizations and decision-making processes are established can relatively easily be influenced by NGOs, as these do not require fundamental behavioural change from the government. When an NGO tries to bind a governmental body to specific commitments the stakes are higher. However, when governments have (positive) experiences working with NGOs they tend more often to work with them when there are higher stakes (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

If there is *institutional overlap*, and NGOs do not have the possibility to influence the negotiations directly, they can influence negotiations indirectly by influencing related institutions, if they. The overlap between the WTO and international trade regimes, for example, restrains the influence of Environmental NGOs while enlarging the influence of NGOs representing business/industry (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Competition from other NGOs can make it more difficult to influence negotiations since NGOs will be speaking with a diffuse voice, or all NGOs might be competing for the same financial funds or want different outcomes of the negotiation. However, NGO influence is not necessarily constrained when there is competition from other NGOs (NGO influence is not a zero-sum game) (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

When an NGO forms strong *alliances with key governmental bodies* their influence increases greatly (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Yanacolpulos, 2005). NGOs can shape the position of a state, either directly or through the public opinion and media. NGO influence increases when proposals are written that resonate the interests of the government, creating a sound basis for cooperation. NGOs and governments can both be working together and working against each other, there is no generalization possible and it has to be determined case to case.

The last mentioned factor that determines political influence is the *level of contention*. This often comes down to NGOs having more influence if there are no economic interests at stake. This factor is really relevant for this study since the potential oil revenues are a large economic interest. Short-term costs and revenues have higher priority than long term costs and benefits, and if NGOs manage to frame their claims consistently, their influence increases (Betsill and Corell, 2008). There may also be contention over sovereignty of states or lands of indigenous people. Protecting indigenous people can be threatening to states, but still NGOs often succeed (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Next to these factors, many others are mentioned by other articles. However, they are not the most relevant for this thesis and will only be mentioned shortly. From the work of Widener (2009-1) an extra factor can be added: *scale of operation*. Some NGOs work on a higher scale and want to influence other things than NGOs that work on a lower scale. The first group might want to influence international policy while the second group focuses on the situation on the ground.

Financial capabilities of a NGO play a large role in their effectiveness. The more financial funds a NGOs has, the more effective it can work, and therefore the more influence it has (Silva, 1997).

Related are the *organisational capabilities* of NGOs, the better it is organised the more influence it can execute (Silva, 1997).

A factor that most influences the effectiveness of the influence is the *availability of expertise*. With more expertise an organization has better knowledge of what to do and how to do it. This has positive influence on the effectiveness and the amount of power since others might act upon the NGO (Silva, 1997).

There is one final group of factors that must be mentioned, but that are very different from the other factors: *contextual factors*. These factors are not controlled by any player within a political arena and might enable some actors' influence while at the same time restricting the influence of other actors.

With all the theory of this thesis introduced it is now the place to conceptualize the theory. To conceptualize the theory, a definition of political influence is needed for this thesis. Political influence is chosen since it implies executed power on chosen topics. Since the focus of this thesis closely relates to Arts book “The Political Influence of Global NGOs” (1998) his definition of political influence concerning global NGOs will be given (Arts, 1998, p.58): ... *political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to an outcome in treaty formation and implementation, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned.*” This definition can be largely used, with a minor adaptation, to define political influence in this thesis.

Arts adds that it is possible to rewrite this definition in terms of the so-called counterfactual. Then political influence implies that the policy outcomes are more in line with the desired outcomes of an actor than it would have been if he had not intervened. To put it more simple and general, the player did matter and did make a difference. Arts (1998 p. 59) adds something that is very important for this specific case: “it should be stressed that the achievement of one’s goal might not only cover the realization of a desired outcome, but the prevention of an undesired one as well”.

In this thesis political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned

In Arts (1998, p. 60) the selective nature of agenda-setting is accepted at the theoretical level, but barely covered by the empirical research. In this thesis a different approach is chosen, since the most important possible achievement of the NGOs might be influencing the agenda setting and issue framing (Kidd et. al., 2010; Connelly and Smith, 2006; Betsill and Corell 2001). The political arena perspective will be used in this thesis since it recognizes the central role of the government. The main focus of this thesis is the influence of NGOs on the government, both intentional and un-intentional. The question if power is intentional or non-intentional is not very relevant for this study which focuses on NGO power. One can claim that all power is intentional since all organisations have their own policy goals they want to achieve, and are therefore intentionally exercising power. On the other hand NGOs have a lot of unintentional power, it can be seen as influence as a side effect, it might change the political climate or discussion unintentionally. Unintentional influence also includes negative influence in the way that this influence will make it harder to achieve its policy goals. Nevertheless a large (and the most important) part of the influence is intentional, since it is focussed on specific actors to achieve policy-goals. (Clegg, 1989).

In this thesis a whole range of different NGOs is trying to influence the outcome in Yasuní. Therefore it is hard to know which groups to include and which to exclude. In Ecuador NGOs have emerged over the last twenty years as leading actors in development. Their numbers rose greatly as did the variety in types of NGOs. Their role in policy making and grass roots organizing also became more fundamental with the retreat of the state. Now NGOs are looking for ways to find new forms of collaboration with the government. At this time NGOs can be seen as one of the most important links between grassroots and the government (Keese and Argudo, 2006).

For this thesis, groups that fit the definition of NGO from the theoretical framework are included:

“ENGOs can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts”

Social movements fit this definition and are therefore included under the caller of NGO although it is recognized that they are essentially different from NGOs. In Yasuní they have the same objectives and work more or less in the same way. Not all NGOs have the same objectives in

Yasuní, they can roughly be divided in three groups. The first group is made up by organisations in favour of oil exploitation: the money gained by the oil exploitation is needed in Ecuador. This group is called *extractivistas* (those in favour of oil extraction). The second group wants to keep the oil under the ground, the so-called *ecologistas*. This group consists of people that consider the social impacts on the indigenous people in Yasuní too large and of groups that want to conserve the unique biodiversity. In reality most groups share both reasons, some have more environmental focus and others a more social focus.

The third group consists of groups that are divided; the so-called *ambientalistas*, and normally the consensus of these groups is exploitation with minimum impact. A lot of NGOs and Social movements fall under this group.

Since the *extractivistas* do not have a lot of support among Ecuadorian NGOs, and the fact that this thesis focuses on Environmental NGOs; *extractivistas* NGOs will not be studied in this thesis, it solely focuses on the *ecologistas* and *ambientalistas* NGOs, as these groups have environmental objectives, the one rather radical the other more mild. To make this clear in the rest of the study these two groups will be called ENGOS: Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations.

2.7 The conceptual model

The conceptual model presented is in line with a political arena rather than with a policy network. A disadvantage of the political arena is that it gives the impression that players, roles, rules and outcomes are fixed, however in reality these factors are to a large extent fluid. The policy network theory recognizes this, but also questions the central role of governmental bodies (Arts, 1998; Börzel, 1998 and Segebart, 2008). In this case the government can still be seen as the central player, making the political arena is the better alternative for this thesis.

This study focuses on the influence of ENGOS on the government and not on all kinds of mutual relations between the government, ENGOS and other players. It also must be stressed that although some problems in Yasuní might have been privatized in the past, for example the government retreat from negotiations between Indigenous movements and oil companies in the past, but at this moment the state is the unquestioned central player. Therefore the political arena is more suitable since it makes the government the central player and leaves enough room to study the influence of the other players including ENGOS on the government and therefore on the policy.

The theoretical model underneath (figure 4) is based on ENGO influence on Climate and Biodiversity Conventions (Arts, 1998, p. 71). This model fits in the pluralist view on power and influence: many actors co-decide and have influence.

The upper part of the model consists of external events and trends, a major factor influencing negotiations. A shift of or within the government, changed economic circumstances or a shift in the environment (local, national or global) can completely change the discussion.

Instead of an international focus as in Arts (1998), this thesis focuses at three different levels, the regional, national and international level. On all three levels are actors trying to influence the outcome. These levels are not strictly divided. A group that mostly focuses on the regional situation might seek international attention for its cause. The same can be said for international NGOs that participate in the global discussion, they might also work in small communities in Yasuní. It has to be said that although the problem takes place in three different levels the national level is the most important, and therefore has the most attention in this thesis. This is because the regional level mainly focuses on the execution of the nationally designed policy and that on the international level the ENGO actors have a lesser voice.

It is recognized that the group *others* is rather broad, and consists of many groups. However in this thesis all these groups are lumped together to get a clearer insight in the role of ENGOS: the main actors of this thesis. This choice might have influenced the research outcomes since this thesis solely focuses on the role of ENGOS. The influence of NGOs that, for example, aim at oil extraction is not investigated.

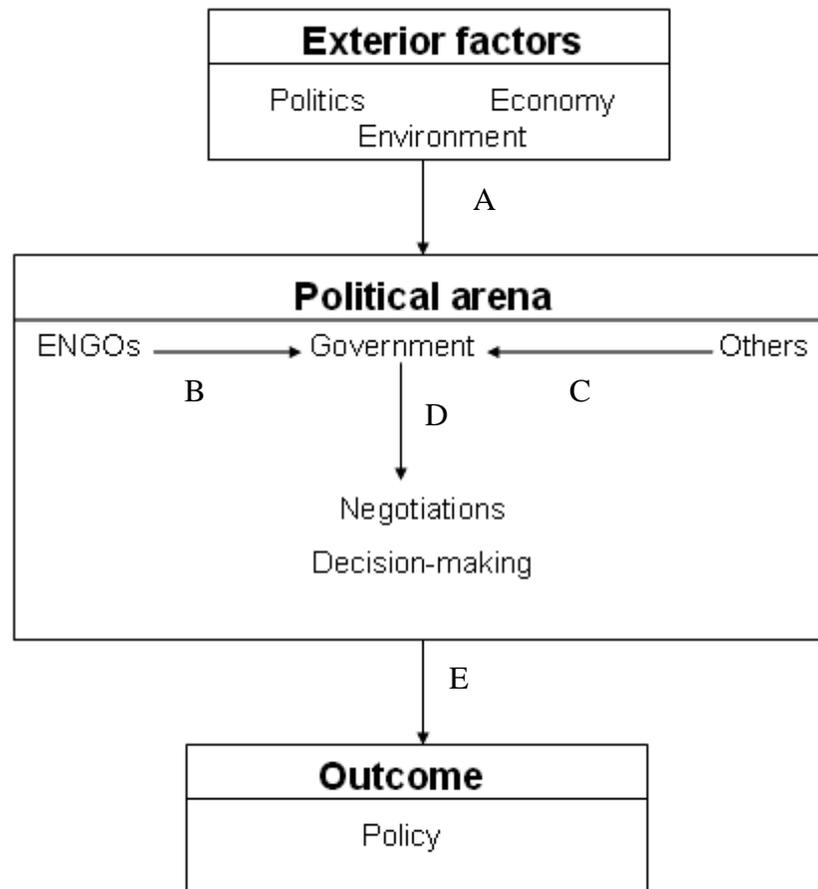


Figure 4: Main issues concerning decision-making in a political arena with NGOs (based on Arts, 1998 p.71)

Arrow (A): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors can be political, economic, environmental; and they may not be fixed, what constrains one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis etc.

Arrow (B): political influence. This is the political influence of ENGOS on the government, this includes agenda-setting and issue framing. This is the main focus of the research.

Arrow (C): political influence. This is the political influence of other actors on the government, in this thesis this group mainly consists of oil companies and their affiliates like *extractivistas* NGOs. It has to be stressed that arrow (B) and (C) are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “ENGOS”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given the formal status and position a government has. In reality, however governments do influence other players and ENGOS, but it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (D): engage in. All actors including the government engage in negotiations and decision-making. The government is the leading actor and can determine the outcomes the most. The outcome depends largely on the nature of the negotiations, and on the nature of the actors involved.

Arrow (E): leads to. The policy processes lead to outcomes in this case: policy.

In this model ENGOS can impact policy outcomes in principle, but are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors. This thesis focuses on the national level while the

international and local levels are recognized, whereas Arts' (1998) model focuses solely on the international level.

Apart from this, two other large differences exist between Arts' model and the one used in this thesis. The upper part of Arts' model consists of the international system, which in turn consists of "events and trends", and a part called "structure". Structure is divided in the distribution of resources, regimes and the rules of the game. Leaving out this structure increases the explanatory power of the central part of this model while at the same time simplifying it. Now the focus is more on the political arena, and everything influencing this arena is regarded as a given trend or event: something that changes the political arena and therefore the terms for negotiations. The other large difference between this model and that of Arts is that there is no feedback between the outcomes of the negotiation and the events and trends. Since the contextual factors are regarded as given circumstances, and this thesis is a short term research, it goes too far to for this thesis to assume that the policy influences these events and trends. The events and trends in this case are highly unpredictable. Giving the model a feedback loop might suggest that they are predictable.

To give some more context to the two research questions they will be placed in figure 4. Question 1 verifies if arrow B does exist and how large it is, in other words: how influential are ENGOs. Question 2 tries to explain arrow B: what factors can explain the influence of ENGOs. The research questions are repeated hereunder.

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology for data collection and data analysis will be presented.

3.1 Assessing the Extent of Political Influence of NGOs

This chapter will present the methodology used to answer research question 1. During the fieldwork it became apparent that the method chosen to analyse the data from the interviews was not applicable in this thesis. Therefore the data will be studied in another way than was intended. The methodology chosen beforehand will be introduced first in this chapter. Then the weaknesses experienced during the fieldwork will be discussed and finally the adapted methodology will be introduced

3.1.1 Original methodology

The normal procedure of comparing cases with and without NGO influence is not applicable since all three investigated cases are unique (Finer et al., 2009; Arts, 1998; Yin, 1994). So when the commonly used comparative case analysis is not applicable, what method is most appropriate? In modern political literature three different methods to assess political influence can be distinguished: the reputation, position and decision-making methods (Arts, 1998).

The reputation method connects power with reputation, it states that what counts in social relations is the mutual perception of power. In other words: if one is regarded influential by others he will be treated as such. The same is true for the opposite, if one is regarded powerless (Arts, 1998). Using opinions of selected key figures one assesses the influence of several actors in a given community (Peters, 1999). A major weakness is the subjectivity of this study; it is completely based on the opinion of others, and it does not say much about the factual influence of an actor. An advantage is the easy way in which one can collect data. Simply by getting the reputation of having influence it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, only the reputation is enough to enhance one's influence (Peters, 1999).

The position method assumes that political influence is based on the position taken by the actors, this position directly influences access to authorities, information and other resources. The closer one is to the authorities and the more information and resources one has, the stronger one's influence is. Using this method, a kind of hierarchy can be designed to rank all actors. For example a president has more influence than a minister, who has more influence than a lobbyist and so forth (Arts, 1998). The position method has a high reliability since it is easy for organisations to pinpoint the crucial, and therefore influential, positions. The major critique on this method is that it easily assesses one's position but not the influence one executes (Peters, 1999). It is easily argued that all majors have a different level of influence while they all have the same positions, so there have to be more factors. Another critique is that it does not discriminate between different issues and political arena since respondents are only asked to assess the power of actors in general. (Arts, 1998)

These two commonly used methods are designed to analyse actors' political influence, but they do not automatically say something about who really influences a political decision (Peters, 1999; Arts, 1998). While position can certainly affect political influence it does not necessarily say much about the control of outcomes. A valid argument for this is that not all members control the outcomes of decision to the same extent, even though they have formally the same position; this differs from case to case.

Incorporating the weaknesses of the latter two methods, the decision-making method aims at analysing decision in specific issue-areas in order to reconstruct the contribution of players to the

final outcome. It assesses to what extent the actors' interventions were successful in the decision making process. This assessment is used to reconstruct the relative influence of each actor. Because key issues and key decisions are studied, the influence of political players is considered to be politically relevant (Arts, 1998; Peters, 1999). Data is generally collected by interviews with actors and decision makers and the analysis of policy documents, interviews with more objective specialists can also be used. However, the decision-making method is also criticized, mainly by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who pinpoint that agenda setting is also influence. Another kind of critique is that one can achieve policy goals without exercising influence: it is hard to separate the extent to which one has achieved one's goal and the influence one had on that outcome (Peters, 1999).

The methods described above all have their advantages and disadvantages, and since every case needs another method, in the practice these three methods are often mixed by picking and combining relevant elements. Originally, a variation on the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal analysis, in short EAC Method, was used for this thesis. This qualitative method combines the three modern methods of analysing political influence. The methodology concerning the EAC Method is developed by Arts (1998). In his book Arts also assesses political influence of ENGOs in a rather complex political arena: the climate and biodiversity conventions. With several adaptations this methodology can be used for this study. A strong point of this methodology is that it studies the same political influence from three completely different angles, which seriously reduces the change of inaccuracies. However in Bas Arts (1998) and this thesis it is not so clear who achieved what specific result in the designed policy.

The EAC methodology works as follows.

Ego-perception

In this qualitative technique a number of selected key respondents of NGOs are asked to assess their own influence on the governmental decisions regarding oil production in Yasuní. Then they will get the opportunity to elaborate on their examples of NGO influence. These interviews will create a list of so-called *ego-perceptions*. Both the quality and quantity of these ENGO claims are taken into account in the assessment (Arts, 1998). These interviews will be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline, in this thesis table 3.

Alter-perception

After selecting a group of key respondents representing government the respondents will assess the political influence of ENGOs active in Yasuní. These result in a list representing alter-perception. Again, both the quality and quantity of these claims on NGO influence are taken into account in the assessment. For this part, other players assess both the reputation of NGOs and the factual achievement of their policy goals (Arts, 1998).

These outcomes can confirm, reject or add to the claims of the NGOs. This is the first control on the claims made by the key informants of the NGOs (Arts, 1998). These interviews in which ENGO influence will be assessed will also be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline.

Causal analysis

Finally, the NGO influence will be subjected to a second control of the NGO claims, the so-called causal analysis. This is done to verify if ENGOs really did influence the policy in the way they claim.

Causal analysis is structured in the following way: First it is checked if an NGO achieved their goals regarding policy, and to what extent. The achievement of these goals is divided in two groups: enhancing a desired 'good' or preventing an undesired 'bad'. The Causal analysis helps to judge the political influence of NGOs. For this thesis, this control will be based on the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) in table 3.

The ego-perception, alter-perception and the causal analysis all point out whether there is in fact an influence of NGOs. If the alter-perception and causal analysis indicate that there was no influence it might be concluded that there was no influence although the ego-perception might claim the opposite. The situation changes where the alter-perception and causal analysis differ, then it is up to the analyst to decide which should prevail. In general the causal analysis is dominant over the alter-perception since it is based on objective documents instead of on subjective visions of key informants. However this dominance also depends on the quality of data as these might differ (Arts, 1998; Steinberg, 2004).

To put this all in perspective, it should be recognized that any assessment of political influence is after all only an informed guess (Arts, 1998). One can never be sure of having included all relevant visible and invisible factors and actors in the analysis, especially in cases like this one, where objectivity is hard to find and transparency is not a common phenomenon. Even scientific judgements on political influence remain guesses. But they are ‘informed’ at least, as the political processes concerned are analysed as thoroughly as possible. (Arts, 1998)

Ego-perception	Views of ENGO representatives with regard to their own political influence (claims)
Alter-perception	Views of government representatives with regard to the political influence of ENGOs (first control of ENGO claims)
Causal analysis	Researcher’s assessment of ENGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews (second control)

3.1.2 The problem between the methodology and the circumstances in the field

The EAC-methodology is based on a strict separation between people working in NGOs, government or other players. While this separation might have existed at an international level or in the nineteen nineties when Arts (1998) carried out his study, the interviews for this thesis showed something completely different for Ecuador. Of the 18 interviewed people 13 worked a long time within another group. For example, scientists were also NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. This made it illogical to pretend there is a hard distinction between the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal-analysis group. There were two possibilities to solve this friction between the methodology and the situation in the field. The first one was to just make a distinction of all interviews in one of the three groups. This could be done according to the current job, which has as a weakness that this was not the job the people had during the events. The second one is trying to group the people in their most meaningful group, the one they worked in during the events or their most influential job. However, this would make the influence of the researcher to unintentionally manipulate the data too large. The second possibility is to look for an alternative methodology that would solve this problem. Since there were interviews done with a very broad group of people one could assume that the truth was captured within the data derived from these interviews. Since almost all people worked at different type of jobs, the data derived from the interviews was more objective than assumed before starting the fieldwork. There were no large differences in the reconstruction of events between the point of view of a former minister and an NGO-employee. Therefore it is chosen to use all data from the interviews to reconstruct the decision-making process. This methodology will be elaborated on in the following section.

3.1.3 Alternative methodology

The methodology, aiming at answering research question 1, was adapted to solve this problem is derived from Betsill and Corell (2008), who studied several cases in which the NGO influence on environmental negotiations was central. During this research a methodology was developed to systematically analyse NGO-influence. The data needed for this is the same as Arts (1998) used and consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews with government delegates, ENGOs and specialists. Since the framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was used during the interviews to systematize the data it could easily be fit to this methodology.

Also the research task is the same: analyse evidence of ENGO influence. Only the methodology is different. The methodology is based on two different dimensions. The first is process tracing: here the participation of ENGOs will be linked to their influence using causal mechanisms to explain this influence. The other analysis is the counterfactual analysis: answering the question “what would have happened if ENGOs had not participated in the negotiations?” This separation will be held during the analysis of the results and the conclusion on the first research question of this thesis. In table 2 an overview of the research strategy, the data type, the data sources and the methodology is given.

Table 2: Strategies for gathering and analysing data on (E)NGO influence (cells contain examples of questions researchers might ask. From: Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 28)

Triangulation by:	Intentional communication by NGOs/NGO participants	Behaviour of other actors/global attainment
<i>Research task: Gather evidence of NGO influence along two dimensions</i>		
Data type	<i>Activities:</i> How did NGOs communicate with other actors?	<i>Outcome:</i> Does the final agreement contain text drafted by NGOs? Does the final agreement reflect NGO goals and principles?
	<i>Access:</i> What opportunities did NGOs have to communicate with other actors?	<i>Process:</i> Did negotiators discuss issues proposed by NGOs (or cease to discuss issues opposed by NGOs)? Did NGOs coin terms that became part of the negotiating jargon? Did NGOs shape the positions of key states?
	<i>Recourses:</i> What sources of leverage did NGOs use in communicating with other actors?	
Data source	<i>Primary texts</i> (e.g., draft decisions, country position statements, the final agreement, (NGO) lobbying materials)	
	<i>Secondary texts</i> (e.g.[...]media reports, press releases)	
	<i>Interviews</i> (government delegates, observers, NGOs) <i>Researcher observations</i> during the negotiations	
<i>Research task: analyse evidence of NGO influence</i>		
Methodology	<i>Process tracing</i> What were the causal mechanisms linking NGO participation in [...] environmental negotiations with their influence?	<i>Counterfactual analysis</i> What would have happened if NGOs had not participated in the negotiations?

In this thesis the extent of political influence is not directly measured or asked in interviews, solely whether there was influence. Table 3, shown below, was used as a framework to systematically analyse the political influence of ENGOs during interviews. The influence of ENGOs was investigated for the five recognized phases: Issue framing, agenda setting, position of key actors, final agreement/procedural issues and final agreement/ substantive issues. In the framework presented in table 3, several questions are presented for all these phases to help the systematic analysis. These questions are answered as part of the results of this thesis.

Claims made by all respondents were verified so that in the end a conclusion could be drawn about the level of influence. Therefore it was chosen to keep the data collection as qualitative as possible with the only exception that the data derived from interviews was used to differentiate between low, moderate and high ENGO influence, as is done in table 4, based on the framework designed by Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 38). The input for this scheme is the completely filled in framework of table 3, which points out if there was ENGO influence, and in what phase. Together these two tables form a complete methodology that enables the researcher to systematically investigate ENGO influence.

Three final schemes will be made one for “La Zona Intangible”, one for Block 31 and the last one for Yasuní-ITT. The conclusion will be drawn when the final scheme of each topic will be linked to table 4. This will lead to three end conclusions of ENGO influence of low, moderate or high, on all three subtopics, and thereby to an answer on research question 1.

Table 3: Indicators of NGO influence (quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 34,35)

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

Table 4: Determining the level of NGO influence (Quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p.38)

	Low	Moderate	High
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate and have some success in shaping the negotiating process but not the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiating process • NGOs' effects of participation can be linked to outcome
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a no on all the outcome indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a yes on one or both of the outcome indicators

3.8 Assessing the Explanatory Factors of NGO Influence

This section introduces the methodology used to answer research question two: What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni? This is done after the first research question is answered being: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” The second question tries to explain the political influence of ENGOs.

To collect the data used to answer the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” all interviewees were asked for the factors that can explain ENGO-influence. This resulted in a ranking of mentioned factors. This list, combined with the list from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used to draw conclusions on the explanatory factors of ENGO-influence.

During the interviews people were asked which factors might have explained the political influence of ENGOs in the Yasuní case, and in interviews with ENGOs which factors might have explained their specific influence. This was done for both enabling and restricting factors. These factors are investigated using interviews, with the data from these interviews one can study how ENGOs have influenced both the negotiation process (through issue framing, agenda setting and shaping the positions of other actors) as well as the outcome (procedural and substantive elements of the final text) of the negotiations concerning the production of oil in Yasuní (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Finally in the discussion a distinction will be made for the explanatory factors for the three sub-topics since not every factor might be as important, or even present, in all three cases.

3.9 Research Strategy

Three different subtopics will be investigated in this thesis, all three very important to answer the research questions. The first will be the construction of “la Zona Intangible” (No-Go Zone), an area that cannot be developed because of the uncontacted indigenous people living there. The construction of this No-Go Zone and the construction of its final boundaries were negotiations where various NGOs tried to influence the outcome. This decision places several oil fields off limits for exploitation.

The second theme is block 31, an oil block that is not yet exploited within the National Park. Previously Petrobras owned it but after a negotiation process between Petrobras, the Ecuadorian government and NGOs Petrobras decided to give block 31 back to the Ecuadorian state.

The third theme concerns Yasuní-ITT. This initiative proposes to keep all the oil in the ITT field underground and let other countries pay half of the expected revenues. This money will be guarded by the UNDP and will be invested in sustainable development projects in Ecuador.

The investigation will be done according to the research strategy designed by Betsill and Corell (2008). Process tracing will be important in this thesis, by reconstructing the process the role of ENGOs and their influence can be analysed. Another important methodology is the counterfactual analysis: asking the question: “what would have happened without ENGOs?” This latter strategy is of major importance for the first research question.

3.10 Data Collection

As can be seen in table 2, the data source consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews. Interviews are especially important to retrieve data for this thesis, used to reconstruct the decision-making process and to answer finally the question “what would have happened without ENGOs?”

18 interviews were held. Since people were also asked about former work-experience an extended list of institutions were analysed, of which a complete list can be found in Appendix 2. This list shows that in fact a substantial larger group of ENGOs, governmental bodies and specialists were interviewed.

To avoid an “in crowd,” people were asked who their “opponents” are or with whom they disagree. To include important people the interviewees were asked to name the actors that facilitated the process. This is called snowball sampling, but with the slight difference that in this way opponents are also selected. This is done to counter the most common flaw: the dependence on the first sample of interviewees and their contacts (Kumar, 2005). This is a very useful method for decision-making and for groups that are not completely understood how they interact.

The texts used in this thesis were almost without an exception of Ecuadorian origin and therefore written in Spanish. Primary texts in this thesis mainly consist of formal governmental decisions, decrees by secretaries of state and lobbying material from a range of actors. Secondary texts are mainly media reports, press releases, documentaries and other articles.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected for this thesis is purely qualitative. First the data analysis for the first research question will be given and in the sub-chapter thereafter the data analysis for the explanatory factors of political influence will be given.

The data used to answer research question 1 consists of interviews and primary and secondary texts, this will be used in two different ways. With all these data the decision-making process will be reconstructed. Since many interviewees wanted to be anonymous and unrecognizable it is impossible to use many quotes since names are easily obtained from these. However all data will only be presented if it is verifiable. So the results are a reconstruction of the decision-making process and with extra stress on the role of ENGOs in this. The decision-making process is divided in five phases, corresponding to table 3: Issue framing, agenda setting, influence on key actors, and the procedural issues and substantive issues of the final agreement.

The results used to answer research question 2 consist of the factors mentioned during the interviews that could explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. A ranking will be made of these factors with the number of times it is mentioned. A conclusion will be drawn using these factors and linking them with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008). Together with the decision-making process it will be made clear which factors are of more and lesser importance.

4. Results

This chapter shows all results from interviews concerning the influence of ENGOs more in depth and with more details, and is structured as table from Betsill and Corell (2008); see p29. This is done three times, each time for the three different subtopics: Zona-Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní-ITT. These extended reconstruction will be used to fill in a complete framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) that will be presented with the conclusions. Later an analysis will be given on what would have happened without ENGOs, the counterfactual analysis. This is done for all three topics. The analysis starts with the issue framing of Yasuní as a whole and the role of ENGOs, because this can be seen as the start of the three topics. First Yasuní as a whole was framed, and later the entire decision-making process for all three topics started, including the framing of the specific issue.

4.1 ENGO influence on framing Yasuní

ENGOs have claimed to influence the framing of Yasuní National Park as (one of) the place(s) with the highest biodiversity in the world, and as a special issue of the New Internationalist. Many initiatives to frame Yasuní as the most biodiverse place on the planet came from civil society like “Yasuní Green Gold”, “el Yasuní depende de tí”, “Expedición Andarele” and “Yasuní por la vida”. The four highest Google hits for “Yasuní” are on number one “live Yasuní” from the ENGO Finding Species. Number two is from Wikipedia, the third is “SOS Yasuní” from the Ecuadorian ENGO Acción Ecologica. The fourth is “Save Yasuní” from the American ENGO “Save America’s Forests”. The first government controlled hit can be found on the eight place.

The same can be said about books; most of the books and articles written about Yasuní are written or compiled by ENGOs (3 respondents). Only since Yasuní ITT the government has written more about Yasuní. New social media become increasingly more important as a source of information, especially for the younger more cosmopolite generation. On Facebook all hits except one (Wikipedia) are from ENGOs and Social movements. Twitter is less used, three groups use “Yasuní” name: one movie that wants to promote the ITT initiative from civil society, one high school project that aims at the same goals and the official, however not active, Yasuní-ITT-account from the Ecuadorian government. Remarkable is that all except the one aiming at fundraising for the Yasuní movie are not used since October 2010. The same is true for the Facebook accounts.

The scientist concerned for Yasuní (SCY) possibly made the highest contribution to frame Yasuní as a unique place with an extraordinary biodiversity. The findings from this report that concludes that Yasuní is the place with the highest biodiversity known to men, is quoted in almost every article related to Yasuní (Acosta, 2010; Acosta et al., 2010; Larrea, 2010; Honty, 2010; Martinez, 2010; Villavicencio, 2010; Bass et al., 2009; Finer et al., 2009; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Yasuní ITT, 2009; Finer et al., 2008). But SCY is not a science-based initiative. It was initiated by two ENGOs from the USA: Finding Species and Save America’s Forests. It was also the work of ENGOs that seven famous and respected scientists joined the campaign and wrote letters to stop the construction of Petrobras’ oil road in block 31. These letters even ended as a news article in the New York Times (New York Times, 17 Feb. 2005)

Even the government uses a lot of material provided by ENGOs, in the airport of San Francisco de Orellana or shortly Rio Coca, the gateway city to Yasuní, the entire airport is decorated by photos from Finding Species.

Another remarkable achievement is the sheer number of stickers, posters etc. provided by ENGOs. Stickers provided by ENGOs can be found on lampposts throughout cities and posters are hung in many important buildings, especially in the governmental hub of Quito and larger cities in the Amazon. Hereunder in figure 5 a timeline is presented with all the important dates from Ecuadorian politics and the three different subtopics.

Timeline Yasuní

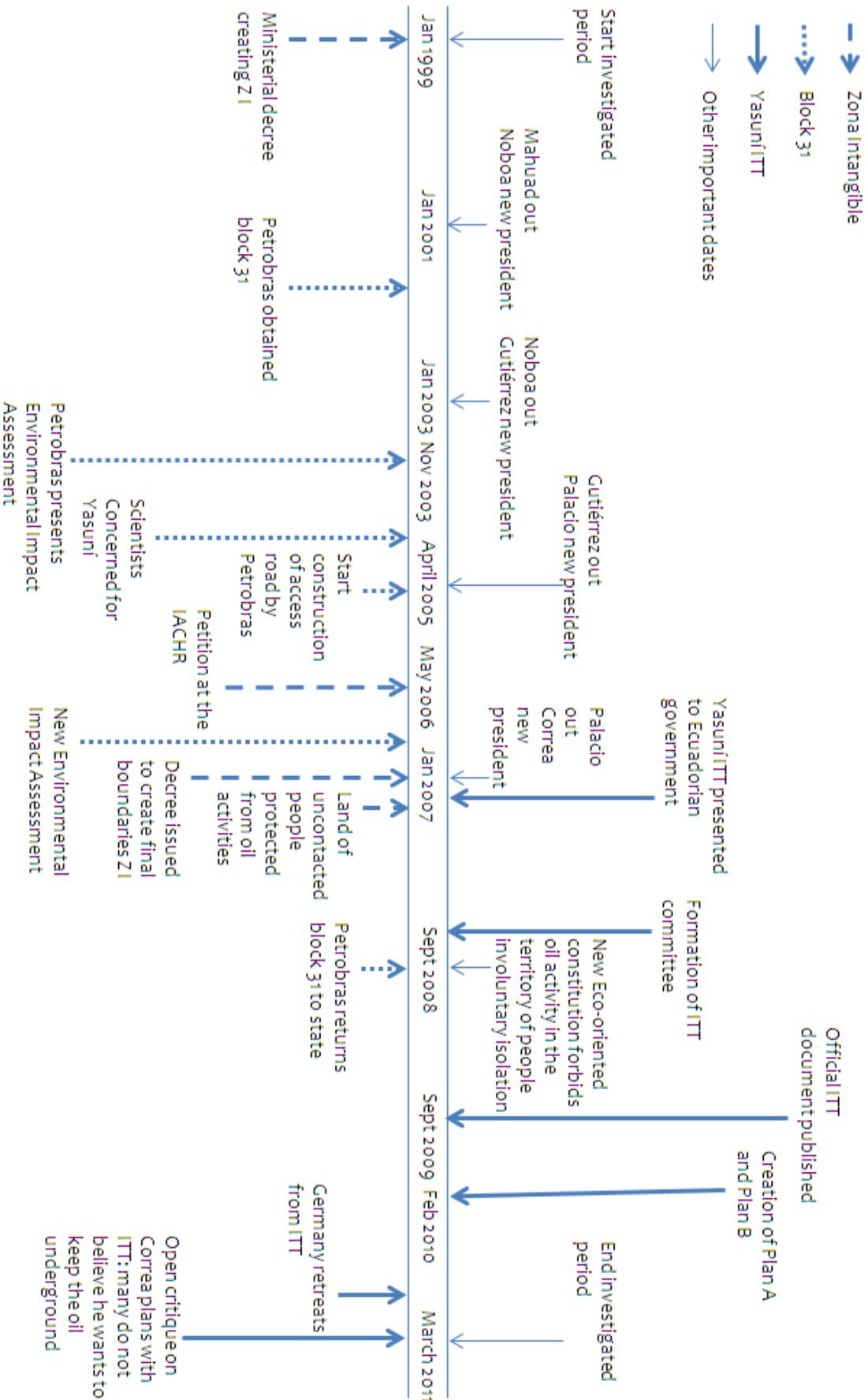


Figure 5: Timeline of Yasuní with all important events concerning the Zona Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní ITT

4.2 Process tracing of La Zona Intangible

The first theme that will be discussed is the one that has its roots deepest in history, La Zona-Intangible. Its roots go back almost thirty years when indigenous people started to ask for an oil-moratorium. In January 1999 “La Zona-Intangible” (ZI) was created by a decree of the minister of environment (Yolanda Kakabadse) in order to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane. Although it was decided that the Zona-Intangible was to be located in the southern part of Yasuní it did not yet get fixed borders. Since the created no-go zone did not have borders it was impossible to enforce the laws protecting this area and illegal logging, for example, took a rise. In 2006 more than ten logging camps were present in the Zona-Intangible. On the May 1st, 2006 a group of Ecuadorian activists petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to intervene and force the Ecuadorian government to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane from all different threats. On the tenth of May, 2006 the IACHR called on the Ecuadorian government to adopt specific ‘precautionary measures’ in order to protect the indigenous tribes by putting measures into practice to prevent the entry of outsiders, such as loggers and oil workers into their territory (Bass et al., 2010; Finer et al., 2009; Narvaéz, 2009; interviews with 6 respondents). In January 2007, eight years after the Zona-Intangible had been created, the president signed a decree to draw its final boundaries. This was followed in April 2007 by a new policy on uncontacted people of the Ecuadorian government, which places their territories off-limits to extractive activities (Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 3 respondents). In the following months a logger was killed just outside the Zona-Intangible. It became obvious that the ZI did not cover the complete living grounds of the Tagaeri and Taromenane. In March 2008 the implementation of the IACHR’s precautionary measures started, creating the first military control point to protect the ZI in April 2008, and it stopped the illegal logging effectively (Finer et al., 2009; Proaño and Colleoni, 2008; interviews with 4 respondents). Ecuador’s new constitution created under president Correa from September 2008 forbids all extractive activities within the territory of indigenous people living in voluntary isolation, and calls the violation of these right ethnocide (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008; Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 4 respondents)

4.3 Results on ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible

This chapter demonstrates all results concerning the Zona-Intangible, using Betsill and Corell’s (2008) framework (table 3). This table forms the red line of this chapter. The five table heads are converted in five sub-chapters and will discuss the main issues from table 3. It starts with issue framing then, agenda setting, the position of key actors followed by the final agreement procedural and later substantive issues. One part of the scheme from Betsill and Corell (2008) has been adapted, under agenda setting the “terms of debate” have not been included. This is done since the majority of the respondents did not understand the answer or did not know what to answer. Since this led to a shortage of usable results it has been chosen to not include this in neither the results nor the discussion.

The information for this chapter consists of 7 interviews that gave substantial information about the ZI, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.3.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning La Zona Intangible

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

First there was the idea from ENGOs and indigenous groups that wanted an oil moratorium in the entire Amazon. This idea had been around since the 1970s. In 1964 Chevron-Texaco was working in the Ecuadorian Amazon under the name of Texpet. The operations were mainly in the northern part of the Amazon near Lago Agrio, and caused an ecological disaster. Hundreds of millions litres of water were polluted and the nature and people suffered severely. This induced the activism of people living in the southern parts of the Amazon, who did not want the fate of their northern

neighbours. Their solution, supported by ENGOs like Oilwatch and Acción Ecológica, was a moratorium for oil in the entire Amazon (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews). The government did not agree and wanted the oil extracted to fund necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure. (7 interviews)

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

When Yolanda Kakabadse came into office in August 1998 she saw the problems, and wanted to protect the uncontacted indigenous people, but also other indigenous groups and Yasuni's fragile ecosystem. All protected areas in Ecuador are under direct control of the minister of environment. Therefore she had the power to declare two areas no-go-zone for development, particularly since uncontacted people were living there. The Intangible Zones are something different than an oil-moratorium, so there was a noticeable shift on the issue. First the government changed its opinion, from exploitation to preservation, however 5 different presidents led the government during the negotiations, inducing several severe shifts in the government perception (5 interviews). Secondly a large group of ENGOs did agree on the official governmental plans, although not all (4 interviews). Finally, oil companies strongly opposed to the plans of a ZI, this did not change during the negotiations (7 interviews).

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The role of ENGOs on the agenda setting of La Zona Intangible seems to be marginal, except from raising a discussion about an oil moratorium in the Ecuadorian Amazon. However, that discussion started in the 1980s and nothing had been done until 1999, when the minister of environment made the decree declaring two No-Go-Zones. It looks like ENGOs and indigenous groups started the discussion and when the right person had the power to make a change a part of the initial plan was executed. However direct influence on the issue framing by ENGOs seems rather unlikely (Bass et al, 2010; Finer et al, 2009; 10 interviews).

ENGO influence on issue framing?

No, ENGOs started the discussion on oil a moratorium, but it cannot be proven to have influenced the idea of a ZI.

4.3.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning La Zona Intangible

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

The minister of environment that created the ZI, Yolanda Kakabadse, did that on her own initiative although here goals were almost identical to that of many ENGOs and indigenous groups she states. Since the Man and Biosphere Reserve fell under her jurisdiction she could "finally" create a No-Go-Zone. She was the one that brought the idea of a ZI to the attention of the community. These statements from Kakabadse are underwritten by all 6 other respondents.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The construction of a no-go-zone was put on the agenda, but there was not a real negotiation. The minister of environment formulated a decree and that was executed. The creation of an oil moratorium for the entire Amazon never entered the agenda although it was often suggested by environmental groups. Two ENGOs, Fundación Natura and EcoCiencia, gave technical assistance to Yolanda Kakabadse when she was minister of Environment in 1999 to design the Zona Intangible of Yasuni and the Zona-Intangible Cuyabeno (Narvaéz, 2009). Oil-companies also tried change the boundaries so that oil wells were not placed off limits (lobbying material of Andes Petroleum; 7 interviews).

After 7 years without definitive frontiers the creation of these boundaries was put on the agenda again by ENGOs, first without success but after a government change it was formulated as a priority by the government.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

The role of ENGOs in shaping the agenda is not completely clear: they did start the discussion of the oil moratorium, but this was never put on the agenda. The no-go-zones came from within the government, and while there might be indirect influence of ENGOs in framing the issue of oil extraction, biodiversity and uncontacted people, this is not evident.

Acción Ecológica, an Ecuadorian ENGO, opposed the creation of a ZI that did not cover the entire Ecuadorian Amazon was stated by 3 respondents not affiliated with Acción Ecológica. This led to a diffuse sound from ENGOs being split in two groups at that time. One group was pro-ZI, since they believed that it was the best they could achieve, the other group consisted of ENGOs and indigenous groups that disapproved the ZI because it was not ambitious enough. According to the three respondents this led to tension between ENGOs and made it harder to influence the government and impossible to claim that either group did influence the government decisively. A high civil servant gives the following explanation: “In 2004 a coalition of civil activists: *el grupo de vigilancia* and an indigenous movement: *las indígenas de seis lados* took action, this was the impulse to restart the discussion of the ZI boundaries. Later many ENGOs, scientists, and other civil society groups joined the discussion. At this time the process to draw borders was started again but the president at that time, Lucio Gutiérrez was not interested in the theme. In the end of 2006 it was restarted again from nothing under president Palacio, here the foundations were laid that led under the boundaries of the ZI under president Correa”.

Two respondents, state that the formation of the borders of the ZI in 2006 was placed on the agenda by ENGOs. Another source state that the force behind the creation of the boundaries were not ENGOs although he knows ENGOs claim this but the sub-secretary of the minister of environment at that time, first months of 2007. On this statement the former two state they had contacts within the government that could speed things up.

The second agenda, with the boundaries of the ZI, might be shaped by ENGOs, they raised the topic again in 2006 but did not succeed. A year later with a new government they did succeed, but it is not clear if this is due to ENGOs, or to a new government that wanted to solve this problem created by former governments. People in interviews disagree on this; it is possible that certain ENGOs are overestimating their influence while other players underestimate their influence. However, it looks like ENGOs could only succeed in their goals if they had powerful contacts within the government. And these newly installed governmental employees already had the same opinion. ENGOs seem to have functioned as a watchdog at this time, unable to achieve their goals single-handedly, but with the right governmental people in place they might have sped up the process (interviews).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, the agenda was set and dominated by the government, however at times ENGOs functioned as a watchdog to ensure that the creation of boundaries was not completely off the agenda.

4.3.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning La Zona Intangible

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government formulated the idea of creating a no-go-zone, so that might be their initial position in this case. Many ENGOs had the same opinion, although definitely not all. Several ENGOs especially Acción Ecológica considered the plans were not ambitious enough. So a pragmatic (and *ambientalistas*) group of ENGOs went for the governmental plans since it was a lot better than nothing and they feared that when they would be too ambitious they might have ended empty-handed. The last key actor in this are oil companies, who wanted to secure their investments and their oil-blocks. Therefore they wanted no Zona-Intangible but when it would be created at least outside their oil blocks (lobby materials Andes Petroleum, interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

One can be certain that the oil companies did not change their opinion; they wanted to stop the creation of the ZI and to reformulate the boundaries to exclude some important oil wells. The opinion of ENGOs did not change either, the two groups remained existing next to each other. The only actor that did change (their opinion) was the Ecuadorian government, which was led by 5 different presidents during the negotiations of 1999 until 2007. No other change was noticed only that the two governments from Noboa and Gutierrez (January 21, 2000 until April 20, 2005) had no priorities creating the ZI's final boundaries. This finally changed in 2006 under the presidency of Palacio. The process restarted and the complete process was successfully finished under President Correa in 2007. One respondent shows that the most important trigger to restart the negotiation in 2006 were new oil explorations in block 14 and 17, that would fall in the ZI, but since it did not have boundaries the oil companies could still try to erect an oil post. This made all actors aware that nothing had been solved yet.

Half of block 14 and 17 fell within the supposed boundaries of the ZI. The oil companies wanted to fix this problem legally, but the government did not want that, and ENGOs were exercising pressure at that time to finally create some borders. Since the official aim of the ZI was to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane the government sent airplanes to scout them from the air. All living grounds of these people were to be protected by the ZI, and the borders were drawn by minister Alban, an eco-orientated minister that already played a key role in block 31.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs tried to shape the position of the government especially under president Gutierrez, this failed several times. When Palacio came into office some people within the government were open to idea of drawing the ZI's boundaries. This made it easier for ENGOs to join meetings. The influence of ENGOs is discussed severely, more than a few people from ENGOs claimed to have played a key role in drawing the borders of the ZI. Not only several people from the government but also more objective specialists oppose this claim. They state that the role of some individual governmental players was more substantial and that these ENGO-employees are severely overestimating their influence. The specialists seem to have a better overview of the negotiation process, and therefore it can be argued that reality resembles their reconstruction.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did try to influence the government, but the government only changed when a new president was installed.

4.3.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning La Zona Intangible

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed.

4.3.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning La Zona Intangible

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The opinion of the majority of ENGOs is resembled in the final agreement, a no-go-zone for development and oil exploitation in Yasuní to protect the (uncontacted) indigenous people and the environment. However some wanted a more ambitious plan.

After an exhausting process and eight years, the borders were drawn of the ZI just about the time oil companies started new explorations. Several oil fields were placed off-limits by the final boundaries of the ZI for example half of block 14 and the Imuya post in the ITT block. This was celebrated as a victory by many ENGOs (interviews).

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Except from joining some meetings and functioning as a watchdog, the role of ENGOs might be rather small. There is some evidence that ENGOs sped up the process of drawing the borders, however no new decisions were made purely because ENGOs promoted it (interviews). In the literature very little can be found from the hands of ENGO concerning the ZI. In comparison to Yasuni-ITT and Block 31 also very little can be found on the websites of ENGOs, as well in other materials distributed by ENGOs.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the content of the agreement was not changed by ENGO influence, although they might have speeded it up in the final stage

4.4 Counterfactual analysis in La Zona Intangible

What would have happened to la Zona Intangible without the participation of ENGOs? Indigenous movements, not ENGOs, started the discussion of an oil moratorium; ENGOs joined later.

It might be that the focus shifted a bit towards nature conservation instead of the living grounds of indigenous people, but in practise it comes down to the same: a large part of the Biosphere Reserve needed extra protection.

The agenda setting might not have differed a lot in the beginning, since the minister of environment raised the whole topic, but in a later stage ENGOs were functioning as a watchdog. Making sure the drawing of the boundaries was never completely off the agenda. But did that make a difference? In 2007 a green government was installed led by Raphael Correa, with or without ENGOs protecting parts of this fragile ecosystem better was one of its teams priorities. ENGOs were not able to change the position of the government possibly also due to the fact that five presidents led the country during the negotiation. No time was available to strengthen their network within the government. It is hard to say if ENGO participation made a difference to the solution, most respondents from ENGOs and other institutions agree that it was almost an entirely government led process. ENGOs were free to join in meetings, but only if they knew the right people in the government could they really exercise influence. Therefore one can conclude that already conservation-orientated people were in the governmental staff when the boundaries were drawn, they may have succeeded without the ENGOs.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible seems to be low: ENGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome. In this case ENGOs did join in the negotiation process, but they do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators. However, who knows what would have happened without ENGOs keeping this topic on the agenda during the political difficult years between 1999 and 2006?

4.5 Process tracing of Block 31

The subsequent topic that will be discussed consists of a series of the negotiations concerning Block 31. The invested period for Block 31 starts in 2003 when Petrobras takes over block 31 from Perez Companc, reaches its summit with the battle for block 31 which makes Petrobras decide to return block 31 and ends in 2011 when this block is still state-owned but not yet leased. Why is there so much hassle about block 31 when it has been proven that the amount of oil in this block is hardly enough to financially break even (Rival, 2010)? Block 31 is the gateway to the large

adjacent reserves in block ITT. To extract the heavy crude of ITT lighter oil is needed to create a mix that is easy to pump up. However when block ITT would not be exploited, block 31 would lose its strategic value and would not be exploited either (1 interview).

This issue commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road, but before the government approved the EIS, Petrobras started the construction of this oil road. What happened afterwards and what was the role of ENGOs in all this?

As stated above the process started when Perez Companc, an Argentinean oil company, sold the exploitation rights of block 31 to Petrobras in 2002 (interviews; Finer et al. 2009). Petrobras presented an Environmental Impact Study in 2003 for the oil reserves of Nenke and Apaika. This study called for the construction of an access road into the National Park (4 interviews; Finer et al., 2009). At that moment the real negotiation started.

To prevent this road an extended research was started involving 59 scientists with experience in Yasuní, called the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní (SCY). The American ENGOs Finding Species and Save America's Forests initiated this initiative. The SCY created an unsolicited Technical Advisory Report regarding the plans for block 31. This report concluded that the greatest threat for the area were the direct and indirect effects of access roads. Later the Smithsonian Institute and The Association for Tropical Biology also published science based letters opposing to this access road (4 interviews; SCY; Finer et al., 2009).

Around the same time several Ecuadorian ENGOs started a lawsuit challenging the fact the relocation of a new processing facility required for the project into the park without proper studies. A second lawsuit was started by human right groups focussing on Constitutional violations of the project (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009).

The Grupo Asesor Técnico de Parque Nacional Yasuní (GAT) was one of the first to know what was going on. This group consisting of ENGOs, universities, local governments and civil right groups were the first ones to know that Petrobras already started with the construction of the not yet approved access road in May 2005. Together with the president of the national park they informed the government demanding that no roads were to be allowed in the National Park. They also demanded reduced impact for the oil pipe. Despite being informed the government did not take a strong position in this issue, they did not force Petrobras to stop (2 interviews). This road reached the northern frontier of Yasuní National Park, and Petrobras was seeking the final permit that would allow them to enter the National Park (Finer et al., 2009). The other permits had already been signed by the minister of Environment, and several details were changed during a meeting with the GAT. Meanwhile ENGOs from the GAT formed a coalition called Amigos de Yasuní and accused the universities and governmental bodies of being environmental unfriendly. Wildlife Conservation Society-Ecuador (WCS) had to change director and the Universidad Pontificia Católica resigned from the GAT (1 interview). Although struggling with internal unrest the GAT demanded that Petrobras would not cross the Rio Tiputini, and when Petrobras did start the road between Rio Tiputini and the National Park the GAT demanded a suspension of their licenses, and that no final license would be given.

At this time President Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of office by the Ecuadorian people and was replaced by Alfredo Palacio: a radical change. Palacio re-examined the oil access road issue in block 31. "On 7 July 2005 the newly installed minister of Environment informed Petrobras that they were not authorized to construct the processing facility or road into the park and instead had to develop a road-less entry design with the processing facility located outside the park" (Finer et al., 2009 p.12). This new minister did not know much about Yasuní and its problems and was introduced to all this material by ENGOs.

“Less than a week later, over 150 Waorani marched through the streets of Quito to protest the Petrobras project and delivered a letter to the government calling for a 10 year moratorium on new oil projects in their territory” (Finer et al., 2009 p.12).

In September 2006 Petrobras submitted a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for a processing facility outside the National Park and for helicopter access to the drilling platforms instead of a road. (ENGO petition 22 march 2007; Finer et al., 2009). Letters were sent by ENGOs in September 2006 to point out the weaknesses and threats from the new Ecological Assessment of Petrobras. However, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment disagreed and discarded the letters from the scientists and ENGOs involved (interview, Save America’s Forests). Why did Petrobras leave block 31 after having invested more than \$200 million? Several versions of this story are told.

1 Ana Alban, the minister of environment under the presidents Palacio and Correa did not like Petrobras and the way they operated. Therefore she never gave the final license needed to access the National Park. Petrobras tired of waiting returned the block to the Ecuadorian state (1 interview)

2 While starting the construction Petrobras used boats a lot bigger that was allowed in the contract. Petrobras also dumped several barrels of diesel in the Rio Napo, these nonconformities were pointed out to the minister of environment by ENGOs, leading to the suspension of the license for 2 years. Not being able to work would cost a lot of money and therefore Petrobras decided to return block 31 (1 interview)

#3 When this license was issued by the minister of environment it was not yet backed up by local governments what was necessary for its validity. One local civil servant in the Amazonian town of Rio Coca did not want to sign this license. According to two respondents he saw the destruction created by oil companies in the Amazon and wanted to protect the area he grew up in. Unfortunately his motives are not verifiable. Remarkably he was the only one allowed to sign the local license for Petrobras. So when the final license was given, it was not yet backed up legally on a local level, making block 31’s oil production illegal (2 interviews).

4 In October 2007 the minister of environment issued the license. This triggered a new round of ENGO petitions and actions. In September 2008 President Correa suddenly declared that Petrobras resigned and had returned block 31 to the Ecuadorian state (Finer, 2009; ENGO petition 22 march 2007).

Knowing that all interviewees only knew their own side of the story, the truth has to be a combination of these three stories. This all finally caused Petrobras to terminate its contract. Directly afterwards block 31 was transferred to state-owned Petroamazonas SA.

With the new 2008 constitution in place, which forbids oil extraction in protected areas, block 31 seems to be protected sufficiently. However an exception was built-in, it allows drilling to proceed if it was petitioned by the President and declared in the national interest by the Congress, which may call for a national referendum if deemed necessary (Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews, Constitution of Ecuador, 2008).

4.6 Results on ENGO influence on Block 31

The information for this chapter consists of 5 interviews that gave substantial information about block 31, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

The 5 main sources unanimously explain that this topic commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road. Before the government approved the EIS Petrobras started the construction of this oil road.

4.6.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Block 31

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

Oil production in block 31 seemed to be the best option for the Ecuadorian government and oil companies, and at that time the government did not oppose construction of an access road (5 interviews). ENGOs and indigenous organisations fiercely opposed to these plans. The GAT opposed to the construction of an access road, not to oil extraction.

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

All five respondents, underwrite the importance of *Scientists concerned for Yasuní*: an initiative by Finding Species and Save America's Forests, two American ENGOs. They created a unsolicited Technical Advisory Report that consisted of scientific research of 59 well-known researchers on the biodiversity of Yasuní. The words that framed the complete Yasuní-issue was uttered here first: "Yasuní has the highest known biodiversity of the planet". All 5 respondents noticed a change in the governmental approach: from oil-production with an access road to a more environmental approach. Also people from within the government and opponents of the SCY underwrite their significance for framing Yasuní as one of the most biodiverse places on the planet and defining the direct and indirect consequences of roads as its biggest threat. This strengthened the GAT's and ENGOs' claim to stop the construction of roads. Again the change from the Gutiérrez presidency to Palacio's did also make a large difference, Palacio was more eco-oriented and under his presidency Petrobras was suddenly expected to present greener plans.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The ENGO induced the SCY frame into the entire discussion and also later discussions about oil exploitation in Yasuní (5 interviews). This putted the creation of an access road and oil-production in a completely different light. However other actions by a variety of ENGOs made the Ecuadorian people aware of the problems in block 31 (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009). The latter might be less obvious but it also activated another group of people that might have made the difference in a later stadium: civil activists, civil servants and ordinary citizens. 1 respondent also emphasized the importance of large actions of the ENGO-indigenous coalition, this made people aware of the risks for the people living in Yasuní and the environment.

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, ENGOs did influence the issue framing of block 31, especially in the role of SCY and activist ENGOs.

4.6.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Block 31

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

Three respondents claimed that the SCY played a key role, however one stated that the actions by other ENGOs did catch the eye earlier. It was also stated that the issue came to the attention of the community when Petrobras applied for the environmental license. This was also the first time national newspapers wrote about it. However it became a major topic on an international scale when Finding Species and Save America's Forests joined the campaign and sponsored the study of the SCY. This led to a storm of national and international media attention, and also reached many people from within the government. So the scale was determined by the SCY while it might not have been the first moment for Ecuadorians to hear about block 31. The attention generated

by the SCY was later used by other ENGOs and civil society organisations to find a large audience and impact during their actions.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The most important is the construction of an oil road and the EIS placed on the agenda by Petrobras and the alternative: extraction without roads was placed on the agenda by the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

ENGOs tried to influence decision-making by starting lawsuits at different times, lobbying, supplying scientific research and actions to influence the public opinion and the government. They also joined a large number of meetings (Finer et al., 2009; 7 interviews). Later when the inexperienced Alban became minister of environment ENGOs introduced her to the topic, framing her mind-set against oil extraction, Petrobras etc. (1 interview).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

Yes, indirectly through the GAT and also directly with a lot of interaction between the government and ENGOs.

4.6.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Block 31

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government and Petrobras wanted to extract the oil. The GAT allowed extraction but opposed to the idea of an access road. ENGOs generally opposed both (interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

A respondent involved in the first negotiation phase gave the following reconstruction: “When Petrobras announced in a meeting with the president of the National Park that the construction of the access road already had been started the latter informed the government. A series of discussions and meetings started, consisting of Petrobras, government representatives and the GAT. The first demand of the GAT was no access roads within the National Park. The oil pipe could be constructed with reduced impact. The government acted weak and did not have strict demands on how things should be executed.”

The government made a radical change when president Gutierrez was replaced by Palacio. They became greener and stricter. ENGOs did not change their position much; at times they became more or less active. This was called opportunism by the GAT blaming ENGOs for only taking interest in Yasuní when things were going wrong and taking all credits. This demonstrates a growing tension within the GAT between ENGOs, universities and governmental bodies and a tension between groups inside and outside the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. All these played a role, the sheer number of actions might have influenced the general opinion, the official governmental opinion and the opinion of individual decision-makers, as is pointed out in the reconstruction option 3. 1 respondent from a ENGO explained that a large action about block 16 created a coalition between ENGOs and indigenous people, these groups started an even larger protest to protect block 31, this coalition wanted to stop the oil-extraction altogether. The actions were based on the fact that in Brazil it is illegal to drill for oil in protected areas. Petrobras, owned for 50% by the Brazilian state, was using double standards.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

Yes, ENGOs did not only raise the issue and frame the topic in an environmental way, but also pointed out a lot of things to the government; their lobby and negotiation seemed effective. The strongest example is that Alban was introduced to the topic by ENGOs

4.6.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues Block 31

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (5 interviews). Although the GAT consisted partly of ENGOs, this only applied to earlier negotiations.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs in the negotiations was never discussed and therefore not formalised either.

4.6.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues of Block 31

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

It very much does, no oil has been exploited, no road entered Yasuní, Petrobras returned block 31 to the state, oil exploitation without access roads became the standard option for the government. It looks like an outright success story, yet in the near future Petroamazonas might start the exploitation, block 31 is not officially protected from oil companies.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. ENGOs were present in staggering numbers; over 50 national and international ENGOs joined the campaign. The most important actions might have been in the meeting rooms with ministers and high officials. There they could shape the discussion and supply the decision-makers with essential (scientific) information. 3 respondents also demonstrated that many things that were illegal or non-conform Petrobras' contract, this lead to governmental sanctions and actions. 3 respondents underline the role of ENGOs in supplying scientific data about the effects of oil roads. 2 mention the intensive media offense and the role of the SCY.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, the final result is in line with ENGOs' policy goals, and they played a substantial role in the negotiation process.

4.7 Counterfactual analysis in Block 31

What would have happened without ENGOs? 4 respondents answered that question and all of them said that the oil in block 31 would already have been exploited, using an oil access road. Having seen and processed all data and after reading many articles it still seems to be true. The role of ENGOs within and outside the GAT was so large that it changed the complete decision-making process; it almost became dominated by ENGOs. What would the government have done without knowing that Yasuní was one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, and without the attention it created? Probably business as usual: let the oil get exploited and demand a percentage of the revenues. ENGOs were the one to point out all Petrobras' unconformities, and without that information the IEA would be approved easily. On all key moments the role of ENGOs was substantial, and throughout the process they were functioning as a watchdog.

Many people tried to explain what happened at times, but with incomplete data they could not trace the complete process, and luck seems to play a large role. However what seemed miracles for many people, e.g. the returning of block 31 by Petrobras or the suspension of the license, was the uncoordinated work of ENGOs and other civil society organisations. Their influence on

individual decision-makers, such as minister Alban or the civil servant responsible for the license in Rio Coca, seems to be large. Not only direct but also indirect influence played a role. The discussion was held on the terms set by ENGOs. Thus without ENGOs the discussion would not have been broader than an effective way to extract oil, and that is what would have been happened. The exploitation of two wells in block 31 connected by a road.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on all the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators.

4.8 Process tracing of Yasuní ITT

This chapter does not aim at describing the technical details of the proposal, sufficient articles have been written about it, many of them almost identical (Sevilla, 2010; Larrea, 2010; Acosta et al., 2009; Martinez, 2010; Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer et al., 2008; Friedman Rudovsky, 2007; Rival, 2010).

In the literature concerning Yasuní-ITT some attention has been given to the first stage of the Initiative, how the idea to protect Yasuní's Biodiversity from oil extraction became a viable proposal (Acosta, 2010). However the decision-making process has not been discussed. This will be the first attempt to reconstruct the decision-making process from an idea of many up to the situation of Yasuní ITT at this moment.

The following is from a personal interview with Alberto Acosta, the minister of energy and mines that presented the ITT Initiative to the Ecuadorian president and the Ecuadorian house-of-representatives, also used is Acosta's 2010 article about the *prologue* of the initiative.

According to Acción Ecológica the ITT has three histories, they will be mentioned throughout this chapter, demonstrating a new phase has started.

4.8.1 Part 1 of the History of ITT

The idea, the basis of the ITT Initiative has been slowly constructed over many years by civil society. This idea presented in January 2007 to the Ecuadorian government is a child of many fathers. It is certain that the basis of this idea lies in the old idea of suspending oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazon. At one point, at one time, one person had been completely filled with indignation and shouted, "Stop the exploitation!" This resistance settled in the minds of many Amazonian communities. Their arguments were clear, oil exploitation was affecting the nature and environment they were living in. Their health suffered under the pollution and oil companies were one of the main contributors to the construction of the Amazon. The image of evil of these groups was Texaco, one of the world's main oil companies, nowadays a part of Chevron. Texaco worked between 1964 and 1990 in the Ecuadorian Amazon, in this time-span in constructed 339 oil wells in 430.000 hectares to extract around one and a half billion barrels of crude oil. This led to the pollution of billions of barrels of water (Acosta, 2010; Crude the movie, 2009; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). While it is impossible to put a price on life and nature, it seems clear that Texaco's activities destructed millions worth of life, water and nature through contamination of water, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and death of animals. The health of people in this area also suffered severely: 31 percent of the people close to oil extraction activity suffer from cancer, compared to a 12.3 percent national average. This adds up to 27 billion dollar, the amount demanded from Texaco by the Ecuadorian and especially Amazonian people (Acosta, 2010).

This all does not even include the social consequences like: sexual violence from oil workers, spontaneous abortions, discrimination and racism, forced replacements, destructive influences only local culture and languages and on the social cohesion. It even led to the extermination of

the local tribes the “Tetes” and the “Sansahuaris”. To eliminate all these problems in the future an oil moratorium has been proposed for all hydrocarbon activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This is the prerequisite history that is needed to understand the ITT Initiative (Acosta, 2010; 2 interviews), and that it is the idea of many. Now the real birth of the initiative will be reconstructed.

In 2000 *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (post-petroleum Ecuador, an alternative development plan) was published, three years later it was presented to the minister of environment by three Ecuadorian NGOs: Pachamama, CDES (Centro de Derechos Economico y Sociales) and Acción Ecológica. At the same time the indigenous community of Sarayaku started a lawsuit against the Argentinean oil company CGC in the IACHR. This resulted in a proposal of not exploiting Yasuní’s oil, led by the NGO Oilwatch (Acosta, 2010; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). At this time many NGOs thought that there was too much focus on block 31 and too little on ITT, therefore a campaign was started led by Acción Ecológica.

This idea of an oil moratorium was incorporated in the election campaign of *Movimiento País*, nowadays *Alianza Pais* the political party led by, now president, Rafael Correa. Their governmental plans 2007-2011 want “*declare a minimum of 40% of the national territory protected area to conserve the biodiversity and heritage of Ecuador*”. They also wanted to incorporate Ecuador’s nature and environment in economic and productive politics. This is not simply suspending oil exploitation. It aimed at optimizing the existing oil posts instead of maximizing the sheer number of oil posts. These plans also imply an oil moratorium for the south and middle of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Although the Yasuní ITT is an idea of many, if it had parents these would have been Esperanza Martinez, president of the NGO Acción Ecológica and Alberto Acosta, former minister of mining and energy and former president of the constitutional assembly (5 interviews). Acosta always had a lot of contact with Acción Ecológica, and his wife worked there at the time. In this group the idea existed to keep oil under ground and maybe already especially about block ITT. Acosta had already written several books about this issue, and when he became minister he had an opening to introduce this idea. The discussion to keep the oil underground has been led by NGOs.

In September 2009 an official document called “Yasuní-ITT Initiative: A big idea from a small country” edited by the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of environment was presented. This documents aims at preserving 38 percent of Ecuador’s territory. It is important to remember that the most relevant details of this document had been formulated long before Correa became president (3 interviews; Acosta, 2010).

Already in December 2006, Martinez gave the following guidelines to the future minister of energy and mines Acosta, from Acosta and Martinez (2010 p. 18):

- 1 *Declare the moratorium as policy aimed at protecting and conserving collective rights*
- 2 *Present internationally a proposal as an effort of Ecuador to meet three global goals: the reduction of greenhouse gasses, the conservation of biodiversity and security of indigenous people*
- 3 *Construct a commission, together with the ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs that makes an global assessment of Yasuní National Park and its population and identify the problems. Formulate necessary actions for local people, secure that they are covered by the state and not by multinationals.*
- 4 *Create an international agenda to present the proposal with as a goal that it becomes recognized as beneficent on an international level, translate this to an economic compensation that enables Ecuador to execute the initiative.*
- 5 *Analyse distinct economic options: selling crude in the soil, carbon compensation, and cancellation of external hesitation.*
- 6 *Inaugurate a sub secretary of Clean Energy, Decentralization and Low Impact, as a signal to the transition to a new petroleum model...*

These are very specific objectives, seeking to protect the life of uncontacted indigenous tribes, the protection of one of the most biodiverse zones of the planet and to avoid the emission of 410 million tons of CO₂.

4.8.2 Part 2 of the History of ITT

The second phase started when more data was collected to create a better proposal. A lot of information was based on the research done to prevent the oil access road in block 31. In this phase the Ecuadorian state became the main actor, instead of civil society and ENGOs.

In April 2007 Rafael Correa stated that although previous administrations had begun to elaborate plans to extract the oil in ITT, the first option would be to keep the oil underground in exchange for international compensation (Finer et al., 2009).

This led to the presentation of the ITT Initiative by Acosta to the Ecuadorian government on June 5, 2007 and later of the presentation to the world by President Correa. The ITT Initiative consisted of two options at the time: A- keep the oil underground by using the ITT Initiative and B- exploiting the oil using a multinational alliance. On November 20, the oil lobby convinced the president to exclude oil reserve Tiputini from the ITT project. At the same time Correa was received full of enthusiasm at the OPEC and UN top meetings, so the role of the president was already ambiguous. The initiative also knew a large number of ups and downs during that first year, at times convinced by their right, at times full of doubt (interview; Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009). The first idea was to incorporate the value of Yasuní's environmental services, the ENGO *Earth Economics* joined in November 2007 and calculated the value of the environmental services in the entire Biosphere Reserve. The value of these services exceeded the value of oil at least two times. However no funds can be found for the funding of environmental services (interview).

The project was consolidated with the formation of a new commission on 29 July 2008 headed by ex-mayor of Quito Roque Sevilla and included some (former) ENGO members like Yolanda Kakabadse, founder of the ENGOs *Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano* and *Fundación Natura*; and Natalia Greene from the ENGO *Pachamama* (Yasuní ITT Initiative).

The goal of this commission was to create a concrete proposal to keep the oil underground in ITT, this was partly funded by *La cooperación técnica Española* and the GTZ (the Spanish and German International Cooperation). This group gave the proposal time and space to crystallize. At this point the idea of an international trust fund supervised by the United Nations was first raised. The focus on environmental services was replaced by a compensation of \$350 million per year for 10 years, based on gaining half of the income it would gain through exploitation, based on the oil price of mid-2007. In late 2008 the strategy was based on carbon markets. Ecuador proposed the creation of "Yasuní Guarantee Certificates" (YGC) for the CO₂ locked in ITT. These YGCs could be sold to compensate non-emitted CO₂. The money would go into a trust fund and the interest of these funds would be used to fund sustainable development (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009).

Two of the most important articles on which the final ITT Initiative was built are the one from Acosta, Gudynas, Martinez and Vogel (2009): *leaving the oil under ground or the search for a lost paradise: elements for an economic and political proposal for the Initiative for not exploiting the crude of IT*, and Larrea and Warnars (2009) *Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Avoiding emissions by keeping petroleum underground*.

4.8.3 Part 3 of the History of ITT

The third phase starts when the government adapts the original proposal and introduces Plan B, extracting ITT's oil as a viable option. At this time the role of ENGOs also changes fundamentally: instead of seeing the government as a partner they see them as opponents. The international community does not believe that Ecuador still aims at keeping the crude in the subsoil. The setup of plan A is complicated, so complicated even that people within the government do not fully comprehend how it functions (interviews). Since 3 February, 2010 it is organized in the following way. Plan A is led by the ministry of environment and works in 3 groups. First: the political

committee, including ministers from involved ministries. Second: the technical committee, technical advisors and specialists, including the technical director Carlos Larrea. And third: the negotiation committee, negotiators and public relation specialists aiming at fundraising (3 interviews). Plan B is organized more effectively, it is run by the state-owned oil companies and aims at investigating how the oil should be exploited (interview).

The role of president Correa is crucial in this, although he became president with the campaign aiming at preserving Yasuní, he does not appear to fully support the ITT Initiative. One day he claims he created the ITT Initiative himself, and taking all credits in big international meetings, while the next he declares on state television that he wants to extract ITT's oil. Correa also cut out all ENGOs from the negotiation process, while they were main actors in the earliest stage, and important advisors later in the process (2 interviews).

The following critique from ENGOs has been uttered on the changed plans. The first initiative aimed at preserving the culture of indigenous groups, a focus lost in the newer proposals. Secondly the original initiative aims at a non-extractive economy, in the newer plans mining is an alternative for hydrocarbon activities. Finally plan B is introduced and developed at the same time as the "keeping the oil underground option" (2 interviews).

People that were involved from the beginning or an early stage only utter critique about this stage. Acosta resigned from all official jobs, as did Falconí. The ENGO of Martinez is chased by the police, and smeared by the government, which tries to make it illegal. Yolanda Kakabadse, now president of WWF international, talks about the smokescreen of the Yasuní ITT Initiative: the extraction of oil in the Amazon always had been the unofficial goal (Hoy 2 March 2011).

At this point, also the international community that needed to fund the ITT Initiative seems to lose confidence. As a first question: it is hard to explain why oil extraction in ITT should be forbidden while it can be done in block 31 and block Armadillo, as the current plan proposes. In both blocks the biodiversity is similar and uncontacted indigenous people also live there. And shouldn't Yasuní be protected sufficiently being a UNESCO site and a National Park? Secondly international actors begin to see that the president does not want to keep the oil underground and that opponents of the ITT Initiative are gaining strength. Many people in favour of the ITT Initiative have been removed from official positions. Germany, the first country to commit, willing to donate \$50 million a year, retreated from the project, not trusting Ecuador's commitment for keeping the oil underground indefinitely. This is a bad signal to all other potential donors and makes it harder to convince them to contribute, if even the self-declared leader on climate change does not want to contribute, why would other countries take the risk? (Schalatek, 2010)

4.9 Results on ENGO influence on Yasuní ITT

The information for this chapter consists of 10 interviews that gave substantial information about Yasuní ITT, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.9.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Yasuní ITT

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

7 respondents pointed out that ENGOs and indigenous groups aimed at a moratorium for Yasuní. 3 did not mention the initial point of view of ENGOs. All 10 respondents state that the government and oil companies wanted to extract the oil from block ITT in the near future. One respondent gave the following overview: "it started with Plan Verde, a plan for an alternative economy: joint initiative of ENGOs, indigenous argue for an oil stop for more than 20 years. Thus, first there was an idea of alternative non-oil economy with human rights, more development and biodiversity conservation. Later this crystallized as Yasuní-ITT"

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

With Alberto Acosta as minister of energy and mines, the possibility to keep the oil underground and get financial compensation to do this became the official framing of oil exploitation in Yasuní.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

Alberto Acosta was closely in touch with ENGOs and the idea of many, mentioned by Acosta, was largely influenced by ENGOs and their employees. It has been stated by multiple respondents that the ITT Initiative would not have been launched without ENGOs

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, the idea was largely created/influenced by multiple ENGOs and ENGO-related groups.

4.9.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Yasuní ITT

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

All respondents state that Alberto Acosta presented the ITT Initiative to the community, however the president did the international campaign and presented it to the United Nations. Since Acosta used the opening he had being the minister of energy and mines to present “this idea of many”, he is the one that presented the issue.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

Keeping the oil underground was placed on the agenda as a serious option for the ITT oil block. Another item that was mentioned was the alternative development model, one that does not depend on extractivism and is sustainable on a social, cultural and environmental level. Later in the process the president put the exploitation of ITT’s oil back on the agenda by developing plan B at the same time.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

Especially in early stages, ENGOs and people from ENGOs joined meetings. This allowed them to shape the agenda at times, however 3 respondents pointed out that they could not change much about the agenda and 2 respondents pointed out that they could not change anything at all. From early on, since the presentation of the Initiative to the House of Representatives and the President the agenda has been controlled by the government.

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, or at least ENGO influence on the agenda setting seems to be marginal. Only some influential people with ENGO and governmental ties were able to shape the agenda to some extent.

4.9.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Yasuní ITT

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government is without doubt the key actor in this negotiation, before Correa became president Ecuador wanted to extract the oil in block ITT. At the start of the negotiations discussed in this thesis the government’s official position to try to keep the oil underground. ENGOs supported this idea, and oil companies opposed.

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

Also in this negotiation, the government did change their opinion during the negotiation, a difference is however that this time these changes were not induced by a change in administration. The pro-oil voices within the government led by Correa gained power while those in favour of keeping the oil underground resigned from official positions. ENGOs and the oil companies did not change their positions.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

Half of the respondents (5) stated that ENGOs were not involved, and another 4 said that they wanted to join but were excluded by the government; this is not true, however it demonstrates the marginal role played by ENGOs. The later in the process the smaller the role of ENGOs was, until at this time they do not even play a role anymore. The ITT Initiative is now completely controlled by the government. Some respondents talk about hijacking plans from civil society and by that paralyzing the green and left opposition. They state that this is the official policy towards civil society by this administration.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did not have enough power or influence to change the position of key actors, even the “idea of many” had to be presented by someone from within the government, only he could change other governmental actors.

4.9.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning Yasuní ITT

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed, however people from ENGOs did get official jobs but not because they were from ENGOs, only because they knew the right people (3 interviews).

4.9.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning Yasuní ITT

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The newer the official documents are the less it reflects the opinion of ENGOs. Even more important the probability that the ITT Initiative will be executed seems smaller every day. However the respondents from ENGO still hope the Initiative will be put into practise.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Only some people from ENGOs to write the first version, and were not able influence the position of the government. The scientific basis of these discussion however has been laid by ENGOs, therefore the influence of ENGOs on the proposal is rather substantial. ENGO influence on the chances the ITT Initiative will be executed is close to zero.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, however ENGOs do not have influence on the chances of success of the ITT Initiative, they did contribute to the basis and official text of the ITT Initiative. Although their role was not formal and they were not officially included, some influential people from ENGOs: Kakabadse, Greene, Martinez could influence the final text of the Initiative.

4.10 Counterfactual analysis of Yasuní ITT

What would have happened if no ENGOs were involved in the decision-making process? It is the question if an idea like the ITT Initiative would have crystalized without ENGOs. Indigenous movements might have taken over the role but it would have looked different then. The role of ENGOs in the discussion prior to the negotiations was crucial, although an “idea of many”; many of those “many” came from ENGOs. It is demonstrated that before Alberto Acosta became minister he was already influenced by Martinez, the director of Acción Ecológica. If this would not have happened he might have acted the same, however it demonstrates how interwoven ENGOs

were in this stage. It is the question if anything might have started without the preparing role of ENGOs.

Later in the process the role of ENGOs becomes less powerful. The commission that wrote the final text of the initiative that was presented September 22 2009 also consisted of people from ENGOs or with strong ties to ENGOs, without these people the initiative might have looked a lot less like the initial idea. ENGOs admit that they already lost grip on the process at that time, which indicates that it would not have gone different without ENGOs. In the last phase the role of ENGOs was marginal or even non-existing, this reduces the need for a counterfactual analysis of this phase.

It can be concluded that the initial phase without ENGOs would have been completely different, and since the first phase is often one of the most important: without an start there is not anything; it can be concluded that without ENGOs no ITT Initiative would ever have been presented.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on one of the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators. However it is not felt by many people involved, ENGOs seem to have played a role of high influence. This is based on the entire process and does not reflect the current role of ENGOs, which seems to be marginal.

4.11 Results on the explanatory factors of ENGO influence

In this chapter the results from the second research question will be presented. This consists of the data derived during the 18 interviews with people from ENGOs, the government and specialists. All interviewees were asked whether they could think of factors that could explain the political influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process in Yasuní. They were also asked what factors could explain the lack of ENGO-influence. These restricting factors are needed in order to give a complete picture of the decision-making process; using only enabling factors will not give a true image of what happened. The results on these two questions will be presented in the section hereunder. All respondents could give as many answers as they liked, therefore the number of factors will not add up to 18.

This discussion aims at answering the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” Here the results from the interviews are combined with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008) and the judgement of the researcher.

Table 5 and table 6 underneath show the results from the respondents, including the general explanation. These are the pure results. However, this chapter will go one step deeper and try to analyse what enabling and restricting factors played a large role in ENGO influence in Yasuní. The number of times a factor has been mentioned does not necessarily represent its importance, it is merely an indicator. This chapter will use these results as a tool to explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. The analysis of these factors starts with the enabling factors, presented hereunder in table 5.

Table 5: Explanatory factors of ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Individual actions	4	Individual actions of ENGO-employee made a difference
2	Contextual factors	3	Mentioned: media and public opinion
	Coincidence	3	Mentioned: miracle, coincidence, luck
	Access to negotiations	3	Easy to join negotiations
	Personal network	3	Through the personal network of ENGO-employees influence was exercised
	Scientific research	3	A lot of research done by ENGOs, so the discussion is based on their information
7	Institutional network	2	Through the network of the ENGO influence was exercised
	Stage of negotiations	2	Joined early and therefore a larger influence
	Watchdog	2	Controlling the government and taking actions when things do not go well
10	Alliances with key governmental bodies	1	An alliance with a governmental player makes it easier to influence governmental decisions
	Confidence between actors	1	NGOs that trusted each other worked together and could enlarge their influence
	In touch with grassroots movements	1	Knows what happens within Yasuní and good contact with indigenous people
	Lot of knowledge and experience	1	Most experience within this field by some ENGOs
	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as good coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Scale of operation	1	More influence on a detailed level
	Well-known ENGO	1	When needed people could find the ENGO

The most important enabling factors that explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní will be discussed.

Most often mentioned and of a rather high importance are *individual actions*. However, most mentioned does not mean these are most important, it only indicates that the individual actions are highly visible. Margot Bass and Matt Finer for example started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní together as a personal initiative. Events like these are highly visible and are of importance. Nevertheless they could only have success when other people or institutions were also working on the same topic. Rather remarkable is that the people that did those individual actions or were involved in individual actions often mentioned *coincidence* as a large explaining factor, often unaware of actions or activities undertaken by others. Instead, a person that had a good overview of the negotiations in Yasuní only mentioned *coincidence* once; he explained that the success of ENGOs depended on so many factors that some luck was necessary to achieve its goals. He explained that the right political climate is needed, the right influential people on the right jobs, a network reaching into the government, some help from the public opinion and the media, enough financial resources at that time. When all these things came together one might call it *luck* or *coincidence* he said. That is true: **many different variables together explain the change of success of ENGOs.**

It is rather easy for ENGOs in Ecuador to join negotiations, *access to negotiations* are therefore an important factor. This is called *rules of access* in Betsill and Corell (2008). They state that ENGO influence is enhanced when ENGO participation is facilitated. This is what happened in Yasuní too. ENGOs could join official meetings of several ministers easily. Even some international actors could join official meetings on a tourist visa, while they were on holiday (interview). Nonetheless

it becomes more difficult every year for ENGOs to join these meetings. The government becomes more and more closed. **The easy access of ENGOs to negotiations enhanced their influence.**

Almost certainly the most important factor to explain ENGO influence is the personal network of ENGO-employees. As can be seen in the negotiations concerning block 31 and Yasuní ITT, the connections of people from ENGOs played a decisive role. According to an Ecuadorian political analyst, this is because Ecuador is ruled by an elite (Natalia Greene, interview). Everyone from this elite knows everybody else. With the Rafael Correa's new government many people from ENGOs and universities were able to join this elite. People from ENGOs became minister, high civil servant, or member of the House of Representatives or the constitutional assembly. With these people in place it became easier to invite other people from ENGOs to join the decision-making process. These people on key positions enabled ENGOs to influence the government from within and to join more closed meetings. This also comes back in two other factors: *alliances with key governmental bodies* and *the institutional network*. This easy-access has been restricted in recent years since the president thought the influence of the civil society groups were too large. **The personal network of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence.**

One of the most influential activities undertaken by ENGOs is *scientific research*, the negotiations of block 31 and Yasuní ITT are built on a fundament of scientific research done by different ENGOs. The recommendations and conclusions from these reports can be found in official government texts like the results from the SCY in the official text for Yasuní ITT. **Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation to the negotiation.** This is also underlined by another mentioned factor: *knowledge and experience of ENGOs*.

The *stage of negotiations* could also explain ENGO influence, especially on Yasuní ITT. ENGOs were active and influential in a very early stage. Although their influence diminished during the negotiations they already had so much influence in the beginning, the final document still represents much of their position. **When ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher.**

The final important enabling factor is being a *watchdog*. Several ENGOs are continuously controlling governmental functioning, when decisions are taken opposing ENGOs' policy goals actions are taken. Some respondents call this opportunism but it looks like it works pretty well, however it is also important that other groups work all the time, not only when action is needed. **Acting as a watchdog is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions.**

Other mentioned factors do not seem to have played a large role in Yasuní. *Being in touch with grassroots movements*, *Confidence between actors*, *ENGO-coordination*, *Being a well-known ENGO* do not appear to have played a decisive role. *ENGO-coordination* in fact, is also mentioned as a restricting factor.

Restricting factors are also of importance explaining the political influence of ENGOs. In the case of Yasuní the following factors respondents mentioned the following factors, including a brief explanation (table 6).

Table 6: Restricting factors for ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Economic stakes	4	The economic stakes are high in Yasuní, this makes it hard to influence governmental decisions
2	Political stakes	3	The political stakes are high in Yasuní making it hard to influence decisions
3	Financial capabilities	2	Both mentioned as a lack of funds
4	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as a lack of coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Bad atmosphere between ENGOs and government	1	This restricted the influence of ENGOs
	Lack of continuity within ENGOs	1	A restricting factor

The most often mentioned factor: *economic stakes* also seems to be the most important. The economic stakes in Yasuní are high. Ecuador is a poor country and needs income from oil to fund education, healthcare and energy. With already 20 percent of the oil reserves in ITT the economic stakes are enormous. The political stakes in the case of Yasuní do not differ much from the economic stakes because the political stakes are in essence also economic: the money is needed by the government, raising the political stakes. Betsill and Corell also state that ENGO influence is constrained where economic interests are at stake. **The economic stakes in Yasuní are high; this restricts ENGO influence.** At the same time the influence of the oil-lobby is enhanced by these high economic stakes. This is scientifically underwritten by Betsill and Corell (2008).

In comparison to the government and oil companies, ENGOs have little *financial capabilities*. This lack of funds also restricts the functioning of ENGOs in Yasuní. **The small financial capabilities of ENGOs, compared to those of the government and oil companies, restrict the influence of ENGOs.**

The lack of *ENGO-coordination* also seems to restrict ENGO influence. Although Betsill and Corell state that it has a neutral effect it seems to restrict ENGO influence a bit, with coordinated actions more impact could be achieved. In the case of the ZI several groups of ENGOs demanded different things, making a diffuse sound and creating a competition of ENGOs for governmental attention. Although also mentioned as an enabling factor **ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor.**

This bad coordination has its basis in the *lack of continuity within ENGOs*, another mentioned factor. With new people aboard ENGOs every few months no strong alliance between ENGOs could be build. Because many people changed jobs very often not a lot of experience could be gained in a specific topic, this also restricted ENGO influence. **The lack of continuity within ENGOs led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs.**

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. It became harder to join meetings and ENGOs have less access to key governmental actors.

Hereunder the explanatory factors will be analysed for all three cases separately. The difference in the three cases lies in the enabling factors, the restricting factors seem to be the same among the three cases, these say more about Yasuní as a political arena than over the cases separately. Therefore the following three sections focus on the enabling factors.

Not all enabling and restricting factors are of the same importance for all three cases. In the case of the Zona Intangible one seems to be the single most important: **acting as a watchdog.** Without ENGOs participating in the negotiations the creation of the final boundaries of the Z I might have

gotten off the agenda resulting in a Zona Intangible without boundaries. This would have made it impossible to protect this area from loggers and even worse, oil exploitation.

For the decision-making process concerning block 31 other factors have been important. The **individual actions** mentioned above mostly concerned block 31. Margot Bass and Matt Finer that started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní initiative. Their effort made a large difference on the negotiations. It included many more actors, the issue was reframed: from normal oil production to the destruction of a natural area with an unique biodiversity. **The personal network of some ENGO employees was also of major importance**, several ENGO employees knew people within the government, this made it easier to access negotiations. This **access to the negotiation** enabled ENGOs to execute a lot of influence: all different groups of people could join formal meetings with the GAT and the minister of environment, especially when Alban became minister. ENGOs introduced her to the problems from an ENGO perspective, making a powerful ally of her. Finally **a lot of scientific research was executed** to investigate the influence of oil extraction and the construction of roads on biodiversity and the indigenous people of this region. Later this knowledge was used in the discussion of Yasuní ITT and the Zona Intangible (see 5.1).

For the Yasuní ITT initiative two factors enabled the large influence of ENGOs. First the **stage of negotiations** at which ENGOs joined. ENGOs were part of the group that created the initial idea. Later several ENGO employees were part of the ITT committee, enabling ENGOs to project their ideals and policy goals on this official governmental document. All **this was possible due to the personal network of some key actors** like Esperanza Martinez, Alberto Acosta and Yolanda Kakabadse.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results will be analysed using the literature presented in the theoretical framework. Also the contribution of this thesis to the literature will be discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The three different cases cannot be seen completely separated from each other. As can be seen in the timeline in figure 5, the three cases have a lot of overlap in both time and actors. Also the same contextual factors influence the three different negotiations, often in a similar manner. With a greener president ENGOs gain influence, with a less eco-oriented president they lose power. New laws, for example, also apply to all three cases. This however is already recognized in the theoretical model in figure 4, whereas the influence between the cases has not been studied yet. In this chapter the interdependence and influence of the different cases will be discussed.

The Zona Intangible did influence the other cases; first it set an example for conservation in the region. Secondly, it placed an important oil well in block 31 off limits, Imuya. Since then people no longer talk about block ITTI but about ITT.

From ENGO's perspective the central case in Yasuní is block 31. The start of these negotiations started the active role of ENGOs in Yasuní, where previous decision-making (for the ZI) took place without ENGOs. **While ENGOs tried to frame the issue of block 31, they actually framed the larger issue of oil production in Yasuní.** The SCY wanted to preserve block 31, and did research in Yasuní to use the results as lobby material. The outcomes of their research, "Yasuní has an unique biodiversity and its greatest threat are roads" are still quoted. These results were even used for official government policy for the Zona Intangible and Yasuní ITT. One can state that **the scientific research done for block 31 is the backbone of Ecuador's policy concerning Yasuní.** The success of ENGOs on block 31 positively influenced the chances of conservation for the ZI and ITT. Only after the successes in block 31 the final boundaries of the ZI were finally drawn. The battle of block 31 made ENGOs the most experienced actors in Yasuní. With the new governments of Palacio and Correa they could gain influence because they knew how things worked, and the history of the negotiation was also know to them.

Another remarkable similarity between the three cases are the actors, not only on an organizational level, but specially on a personal level. Some key actors come back in all three negotiations. They could even have a different role in all three negotiations.

At one time some people thought that block 31 got too much attention, at that time ITT became more important in the negotiations. In January 2007 the focus changed from block 31 to Yasuní ITT. **The interdependence of block 31 and Yasuní ITT is very large.** They are destined to the same future, either oil extraction or conservation. Basically what will happen to block ITT will happen to block 31. When the ITT initiative will be executed the extraction of oil in 31 would no longer be profitable. When ITT will be extracted the oil from block 31 will be used to mix 31's lighter oil with the heavy crude from ITT.

Since Petrobras returned block 31 to the state and the official document of Yasuní ITT is published the influence of ENGOs diminished. The Correa administration excluded ENGOs from the decision-making process and eco-oriented ministers and advisers were replaced. What this will mean for the future is still unknown.

The three dimensions of power from Lukes (1974) can also be found in the case of Yasuní. The first dimension is most seen in Yasuní: the openly executed influence between actors. The government is the central player in this dimension, it states what other actors should do and what decisions will be taken. The second dimension can also be found, many decisions are not taken, the final boundaries of the ZI took eight years; eight years in which no decision has been taken

because those boundaries were not in line with the policy preferences of the government and oil companies. The same can be said for Yasuní ITT, it has not yet been started because there is a covert conflict within the government and between all actors. Some do not want to keep the oil underground: no decision on the activation of Yasuní ITT is in line with their policy preferences. The third dimension of power is hardest to observe; however, in the Yasuní case, the “real” interests are overt. The separation of the actors in two groups have been made earlier in this thesis, groups that want to extract the oil and the groups that want to keep the oil under ground. Later a third group was added that wants to extract the oil with minimum social and environmental impact. This separation reflects the “real” interests of the actors. The extraction of Yasuní’s oil has long been a latent conflict, however in the investigated period it was clearly overt. Before 1999 many conflicts have been latent, but since block 31 everything happens more openly. Except for the conflicts within the Correa administration: these best represent the third dimension of power in this thesis.

Some political scientists in Ecuador, for example Natalia Greene (interview), recognize the existence of an elite that rules Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a small group of people in which everybody knows each other; these people rule the country, or rule a theme like nature conservation. This implies that the ideas from Wright Mills (1956) are still applicable for Ecuador. In this thesis special attention has been given to ask open questions to verify if in Ecuador the pluralist theory, the elitist theory or a hybrid is most relevant. Therefore neither the elitist question “who rules?” is asked nor “does anyone have power?” like a pluralist would ask.

The choice for a political arena has been a good choice for this thesis, although the situation sometimes resembles a policy network. However the central player is most certainly the Ecuadorian government, therefore there is as strict hierarchy of actors. For Yasuní it is as follows: on top are the governmental players, underneath international players like UNDP or UNESCO, followed by powerful groups and businesses, ranging from oil companies to powerful indigenous organizations, ending with NGOs. Another hint that it is not a policy network is the fact that the public and private players are not mutually dependent, in fact the government can do what it wants. At times this provokes an intense reaction by other players, but it does not mean that the policy will be changed.

Whereas Arts (2008) solely focuses on intentional influence, this thesis also underlines the importance of the unintentional influence of ENGOs. Some ENGOs, especially those with a more radical view had a lot of unwanted unintentional influence on the negotiation. They radicalized, which made cooperation with some other actors impossible. This history has been repeated by several respondents and demonstrated the important role of Acción Ecológica. The discussion whether influence has to be intentional can be explained for Yasuní. Many groups try to influence the decision-making and the key actor: the government. This is done because these groups want to achieve their policy goals. However aiming at positive influence they might at times experience unexpected and unwanted side effects. For example in the discussion of the ZI the claims made by Acción Ecológica to make the entire Amazon a No-Go Zone for development almost ruined the chances to create the actual ZI. Therefore the importance of unintentional influence in this thesis is rather large.

The distinction made in governance literature between NGOs that work in partnerships and NGOs that focus more on action has also been found in this thesis. Van Huijstee (2010); Visseren-Hamakers (2009); and Humphreys (2006) have found a similar distinction. In Ecuador partnerships are still rare, especially in the Yasuní region. However a group of NGOs cooperates more with the government and others, whereas the second group solely consists of more radical NGOs. In time partnerships might be a part of the Ecuadorian NGO-landscape. The terms “collaborative” and “campaigning” NGO seem to suit the situation in Ecuador.

The results from this thesis can be linked to the outcomes of Betsill and Corell (2008). The latter found eight factors that can explain political influence of NGOs, and also a brief explanation of how these factors explain political influence. In this thesis a number of these factors are mentioned by respondents, six of these have also been listed by Betsill and Corell.

ENGO coordination had a neutral effect according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in this thesis however it was mentioned as a restricting factor. The lack of coordination was restricting the influence of ENGOs on the government according to the respondents. In Yasuní's case it seems to be a restricting factor rather than an factor with a neutral effect. Betsill and Corell (2008) did mention that all levels of ENGO influence were achieved under varying levels of ENGO coordination, in Yasuní the influence of ENGOs could have been higher if the actions of like-minded ENGOs were more synchronized.

Betsill and Corell state that ENGO influence is enhanced when active steps are taken to facilitate NGO participation. In Yasuní it was at times facilitated like in the Yasuní ITT committee, at times it was not facilitated but the participation of ENGOs was still high. While Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence does not decline, in Yasuní ENGO influence declined with more restrictive rules of access, particularly in the last 3 years.

Betsill and Corell (2008) underwrite the importance of joining the negotiations in an early phase, however this is often not enough to achieve influence in a later phase. The same can be seen in Yasuní, and especially in Yasuní ITT. ENGOs joined early but over time the policy less and less resembles the ENGOs' opinion.

The political and economic stakes are very high in Yasuní, this reduces influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), and that is true. The government and other players are less open to the ideas from ENGOs since so much money and power is at stake.

Alliances with key governmental bodies enhances influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in Ecuador this is done at times, although only mentioned by one respondent. This implies that it is not the most usual way to influence the government in Yasuní.

The last two factors from Betsill and Corell (2008), *institutional overlap* and *competition from other NGOs* have not been found in this thesis. However the competition from other NGOs might have played a role in the drawing of the ZI's final boundaries. Two groups of ENGOs had completely different goals, protecting the proposed area or protecting the entire Amazon. This battle between ENGOs did no good for the negotiation, but the goal of the larger group was reached: protecting the proposed area. Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence is not a zero-sum game and that competition between NGOs does not necessarily constrain NGO influence.

5.2 Contribution to the literature

This thesis investigated the decision-making process of the major issues in Yasuní: la Zona Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní ITT. This is one of the first investigations to combine these three major cases, and the first that analyses the decision-making process of these cases. Also the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has not been studied widely yet. Other than the works of Narvaez (2007) and Lara (2007) the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has only been touched superficially. This is the first complete overview of the last twelve years in Yasuní. The timeline created for this thesis is also a novelty. It is of importance that these cases finally have been linked formally since the negotiations influenced each other, although it was not yet recognized.

This thesis is also another verification of explanatory factors, Betsill and Corell (2008) do not mention the personal network of ENGO employees, while in Ecuador this is the single most important enabling factor for ENGO influence. This might be a valuable addition to the list of Betsill and Corell (2008). Many others (6 out of 8) have also been found in this thesis; underlining the quality of Betsill and Corell's (2008) list.

The use of Arts' (1998) model demonstrated that there is a large difference in the area of research between Arts' and this research. His methodology was not applicable to the situation in Ecuador where there is no strict boundary between ENGO-people and governmental or other employees. This behaviour of Ecuadorian decision-makers might not be typically Ecuadorian, this happens among many political players in environmental issues (Carter, 2008). The distinction between two types of NGOs, one more pragmatic the other more radical in its message has not only been found in this thesis but is a mayor area of investigation. Van Huijstee (2010) and Visseren-Hamakers (2008) have found the same outcome in their investigation. Humphreys (2006) also investigated this phenomenon in governance.

5.3 Discussion of the Model

The model used in this thesis was adapted from Arts (1998) before carrying out the research, and was a useful simplification of the reality. However further adaptations could be made to enlarge the explanatory power of the model; it makes the model more suited for Yasuní. To introduce this model, it is necessary to understand the background of the situation in Ecuador. Figure 6 below provides a schematic guide to reading the following section.

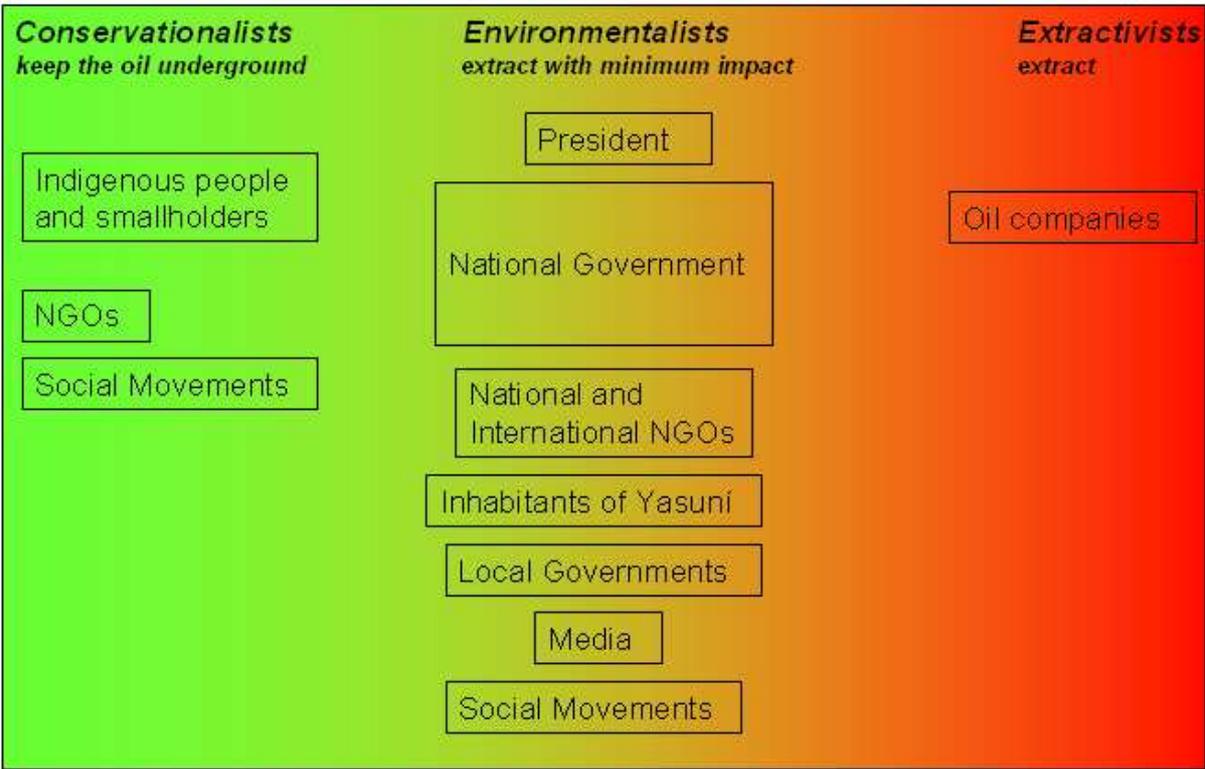


Figure 6: The major actors of this thesis

Three different groups can be categorized in Yasuní, those in favour of extracting Yasuní's oil, *extractivists*; those that want to keep the oil underground, *conservationalists* and those to want to extract the oil but with minimum impact: *environmentalists*. The *extractivists* consist, nowadays, solely of oil companies. The *conservationalists*, consist of some NGOs, some social movements and indigenous people and smallholders living in the Amazon. Here the distinction between NGOs and social movements is used since these behave differently. Social movements in Ecuador often represent an group of people, like the social movements of indigenous or women. If policy is designed that touches these people in a negative way, actions are taken whereas NGOs work with projects on specific themes. However this distinction not needed for the entire thesis, since for Yasuní these groups have similar goals. However, several people interviewed for this thesis worked both at NGOs and at social movements. The *environmentalists* are the most diverse

group. They consist of some inhabitants, governmental actors and NGOs that believe in oil extraction with minimum impact; some NGOs, social movements and governmental bodies that believe in a pragmatic approach, where minimum impact extraction is the best they can achieve; and actors that reached this consensus since they are internally divided: such as the national government, the media and the president. This is a rather strange claim, but it seems that the president of Ecuador swings back and forth between keeping the oil underground and extracting it. The National Government at this time consists of both pro-oil people and pro-conservation people.

This new knowledge can lead to a new model, still simple but with some nuance. While the basic structure remains the same, the grey scale from figure 6 are included to indicate the political opinion of these groups. The second difference is that NGOs are split in ENGOs and NGOs. The first group consists of campaigning NGOs the second of collaborative NGOs, this same distinction can be found in governance literature (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009). Separating these two groups of NGOs enlarges the explanatory power of this model without making it overly complicated. The main focus for this research would lie on the political influence of ENGOs instead of NGOs. The adapted model is showed hereunder in figure 7. A final change is that this model acknowledges that the government makes the final decisions, rather than participating in negotiations (arrow V, explained below).

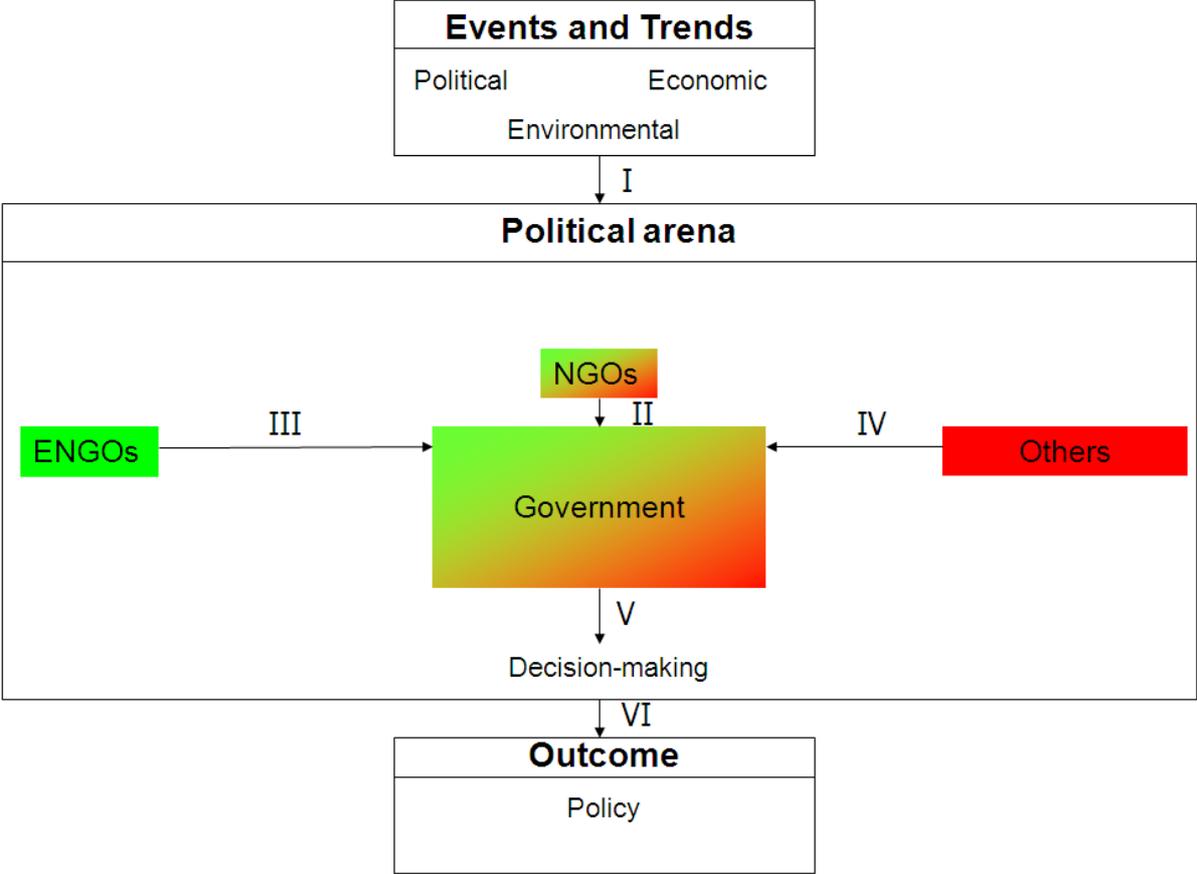


Figure 7: The adapted theoretical model

Arrow (I): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are all political, economic, environmental factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors may not be fixed, what is a constraint for one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis, etc.

Arrow (II): *political influence*. This is the political influence of *collaborative* NGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing.

Arrow (III): *political influence*. This is the political influence of (*campaigning*) ENGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing. This arrow is the main focus of the research. In the governance literature this group can also be called campaigning NGOs (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009)

Arrow (IV): *political influence*. This is the political influence of actors other than NGOs on the government (primarily oil companies, for a detailed list, see figure 6). It has to be stressed that arrows II, III and IV are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given its formal status and position. However governments do in reality influence other players and NGOs it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (V): *does*. The government is the most important actor in decision-making, but during the process it might be influenced.

Arrow (VI): *leads to*. The policy processes lead to policy.

In this model NGOs are able to impact policy outcomes in principle but they are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors.

5.4 Discussion of the Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction and the research methodology chapter, the first methodology selected was replaced by one more suitable for the specific situation in Yasuní. The first methodology was based on the assumption that respondents could be divided in three different groups: people from ENGOs, people from the government and other respondents. The first group could provide an EGO-perception of ENGO-influence on the negotiations. The second group would give an ALTER-perception, the view from people in the government on ENGO-influence. The third group consisting of specialists could provide a more objective view, the Causal Analysis. This Causal Analysis would be a researcher’s assessment of NGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews. This methodology was used by Arts (1998) to analyse NGO influence on international conventions. Initially, this methodology appeared to provide an adequate examination of ENGO influence in Yasuní. While the international environmental negotiations and the negotiations concerning Yasuní looked rather similar beforehand, in the practice the international dimension was non-existent. This led to several complications: instead of resembling international political negotiations it was more similar to regional politics; where one small group of people that knows each other well, an ‘elite,’ governed Yasuní. This small group of people dominated the negotiations, but did not stick to one position. People changed from influential ENGO jobs to professorships and some even became minister or member of the constitutional assembly or House of Representatives. Furthermore, these changes were not one-way, after a job in the government some people returned to ENGOs. These changes in employment led to new employees bringing their expertise and network with them, and to an exchange of ideas between different groups.

These changes in careers were common; many people did exceed two years in one job, making the planned division between EGO- and ALTER-perception and Causal-Analysis impossible. This was also due to the fact that, during the interviews, many people did not have the kind of job they had during the various events in Yasuní. It was therefore decided to consider a large group respondents as a part of an *elite*. People outside this ‘elite’ considered the other actors as a group where they did not belong to. Therefore the division in three groups was cancelled and all answers from respondents were equally analysed.

The main source of data in this thesis consisted of semi-structured interviews, using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008). During the interviews it seemed impossible to structure

an interview accordingly. Many people gave their version of events, which had to be structured into the framework to present the results.

The original plan for this thesis was to interview the three main actors in Yasuní: NGOs, governmental bodies and oil companies. Due to circumstances the latter could not be interviewed. New licenses were given to oil companies during the fieldwork. This made it impossible for an outsider to have meetings with them, oil companies were too afraid any outcome might influence their new contracts. This reduced the interviewed participating parties to two: NGOs and governmental bodies.

Another restricting factor was Ecuador's political situation in October 2010. On 30 September 2010 an attempted coupe d'état was executed by the police. During this chaos there was even an attempted murder on the president. The weeks following 30 September it was impossible to contact governmental bodies for an interview, and later in November and December people were still less open than they might have been beforehand. Therefore only a few names are mentioned in this thesis, the names of politicians openly talking about the times they were minister. Other actors wanted to remain low profile and anonymous. Guaranteeing their anonymity made them more open, so more reliable information could be retrieved.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the most important consequences of this thesis. It starts with conclusions on the scientific objective: answers on the research questions. Subsequently hints for further research will be given and finally recommendations for ENGOs active in Yasuní are presented.

6.1 To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 1: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” This will be done first for the three topics and later a general answer will be presented.

In the Zona Intangible the influence of ENGOs was low when the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used. ENGOs participated in the negotiation but without noticeable effect on the process or outcome. However in the counterfactual analysis it was demonstrated that the creation of final boundaries might have been put off the agenda if it were not for ENGOs. Therefore **the actual influence of ENGOs on the ZI might have been higher, however this is only an indicated guess by the researcher.**

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning block 31 was high: ENGOs participated in the negotiations and had some success in shaping the negotiation process; also the effects of ENGO participation can be linked to the outcome. If it were not for ENGOs the oil in block 31 was currently exploited, destroying the living grounds of the indigenous groups in the area and its fragile ecosystem.

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning Yasuní ITT was high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and they have some success in shaping the negotiation process. ENGOs’ effects of participation can be linked to the outcome. Especially in the first phases of the negotiation the role of ENGOs was significant. However their role weakened, the policy goals of ENGOs are still largely represented by the government on this topic.

ENGO influence in Yasuní is case specific, their influence was different in all three cases. However ENGOs had high influence in two of the three cases, therefore it is possible to conclude that **ENGOs have significant overall influence on governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní.**

6.2 What factors explain ENGOs influence on the governmental decisions concerning oil exploitation in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 2: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?”

The enabling factors found in this thesis are in sequence of importance: the **personal network** of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence. People involved in Yasuní form a small *elite*; everyone knows each other. This enables the exchange of information and enlarges the possibilities of ENGO employees to join important meetings. The importance of the fact that all actors in this political arena are just a phone call away is hard to overestimate.

Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation for the negotiations. Especially for block 31 a lot of research has been executed by ENGOs on the effects of oil extraction and road construction on the natural and cultural environment of Yasuní. No other

group has delivered so much valuable scientific information. Whereas the government takes the decisions in Yasuní, their decisions are based on the information delivered by ENGOS.

The **Stage of negotiation** was also of large importance: when ENGOS joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher. Important is that ENGOS did often join early, except for the Zona Intangible discussion. Yasuní ITT underlines the importance of joining early in these negotiations. ENGOS only joined early phases of the negotiation but their influence of the outcome was still large because they designed the outline of the entire plan.

The **easy access of ENGOS to negotiations** enhanced their influence. This can be linked to the personal network of ENGO employees and the network of the ENGOS. The rules of access are rather informal or non-existing, which makes it easier for non-governmental actors to joined when compared to other negotiations.

Acting as a **watchdog** is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions. When ENGOS were excluded from the decision-making they controlled the government. As soon as the government did something undesired by ENGOS they started actions to influence the government.

Opposite the enabling factors are the restricting factors; the most important restricting factors. These are listed hereunder:

The single most important factor is the presence of very high **economic stakes** in Yasuní. These make it harder for ENGOS to join the decision-making process and to influence the outcomes. This factor has a lot of overlap with the **political stakes** in Yasuní, which are mainly of an economic character.

The small **financial capabilities** of ENGOS compared to the government and oil companies restrict ENGOS' political influence. The amount of money available for demonstrations, research and lobby-activities is restricted, especially compared to the budget of the other actors like the government and oil companies.

ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor. With better coordination the influence of ENGOS could have been higher and more precisely focussed on important issues. Also the overlap of scientific research would have been reduced.

The **lack of continuity within ENGOS** led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOS. Since the personal network is the most important enabling factor of political influence in Yasuní, the turnover rate of employees is a severe threat to the positions of ENGOS.

The bad atmosphere between ENGOS and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. Since 2008 the role of ENGOS in the decision-making process has been diminished. The authoritarian style of the government does not recognize the role of ENGOS and other groups from civil society. This effectively destroyed the strong ties between the Correa administration and ENGOS, this is a critical problem for ENGOS in the near future.

6.3 Conclusions regarding the used model and methodology

The original theoretical model should be adapted to increase its explanatory power while keeping it simple. Two groups of NGOs should be included in the model: one group aiming to keep the oil underground (ENGOS) and a second group aiming at extraction with minimum social and environmental impact (NGOs). This separation between more radical and more pragmatic NGOs can also be found in governance literature.

For succeeding studies a methodology that recognizes the fact that the people in power consists of an actual elite would be preferable. The initial methodology from Arts (1998) was not applicable in the case of Yasuní. In the methodology should be recognized that people in important positions change their jobs often, making a distinction between governmental employees and ENGO employees impossible.

The changing opinion of the Ecuadorian government should also be recognized in advance: Ecuador has changed five times of president during the investigated processes (1999-2011). Therefore a model should recognize that the government is not an unchanging or stable actor. The framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was highly suited to this research. It supported and guided this research, even without making major adaptations. Only the procedural issues of the final agreement were not used, since they were not discussed in any of the three cases.

6.3 Recommendations for ENGOs

Research goal two was formulating recommendations for ENGOs in cases similar to Yasuní. Hereunder four brief recommendations extracted from this thesis are formulated.

1 invest in an extensive personal network existing of other people in the political arena, this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions

2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs.

3 join early in negotiations. The more early ENGOs join the better the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals.

4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice. This is needed to tackle the difference in funds.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Ego-Perception

Name of Organization:

What kind of NGO:

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway? How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the initial position of key actors? Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What specific achievements did this NGO make concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de esta ONG en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of this NGO concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande esta ONG en Yasuní?

What documents or policy did you change; How?

Que documentos o gestión cambió esta ONG; Cómo?

What would have happened without this NGO / no NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la influencia de esta ONG?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

What factors explain your political influence, Why?

Qué factores pueden explicar el influencia de las ONGs; Porqué?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influencia politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

Alter-Perception and Specialists Interviews

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ITT, ZI & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influence politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

➔ Checking claims made by discussed NGO in previous interviews

Appendix 2: List of interviewed groups

List of interviewed organizations:

ENGOs and Social movements

Acción Ecológica
Amazonia por la vida
Ciudadanos por la vida
EcoCiencia
Fundación Natura
Fundación Pachamama
FondoAmbiental
Instituto de estudios ecologistas de tercer mundo
Oilwatch
Save America's Forests
Secretaría de Pueblos
WCS-Ecuador
WWF

Government

Co-authors of Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Yasuní ITT committee
Committee de gestion de Yasuní (Yasuní's Biosphere Reserve management committee)
Ministry of environment
Ministry of cultural and natural heritage
Ministry of mining and energy
Ministry of politics

Specialists

University of San Francisco de Quito
University Andina Simon Bolivar
FLACSO
Boston University
Tiputini Biodiversity station
Radio France Internacional
Wereldomroep Nederland / VPRO

List of organizations that gave lectures on this specific topic, including groups that were active in Yasuní but did no longer have the knowledge required for this thesis.

CEDA (Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental)
Conservation International
Ecoflex
EcoFund
IEETM
International Alert
Plataforma de Responsabilidad Social
UNDP
UNDP-PPD

The Political Influence of ENGOs on Oil Extraction in Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve:

Can ENGOs keep the oil underground?



Pascal ten Have BSc

870220312130

Supervisor: Dr. Ingrid Visseren-Hamakers

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for Lucero

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Summary

Yasuni's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet. It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. Yasuni consists of Yasuni National Park and a Waorani Ethnic Reserve, an indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani are the Taromenane and Tagaeri, two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation. Yasuni's staggering richness does not only lie above ground; under the soil are vast amounts of crude oil that put Yasuni's future on the line. Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuni: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and Yasuni-ITT. This thesis aims at explaining the role of ENGOS (Environmental NGOs) in the decision-making processes in Yasuni. The aim of this thesis is to answer the following two questions: *To what extent did ENGOS influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* and *What factors explain the political influence of ENGOS on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?* This analytical and explanatory study describes the extent of the ENGOS' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuni. In addition, it also tries to explain the factors that determine this political influence.

To answer the research questions a theoretical framework has been created based on the following concepts: *power, influence, political influence, political arena, policy network, ENGOS*. These concepts all came together in the influence of ENGOS on environmental negotiations. The works of Arts (1998) and Betsill and Corell (2008) form the scientific backbone of this thesis. The theoretical model aims at explaining the influence of ENGOS on the main actor in these decision-making processes: the government.

The first set of data was retrieved from semi-structured interviews with key actors on the three different topics in Yasuni. This data was used to examine the influence of ENGOS on: issue framing, agenda setting, the position of key actors and on the final agreement. With these results the decision-making process is reconstructed, the influence on all different phases is analysed and a counterfactual analysis of ENGO influence was made. The second set of data consists of factors explaining ENGO influence, which have also been retrieved from interviews. In the discussion these are combined with the eight factors Betsill and Corell extracted from several case studies about the political influence of NGOs on environmental negotiations.

This analysis provided the following results. The influence of ENGOS on the decision-making process of the Zona-Intangible was low: while ENGOS participated in the negotiations, there was no effect on the process or outcome. Conversely, ENGO influence in block 31 was high, ENGOS had both influence on the process and the outcome. ENGO influence on Yasuni ITT has also been high: ENGOS participated in the negotiation and had some success in the negotiation process. Also the participation of ENGOS could be linked to the outcome. This demonstrates that ENGO influence is case-specific.

ENGO influence is enabled by: 1 The *personal network* of ENGO employees; 2 *Scientific research* done by ENGOS; 3 the *Stage of negotiation*; 4 The *easy access of ENGOS to negotiations*; 5 Acting as a *watchdog*. The factors restricting ENGO influenced are listed in order of importance: 1 The *high economic stakes*; 2 The *small financial capabilities* of ENGOS; 3 the *poor ENGO-coordination*; 4 The *lack of continuity within ENGOS*; 5 The *tense relations between ENGOS and the government* of the last years.

Finally, four recommendations for ENGOS have been formulated: 1 invest in an extensive personal network; this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions. 2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOS, as this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOS. 3 join in early on negotiations. The earlier ENGOS join, the more the final document will be in line with ENGOS' policy goals. 4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOS and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice.

1. Introduction

Yasuní's Man and Biosphere Reserve is the most biodiverse forest on the planet (Finer et al., 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Acosta 2010; Larrea, 2010). It is located in Ecuador, on the North-Western edge of the Amazon Basin, just a few hundred kilometres from high Andes peaks. (Villavicencio, 2010; Acosta et al. 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). Yasuní consists of Yasuní National Park and an Ethnic Reserve for the Waorani indigenous tribe. Closely related to the Waorani, the Taromenane and Tagaeri, are two of the last indigenous communities living in voluntary isolation (Proaño Garcia and Colleoni, 2008, Martinez, 2010, Rommel 2007). They live in Yasuní together with over 1300 species of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, fish and more than 100.000 species of insects (del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010). One hectare in Yasuní has as many as 650 tree species, an number higher than the number of tree species of Canada and the U.S.A. combined (Bass et al. 2010, del Hierro, 2010; Benalcazar et al., 2010; McSweeney and Pearson, 2009).

Yasuní's staggering richness lies not only above ground; below the soil vast amounts of crude oil put Yasuní's future on the line (New Internationalist, 2008, Finer, 2010, Bass et al., 2010). Although the area is formally protected at the regional, national and international level, oil concessions have been given to a variety of oil companies (Finer, 2009). And as these oil blocks were designated before Yasuní was a formally protected area, protecting this area from destruction by oil companies is problematic (Acosta, 2010; Rommel, 2007).

Three different but closely interwoven battles are being fought against oil exploitation in Yasuní: the creation of a No-Go-Zone for oil exploitation (Zona-Intangible), the battle for block 31 and the Yasuní-ITT. These three topics will be further elaborated in the following section.

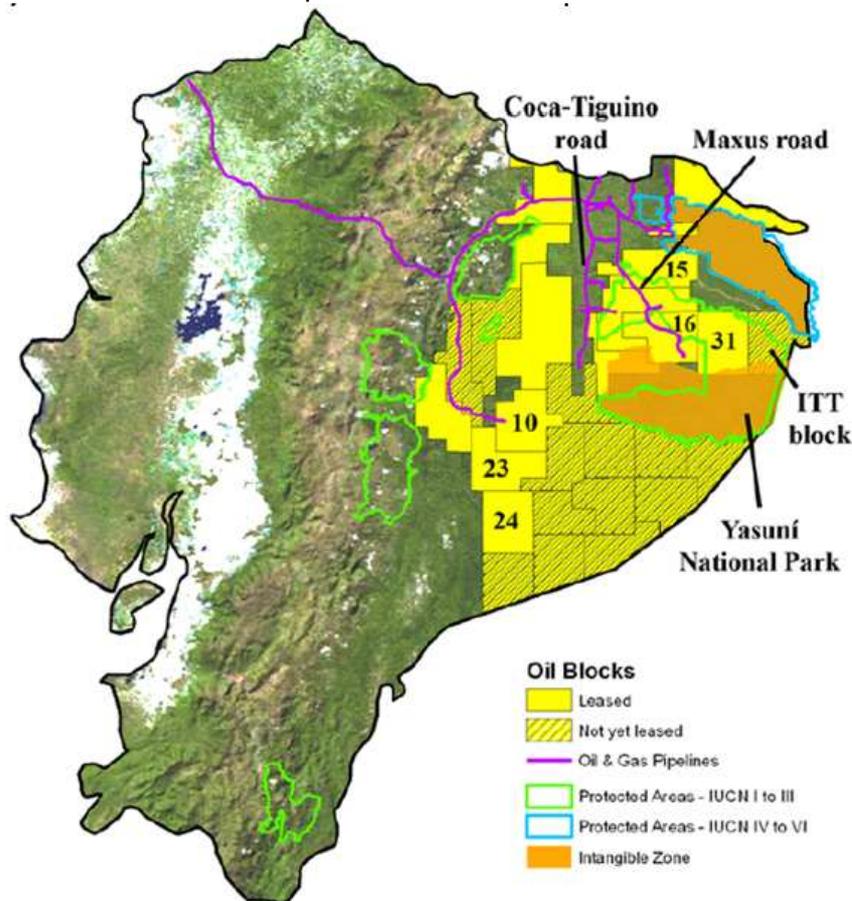


Figure 1: Oil and gas blocks in Ecuador. (Finer et al., 2008)

1.1 Zona Intangible

The indicated zones (former parts of oil blocks) in figure 1 are declared No-Go-Zones for oil exploitation in Yasuní: Zonas Intangibles. The northern No-Go-Zone, La Zona Intangible Cuyabeno falls outside the boundaries of Yasuní, whereas the southern No-Go-Zone, la Zona Intangible Tagaeri- Taromenane (ZI) consists of a substantial part of the Man and Biosphere Reserve (Finer et al. 2009; Bass et al. 2010; Rommel, 2007). This thesis will only focus on the southern ZI, as the northern is not located in Yasuní. This No-Go-Zone was created by the ministry of environment to conserve the Tagaeri and Taromenane, and the forest they live from (Rommel, 2007). Although created in 1999 it took until 2007 to draw its final boundaries, but since then it finally seems to be protected adequately. It encompasses 7580km² and covers the complete southern half of the National Park and a part of the Woarani territory (Finer et al., 2009). As can be seen in figure 2 there are not only oil blocks that have yet to be leased in the southern Zona Intangible, parts of the oil blocks 16, 31 and ITT and almost half of block 17 also fall within the southern No-Go-Zone, this placed major oil reserves in block 17 and block-ITT (Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini) off limits (Finer et al., 2009).

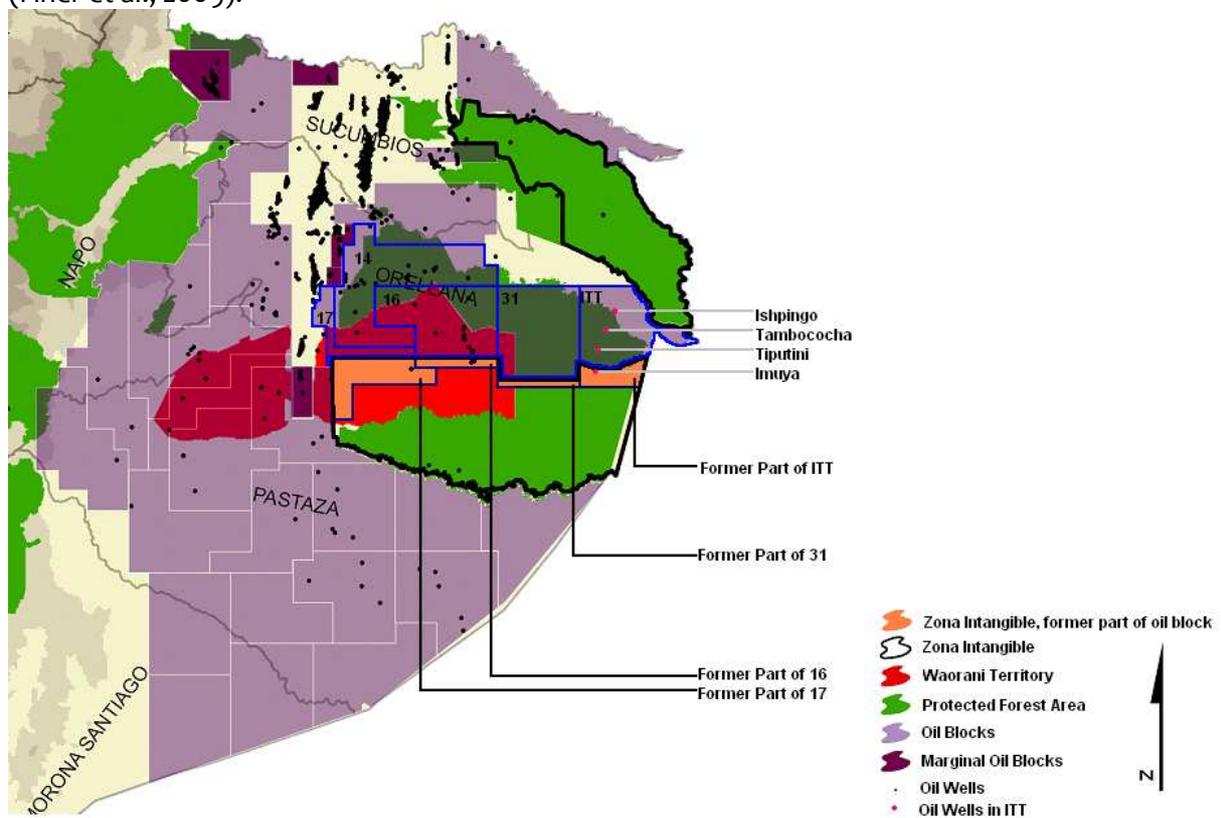


Figure 2: Zona Intangible and the consequences for oil production in Yasuní (Accion Ecologica 2008)

1.2 Block 31

Block 31 is one of the largest oil blocks in Yasuní, although only in size. The amount of oil in block 31 is hardly enough to break even when exploited (Martinez, 2010). It is a very strategic block, however, as it is close to block ITT, in which 20 percent of the remaining oil of Ecuador is located (see 1.3). Therefore a long struggle has been going on to stop the exploitation.

In 1996, the government released block 31, and it was given to the Argentinean company Perez Companc. In 2002, block 31 was taken over by Petrobras who executed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for the construction of an oil road, which started a large controversy. Many different groups joined to stop this road, ranging from NGOs, Social movements, and indigenous communities to famous international scientists (Finer et al. 2009).

Despite these lawsuits and protests, Petrobras started developing the road and clearing primary forest in May 2005, from the banks of the river Napo to the border of Yasuní National Park. At that time, Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of presidency. His successor Alfredo Palacio, reconsidered the issue and authorized development of these fields only under the condition that no roads were constructed and the production plant was outside the national park. In the following year a new EIS was executed and permit was given, based on a new plan that did not involve roads. Surprisingly, however, a year later the new president Rafael Correa announced that Petrobras terminated its contract and returned block 31 to the state (Finer et al., 2009).

1.3 Yasuní-ITT

Next to block 31, under the North-Eastern part of Yasuní National Park called Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) lies one of the biggest remaining oil fields with at least 846 million barrels with a total value of more than 72 billion US dollars, accounting for twenty percent of the remaining oil reserves. (Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer, 2010; Bass et al., 2010; New Internationalist 2008). Since Ecuador is an oil dependent economy, it needs this income to invest in education, healthcare and energy (de Hierro, 2010).

However, a ground-breaking initiative has been developed to generate income without exploiting this oil, and thereby protecting Yasuní's fragile biodiversity. The use of the crude oil in Yasuní would result in the release of 407.000.000 Metric tons of carbon dioxide, which could retrieve 7.2 billion US dollars on the international carbon market. However, as the carbon market only recognizes already emitted CO₂, the idea arose to place the CO₂ not emitted from Yasuní on the voluntary carbon market (Acosta, 2010). Foreign investments in this so-called "Yasuní Guarantee Certificate" will generate enough income to relieve the need for extraction (del Hierro, 2010).

The collected funds would be managed by a trust fund headed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which would invest the money in long-term development plans. The oil-based energy would be replaced by hydro-electrical, geo-thermal, solar and biomass energy. A million hectares would be reforested and protecting fourteen natural reserves and indigenous lands. This will result in the protection of 36 percent of Ecuador, and finally a revolutionary new development strategy (del Hierro, 2010). Since ITT is bordering the Intangible Zone, it would therefore create a rather large area free of oil development. It would also make the exploitation of bordering oil fields, like block 31, unprofitable and thereby would preserve these areas too (Finer et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, the Kyoto Protocol does not recognize the Yasuní Guarantee Certificates. Ecuador also tried to get this initiative recognized under REDD, however it was not accepted since it is not sufficiently focused on deforestation. For the climate agreements in Mexico 2010 Ecuador hoped to get it recognized as a new initiative next to the existing REDD and REDD+, however Ecuador did not succeed (Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009). The search for investors and funding, is still on going.

1.4 Aim of the research

As shown above, the three battles are faced with an open end, and while the official facts can be presented, it remains unclear how and why things were decided. A relevant yet unanswered question is: what was and will be the role of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Social movements in Yasuní?

This thesis investigates the political influence of the various ENGOS on policy- and decision making concerning the oil extraction in Yasuní. Yasuní is a natural area of global importance and can serve as a flagship for nature conservation. Yasuní's uncontacted indigenous people and biodiversity are threatened by oil extraction. Nevertheless it can serve as an example on how nature can be protected although it is under high pressure. ENGOS acting on local, national and global level are

trying to conserve the indigenous living grounds of the voluntary isolated tribes and Yasuní's unique biodiversity.

This paper focuses on creating understanding of the political influence of ENGOs on oil extraction in Yasuní, and aims at formulating recommendations for the involved ENGOs to enhance their political influence in similar political arenas in the near future. Hopefully this might influence the outcome in Yasuní or at least provide ENGOs worldwide with information and recommendations on how to be better prepared for conflicts similar to this one. The aim of this thesis is therefore answering the following two research questions:

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?

This study is analytical and explanatory. It describes the extend of ENGOs' political influence on oil extraction in Yasuní in addition it also tries to explain what factors determine this political influence.

To answer these questions a qualitative research project is carried out, using interviews, and primary and secondary texts. Especially for the first questions semi-structured into-depth interviews are of high importance. Staff from ENGOs, governmental bodies and different kinds of specialists were interviewed. The original idea to make a strict distinction between these groups was a lot harder in reality than it seemed beforehand. The initial methodology needed this strict division to analyse the decision-making process from three different angles (see 3.7). However this was not the case. For example: scientists were former NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past, people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. Therefore a new methodology will be introduced to analyse the retrieved data more securely, without making divisions for theory's sake while such division does not exist in reality. Finally, a reconstruction of the decision-making process of all three themes (Zona-Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní-ITT) will be made. Overall, the research questions will be answered by analysing the role of ENGOs in this decision-making process. Additionally, this thesis presents recommendations for Ecuadorian ENGOs to enlarge their influence.

This thesis focuses on Yasuní: the Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve, which consists of Yasuní National Park, Waorani Reserve and a 10 kilometre buffer on the west, north and south side. Yasuní Man and Biosphere Reserve boasts uncontacted indigenous people, an unique biodiversity and both producing oil blocks and blocks that might produce in the near future.

The researched period lies between January 1999, the time of the ministerial decree that declared a large area of Yasuní a Zona Intangible until March 2011, the end of this fieldwork period.

Several factors made it harder to execute the research needed for this thesis. On September 30th 2010 a coup d'état and a personal assault on the president just failed. This created a tense political situation which made it harder to contact governmental representatives. People that gave interviews were less open than normally, which makes it hard to check if the given information is correct.

When the tension became less and less during the following weeks the tension among oil-producers grew tenser since new contracts were given for the next ten years. This made it impossible to contact oil-companies since new information could harm their contract. Therefore the initial idea to include oil-companies had to be changed.

The internal tension on Yasuní-ITT has also risen since Germany, the largest confirmed donor retreated. This did not only cost a lot of money but also implied that other countries and donors drew back.

2. Theoretical Framework

The introduction shows that there are many things at stake in Yasuní. A large variety of actors strives to see their own, often conflicting, goals achieved. Since not each and every one of these goals can be achieved, all actors attempt to influence the people that make the final decision. Although one actor may have more chance to influence a decision maker than another, this does not mean that he will certainly achieve his goals. When different actors are competing in this way, and if their access to resources and information is unequal, there will inevitably be a large difference in their influence on decision-making (Connell and Smith, 2006). Thus, there are power inequalities in this field; some have more power than others. To understand why this occurs, it's important to focus on the concept of power. What is power and what does power do are relevant questions in this context. These and other questions relating to power and influence will be answered in this chapter as well as the other relevant concepts that can help explain the role of ENGOs in environmental negotiations.

2.1 A Brief Introduction to Power Literature

Why is power studied to such a large extent? To put it very boldly: All aspects of social life are based upon power (Kidd et al., 2010 p. 4). This statement indicates how important power may be in everyday life. When the topic of power arises, it is often immediately associated with politics, but there is a major difference between power and politics. "Power is about getting what you want, and politics is about how and why different groups struggle to get what they want." (Kidd et al., 2010, p.5). This definition of power is very broad, and while many scientist would not agree on it, many of them would agree that this broadly is what power is about.

Deep inside, everybody has an idea of power, and of its opposite: powerlessness. We call people powerful when they can execute power over others, and consider those who cannot the powerless. In an average society the latter group is the vast majority (Kidd et al., 2010). Powerless is 'without power' just as "dark" is defined as "without light". This implies that we all know what power is and we can describe it without problems. We also know many of the manifestations of power.

In the social and political sciences, however, power is an 'essentially contested concept' (Ashe et al., 1999 p. 69). According to Kidd et al. (2010, p.7) five general themes can be distinguished within power literature:

1. Power and agency (individuals) – how much of a say do ordinary people have over their actions on a day-to-day basis? How much agency (or freedom/free will) do they have?
2. Power and structure (society) – how rooted and integral are power relationships within the overall make-up of society as a whole? To what extent does society as a thing weigh down upon individuals, regulating their decisions, actions and options?
3. Power and domination – what happens if people step out of line? How are they punished? Do some groups benefit from the punishing of others?
4. Power and empowerment – should we see power as a tool to use against others or as a way to make decisions about and for ourselves? Is it a matter of having power over what others do or is it power to do something for ourselves?
5. Power and identity – how does having power, struggling for power or being the objects of someone else's power make us who we are? What is the relationship between power and how we come to see ourselves in society: our identity?

According to Stephen Lukes (1974) these kinds of power can be gained through two different ways: power can either be obtained through battle, struggle and the possible resistance of others, or be the outcome of an agreement, it is not held by some over and at expense of others

who have none of it. Banfield (2009 p.9) puts it as follows: “Power is the ability to establish control. So who has power controls the situation, this person can do what he wants, not only within its own life but also with the lives of others and sometimes even with society.”

Thus it can be concluded that power is a vital topic in people’s life, this might explain why science’s early interest in studying power.

It is commonly accepted among scientists that modern power literature goes back to the 16th century when Machiavelli published “The Prince” (Bejan, 2010). Only twenty years later Thomas Hobbes published his renowned book “Leviathan”. These two authors started the first discussion in power literature, one that would continue for many years. On the one hand Machiavelli focused on strategies while Hobbes centred his book on notions. Arguably, Machiavelli’s focus point was the question *what does power do* while Hobbes tried to figure out what power actually is (Bejan, 2010; Clegg, 1989; Machiavelli, 2005). Given this, Machiavelli was in many ways a militarist while Hobbes was an early modernist, always looking to the answer to the question “what is power?” and with a strict sense of order. Modernists were not interested in what power does and how power could be used effectively for one’s own goals (Clegg, 1989; Giddens, 1990).

This chapter will continue with scholars inspired by the school of Hobbes since the “what is power” question is more relevant, particularly considering that Machiavelli focused largely on matters of military power. Hobbes’ book led to philosophical and sociological discussions on what power is and how it is executed. Machiavelli’s book is more practical hand guide on how to gain power, how to execute and how to maintain it. Although interesting, it is of lesser relevance for this thesis. Clegg (1989) states that Hobbes way of thinking led to modern power literature in which power is initiated by human agency, expressed through causal relations and measurable in terms of mechanistic indicators. Various modern scholars use mathematic equations to specify the level of power or influence, for example Becker (1983) and Arts (1998).

Hobbes’ book led to several major discussions within sociology, discussions that are still held by scientists today: Is power distributed among many or held by an elite? Is power intentional or not intentional? Is power confined to decision making or is it evident in non-decision making? Is power constant over time? (Clegg, 1989) Before the end of this theoretical framework these questions will be answered.

The answer to the question: “Is power distributed among many or held by an elite” requires a brief overview of the elitist and pluralist theories. The publication C. Wright Mills’ book “The Power Elite” can be seen as the start of modern elitist theory (Clegg, 1989). This theory states that power in society is distributed among a small ruling elite (Wright Mills, 1956). Although the elite has changed from kings, dukes and monks to presidents, CEOs and bankers it is still omnipresent (Bottomore, 1993). But is it really? Dahl (1961) is a well-known supporter and one of the founders of the pluralist theory. In his book “Who Governs?”, he claims that power is not held by an elite, as was thought before, but by a very large group. This publication received much critique; many scientists argued that his findings were case-specific (Clegg, 1989). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) observed that where one group of scientists concluded that power was largely diffused in their cases and others assumed that it was extremely centralized, this difference would not be due to a case specific difference, but rather to predetermination in the research (Bachrach and Baratz 1962). Under the approach of Bachrach and Baratz (1962) the researcher should neither begin by asking “who rules?”, as the elitist does, nor by enquiring “does anyone have power?”, as the pluralist does, since these questions already determine the outcome.

The next big contribution to the power debate was by Steven Lukes. Lukes’ influential book “Power: a Radical View” (1974) can help answer many of the remaining questions above, including: “is power intentional or non-intentional?” and “is power confined to decision making or

is it evident in non-decision making?” The book divides power into three different dimensions: In the first dimension the exercise of power occurs in observable overt conflicts between actors of key issues; in the second the exercise of power occurs in observable overt or covert conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues and in the third the power is exercised to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist. (Clegg, 1989; Connell and Smith, 2006)

The first dimension is the one Robert Dahl (1957, p. 203) used: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. This is a very clear and obvious form of power. A good example is a police officer that commands people to turn right; all people will follow his orders even though they would not have done so when it was not told to them by this police officer. Betsill and Corell (2008 p.24) state: “influence occurs when one actor intentionally communicates to another so as to alter the latter’s behaviour from what would have occurred otherwise.” Banfield (2009) adds: “What is A’s ability to achieve the intended result? And what is his ability to achieve it without incurring disadvantages (“costs”) which he regards as equal or greater than the advantage of the result.” This essentially comes down to: the more power A has the more abilities it has to influence the behaviour of B without negative consequences.

Lukes states that this definition of power is blind; it does not see all the less obvious ways in which one can influence another actor. To put it in a political perspective, it does not show the various and less obvious ways in which a political agenda can be controlled in a political system (Lukes, 1974; Clegg, 1989). To overcome this weakness, the first dimension is supplemented with a second dimension, which Lukes characterizes as the exercise of power that occurs in observable open or hidden conflicts between actors over issues or potential issues. This implies that one should not only look at what is done and which decisions are made, but also at what is not done and which decisions are not taken. The fact that a specific item never reaches the political agenda, or that a decision taken about something is never taken, can be the influence of one of the actors. This all goes beyond the visible and obvious exercise of power characteristics of the first dimension. Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz previously introduced this as “the second face of power”: the not taken decisions. They discovered that, hidden from the public, an elite influences agenda-setting and in this way exerts its power on society (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962)

So far we have two dimensions, or the two faces of power. One open and obvious that is observable, and one that is hidden and which might also be called “non-decision making”, where conflicts are suppressed and it is prevented that a decision will be taken (Connell and Smith, 2006). Where Bachrach and Baratz (1962) stop with two dimensions or faces of power, Lukes (1974) was still not content, he felt that there were still some aspects of power not brought to light. Therefore he introduced a third dimension of power, characterized by the idea of a hidden conflict that affects interests. Latent conflict exists when there would be a conflict of wants or preferences between those exercising and those subject to power if the latter were to become aware of their interests. This is the power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist.

Linking these three dimensions, Lukes defines the underlying concept of power as: “A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B’s interests” (Lukes, 1974, p. 27) The interesting aspect of this definition lies in the “contrary to B’s interests,” which is rather clear in the first dimension when the outcome of B is decided completely by A, and in the second dimension when B’s interest is never uttered, never placed on the agenda. In the third dimension, however, it is not clear that someone has gained or someone lost; this kind of power may be exercised even if B does not feel it.

The question: “is power constant over time?” can be answered rather easily. No one king stays in power over time and only a few presidents reign longer than eight years. Bachrach and Baratz (1962) are the first that state that power is not constant over time: it comes, fluctuates and finally diminishes.

“Does one need to exercise power to have power?” is a question that continues to divide scholars. The differences between Dahl (1957, p. 203) and Druckman and Rozelle (in: Tedeschi, 2008) are a clear illustration. As mentioned above Dahl (1957) defines power as: “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do”. Druckman and Rozelle, on the other hand use the concept of “resources”, and in which way these can influence decision makers. They define power as following (quoted from Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3): “Power as control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others”. The difference between the two definitions can be explained by the emphasis of exercising power or influence on the one hand (Dahl) and on the other an emphasis on having power. This difference is called the episodic versus dispositional concept of power (Clegg, 1989) The dispositional school claims that one can be powerful without actually exercising power. A clear example is a nation-state that is powerful in the region because it has a substantial army, not because it uses it (Tedeschi, 2008). In this line of reasoning it can be said that those that hold political power are generally accepted by all other political actors, such as a part of the voters in a democracy. In politics this will mean that they are in control of relevant offices, resources and decision-making apparatus.

For the supporters of the episodic school, however, it is impossible to assess the capability of a player if that capability is not applied. One cannot count and add up a player’s power as if it were money and subsequently forecast outcomes. There is no one-to-one relation found between the resources an actor has and the outcomes it achieves. “A concept of power without the notion of influence is therefore misleading” (Arts, 1998, p.57).

Power is not only a topic in the power literature, research on power is also done in the regime and institutional literature. The power of actors on the development and effectiveness of regimes is studied by scholars (Mitchell, 2003). Mitchell (2003) for example recognizes the role of the interests of states and the efforts of individuals and groups to influence the outcome of International Environmental Agreements (IEAs).

2.2 The Concept of Influence

Now that it is clear what power is and what it does, it is time to introduce the most important concept of this thesis: influence.

The difference between power and influence can briefly be explained as follows. Power is “control over resources that may be used to gain influence over the decisions of others” (Tedeschi, 2008, p. 3). On the other hand “Influence means the modification of one actor’s behaviour by that of another” (Arts, 1998 p. 57). This extended definition forms an underlying principle for this thesis, and hereunder the concept of influence will be further developed.

Arts (1998, p. 57) also adds the following to the definition of influence given above:

“Influence is to be distinguished from power. Power means capability; it is the aggregate of political resources that are available to an actor. (...) Power may be converted into influence, but it is not necessarily so converted at all or to its full extent.”

To complete this list of definitions used in this thesis the final difference between political power and political influence will also be given by Arts (1998, p 58):

“Political power refers to a more or less permanent ability to influence policy outcomes, whereas political influence refers to an episodic effect on decision-making”.

Influence can be organized in the same way as power in the previous chapter, using the three dimensions of power. First the openly executed influence between actors. This focuses on the behaviour of actors in decision-making, mainly on key situations. The execution of influence is

often observable: policy preferences are demonstrated through political actions (Lukes, 1974 p. 15)

The two dimensional view of power focuses on decision-making and non-decision-making. This second dimension looks at current and potential issues, both overt and covert. The emphasis in this dimension still are the policy preferences of the actors (Lukes, 1974).

In the three dimensional view of power the two dimensional view of power is expanded with latent conflicts. It also recognizes next to the subjective interests like policy preferences the “real” interests of actors outside the decision-making process (Lukes, 1974).

Giddens (1990) claims that actors are constrained to act, and thereby influence, within given rules and with the existing division of resources. This means they cannot just do what they like and use all resources they want: their political influence is restricted, they have to behave according the rules of the game and according the distribution of resources (Arts, 1998). This distribution of resources in the practice means that actors have only restricted money, supporters, logistics etc. to influence decision-making. This means that they have to use their resources wisely and within the rules of the game.

All actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave. An actor can be part of the political discussion and can join all meetings or one might be excluded from all formal meetings. Rules of the game can be transparent for all actors, but can also be non-transparent, meaning that not all players know what the rules are (Larson, 2010). Rules of the game can be altered by (a group of) players with sufficient power: the rules of the game change over time, with changing society and changing actors. In some cases a single actor can even change the rules of the game, this is normally a governmental player (Boix, 1999; Larson, 2010). Hence rules of the game are the institutional environment that determines what strategy an actor can use and what resources it will use to achieve its policy goals (Williamson, 2010). “Institutions in this context are a set of rules, decision-making procedures, and programs that define social practices, assign roles to the participants in these practices and guide interaction among the occupants of individual roles. Structures of property rights, electoral systems, and practices relating to marriage and the family are all examples of institutions in this sense. Institutions in this sense must not be confused with organizations construed as material entities with employees, offices, equipment, budgets, and (often) legal personality” (Young, 2002 p. 5).

2.3 Political Arena and Policy Network

Political actors can meet in two different settings, in a political arena or in a policy network. Political arena is a commonly used metaphor in political science, it refers to the battlefield of ancient gladiators, where all the actors compete and try to win while they are restricted by certain rules. The political struggle is quite similar. The political players meet to make a decision or to develop specific policy. The players focus on specific outcomes in the form of a decision or policy. Another similarity is that all players try to win which comes down to influencing the policy or decision to such an extent that their policy goals are met best. The fourth and final similarity is that all actors operate according to formal and informal rules: the rules of the game. The rules decide who is in and who is out, how conflicts are settled, how decisions are made, how players should behave etc. (Arts, 1998). A political arena can be defined as follows (Arts, 1998, p. 55): “[...] a formal meeting places of political players who struggle, debate, negotiate, and decide on policy issues and in doing so, are bound to given rules (although these might be changed by players as well).”

In recent times the term policy network gained recognition. Börzel (1998 p. 254) has the following definition: “a set of relatively stable relationships which are of non-hierarchical and interdependent nature linking a variety of actors, who share common interests with regard to a policy and who exchange resources to pursue these shared interests acknowledging that co-

operation is the best way to achieve common goals". It has to be stressed that most definitions are controversial, and so an alternative definition will be given from Arts (1998, p.56): "a more or less stable social system in which mutually dependent public and private players address policy issues and programmes". Börzel (1998) states that several scientists consider policy networks as a simple metaphor to indicate that policymaking is done by a large number of different actors all with different roles and stakes. While Börzel (1998) recognizes many forms of policy networks, for this thesis the form of policy network that seems to be most appropriate is a policy network as a form of governance. Several types of governance in and by networks can be distinguished (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). These refer to networks of public and of private organizations, and of mixes of these two. Networks of public policy organizations, the one that seems relevant for this thesis, have been considered to be the analytical heart of the notion of governance in the study of public administration (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004, p 148). The typical mode of interaction between the actors is through negotiations (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004).

According to the definition of Kenis and Schneider (1991 p. 36) policy networks are "webs of relatively stable and on-going relationships which mobilize and pool dispersed resources so that the collective (or parallel) actions can be orchestrated towards the solution of a common policy". This means that a policy network includes all actors involved in the policy making process. They are mainly characterized by informal interactions between public and private actors with distinctive but interdependent interests, who strive to solve problems of collective action on a central, non-hierarchical level (Börzel, 1998). This implies that there is no longer a central role for the government, where the government has a hierarchical power over other players. This fits well in the on-going debate surrounding the existence of a key role of governmental institutions (Segebart, 2008).

2.4 Policy and the Policy Cycle

A well-known concept in policy studies is to simplify the policy-making process in a series of stages: the policy cycle (Crabbé and Leroy, 2008). Generally the stages are: agenda-setting, policy making, the forming of opinions, policy implementation and the stage that consists of autonomous developments and policy outcomes. From this stage, the cycle starts anew by the setting of a new agenda, as can be seen in figure 2. All of this is of importance for this thesis, but some important processes are not recognized in this cycle, or at least not made explicit. First the stage of issue-framing, that refers to how the issue is conceptualized before, during and after the negotiation process. A frame is "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of action within one's present or past environment" (Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 33). By framing (or re-framing) environmental problems, NGOs can highlight particular aspects of a problem such as the driving causes or who has the responsibility to act, thereby establishing the boundaries in which others have to respond (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Issue framing may occur before negotiations or during the negotiation-process, which means an issue can be re-framed. Agenda setting is recognized in the policy cycle but influencing key-actors is not explicitly included. Many groups try to influence the main actors during the negotiation-process. NGOs among others use this as a strategy to achieve their policy-goals (Betsill and Corell, 2008). The next section introduces the main actor of this thesis.

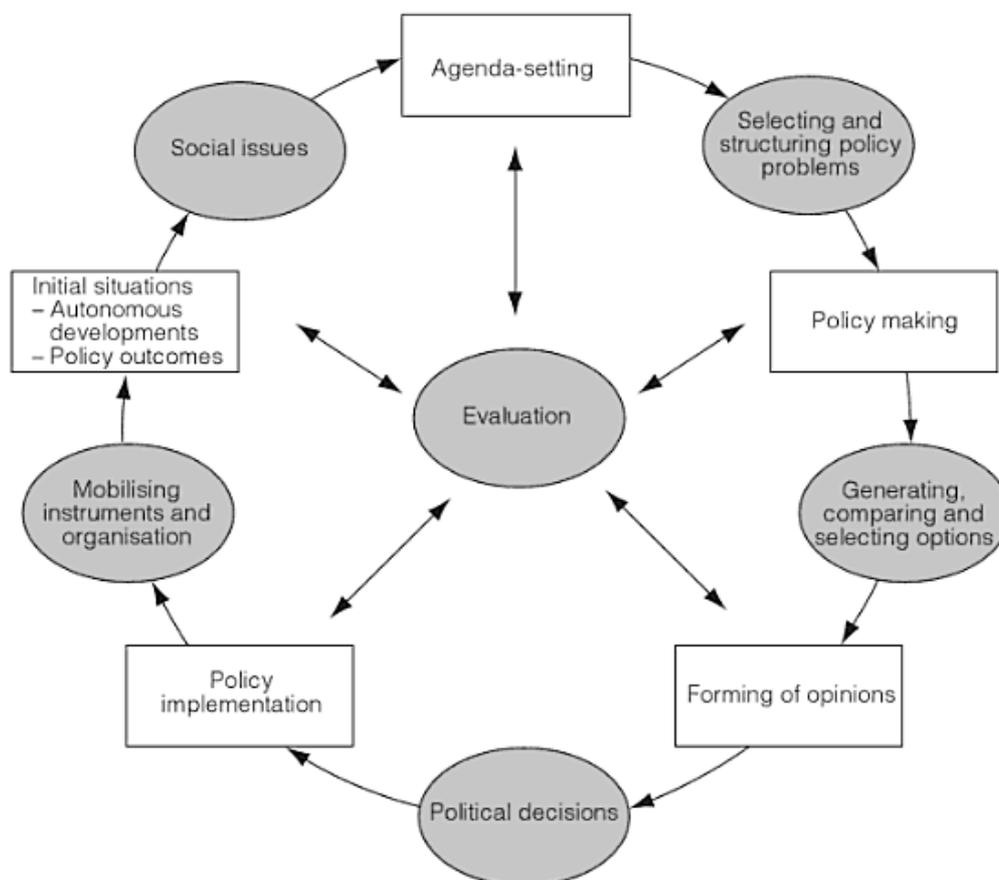


Figure 3: The policy cycle From Crabbé and Leroy (2008 p.3)

2.5 NGOs, ENGOs and Social movements

With power and influence defined, the next big concept for this thesis is that of NGOs. Many scholars recognize the NGO, Non-Governmental Organisation, as one of the most important political players these days. The practical definition of an NGO, however, is intensely disputed. (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). Many definitions of NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) exist; every case might even need its own tailor-made definition, including and excluding desired groups. This spectrum of definitions ranges from almost including every group to almost excluding all : some authors argue that even soccer-clubs might fall under the umbrella of NGOs (Kidd et al., 2010; Arts, 1998). Arts (1998) on the other hand uses an extended definition of NGO, or in his case, global NGO: “[...] a global NGO is defined as a promotional pressure group which seeks to influence political decision-making on certain issues at global level. In the case of the UNFCCC and CBD we deal with welfare, communal and issue-specific organizations (respectively development, indigenous, environmental and conservation groups)”.

The definition of NGO used in this study has mostly been drawn from Arts’ definition of global NGOs given above, since it mainly focuses on the political role of NGOs where other definitions focus on the role of NGOs in society. In order to filter relevant NGOs without excluding other potential groups, the following definition, adapted from Arts (1998), is most suitable: “a NGO can be defined as a pressure group that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making.” NGOs fitting the latter definition can basically be divided in two groups: protest groups and pressure groups. Protest groups are groups that are outside the political arena and try to change policy by demonstration, contest and sometimes violence. Pressure groups, on the other hand, are in the political arena and try to change policy from within. This latter group can be divided further: in advocacy and lobby groups. Advocacy groups act as advocates for their cause mainly in

official events. Lobby groups try to influence individual policy- and decision-makers in an informal way (Arts, 1998). It is not clear whether groups inside the political arena are more effective than groups outside. Insiders have more and better access to decision-makers but they have to act responsibly and may lose their independence. Kidd et al. (2010) states that it is probable, however that many outsiders groups want to become part of the 'inside' groups.

In modern governance theory another split between NGOs is made, Visseren-Hamakers (2009) for example makes the difference between campaigning and collaborative NGOs, the first group represents pure conservation NGOs. One could think of Greenpeace or Friends of the Earth. The second group consists of NGOs that create partnerships for example the World Wildlife Fund. Also Van Huijstee (2010) and Humphreys (2006) recognize two groups of NGOs, in this thesis they will be divided in "campaigning NGOs" and "collaborative NGOs".

Closely related to NGOs but crucially different are social movements. Contrary to NGOs, social movements normally have no strict hierarchy. These groups consist of like-minded people who seek to influence policy-making on a narrow range of issues. Although seeking to influence policy and policy-makers, they are not interested in becoming policy makers (Kidd et al., 2010). When using the definition above, however, social movements might also be classified as NGOs .

Social movements and NGOs can also be divided into sectional and promotional pressure groups. Sectional groups protect the interests of their members, such as labour unions, or a group of indigenous people that fight for protection of their lands. Promotional groups exist to promote a cause they believe is neglected by the government, for example Greenpeace and Amnesty International (Kidd et. al., 2010). These examples show that sectional groups often tend towards social movements while promotional groups lean towards NGOs.

So how important are NGOs and social movements in political decision making on environmental matters? While the pluralists' perception that pressure groups and social movements play a vital role in the political decision making is true to form, it is also recognized by many that better environmental outcomes are achieved when NGOs and social movements are involved in decision-making (Silva, 1997; Kidd et al., 2010). All those groups with environmental focus normally are called ENGOS (Betsill and Corell, 2001). From now on, since principally NGOs with environmental goals are studied the term ENGO will be used: ENGOS can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seek to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts.

2.6 ENGO influence on environmental negotiations

Most scientific literature has focused on the power of states, and what factors might explain the power of these states (Kidd et al., 2010). Military, economic and political are the most important resources states have to execute power (Kidd et al., 2010). Nowadays it is recognized that not only states have power, and non-state actors can also shape governmental outcomes. Like states, NGOs have access to a range of resources that can give them influence. While NGOs do not have military power, some of them do have significant economic resources; these are mostly NGOs in the private sector, but some are environmental NGOs like Greenpeace and WWF. Rather than economic and military resources, the most important resources for NGOs are commonly recognized as knowledge and information. This specialized knowledge and information is used to influence governmental decision-makers (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

As previously mentioned, the relationship between power (capabilities) and influence is not direct. The question is how to translate the capabilities into influence (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Holsti (1988) distinguishes six strategies that states can use to exercise influence: persuasion, the offer of rewards, the granting of rewards, the threat of punishment, the infliction of non-violent punishment and the use of force. Betsill and Corell (2008) translate these to NGOs and they conclude that persuasion is the most used among NGOs. NGOs spend a large amount of time trying to influence decision-makers. The use of force, often used by states, is not a possible option for NGOs (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Power in relation to International Environmental Agreements is already discussed briefly in 2.1. Also the role of NGOs is underwritten in this regime theory. NGOs for example provide information, conduct research, and propose and evaluate policies, actions that introduce both ideas and political pressure into negotiations (Mitchell, 2003).

Arts (1998) divides the explanatory factors of political influence into three levels: the arena level, level of the outcome and the context level, which is a quite detailed division (see 2.8). Instead, Betsill and Corell (2008) make another division by identifying firstly the participation in negotiations and secondly the effect on the behaviour of other actors.

Betsill and Corell (2008, p.189) identified eight most often mentioned factors that could explain the political influence of NGOs through comparisons between different negotiation cases. It has to be said that their study mainly focuses on Environmental NGOs and that it is just the top of the iceberg of factors that could influence NGO influence, but it gives a good overview on the influence of Environmental NGOs especially when it comes down to forest related cases. The factors most often mentioned by key-informants in the research of Betsill and Corell are explained below (2008).

Several experts state that *NGO coordination* between like-minded enhances the influence on negotiations: they speak with one joined and therefore stronger voice. However in the cases researched by Betsill and Corell (2008) and Arts (2001, in: Betsill and Corell 2008) NGO coordination has only a neutral effect. They claim that NGOs have achieved all levels of influence whether they did or did not coordinate, so an NGO can have large influence without coordinating its actions. Coordinating NGO strategies seems hard: even among NGOs with common interests, a consensus between a large NGO with many resources and a small NGO focussing on the situation on the ground is hard to reach (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

There are no set *rules of access* governing NGO participation in international environmental negotiation (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Habitually NGO access is created ad hoc in international negotiations, and therefore it varies greatly, making it easier to study. Repeatedly it is assumed that more restricted access leads to lesser influence. Betsill and Corell (2008) showed that this relation is more complex. They claim that when NGOs are actively invited and stimulated to participate, their influence grows; in these cases NGOs were seen as important partners to achieve a common goal. On the other hand when states restrict NGO access, NGOs frequently overcome: they changed strategies and therefore less access did not constrain NGOs to influence the negotiations. This is remarkable when one notices the amount of energy and time NGOs dedicate to get a more open access to decision-making processes. They believe that more access leads to more influence but it is shown that this is not necessarily the case. The key to success lies in convincing states and decision-makers that NGOs can be an effective partner in making better decisions or implementing these, then states will actively facilitate NGOs to participate and that will lead to an increased influence. Christensen (2006) states that with soft-law real rules of access often do not exist, it is not made explicit who can and who cannot join the decision-making process, however in some certification schemes this is very well defined (Yale Program on Forest Policy and Governance, 2008).

The cases of Betsill and Corell (2008) hint that there is a relation between the *stage of negotiation* and the influence of NGOs. Two different stages can be distinguished. The first one being a formulation phase “where participants agree upon a framework for the negotiations” and a detail phase “where they bargain over the specifics of the final text” (Betsill and Corell, 2008, p.193). NGOs are seen to have more influence in the earlier stage than in the detail phase where governments are trying to solve core issues, when the tone of the negotiations is much harder. Betsill and Corell (2008) argues that the later stages are more heavily politicized, which may lead to less people to decide on the core issues (Betsill and Corell, 2008). They claim that the peak of NGO influence lies in the agenda-setting phase, the phase before the actual negotiation. NGOs co-decide what will and what will not be discussed: they identify problems and call upon states to act. This does not mean that NGOs do not have influence in the real decision but their greatest

effect is on agenda-setting, particularly when agenda-setting is defined as an on-going process rather than a distinct stage of policy making that ends once negotiation begins (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Political stakes are seen as a major factor shaping political influence. When the negotiations are in an early stage and the aims are still vague NGOs can influence the decision making to a larger extent than when the stakes are higher. Initial agreements where general principles are articulated, new organizations and decision-making processes are established can relatively easily be influenced by NGOs, as these do not require fundamental behavioural change from the government. When an NGO tries to bind a governmental body to specific commitments the stakes are higher. However, when governments have (positive) experiences working with NGOs they tend more often to work with them when there are higher stakes (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

If there is *institutional overlap*, and NGOs do not have the possibility to influence the negotiations directly, they can influence negotiations indirectly by influencing related institutions, if they. The overlap between the WTO and international trade regimes, for example, restrains the influence of Environmental NGOs while enlarging the influence of NGOs representing business/industry (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Competition from other NGOs can make it more difficult to influence negotiations since NGOs will be speaking with a diffuse voice, or all NGOs might be competing for the same financial funds or want different outcomes of the negotiation. However, NGO influence is not necessarily constrained when there is competition from other NGOs (NGO influence is not a zero-sum game) (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

When an NGO forms strong *alliances with key governmental bodies* their influence increases greatly (Betsill and Corell, 2008; Yanacolpulos, 2005). NGOs can shape the position of a state, either directly or through the public opinion and media. NGO influence increases when proposals are written that resonate the interests of the government, creating a sound basis for cooperation. NGOs and governments can both be working together and working against each other, there is no generalization possible and it has to be determined case to case.

The last mentioned factor that determines political influence is the *level of contention*. This often comes down to NGOs having more influence if there are no economic interests at stake. This factor is really relevant for this study since the potential oil revenues are a large economic interest. Short-term costs and revenues have higher priority than long term costs and benefits, and if NGOs manage to frame their claims consistently, their influence increases (Betsill and Corell, 2008). There may also be contention over sovereignty of states or lands of indigenous people. Protecting indigenous people can be threatening to states, but still NGOs often succeed (Betsill and Corell, 2008).

Next to these factors, many others are mentioned by other articles. However, they are not the most relevant for this thesis and will only be mentioned shortly. From the work of Widener (2009-1) an extra factor can be added: *scale of operation*. Some NGOs work on a higher scale and want to influence other things than NGOs that work on a lower scale. The first group might want to influence international policy while the second group focuses on the situation on the ground.

Financial capabilities of a NGO play a large role in their effectiveness. The more financial funds a NGOs has, the more effective it can work, and therefore the more influence it has (Silva, 1997).

Related are the *organisational capabilities* of NGOs, the better it is organised the more influence it can execute (Silva, 1997).

A factor that most influences the effectiveness of the influence is the *availability of expertise*. With more expertise an organization has better knowledge of what to do and how to do it. This has positive influence on the effectiveness and the amount of power since others might act upon the NGO (Silva, 1997).

There is one final group of factors that must be mentioned, but that are very different from the other factors: *contextual factors*. These factors are not controlled by any player within a political arena and might enable some actors' influence while at the same time restricting the influence of other actors.

With all the theory of this thesis introduced it is now the place to conceptualize the theory. To conceptualize the theory, a definition of political influence is needed for this thesis. Political influence is chosen since it implies executed power on chosen topics. Since the focus of this thesis closely relates to Arts book “The Political Influence of Global NGOs” (1998) his definition of political influence concerning global NGOs will be given (Arts, 1998, p.58): ... *political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to an outcome in treaty formation and implementation, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned.*” This definition can be largely used, with a minor adaptation, to define political influence in this thesis.

Arts adds that it is possible to rewrite this definition in terms of the so-called counterfactual. Then political influence implies that the policy outcomes are more in line with the desired outcomes of an actor than it would have been if he had not intervened. To put it more simple and general, the player did matter and did make a difference. Arts (1998 p. 59) adds something that is very important for this specific case: “it should be stressed that the achievement of one’s goal might not only cover the realization of a desired outcome, but the prevention of an undesired one as well”.

In this thesis political influence is defined as the achievement of (a part of) one’s policy goal with regard to governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní, which is (at least partly) caused by one’s own and intentional intervention in the political arena and process concerned

In Arts (1998, p. 60) the selective nature of agenda-setting is accepted at the theoretical level, but barely covered by the empirical research. In this thesis a different approach is chosen, since the most important possible achievement of the NGOs might be influencing the agenda setting and issue framing (Kidd et. al., 2010; Connelly and Smith, 2006; Betsill and Corell 2001). The political arena perspective will be used in this thesis since it recognizes the central role of the government. The main focus of this thesis is the influence of NGOs on the government, both intentional and un-intentional. The question if power is intentional or non-intentional is not very relevant for this study which focuses on NGO power. One can claim that all power is intentional since all organisations have their own policy goals they want to achieve, and are therefore intentionally exercising power. On the other hand NGOs have a lot of unintentional power, it can be seen as influence as a side effect, it might change the political climate or discussion unintentionally. Unintentional influence also includes negative influence in the way that this influence will make it harder to achieve its policy goals. Nevertheless a large (and the most important) part of the influence is intentional, since it is focussed on specific actors to achieve policy-goals. (Clegg, 1989).

In this thesis a whole range of different NGOs is trying to influence the outcome in Yasuní. Therefore it is hard to know which groups to include and which to exclude. In Ecuador NGOs have emerged over the last twenty years as leading actors in development. Their numbers rose greatly as did the variety in types of NGOs. Their role in policy making and grass roots organizing also became more fundamental with the retreat of the state. Now NGOs are looking for ways to find new forms of collaboration with the government. At this time NGOs can be seen as one of the most important links between grassroots and the government (Keese and Argudo, 2006).

For this thesis, groups that fit the definition of NGO from the theoretical framework are included:

“ENGOs can be defined as environmental pressure groups that seeks to influence the course of decision and policy making, with the goal to conserve nature or reduce environmental impacts”

Social movements fit this definition and are therefore included under the caller of NGO although it is recognized that they are essentially different from NGOs. In Yasuní they have the same objectives and work more or less in the same way. Not all NGOs have the same objectives in

Yasuní, they can roughly be divided in three groups. The first group is made up by organisations in favour of oil exploitation: the money gained by the oil exploitation is needed in Ecuador. This group is called *extractivistas* (those in favour of oil extraction). The second group wants to keep the oil under the ground, the so-called *ecologistas*. This group consists of people that consider the social impacts on the indigenous people in Yasuní too large and of groups that want to conserve the unique biodiversity. In reality most groups share both reasons, some have more environmental focus and others a more social focus.

The third group consists of groups that are divided; the so-called *ambientalistas*, and normally the consensus of these groups is exploitation with minimum impact. A lot of NGOs and Social movements fall under this group.

Since the *extractivistas* do not have a lot of support among Ecuadorian NGOs, and the fact that this thesis focuses on Environmental NGOs; *extractivistas* NGOs will not be studied in this thesis, it solely focuses on the *ecologistas* and *ambientalistas* NGOs, as these groups have environmental objectives, the one rather radical the other more mild. To make this clear in the rest of the study these two groups will be called ENGOS: Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations.

2.7 The conceptual model

The conceptual model presented is in line with a political arena rather than with a policy network. A disadvantage of the political arena is that it gives the impression that players, roles, rules and outcomes are fixed, however in reality these factors are to a large extent fluid. The policy network theory recognizes this, but also questions the central role of governmental bodies (Arts, 1998; Börzel, 1998 and Segebart, 2008). In this case the government can still be seen as the central player, making the political arena is the better alternative for this thesis.

This study focuses on the influence of ENGOS on the government and not on all kinds of mutual relations between the government, ENGOS and other players. It also must be stressed that although some problems in Yasuní might have been privatized in the past, for example the government retreat from negotiations between Indigenous movements and oil companies in the past, but at this moment the state is the unquestioned central player. Therefore the political arena is more suitable since it makes the government the central player and leaves enough room to study the influence of the other players including ENGOS on the government and therefore on the policy.

The theoretical model underneath (figure 4) is based on ENGO influence on Climate and Biodiversity Conventions (Arts, 1998, p. 71). This model fits in the pluralist view on power and influence: many actors co-decide and have influence.

The upper part of the model consists of external events and trends, a major factor influencing negotiations. A shift of or within the government, changed economic circumstances or a shift in the environment (local, national or global) can completely change the discussion.

Instead of an international focus as in Arts (1998), this thesis focuses at three different levels, the regional, national and international level. On all three levels are actors trying to influence the outcome. These levels are not strictly divided. A group that mostly focuses on the regional situation might seek international attention for its cause. The same can be said for international NGOs that participate in the global discussion, they might also work in small communities in Yasuní. It has to be said that although the problem takes place in three different levels the national level is the most important, and therefore has the most attention in this thesis. This is because the regional level mainly focuses on the execution of the nationally designed policy and that on the international level the ENGO actors have a lesser voice.

It is recognized that the group *others* is rather broad, and consists of many groups. However in this thesis all these groups are lumped together to get a clearer insight in the role of ENGOS: the main actors of this thesis. This choice might have influenced the research outcomes since this thesis solely focuses on the role of ENGOS. The influence of NGOs that, for example, aim at oil extraction is not investigated.

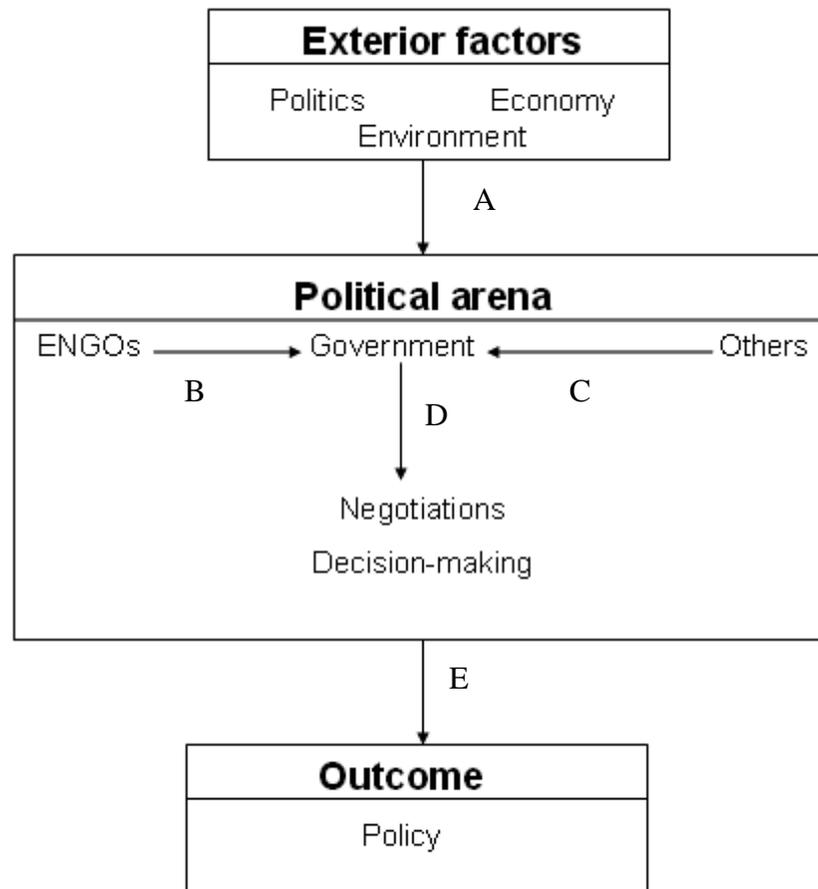


Figure 4: Main issues concerning decision-making in a political arena with NGOs (based on Arts, 1998 p.71)

Arrow (A): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors can be political, economic, environmental; and they may not be fixed, what constrains one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis etc.

Arrow (B): political influence. This is the political influence of ENGOS on the government, this includes agenda-setting and issue framing. This is the main focus of the research.

Arrow (C): political influence. This is the political influence of other actors on the government, in this thesis this group mainly consists of oil companies and their affiliates like *extractivistas* NGOs. It has to be stressed that arrow (B) and (C) are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “ENGOS”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given the formal status and position a government has. In reality, however governments do influence other players and ENGOS, but it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (D): engage in. All actors including the government engage in negotiations and decision-making. The government is the leading actor and can determine the outcomes the most. The outcome depends largely on the nature of the negotiations, and on the nature of the actors involved.

Arrow (E): leads to. The policy processes lead to outcomes in this case: policy.

In this model ENGOS can impact policy outcomes in principle, but are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors. This thesis focuses on the national level while the

international and local levels are recognized, whereas Arts' (1998) model focuses solely on the international level.

Apart from this, two other large differences exist between Arts' model and the one used in this thesis. The upper part of Arts' model consists of the international system, which in turn consists of "events and trends", and a part called "structure". Structure is divided in the distribution of resources, regimes and the rules of the game. Leaving out this structure increases the explanatory power of the central part of this model while at the same time simplifying it. Now the focus is more on the political arena, and everything influencing this arena is regarded as a given trend or event: something that changes the political arena and therefore the terms for negotiations. The other large difference between this model and that of Arts is that there is no feedback between the outcomes of the negotiation and the events and trends. Since the contextual factors are regarded as given circumstances, and this thesis is a short term research, it goes too far to for this thesis to assume that the policy influences these events and trends. The events and trends in this case are highly unpredictable. Giving the model a feedback loop might suggest that they are predictable.

To give some more context to the two research questions they will be placed in figure 4. Question 1 verifies if arrow B does exist and how large it is, in other words: how influential are ENGOs. Question 2 tries to explain arrow B: what factors can explain the influence of ENGOs. The research questions are repeated hereunder.

Question 1

To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

Question 2

What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter the research methodology for data collection and data analysis will be presented.

3.1 Assessing the Extent of Political Influence of NGOs

This chapter will present the methodology used to answer research question 1. During the fieldwork it became apparent that the method chosen to analyse the data from the interviews was not applicable in this thesis. Therefore the data will be studied in another way than was intended. The methodology chosen beforehand will be introduced first in this chapter. Then the weaknesses experienced during the fieldwork will be discussed and finally the adapted methodology will be introduced

3.1.1 Original methodology

The normal procedure of comparing cases with and without NGO influence is not applicable since all three investigated cases are unique (Finer et al., 2009; Arts, 1998; Yin, 1994). So when the commonly used comparative case analysis is not applicable, what method is most appropriate? In modern political literature three different methods to assess political influence can be distinguished: the reputation, position and decision-making methods (Arts, 1998).

The reputation method connects power with reputation, it states that what counts in social relations is the mutual perception of power. In other words: if one is regarded influential by others he will be treated as such. The same is true for the opposite, if one is regarded powerless (Arts, 1998). Using opinions of selected key figures one assesses the influence of several actors in a given community (Peters, 1999). A major weakness is the subjectivity of this study; it is completely based on the opinion of others, and it does not say much about the factual influence of an actor. An advantage is the easy way in which one can collect data. Simply by getting the reputation of having influence it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, only the reputation is enough to enhance one's influence (Peters, 1999).

The position method assumes that political influence is based on the position taken by the actors, this position directly influences access to authorities, information and other resources. The closer one is to the authorities and the more information and resources one has, the stronger one's influence is. Using this method, a kind of hierarchy can be designed to rank all actors. For example a president has more influence than a minister, who has more influence than a lobbyist and so forth (Arts, 1998). The position method has a high reliability since it is easy for organisations to pinpoint the crucial, and therefore influential, positions. The major critique on this method is that it easily assesses one's position but not the influence one executes (Peters, 1999). It is easily argued that all majors have a different level of influence while they all have the same positions, so there have to be more factors. Another critique is that it does not discriminate between different issues and political arena since respondents are only asked to assess the power of actors in general. (Arts, 1998)

These two commonly used methods are designed to analyse actors' political influence, but they do not automatically say something about who really influences a political decision (Peters, 1999; Arts, 1998). While position can certainly affect political influence it does not necessarily say much about the control of outcomes. A valid argument for this is that not all members control the outcomes of decision to the same extent, even though they have formally the same position; this differs from case to case.

Incorporating the weaknesses of the latter two methods, the decision-making method aims at analysing decision in specific issue-areas in order to reconstruct the contribution of players to the

final outcome. It assesses to what extent the actors' interventions were successful in the decision making process. This assessment is used to reconstruct the relative influence of each actor. Because key issues and key decisions are studied, the influence of political players is considered to be politically relevant (Arts, 1998; Peters, 1999). Data is generally collected by interviews with actors and decision makers and the analysis of policy documents, interviews with more objective specialists can also be used. However, the decision-making method is also criticized, mainly by Bachrach and Baratz (1962) who pinpoint that agenda setting is also influence. Another kind of critique is that one can achieve policy goals without exercising influence: it is hard to separate the extent to which one has achieved one's goal and the influence one had on that outcome (Peters, 1999).

The methods described above all have their advantages and disadvantages, and since every case needs another method, in the practice these three methods are often mixed by picking and combining relevant elements. Originally, a variation on the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal analysis, in short EAC Method, was used for this thesis. This qualitative method combines the three modern methods of analysing political influence. The methodology concerning the EAC Method is developed by Arts (1998). In his book Arts also assesses political influence of ENGOs in a rather complex political arena: the climate and biodiversity conventions. With several adaptations this methodology can be used for this study. A strong point of this methodology is that it studies the same political influence from three completely different angles, which seriously reduces the change of inaccuracies. However in Bas Arts (1998) and this thesis it is not so clear who achieved what specific result in the designed policy.

The EAC methodology works as follows.

Ego-perception

In this qualitative technique a number of selected key respondents of NGOs are asked to assess their own influence on the governmental decisions regarding oil production in Yasuní. Then they will get the opportunity to elaborate on their examples of NGO influence. These interviews will create a list of so-called *ego-perceptions*. Both the quality and quantity of these ENGO claims are taken into account in the assessment (Arts, 1998). These interviews will be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline, in this thesis table 3.

Alter-perception

After selecting a group of key respondents representing government the respondents will assess the political influence of ENGOs active in Yasuní. These result in a list representing alter-perception. Again, both the quality and quantity of these claims on NGO influence are taken into account in the assessment. For this part, other players assess both the reputation of NGOs and the factual achievement of their policy goals (Arts, 1998).

These outcomes can confirm, reject or add to the claims of the NGOs. This is the first control on the claims made by the key informants of the NGOs (Arts, 1998). These interviews in which ENGO influence will be assessed will also be done using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) as a guideline.

Causal analysis

Finally, the NGO influence will be subjected to a second control of the NGO claims, the so-called causal analysis. This is done to verify if ENGOs really did influence the policy in the way they claim.

Causal analysis is structured in the following way: First it is checked if an NGO achieved their goals regarding policy, and to what extent. The achievement of these goals is divided in two groups: enhancing a desired 'good' or preventing an undesired 'bad'. The Causal analysis helps to judge the political influence of NGOs. For this thesis, this control will be based on the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) in table 3.

The ego-perception, alter-perception and the causal analysis all point out whether there is in fact an influence of NGOs. If the alter-perception and causal analysis indicate that there was no influence it might be concluded that there was no influence although the ego-perception might claim the opposite. The situation changes where the alter-perception and causal analysis differ, then it is up to the analyst to decide which should prevail. In general the causal analysis is dominant over the alter-perception since it is based on objective documents instead of on subjective visions of key informants. However this dominance also depends on the quality of data as these might differ (Arts, 1998; Steinberg, 2004).

To put this all in perspective, it should be recognized that any assessment of political influence is after all only an informed guess (Arts, 1998). One can never be sure of having included all relevant visible and invisible factors and actors in the analysis, especially in cases like this one, where objectivity is hard to find and transparency is not a common phenomenon. Even scientific judgements on political influence remain guesses. But they are ‘informed’ at least, as the political processes concerned are analysed as thoroughly as possible. (Arts, 1998)

Ego-perception	Views of ENGO representatives with regard to their own political influence (claims)
Alter-perception	Views of government representatives with regard to the political influence of ENGOs (first control of ENGO claims)
Causal analysis	Researcher’s assessment of ENGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews (second control)

3.1.2 The problem between the methodology and the circumstances in the field

The EAC-methodology is based on a strict separation between people working in NGOs, government or other players. While this separation might have existed at an international level or in the nineteen nineties when Arts (1998) carried out his study, the interviews for this thesis showed something completely different for Ecuador. Of the 18 interviewed people 13 worked a long time within another group. For example, scientists were also NGO-employees, professors were former ministers, civil-servants worked at NGOs and people from NGOs used to work at the government. This would not have been a major problem if the people only told their experiences from their current job, but this was not the case. Since the cases studied in this thesis happened in the past people told more about their former jobs, the jobs they had when the events in Yasuní took place. This made it illogical to pretend there is a hard distinction between the Ego-perception, Alter-perception and Causal-analysis group. There were two possibilities to solve this friction between the methodology and the situation in the field. The first one was to just make a distinction of all interviews in one of the three groups. This could be done according to the current job, which has as a weakness that this was not the job the people had during the events. The second one is trying to group the people in their most meaningful group, the one they worked in during the events or their most influential job. However, this would make the influence of the researcher to unintentionally manipulate the data too large. The second possibility is to look for an alternative methodology that would solve this problem. Since there were interviews done with a very broad group of people one could assume that the truth was captured within the data derived from these interviews. Since almost all people worked at different type of jobs, the data derived from the interviews was more objective than assumed before starting the fieldwork. There were no large differences in the reconstruction of events between the point of view of a former minister and an NGO-employee. Therefore it is chosen to use all data from the interviews to reconstruct the decision-making process. This methodology will be elaborated on in the following section.

3.1.3 Alternative methodology

The methodology, aiming at answering research question 1, was adapted to solve this problem is derived from Betsill and Corell (2008), who studied several cases in which the NGO influence on environmental negotiations was central. During this research a methodology was developed to systematically analyse NGO-influence. The data needed for this is the same as Arts (1998) used and consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews with government delegates, ENGOs and specialists. Since the framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was used during the interviews to systematize the data it could easily be fit to this methodology.

Also the research task is the same: analyse evidence of ENGO influence. Only the methodology is different. The methodology is based on two different dimensions. The first is process tracing: here the participation of ENGOs will be linked to their influence using causal mechanisms to explain this influence. The other analysis is the counterfactual analysis: answering the question “what would have happened if ENGOs had not participated in the negotiations?” This separation will be held during the analysis of the results and the conclusion on the first research question of this thesis. In table 2 an overview of the research strategy, the data type, the data sources and the methodology is given.

Table 2: Strategies for gathering and analysing data on (E)NGO influence (cells contain examples of questions researchers might ask. From: Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 28)

Triangulation by:	Intentional communication by NGOs/NGO participants	Behaviour of other actors/global attainment
<i>Research task: Gather evidence of NGO influence along two dimensions</i>		
Data type	<i>Activities:</i> How did NGOs communicate with other actors?	<i>Outcome:</i> Does the final agreement contain text drafted by NGOs? Does the final agreement reflect NGO goals and principles?
	<i>Access:</i> What opportunities did NGOs have to communicate with other actors?	<i>Process:</i> Did negotiators discuss issues proposed by NGOs (or cease to discuss issues opposed by NGOs)? Did NGOs coin terms that became part of the negotiating jargon? Did NGOs shape the positions of key states?
	<i>Recourses:</i> What sources of leverage did NGOs use in communicating with other actors?	
Data source	<i>Primary texts</i> (e.g., draft decisions, country position statements, the final agreement, (NGO) lobbying materials)	
	<i>Secondary texts</i> (e.g.[...]media reports, press releases)	
	<i>Interviews</i> (government delegates, observers, NGOs) <i>Researcher observations</i> during the negotiations	
<i>Research task: analyse evidence of NGO influence</i>		
Methodology	<i>Process tracing</i> What were the causal mechanisms linking NGO participation in [...] environmental negotiations with their influence?	<i>Counterfactual analysis</i> What would have happened if NGOs had not participated in the negotiations?

In this thesis the extent of political influence is not directly measured or asked in interviews, solely whether there was influence. Table 3, shown below, was used as a framework to systematically analyse the political influence of ENGOs during interviews. The influence of ENGOs was investigated for the five recognized phases: Issue framing, agenda setting, position of key actors, final agreement/procedural issues and final agreement/ substantive issues. In the framework presented in table 3, several questions are presented for all these phases to help the systematic analysis. These questions are answered as part of the results of this thesis.

Claims made by all respondents were verified so that in the end a conclusion could be drawn about the level of influence. Therefore it was chosen to keep the data collection as qualitative as possible with the only exception that the data derived from interviews was used to differentiate between low, moderate and high ENGO influence, as is done in table 4, based on the framework designed by Betsill and Corell (2008 p. 38). The input for this scheme is the completely filled in framework of table 3, which points out if there was ENGO influence, and in what phase. Together these two tables form a complete methodology that enables the researcher to systematically investigate ENGO influence.

Three final schemes will be made one for “La Zona Intangible”, one for Block 31 and the last one for Yasuní-ITT. The conclusion will be drawn when the final scheme of each topic will be linked to table 4. This will lead to three end conclusions of ENGO influence of low, moderate or high, on all three subtopics, and thereby to an answer on research question 1.

Table 3: Indicators of NGO influence (quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p 34,35)

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

Table 4: Determining the level of NGO influence (Quoted from Betsill and Corell, 2008 p.38)

	Low	Moderate	High
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate and have some success in shaping the negotiating process but not the outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiating process • NGOs' effects of participation can be linked to outcome
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a no on all the outcome indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs engage in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations • NGOs score a yes on some or all of the process indicators • NGOs score a yes on one or both of the outcome indicators

3.8 Assessing the Explanatory Factors of NGO Influence

This section introduces the methodology used to answer research question two: What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni? This is done after the first research question is answered being: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” The second question tries to explain the political influence of ENGOs.

To collect the data used to answer the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuni?” all interviewees were asked for the factors that can explain ENGO-influence. This resulted in a ranking of mentioned factors. This list, combined with the list from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used to draw conclusions on the explanatory factors of ENGO-influence.

During the interviews people were asked which factors might have explained the political influence of ENGOs in the Yasuní case, and in interviews with ENGOs which factors might have explained their specific influence. This was done for both enabling and restricting factors. These factors are investigated using interviews, with the data from these interviews one can study how ENGOs have influenced both the negotiation process (through issue framing, agenda setting and shaping the positions of other actors) as well as the outcome (procedural and substantive elements of the final text) of the negotiations concerning the production of oil in Yasuní (Betsill and Corell, 2008). Finally in the discussion a distinction will be made for the explanatory factors for the three sub-topics since not every factor might be as important, or even present, in all three cases.

3.9 Research Strategy

Three different subtopics will be investigated in this thesis, all three very important to answer the research questions. The first will be the construction of “la Zona Intangible” (No-Go Zone), an area that cannot be developed because of the uncontacted indigenous people living there. The construction of this No-Go Zone and the construction of its final boundaries were negotiations where various NGOs tried to influence the outcome. This decision places several oil fields off limits for exploitation.

The second theme is block 31, an oil block that is not yet exploited within the National Park. Previously Petrobras owned it but after a negotiation process between Petrobras, the Ecuadorian government and NGOs Petrobras decided to give block 31 back to the Ecuadorian state.

The third theme concerns Yasuní-ITT. This initiative proposes to keep all the oil in the ITT field underground and let other countries pay half of the expected revenues. This money will be guarded by the UNDP and will be invested in sustainable development projects in Ecuador.

The investigation will be done according to the research strategy designed by Betsill and Corell (2008). Process tracing will be important in this thesis, by reconstructing the process the role of ENGOs and their influence can be analysed. Another important methodology is the counterfactual analysis: asking the question: “what would have happened without ENGOs?” This latter strategy is of major importance for the first research question.

3.10 Data Collection

As can be seen in table 2, the data source consists of primary texts, secondary texts and interviews. Interviews are especially important to retrieve data for this thesis, used to reconstruct the decision-making process and to answer finally the question “what would have happened without ENGOs?”

18 interviews were held. Since people were also asked about former work-experience an extended list of institutions were analysed, of which a complete list can be found in Appendix 2. This list shows that in fact a substantial larger group of ENGOs, governmental bodies and specialists were interviewed.

To avoid an “in crowd,” people were asked who their “opponents” are or with whom they disagree. To include important people the interviewees were asked to name the actors that facilitated the process. This is called snowball sampling, but with the slight difference that in this way opponents are also selected. This is done to counter the most common flaw: the dependence on the first sample of interviewees and their contacts (Kumar, 2005). This is a very useful method for decision-making and for groups that are not completely understood how they interact.

The texts used in this thesis were almost without an exception of Ecuadorian origin and therefore written in Spanish. Primary texts in this thesis mainly consist of formal governmental decisions, decrees by secretaries of state and lobbying material from a range of actors. Secondary texts are mainly media reports, press releases, documentaries and other articles.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data collected for this thesis is purely qualitative. First the data analysis for the first research question will be given and in the sub-chapter thereafter the data analysis for the explanatory factors of political influence will be given.

The data used to answer research question 1 consists of interviews and primary and secondary texts, this will be used in two different ways. With all these data the decision-making process will be reconstructed. Since many interviewees wanted to be anonymous and unrecognizable it is impossible to use many quotes since names are easily obtained from these. However all data will only be presented if it is verifiable. So the results are a reconstruction of the decision-making process and with extra stress on the role of ENGOs in this. The decision-making process is be divided in five phases, corresponding to table 3: Issue framing, agenda setting, influence on key actors, and the procedural issues and substantive issues of the final agreement.

The results used to answer research question 2 consist of the factors mentioned during the interviews that could explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. A ranking will be made of these factors with the number of times it is mentioned. A conclusion will be drawn using these factors and linking them with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008). Together with the decision-making process it will be made clear which factors are of more and lesser importance.

4. Results

This chapter shows all results from interviews concerning the influence of ENGOs more in depth and with more details, and is structured as table from Betsill and Corell (2008); see p29. This is done three times, each time for the three different subtopics: Zona-Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní-ITT. These extended reconstruction will be used to fill in a complete framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) that will be presented with the conclusions. Later an analysis will be given on what would have happened without ENGOs, the counterfactual analysis. This is done for all three topics. The analysis starts with the issue framing of Yasuní as a whole and the role of ENGOs, because this can be seen as the start of the three topics. First Yasuní as a whole was framed, and later the entire decision-making process for all three topics started, including the framing of the specific issue.

4.1 ENGO influence on framing Yasuní

ENGOs have claimed to influence the framing of Yasuní National Park as (one of) the place(s) with the highest biodiversity in the world, and as a special issue of the New Internationalist. Many initiatives to frame Yasuní as the most biodiverse place on the planet came from civil society like “Yasuní Green Gold”, “el Yasuní depende de tí”, “Expedición Andarele” and “Yasuní por la vida”. The four highest Google hits for “Yasuní” are on number one “live Yasuní” from the ENGO Finding Species. Number two is from Wikipedia, the third is “SOS Yasuní” from the Ecuadorian ENGO Acción Ecologica. The fourth is “Save Yasuní” from the American ENGO “Save America’s Forests”. The first government controlled hit can be found on the eight place.

The same can be said about books; most of the books and articles written about Yasuní are written or compiled by ENGOs (3 respondents). Only since Yasuní ITT the government has written more about Yasuní. New social media become increasingly more important as a source of information, especially for the younger more cosmopolite generation. On Facebook all hits except one (Wikipedia) are from ENGOs and Social movements. Twitter is less used, three groups use “Yasuní” name: one movie that wants to promote the ITT initiative from civil society, one high school project that aims at the same goals and the official, however not active, Yasuní-ITT-account from the Ecuadorian government. Remarkable is that all except the one aiming at fundraising for the Yasuní movie are not used since October 2010. The same is true for the Facebook accounts.

The scientist concerned for Yasuní (SCY) possibly made the highest contribution to frame Yasuní as a unique place with an extraordinary biodiversity. The findings from this report that concludes that Yasuní is the place with the highest biodiversity known to men, is quoted in almost every article related to Yasuní (Acosta, 2010; Acosta et al., 2010; Larrea, 2010; Honty, 2010; Martinez, 2010; Villavicencio, 2010; Bass et al., 2009; Finer et al., 2009; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Yasuní ITT, 2009; Finer et al., 2008). But SCY is not a science-based initiative. It was initiated by two ENGOs from the USA: Finding Species and Save America’s Forests. It was also the work of ENGOs that seven famous and respected scientists joined the campaign and wrote letters to stop the construction of Petrobras’ oil road in block 31. These letters even ended as a news article in the New York Times (New York Times, 17 Feb. 2005)

Even the government uses a lot of material provided by ENGOs, in the airport of San Francisco de Orellana or shortly Rio Coca, the gateway city to Yasuní, the entire airport is decorated by photos from Finding Species.

Another remarkable achievement is the sheer number of stickers, posters etc. provided by ENGOs. Stickers provided by ENGOs can be found on lampposts throughout cities and posters are hung in many important buildings, especially in the governmental hub of Quito and larger cities in the Amazon. Hereunder in figure 5 a timeline is presented with all the important dates from Ecuadorian politics and the three different subtopics.

Timeline Yasuní

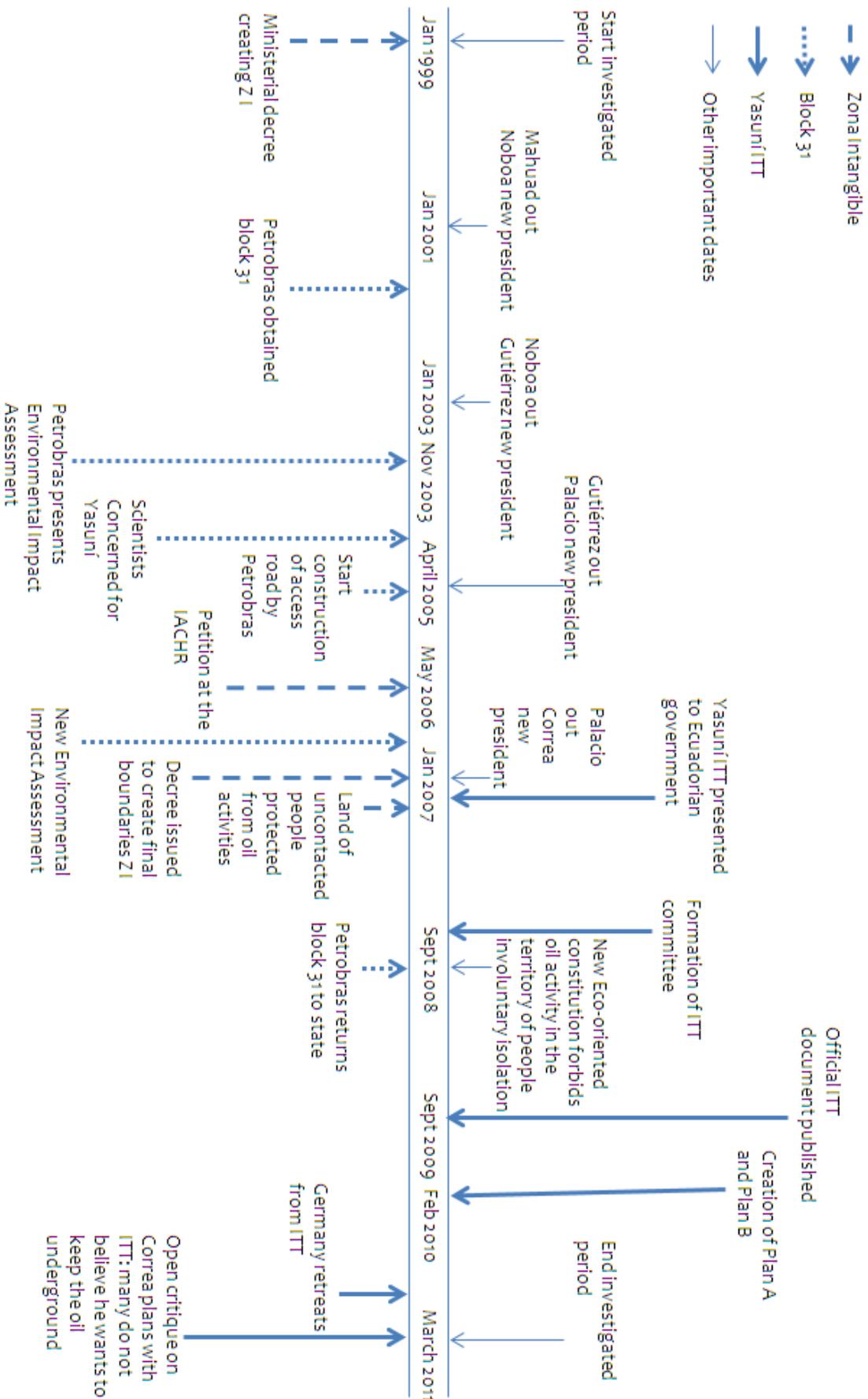


Figure 5: Timeline of Yasuní with all important events concerning the Zona Intangible, Block 31 and Yasuní ITT

4.2 Process tracing of La Zona Intangible

The first theme that will be discussed is the one that has its roots deepest in history, La Zona-Intangible. Its roots go back almost thirty years when indigenous people started to ask for an oil-moratorium. In January 1999 “La Zona-Intangible” (ZI) was created by a decree of the minister of environment (Yolanda Kakabadse) in order to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane. Although it was decided that the Zona-Intangible was to be located in the southern part of Yasuní it did not yet get fixed borders. Since the created no-go zone did not have borders it was impossible to enforce the laws protecting this area and illegal logging, for example, took a rise. In 2006 more than ten logging camps were present in the Zona-Intangible. On the May 1st, 2006 a group of Ecuadorian activists petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to intervene and force the Ecuadorian government to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane from all different threats. On the tenth of May, 2006 the IACHR called on the Ecuadorian government to adopt specific ‘precautionary measures’ in order to protect the indigenous tribes by putting measures into practice to prevent the entry of outsiders, such as loggers and oil workers into their territory (Bass et al., 2010; Finer et al., 2009; Narvaéz, 2009; interviews with 6 respondents). In January 2007, eight years after the Zona-Intangible had been created, the president signed a decree to draw its final boundaries. This was followed in April 2007 by a new policy on uncontacted people of the Ecuadorian government, which places their territories off-limits to extractive activities (Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 3 respondents). In the following months a logger was killed just outside the Zona-Intangible. It became obvious that the ZI did not cover the complete living grounds of the Tagaeri and Taromenane. In March 2008 the implementation of the IACHR’s precautionary measures started, creating the first military control point to protect the ZI in April 2008, and it stopped the illegal logging effectively (Finer et al., 2009; Proaño and Colleoni, 2008; interviews with 4 respondents). Ecuador’s new constitution created under president Correa from September 2008 forbids all extractive activities within the territory of indigenous people living in voluntary isolation, and calls the violation of these right ethnocide (Constitution of Ecuador, 2008; Finer et al., 2009; interviews with 4 respondents)

4.3 Results on ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible

This chapter demonstrates all results concerning the Zona-Intangible, using Betsill and Corell’s (2008) framework (table 3). This table forms the red line of this chapter. The five table heads are converted in five sub-chapters and will discuss the main issues from table 3. It starts with issue framing then, agenda setting, the position of key actors followed by the final agreement procedural and later substantive issues. One part of the scheme from Betsill and Corell (2008) has been adapted, under agenda setting the “terms of debate” have not been included. This is done since the majority of the respondents did not understand the answer or did not know what to answer. Since this led to a shortage of usable results it has been chosen to not include this in neither the results nor the discussion.

The information for this chapter consists of 7 interviews that gave substantial information about the ZI, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.3.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning La Zona Intangible

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

First there was the idea from ENGOs and indigenous groups that wanted an oil moratorium in the entire Amazon. This idea had been around since the 1970s. In 1964 Chevron-Texaco was working in the Ecuadorian Amazon under the name of Texpet. The operations were mainly in the northern part of the Amazon near Lago Agrio, and caused an ecological disaster. Hundreds of millions litres of water were polluted and the nature and people suffered severely. This induced the activism of people living in the southern parts of the Amazon, who did not want the fate of their northern

neighbours. Their solution, supported by ENGOs like Oilwatch and Acción Ecológica, was a moratorium for oil in the entire Amazon (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews). The government did not agree and wanted the oil extracted to fund necessary investments in education, health and infrastructure. (7 interviews)

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

When Yolanda Kakabadse came into office in August 1998 she saw the problems, and wanted to protect the uncontacted indigenous people, but also other indigenous groups and Yasuni's fragile ecosystem. All protected areas in Ecuador are under direct control of the minister of environment. Therefore she had the power to declare two areas no-go-zone for development, particularly since uncontacted people were living there. The Intangible Zones are something different than an oil-moratorium, so there was a noticeable shift on the issue. First the government changed its opinion, from exploitation to preservation, however 5 different presidents led the government during the negotiations, inducing several severe shifts in the government perception (5 interviews). Secondly a large group of ENGOs did agree on the official governmental plans, although not all (4 interviews). Finally, oil companies strongly opposed to the plans of a ZI, this did not change during the negotiations (7 interviews).

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The role of ENGOs on the agenda setting of La Zona Intangible seems to be marginal, except from raising a discussion about an oil moratorium in the Ecuadorian Amazon. However, that discussion started in the 1980s and nothing had been done until 1999, when the minister of environment made the decree declaring two No-Go-Zones. It looks like ENGOs and indigenous groups started the discussion and when the right person had the power to make a change a part of the initial plan was executed. However direct influence on the issue framing by ENGOs seems rather unlikely (Bass et al, 2010; Finer et al, 2009; 10 interviews).

ENGO influence on issue framing?

No, ENGOs started the discussion on oil a moratorium, but it cannot be proven to have influenced the idea of a ZI.

4.3.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning La Zona Intangible

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

The minister of environment that created the ZI, Yolanda Kakabadse, did that on her own initiative although here goals were almost identical to that of many ENGOs and indigenous groups she states. Since the Man and Biosphere Reserve fell under her jurisdiction she could "finally" create a No-Go-Zone. She was the one that brought the idea of a ZI to the attention of the community. These statements from Kakabadse are underwritten by all 6 other respondents.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The construction of a no-go-zone was put on the agenda, but there was not a real negotiation. The minister of environment formulated a decree and that was executed. The creation of an oil moratorium for the entire Amazon never entered the agenda although it was often suggested by environmental groups. Two ENGOs, Fundación Natura and EcoCiencia, gave technical assistance to Yolanda Kakabadse when she was minister of Environment in 1999 to design the Zona Intangible of Yasuni and the Zona-Intangible Cuyabeno (Narvaéz, 2009). Oil-companies also tried change the boundaries so that oil wells were not placed off limits (lobbying material of Andes Petroleum; 7 interviews).

After 7 years without definitive frontiers the creation of these boundaries was put on the agenda again by ENGOs, first without success but after a government change it was formulated as a priority by the government.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

The role of ENGOs in shaping the agenda is not completely clear: they did start the discussion of the oil moratorium, but this was never put on the agenda. The no-go-zones came from within the government, and while there might be indirect influence of ENGOs in framing the issue of oil extraction, biodiversity and uncontacted people, this is not evident.

Acción Ecológica, an Ecuadorian ENGO, opposed the creation of a ZI that did not cover the entire Ecuadorian Amazon was stated by 3 respondents not affiliated with Acción Ecológica. This led to a diffuse sound from ENGOs being split in two groups at that time. One group was pro-ZI, since they believed that it was the best they could achieve, the other group consisted of ENGOs and indigenous groups that disapproved the ZI because it was not ambitious enough. According to the three respondents this led to tension between ENGOs and made it harder to influence the government and impossible to claim that either group did influence the government decisively. A high civil servant gives the following explanation: “In 2004 a coalition of civil activists: *el grupo de vigilancia* and an indigenous movement: *las indígenas de seis lados* took action, this was the impulse to restart the discussion of the ZI boundaries. Later many ENGOs, scientists, and other civil society groups joined the discussion. At this time the process to draw borders was started again but the president at that time, Lucio Gutiérrez was not interested in the theme. In the end of 2006 it was restarted again from nothing under president Palacio, here the foundations were laid that led under the boundaries of the ZI under president Correa”.

Two respondents, state that the formation of the borders of the ZI in 2006 was placed on the agenda by ENGOs. Another source state that the force behind the creation of the boundaries were not ENGOs although he knows ENGOs claim this but the sub-secretary of the minister of environment at that time, first months of 2007. On this statement the former two state they had contacts within the government that could speed things up.

The second agenda, with the boundaries of the ZI, might be shaped by ENGOs, they raised the topic again in 2006 but did not succeed. A year later with a new government they did succeed, but it is not clear if this is due to ENGOs, or to a new government that wanted to solve this problem created by former governments. People in interviews disagree on this; it is possible that certain ENGOs are overestimating their influence while other players underestimate their influence. However, it looks like ENGOs could only succeed in their goals if they had powerful contacts within the government. And these newly installed governmental employees already had the same opinion. ENGOs seem to have functioned as a watchdog at this time, unable to achieve their goals single-handedly, but with the right governmental people in place they might have sped up the process (interviews).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, the agenda was set and dominated by the government, however at times ENGOs functioned as a watchdog to ensure that the creation of boundaries was not completely off the agenda.

4.3.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning La Zona Intangible

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government formulated the idea of creating a no-go-zone, so that might be their initial position in this case. Many ENGOs had the same opinion, although definitely not all. Several ENGOs especially Acción Ecológica considered the plans were not ambitious enough. So a pragmatic (and *ambientalistas*) group of ENGOs went for the governmental plans since it was a lot better than nothing and they feared that when they would be too ambitious they might have ended empty-handed. The last key actor in this are oil companies, who wanted to secure their investments and their oil-blocks. Therefore they wanted no Zona-Intangible but when it would be created at least outside their oil blocks (lobby materials Andes Petroleum, interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

One can be certain that the oil companies did not change their opinion; they wanted to stop the creation of the ZI and to reformulate the boundaries to exclude some important oil wells. The opinion of ENGOs did not change either, the two groups remained existing next to each other. The only actor that did change (their opinion) was the Ecuadorian government, which was led by 5 different presidents during the negotiations of 1999 until 2007. No other change was noticed only that the two governments from Noboa and Gutierrez (January 21, 2000 until April 20, 2005) had no priorities creating the ZI's final boundaries. This finally changed in 2006 under the presidency of Palacio. The process restarted and the complete process was successfully finished under President Correa in 2007. One respondent shows that the most important trigger to restart the negotiation in 2006 were new oil explorations in block 14 and 17, that would fall in the ZI, but since it did not have boundaries the oil companies could still try to erect an oil post. This made all actors aware that nothing had been solved yet.

Half of block 14 and 17 fell within the supposed boundaries of the ZI. The oil companies wanted to fix this problem legally, but the government did not want that, and ENGOs were exercising pressure at that time to finally create some borders. Since the official aim of the ZI was to protect the Tagaeri and Taromenane the government sent airplanes to scout them from the air. All living grounds of these people were to be protected by the ZI, and the borders were drawn by minister Alban, an eco-orientated minister that already played a key role in block 31.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs tried to shape the position of the government especially under president Gutierrez, this failed several times. When Palacio came into office some people within the government were open to idea of drawing the ZI's boundaries. This made it easier for ENGOs to join meetings. The influence of ENGOs is discussed severely, more than a few people from ENGOs claimed to have played a key role in drawing the borders of the ZI. Not only several people from the government but also more objective specialists oppose this claim. They state that the role of some individual governmental players was more substantial and that these ENGO-employees are severely overestimating their influence. The specialists seem to have a better overview of the negotiation process, and therefore it can be argued that reality resembles their reconstruction.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did try to influence the government, but the government only changed when a new president was installed.

4.3.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning La Zona Intangible

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed.

4.3.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning La Zona Intangible

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The opinion of the majority of ENGOs is resembled in the final agreement, a no-go-zone for development and oil exploitation in Yasuní to protect the (uncontacted) indigenous people and the environment. However some wanted a more ambitious plan.

After an exhausting process and eight years, the borders were drawn of the ZI just about the time oil companies started new explorations. Several oil fields were placed off-limits by the final boundaries of the ZI for example half of block 14 and the Imuya post in the ITT block. This was celebrated as a victory by many ENGOs (interviews).

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Except from joining some meetings and functioning as a watchdog, the role of ENGOs might be rather small. There is some evidence that ENGOs sped up the process of drawing the borders, however no new decisions were made purely because ENGOs promoted it (interviews). In the literature very little can be found from the hands of ENGO concerning the ZI. In comparison to Yasuni-ITT and Block 31 also very little can be found on the websites of ENGOs, as well in other materials distributed by ENGOs.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the content of the agreement was not changed by ENGO influence, although they might have speeded it up in the final stage

4.4 Counterfactual analysis in La Zona Intangible

What would have happened to la Zona Intangible without the participation of ENGOs? Indigenous movements, not ENGOs, started the discussion of an oil moratorium; ENGOs joined later.

It might be that the focus shifted a bit towards nature conservation instead of the living grounds of indigenous people, but in practise it comes down to the same: a large part of the Biosphere Reserve needed extra protection.

The agenda setting might not have differed a lot in the beginning, since the minister of environment raised the whole topic, but in a later stage ENGOs were functioning as a watchdog. Making sure the drawing of the boundaries was never completely off the agenda. But did that make a difference? In 2007 a green government was installed led by Raphael Correa, with or without ENGOs protecting parts of this fragile ecosystem better was one of its teams priorities. ENGOs were not able to change the position of the government possibly also due to the fact that five presidents led the country during the negotiation. No time was available to strengthen their network within the government. It is hard to say if ENGO participation made a difference to the solution, most respondents from ENGOs and other institutions agree that it was almost an entirely government led process. ENGOs were free to join in meetings, but only if they knew the right people in the government could they really exercise influence. Therefore one can conclude that already conservation-orientated people were in the governmental staff when the boundaries were drawn, they may have succeeded without the ENGOs.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the Zona-Intangible seems to be low: ENGOs participate in the negotiations but without effect on either process or outcome. In this case ENGOs did join in the negotiation process, but they do not score a yes on any of the influence indicators. However, who knows what would have happened without ENGOs keeping this topic on the agenda during the political difficult years between 1999 and 2006?

4.5 Process tracing of Block 31

The subsequent topic that will be discussed consists of a series of the negotiations concerning Block 31. The invested period for Block 31 starts in 2003 when Petrobras takes over block 31 from Perez Companc, reaches its summit with the battle for block 31 which makes Petrobras decide to return block 31 and ends in 2011 when this block is still state-owned but not yet leased. Why is there so much hassle about block 31 when it has been proven that the amount of oil in this block is hardly enough to financially break even (Rival, 2010)? Block 31 is the gateway to the large

adjacent reserves in block ITT. To extract the heavy crude of ITT lighter oil is needed to create a mix that is easy to pump up. However when block ITT would not be exploited, block 31 would lose its strategic value and would not be exploited either (1 interview).

This issue commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road, but before the government approved the EIS, Petrobras started the construction of this oil road. What happened afterwards and what was the role of ENGOs in all this?

As stated above the process started when Perez Companc, an Argentinean oil company, sold the exploitation rights of block 31 to Petrobras in 2002 (interviews; Finer et al. 2009). Petrobras presented an Environmental Impact Study in 2003 for the oil reserves of Nenke and Apaika. This study called for the construction of an access road into the National Park (4 interviews; Finer et al., 2009). At that moment the real negotiation started.

To prevent this road an extended research was started involving 59 scientists with experience in Yasuní, called the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní (SCY). The American ENGOs Finding Species and Save America's Forests initiated this initiative. The SCY created an unsolicited Technical Advisory Report regarding the plans for block 31. This report concluded that the greatest threat for the area were the direct and indirect effects of access roads. Later the Smithsonian Institute and The Association for Tropical Biology also published science based letters opposing to this access road (4 interviews; SCY; Finer et al., 2009).

Around the same time several Ecuadorian ENGOs started a lawsuit challenging the fact the relocation of a new processing facility required for the project into the park without proper studies. A second lawsuit was started by human right groups focussing on Constitutional violations of the project (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009).

The Grupo Asesor Técnico de Parque Nacional Yasuní (GAT) was one of the first to know what was going on. This group consisting of ENGOs, universities, local governments and civil right groups were the first ones to know that Petrobras already started with the construction of the not yet approved access road in May 2005. Together with the president of the national park they informed the government demanding that no roads were to be allowed in the National Park. They also demanded reduced impact for the oil pipe. Despite being informed the government did not take a strong position in this issue, they did not force Petrobras to stop (2 interviews). This road reached the northern frontier of Yasuní National Park, and Petrobras was seeking the final permit that would allow them to enter the National Park (Finer et al., 2009). The other permits had already been signed by the minister of Environment, and several details were changed during a meeting with the GAT. Meanwhile ENGOs from the GAT formed a coalition called Amigos de Yasuní and accused the universities and governmental bodies of being environmental unfriendly. Wildlife Conservation Society-Ecuador (WCS) had to change director and the Universidad Pontificia Católica resigned from the GAT (1 interview). Although struggling with internal unrest the GAT demanded that Petrobras would not cross the Rio Tiputini, and when Petrobras did start the road between Rio Tiputini and the National Park the GAT demanded a suspension of their licenses, and that no final license would be given.

At this time President Lucio Gutierrez was forced out of office by the Ecuadorian people and was replaced by Alfredo Palacio: a radical change. Palacio re-examined the oil access road issue in block 31. "On 7 July 2005 the newly installed minister of Environment informed Petrobras that they were not authorized to construct the processing facility or road into the park and instead had to develop a road-less entry design with the processing facility located outside the park" (Finer et al., 2009 p.12). This new minister did not know much about Yasuní and its problems and was introduced to all this material by ENGOs.

“Less than a week later, over 150 Waorani marched through the streets of Quito to protest the Petrobras project and delivered a letter to the government calling for a 10 year moratorium on new oil projects in their territory” (Finer et al., 2009 p.12).

In September 2006 Petrobras submitted a new Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS). This EIS called for a processing facility outside the National Park and for helicopter access to the drilling platforms instead of a road. (ENGO petition 22 march 2007; Finer et al., 2009). Letters were sent by ENGOs in September 2006 to point out the weaknesses and threats from the new Ecological Assessment of Petrobras. However, the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment disagreed and discarded the letters from the scientists and ENGOs involved (interview, Save America’s Forests). Why did Petrobras leave block 31 after having invested more than \$200 million? Several versions of this story are told.

1 Ana Alban, the minister of environment under the presidents Palacio and Correa did not like Petrobras and the way they operated. Therefore she never gave the final license needed to access the National Park. Petrobras tired of waiting returned the block to the Ecuadorian state (1 interview)

2 While starting the construction Petrobras used boats a lot bigger that was allowed in the contract. Petrobras also dumped several barrels of diesel in the Rio Napo, these nonconformities were pointed out to the minister of environment by ENGOs, leading to the suspension of the license for 2 years. Not being able to work would cost a lot of money and therefore Petrobras decided to return block 31 (1 interview)

#3 When this license was issued by the minister of environment it was not yet backed up by local governments what was necessary for its validity. One local civil servant in the Amazonian town of Rio Coca did not want to sign this license. According to two respondents he saw the destruction created by oil companies in the Amazon and wanted to protect the area he grew up in. Unfortunately his motives are not verifiable. Remarkably he was the only one allowed to sign the local license for Petrobras. So when the final license was given, it was not yet backed up legally on a local level, making block 31’s oil production illegal (2 interviews).

4 In October 2007 the minister of environment issued the license. This triggered a new round of ENGO petitions and actions. In September 2008 President Correa suddenly declared that Petrobras resigned and had returned block 31 to the Ecuadorian state (Finer, 2009; ENGO petition 22 march 2007).

Knowing that all interviewees only knew their own side of the story, the truth has to be a combination of these three stories. This all finally caused Petrobras to terminate its contract. Directly afterwards block 31 was transferred to state-owned Petroamazonas SA.

With the new 2008 constitution in place, which forbids oil extraction in protected areas, block 31 seems to be protected sufficiently. However an exception was built-in, it allows drilling to proceed if it was petitioned by the President and declared in the national interest by the Congress, which may call for a national referendum if deemed necessary (Finer et al., 2009; 3 interviews, Constitution of Ecuador, 2008).

4.6 Results on ENGO influence on Block 31

The information for this chapter consists of 5 interviews that gave substantial information about block 31, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

The 5 main sources unanimously explain that this topic commenced when Petrobras, a Brazilian oil-company, took over block 31 from Perez Companc in 2003. An Environmental Impact Study (EIS) showed plans for two oil reserves and a new access road. Before the government approved the EIS Petrobras started the construction of this oil road.

4.6.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Block 31

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

Oil production in block 31 seemed to be the best option for the Ecuadorian government and oil companies, and at that time the government did not oppose construction of an access road (5 interviews). ENGOs and indigenous organisations fiercely opposed to these plans. The GAT opposed to the construction of an access road, not to oil extraction.

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

All five respondents, underwrite the importance of *Scientists concerned for Yasuní*: an initiative by Finding Species and Save America's Forests, two American ENGOs. They created a unsolicited Technical Advisory Report that consisted of scientific research of 59 well-known researchers on the biodiversity of Yasuní. The words that framed the complete Yasuní-issue was uttered here first: "Yasuní has the highest known biodiversity of the planet". All 5 respondents noticed a change in the governmental approach: from oil-production with an access road to a more environmental approach. Also people from within the government and opponents of the SCY underwrite their significance for framing Yasuní as one of the most biodiverse places on the planet and defining the direct and indirect consequences of roads as its biggest threat. This strengthened the GAT's and ENGOs' claim to stop the construction of roads. Again the change from the Gutiérrez presidency to Palacio's did also make a large difference, Palacio was more eco-oriented and under his presidency Petrobras was suddenly expected to present greener plans.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

The ENGO induced the SCY frame into the entire discussion and also later discussions about oil exploitation in Yasuní (5 interviews). This putted the creation of an access road and oil-production in a completely different light. However other actions by a variety of ENGOs made the Ecuadorian people aware of the problems in block 31 (1 interview; Finer et al., 2009). The latter might be less obvious but it also activated another group of people that might have made the difference in a later stadium: civil activists, civil servants and ordinary citizens. 1 respondent also emphasized the importance of large actions of the ENGO-indigenous coalition, this made people aware of the risks for the people living in Yasuní and the environment.

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, ENGOs did influence the issue framing of block 31, especially in the role of SCY and activist ENGOs.

4.6.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Block 31

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

Three respondents claimed that the SCY played a key role, however one stated that the actions by other ENGOs did catch the eye earlier. It was also stated that the issue came to the attention of the community when Petrobras applied for the environmental license. This was also the first time national newspapers wrote about it. However it became a major topic on an international scale when Finding Species and Save America's Forests joined the campaign and sponsored the study of the SCY. This led to a storm of national and international media attention, and also reached many people from within the government. So the scale was determined by the SCY while it might not have been the first moment for Ecuadorians to hear about block 31. The attention generated

by the SCY was later used by other ENGOs and civil society organisations to find a large audience and impact during their actions.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

The most important is the construction of an oil road and the EIS placed on the agenda by Petrobras and the alternative: extraction without roads was placed on the agenda by the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

ENGOs tried to influence decision-making by starting lawsuits at different times, lobbying, supplying scientific research and actions to influence the public opinion and the government. They also joined a large number of meetings (Finer et al., 2009; 7 interviews). Later when the inexperienced Alban became minister of environment ENGOs introduced her to the topic, framing her mind-set against oil extraction, Petrobras etc. (1 interview).

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

Yes, indirectly through the GAT and also directly with a lot of interaction between the government and ENGOs.

4.6.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Block 31

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government and Petrobras wanted to extract the oil. The GAT allowed extraction but opposed to the idea of an access road. ENGOs generally opposed both (interviews).

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

A respondent involved in the first negotiation phase gave the following reconstruction: “When Petrobras announced in a meeting with the president of the National Park that the construction of the access road already had been started the latter informed the government. A series of discussions and meetings started, consisting of Petrobras, government representatives and the GAT. The first demand of the GAT was no access roads within the National Park. The oil pipe could be constructed with reduced impact. The government acted weak and did not have strict demands on how things should be executed.”

The government made a radical change when president Gutierrez was replaced by Palacio. They became greener and stricter. ENGOs did not change their position much; at times they became more or less active. This was called opportunism by the GAT blaming ENGOs for only taking interest in Yasuní when things were going wrong and taking all credits. This demonstrates a growing tension within the GAT between ENGOs, universities and governmental bodies and a tension between groups inside and outside the GAT.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. All these played a role, the sheer number of actions might have influenced the general opinion, the official governmental opinion and the opinion of individual decision-makers, as is pointed out in the reconstruction option 3. 1 respondent from a ENGO explained that a large action about block 16 created a coalition between ENGOs and indigenous people, these groups started an even larger protest to protect block 31, this coalition wanted to stop the oil-extraction altogether. The actions were based on the fact that in Brazil it is illegal to drill for oil in protected areas. Petrobras, owned for 50% by the Brazilian state, was using double standards.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

Yes, ENGOs did not only raise the issue and frame the topic in an environmental way, but also pointed out a lot of things to the government; their lobby and negotiation seemed effective. The strongest example is that Alban was introduced to the topic by ENGOs

4.6.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues Block 31

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (5 interviews). Although the GAT consisted partly of ENGOs, this only applied to earlier negotiations.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs in the negotiations was never discussed and therefore not formalised either.

4.6.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues of Block 31

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

It very much does, no oil has been exploited, no road entered Yasuní, Petrobras returned block 31 to the state, oil exploitation without access roads became the standard option for the government. It looks like an outright success story, yet in the near future Petroamazonas might start the exploitation, block 31 is not officially protected from oil companies.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

ENGOs were active in a variety of ways, in the interviews actions, lobbying, research, lawsuits, demonstrations, media attention were mentioned. ENGOs were present in staggering numbers; over 50 national and international ENGOs joined the campaign. The most important actions might have been in the meeting rooms with ministers and high officials. There they could shape the discussion and supply the decision-makers with essential (scientific) information. 3 respondents also demonstrated that many things that were illegal or non-conform Petrobras' contract, this lead to governmental sanctions and actions. 3 respondents underline the role of ENGOs in supplying scientific data about the effects of oil roads. 2 mention the intensive media offense and the role of the SCY.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, the final result is in line with ENGOs' policy goals, and they played a substantial role in the negotiation process.

4.7 Counterfactual analysis in Block 31

What would have happened without ENGOs? 4 respondents answered that question and all of them said that the oil in block 31 would already have been exploited, using an oil access road. Having seen and processed all data and after reading many articles it still seems to be true. The role of ENGOs within and outside the GAT was so large that it changed the complete decision-making process; it almost became dominated by ENGOs. What would the government have done without knowing that Yasuní was one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, and without the attention it created? Probably business as usual: let the oil get exploited and demand a percentage of the revenues. ENGOs were the one to point out all Petrobras' unconformities, and without that information the IEA would be approved easily. On all key moments the role of ENGOs was substantial, and throughout the process they were functioning as a watchdog.

Many people tried to explain what happened at times, but with incomplete data they could not trace the complete process, and luck seems to play a large role. However what seemed miracles for many people, e.g. the returning of block 31 by Petrobras or the suspension of the license, was the uncoordinated work of ENGOs and other civil society organisations. Their influence on

individual decision-makers, such as minister Alban or the civil servant responsible for the license in Rio Coca, seems to be large. Not only direct but also indirect influence played a role. The discussion was held on the terms set by ENGOs. Thus without ENGOs the discussion would not have been broader than an effective way to extract oil, and that is what would have been happened. The exploitation of two wells in block 31 connected by a road.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on all the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators.

4.8 Process tracing of Yasuní ITT

This chapter does not aim at describing the technical details of the proposal, sufficient articles have been written about it, many of them almost identical (Sevilla, 2010; Larrea, 2010; Acosta et al., 2009; Martinez, 2010; Finer et al., 2010; Larrea and Warnars, 2009; Finer et al., 2008; Friedman Rudovsky, 2007; Rival, 2010).

In the literature concerning Yasuní-ITT some attention has been given to the first stage of the Initiative, how the idea to protect Yasuní's Biodiversity from oil extraction became a viable proposal (Acosta, 2010). However the decision-making process has not been discussed. This will be the first attempt to reconstruct the decision-making process from an idea of many up to the situation of Yasuní ITT at this moment.

The following is from a personal interview with Alberto Acosta, the minister of energy and mines that presented the ITT Initiative to the Ecuadorian president and the Ecuadorian house-of-representatives, also used is Acosta's 2010 article about the *prologue* of the initiative.

According to Acción Ecológica the ITT has three histories, they will be mentioned throughout this chapter, demonstrating a new phase has started.

4.8.1 Part 1 of the History of ITT

The idea, the basis of the ITT Initiative has been slowly constructed over many years by civil society. This idea presented in January 2007 to the Ecuadorian government is a child of many fathers. It is certain that the basis of this idea lies in the old idea of suspending oil extraction in the Ecuadorian Amazon. At one point, at one time, one person had been completely filled with indignation and shouted, "Stop the exploitation!" This resistance settled in the minds of many Amazonian communities. Their arguments were clear, oil exploitation was affecting the nature and environment they were living in. Their health suffered under the pollution and oil companies were one of the main contributors to the construction of the Amazon. The image of evil of these groups was Texaco, one of the world's main oil companies, nowadays a part of Chevron. Texaco worked between 1964 and 1990 in the Ecuadorian Amazon, in this time-span in constructed 339 oil wells in 430.000 hectares to extract around one and a half billion barrels of crude oil. This led to the pollution of billions of barrels of water (Acosta, 2010; Crude the movie, 2009; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). While it is impossible to put a price on life and nature, it seems clear that Texaco's activities destructed millions worth of life, water and nature through contamination of water, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and death of animals. The health of people in this area also suffered severely: 31 percent of the people close to oil extraction activity suffer from cancer, compared to a 12.3 percent national average. This adds up to 27 billion dollar, the amount demanded from Texaco by the Ecuadorian and especially Amazonian people (Acosta, 2010).

This all does not even include the social consequences like: sexual violence from oil workers, spontaneous abortions, discrimination and racism, forced replacements, destructive influences only local culture and languages and on the social cohesion. It even led to the extermination of

the local tribes the “Tetes” and the “Sansahuaris”. To eliminate all these problems in the future an oil moratorium has been proposed for all hydrocarbon activities in the Ecuadorian Amazon. This is the prerequisite history that is needed to understand the ITT Initiative (Acosta, 2010; 2 interviews), and that it is the idea of many. Now the real birth of the initiative will be reconstructed.

In 2000 *El Ecuador post-petrolero* (post-petroleum Ecuador, an alternative development plan) was published, three years later it was presented to the minister of environment by three Ecuadorian NGOs: Pachamama, CDES (Centro de Derechos Economico y Sociales) and Acción Ecológica. At the same time the indigenous community of Sarayaku started a lawsuit against the Argentinean oil company CGC in the IACHR. This resulted in a proposal of not exploiting Yasuní’s oil, led by the NGO Oilwatch (Acosta, 2010; Oilwatch 2005; Oilwatch 2006). At this time many NGOs thought that there was too much focus on block 31 and too little on ITT, therefore a campaign was started led by Acción Ecológica.

This idea of an oil moratorium was incorporated in the election campaign of *Movimiento País*, nowadays *Alianza Pais* the political party led by, now president, Rafael Correa. Their governmental plans 2007-2011 want “*declare a minimum of 40% of the national territory protected area to conserve the biodiversity and heritage of Ecuador*”. They also wanted to incorporate Ecuador’s nature and environment in economic and productive politics. This is not simply suspending oil exploitation. It aimed at optimizing the existing oil posts instead of maximizing the sheer number of oil posts. These plans also imply an oil moratorium for the south and middle of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Although the Yasuní ITT is an idea of many, if it had parents these would have been Esperanza Martinez, president of the NGO Acción Ecológica and Alberto Acosta, former minister of mining and energy and former president of the constitutional assembly (5 interviews). Acosta always had a lot of contact with Acción Ecológica, and his wife worked there at the time. In this group the idea existed to keep oil under ground and maybe already especially about block ITT. Acosta had already written several books about this issue, and when he became minister he had an opening to introduce this idea. The discussion to keep the oil underground has been led by NGOs.

In September 2009 an official document called “Yasuní-ITT Initiative: A big idea from a small country” edited by the ministry of foreign affairs and the ministry of environment was presented. This documents aims at preserving 38 percent of Ecuador’s territory. It is important to remember that the most relevant details of this document had been formulated long before Correa became president (3 interviews; Acosta, 2010).

Already in December 2006, Martinez gave the following guidelines to the future minister of energy and mines Acosta, from Acosta and Martinez (2010 p. 18):

- 1 *Declare the moratorium as policy aimed at protecting and conserving collective rights*
- 2 *Present internationally a proposal as an effort of Ecuador to meet three global goals: the reduction of greenhouse gasses, the conservation of biodiversity and security of indigenous people*
- 3 *Construct a commission, together with the ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Social Affairs that makes an global assessment of Yasuní National Park and its population and identify the problems. Formulate necessary actions for local people, secure that they are covered by the state and not by multinationals.*
- 4 *Create an international agenda to present the proposal with as a goal that it becomes recognized as beneficent on an international level, translate this to an economic compensation that enables Ecuador to execute the initiative.*
- 5 *Analyse distinct economic options: selling crude in the soil, carbon compensation, and cancellation of external hesitation.*
- 6 *Inaugurate a sub secretary of Clean Energy, Decentralization and Low Impact, as a signal to the transition to a new petroleum model...*

These are very specific objectives, seeking to protect the life of uncontacted indigenous tribes, the protection of one of the most biodiverse zones of the planet and to avoid the emission of 410 million tons of CO₂.

4.8.2 Part 2 of the History of ITT

The second phase started when more data was collected to create a better proposal. A lot of information was based on the research done to prevent the oil access road in block 31. In this phase the Ecuadorian state became the main actor, instead of civil society and ENGOs.

In April 2007 Rafael Correa stated that although previous administrations had begun to elaborate plans to extract the oil in ITT, the first option would be to keep the oil underground in exchange for international compensation (Finer et al., 2009).

This led to the presentation of the ITT Initiative by Acosta to the Ecuadorian government on June 5, 2007 and later of the presentation to the world by President Correa. The ITT Initiative consisted of two options at the time: A- keep the oil underground by using the ITT Initiative and B- exploiting the oil using a multinational alliance. On November 20, the oil lobby convinced the president to exclude oil reserve Tiputini from the ITT project. At the same time Correa was received full of enthusiasm at the OPEC and UN top meetings, so the role of the president was already ambiguous. The initiative also knew a large number of ups and downs during that first year, at times convinced by their right, at times full of doubt (interview; Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009). The first idea was to incorporate the value of Yasuní's environmental services, the ENGO *Earth Economics* joined in November 2007 and calculated the value of the environmental services in the entire Biosphere Reserve. The value of these services exceeded the value of oil at least two times. However no funds can be found for the funding of environmental services (interview).

The project was consolidated with the formation of a new commission on 29 July 2008 headed by ex-mayor of Quito Roque Sevilla and included some (former) ENGO members like Yolanda Kakabadse, founder of the ENGOs *Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano* and *Fundación Natura*; and Natalia Greene from the ENGO *Pachamama* (Yasuní ITT Initiative).

The goal of this commission was to create a concrete proposal to keep the oil underground in ITT, this was partly funded by *La cooperación técnica Española* and the GTZ (the Spanish and German International Cooperation). This group gave the proposal time and space to crystallize. At this point the idea of an international trust fund supervised by the United Nations was first raised. The focus on environmental services was replaced by a compensation of \$350 million per year for 10 years, based on gaining half of the income it would gain through exploitation, based on the oil price of mid-2007. In late 2008 the strategy was based on carbon markets. Ecuador proposed the creation of "Yasuní Guarantee Certificates" (YGC) for the CO₂ locked in ITT. These YGCs could be sold to compensate non-emitted CO₂. The money would go into a trust fund and the interest of these funds would be used to fund sustainable development (Acosta, 2010; Finer et al., 2009).

Two of the most important articles on which the final ITT Initiative was built are the one from Acosta, Gudynas, Martinez and Vogel (2009): *leaving the oil under ground or the search for a lost paradise: elements for an economic and political proposal for the Initiative for not exploiting the crude of IT*, and Larrea and Warnars (2009) *Ecuador's Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Avoiding emissions by keeping petroleum underground*.

4.8.3 Part 3 of the History of ITT

The third phase starts when the government adapts the original proposal and introduces Plan B, extracting ITT's oil as a viable option. At this time the role of ENGOs also changes fundamentally: instead of seeing the government as a partner they see them as opponents. The international community does not believe that Ecuador still aims at keeping the crude in the subsoil. The setup of plan A is complicated, so complicated even that people within the government do not fully comprehend how it functions (interviews). Since 3 February, 2010 it is organized in the following way. Plan A is led by the ministry of environment and works in 3 groups. First: the political

committee, including ministers from involved ministries. Second: the technical committee, technical advisors and specialists, including the technical director Carlos Larrea. And third: the negotiation committee, negotiators and public relation specialists aiming at fundraising (3 interviews). Plan B is organized more effectively, it is run by the state-owned oil companies and aims at investigating how the oil should be exploited (interview).

The role of president Correa is crucial in this, although he became president with the campaign aiming at preserving Yasuní, he does not appear to fully support the ITT Initiative. One day he claims he created the ITT Initiative himself, and taking all credits in big international meetings, while the next he declares on state television that he wants to extract ITT's oil. Correa also cut out all ENGOs from the negotiation process, while they were main actors in the earliest stage, and important advisors later in the process (2 interviews).

The following critique from ENGOs has been uttered on the changed plans. The first initiative aimed at preserving the culture of indigenous groups, a focus lost in the newer proposals. Secondly the original initiative aims at a non-extractive economy, in the newer plans mining is an alternative for hydrocarbon activities. Finally plan B is introduced and developed at the same time as the "keeping the oil underground option" (2 interviews).

People that were involved from the beginning or an early stage only utter critique about this stage. Acosta resigned from all official jobs, as did Falconí. The ENGO of Martinez is chased by the police, and smeared by the government, which tries to make it illegal. Yolanda Kakabadse, now president of WWF international, talks about the smokescreen of the Yasuní ITT Initiative: the extraction of oil in the Amazon always had been the unofficial goal (Hoy 2 March 2011).

At this point, also the international community that needed to fund the ITT Initiative seems to lose confidence. As a first question: it is hard to explain why oil extraction in ITT should be forbidden while it can be done in block 31 and block Armadillo, as the current plan proposes. In both blocks the biodiversity is similar and uncontacted indigenous people also live there. And shouldn't Yasuní be protected sufficiently being a UNESCO site and a National Park? Secondly international actors begin to see that the president does not want to keep the oil underground and that opponents of the ITT Initiative are gaining strength. Many people in favour of the ITT Initiative have been removed from official positions. Germany, the first country to commit, willing to donate \$50 million a year, retreated from the project, not trusting Ecuador's commitment for keeping the oil underground indefinitely. This is a bad signal to all other potential donors and makes it harder to convince them to contribute, if even the self-declared leader on climate change does not want to contribute, why would other countries take the risk? (Schalatek, 2010)

4.9 Results on ENGO influence on Yasuní ITT

The information for this chapter consists of 10 interviews that gave substantial information about Yasuní ITT, at times in other interviews additional information or details were given. Since not all people answered all questions, the number of responding interview per question might not add up to the total number of people interviewed on the topic.

4.9.1 ENGO Influence on issue framing concerning Yasuní ITT

How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations?

7 respondents pointed out that ENGOs and indigenous groups aimed at a moratorium for Yasuní. 3 did not mention the initial point of view of ENGOs. All 10 respondents state that the government and oil companies wanted to extract the oil from block ITT in the near future. One respondent gave the following overview: "it started with Plan Verde, a plan for an alternative economy: joint initiative of ENGOs, indigenous argue for an oil stop for more than 20 years. Thus, first there was an idea of alternative non-oil economy with human rights, more development and biodiversity conservation. Later this crystallized as Yasuní-ITT"

Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway?

With Alberto Acosta as minister of energy and mines, the possibility to keep the oil underground and get financial compensation to do this became the official framing of oil exploitation in Yasuní.

What did ENGOs do to bring about this understanding?

Alberto Acosta was closely in touch with ENGOs and the idea of many, mentioned by Acosta, was largely influenced by ENGOs and their employees. It has been stated by multiple respondents that the ITT Initiative would not have been launched without ENGOs

ENGO influence on issue framing?

Yes, the idea was largely created/influenced by multiple ENGOs and ENGO-related groups.

4.9.2 ENGO Influence on agenda setting concerning Yasuní ITT

How did the issue first come to the attention of the community?

All respondents state that Alberto Acosta presented the ITT Initiative to the community, however the president did the international campaign and presented it to the United Nations. Since Acosta used the opening he had being the minister of energy and mines to present “this idea of many”, he is the one that presented the issue.

What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda?

Keeping the oil underground was placed on the agenda as a serious option for the ITT oil block. Another item that was mentioned was the alternative development model, one that does not depend on extractivism and is sustainable on a social, cultural and environmental level. Later in the process the president put the exploitation of ITT’s oil back on the agenda by developing plan B at the same time.

What did ENGOs do to shape the agenda?

Especially in early stages, ENGOs and people from ENGOs joined meetings. This allowed them to shape the agenda at times, however 3 respondents pointed out that they could not change much about the agenda and 2 respondents pointed out that they could not change anything at all. From early on, since the presentation of the Initiative to the House of Representatives and the President the agenda has been controlled by the government.

ENGO influence on agenda setting?

No, or at least ENGO influence on the agenda setting seems to be marginal. Only some influential people with ENGO and governmental ties were able to shape the agenda to some extent.

4.9.3 ENGO Influence on the position of key actors concerning Yasuní ITT

What was the initial position of key actors?

The government is without doubt the key actor in this negotiation, before Correa became president Ecuador wanted to extract the oil in block ITT. At the start of the negotiations discussed in this thesis the government’s official position to try to keep the oil underground. ENGOs supported this idea, and oil companies opposed.

Did key actors change their position during the negotiations?

Also in this negotiation, the government did change their opinion during the negotiation, a difference is however that this time these changes were not induced by a change in administration. The pro-oil voices within the government led by Correa gained power while those in favour of keeping the oil underground resigned from official positions. ENGOs and the oil companies did not change their positions.

What did ENGOs do to shape the positions of key actors?

Half of the respondents (5) stated that ENGOs were not involved, and another 4 said that they wanted to join but were excluded by the government; this is not true, however it demonstrates the marginal role played by ENGOs. The later in the process the smaller the role of ENGOs was, until at this time they do not even play a role anymore. The ITT Initiative is now completely controlled by the government. Some respondents talk about hijacking plans from civil society and by that paralyzing the green and left opposition. They state that this is the official policy towards civil society by this administration.

ENGO influence on the position of key actors?

No, ENGOs did not have enough power or influence to change the position of key actors, even the “idea of many” had to be presented by someone from within the government, only he could change other governmental actors.

4.9.4 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: procedural issues concerning Yasuní ITT

All respondents interviewed for this thesis stated that no procedural issues were discussed, no formal role for ENGOs was ever discussed. No other sources were found to indicate the opposite (interviews).

ENGO influence on the final agreement: procedural issues?

No, the formal role of ENGOs was not discussed, however people from ENGOs did get official jobs but not because they were from ENGOs, only because they knew the right people (3 interviews).

4.9.5 ENGO Influence on the final agreement: substantive issues concerning Yasuní ITT

Does the agreement reflect the ENGO position about what should be done on the issue?

The newer the official documents are the less it reflects the opinion of ENGOs. Even more important the probability that the ITT Initiative will be executed seems smaller every day. However the respondents from ENGO still hope the Initiative will be put into practise.

What did ENGOs do to promote these substantive issues?

Only some people from ENGOs to write the first version, and were not able influence the position of the government. The scientific basis of these discussion however has been laid by ENGOs, therefore the influence of ENGOs on the proposal is rather substantial. ENGO influence on the chances the ITT Initiative will be executed is close to zero.

ENGO influence on the final agreement: substantive issues?

Yes, however ENGOs do not have influence on the chances of success of the ITT Initiative, they did contribute to the basis and official text of the ITT Initiative. Although their role was not formal and they were not officially included, some influential people from ENGOs: Kakabadse, Greene, Martinez could influence the final text of the Initiative.

4.10 Counterfactual analysis of Yasuní ITT

What would have happened if no ENGOs were involved in the decision-making process? It is the question if an idea like the ITT Initiative would have crystalized without ENGOs. Indigenous movements might have taken over the role but it would have looked different then. The role of ENGOs in the discussion prior to the negotiations was crucial, although an “idea of many”; many of those “many” came from ENGOs. It is demonstrated that before Alberto Acosta became minister he was already influenced by Martinez, the director of Acción Ecológica. If this would not have happened he might have acted the same, however it demonstrates how interwoven ENGOs

were in this stage. It is the question if anything might have started without the preparing role of ENGOs.

Later in the process the role of ENGOs becomes less powerful. The commission that wrote the final text of the initiative that was presented September 22 2009 also consisted of people from ENGOs or with strong ties to ENGOs, without these people the initiative might have looked a lot less like the initial idea. ENGOs admit that they already lost grip on the process at that time, which indicates that it would not have gone different without ENGOs. In the last phase the role of ENGOs was marginal or even non-existing, this reduces the need for a counterfactual analysis of this phase.

It can be concluded that the initial phase without ENGOs would have been completely different, and since the first phase is often one of the most important: without an start there is not anything; it can be concluded that without ENGOs no ITT Initiative would ever have been presented.

When using the data from the previous sections in table 4 from Betsill and Corell (2008) ENGO influence on the decision making process of block 31 is high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and have some success in shaping the negotiation process and ENGOs effects of participation can be linked to the outcome.

ENGOs engaged in activities aimed at influencing the negotiations. ENGOs score a yes on one of the process indicators. And ENGOs score a yes on one of the outcome indicators. However it is not felt by many people involved, ENGOs seem to have played a role of high influence. This is based on the entire process and does not reflect the current role of ENGOs, which seems to be marginal.

4.11 Results on the explanatory factors of ENGO influence

In this chapter the results from the second research question will be presented. This consists of the data derived during the 18 interviews with people from ENGOs, the government and specialists. All interviewees were asked whether they could think of factors that could explain the political influence of ENGOs on the decision-making process in Yasuní. They were also asked what factors could explain the lack of ENGO-influence. These restricting factors are needed in order to give a complete picture of the decision-making process; using only enabling factors will not give a true image of what happened. The results on these two questions will be presented in the section hereunder. All respondents could give as many answers as they liked, therefore the number of factors will not add up to 18.

This discussion aims at answering the second research question: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” Here the results from the interviews are combined with the factors from Betsill and Corell (2008) and the judgement of the researcher.

Table 5 and table 6 underneath show the results from the respondents, including the general explanation. These are the pure results. However, this chapter will go one step deeper and try to analyse what enabling and restricting factors played a large role in ENGO influence in Yasuní. The number of times a factor has been mentioned does not necessarily represent its importance, it is merely an indicator. This chapter will use these results as a tool to explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní. The analysis of these factors starts with the enabling factors, presented hereunder in table 5.

Table 5: Explanatory factors of ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Individual actions	4	Individual actions of ENGO-employee made a difference
2	Contextual factors	3	Mentioned: media and public opinion
	Coincidence	3	Mentioned: miracle, coincidence, luck
	Access to negotiations	3	Easy to join negotiations
	Personal network	3	Through the personal network of ENGO-employees influence was exercised
	Scientific research	3	A lot of research done by ENGOs, so the discussion is based on their information
7	Institutional network	2	Through the network of the ENGO influence was exercised
	Stage of negotiations	2	Joined early and therefore a larger influence
	Watchdog	2	Controlling the government and taking actions when things do not go well
10	Alliances with key governmental bodies	1	An alliance with a governmental player makes it easier to influence governmental decisions
	Confidence between actors	1	NGOs that trusted each other worked together and could enlarge their influence
	In touch with grassroots movements	1	Knows what happens within Yasuní and good contact with indigenous people
	Lot of knowledge and experience	1	Most experience within this field by some ENGOs
	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as good coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Scale of operation	1	More influence on a detailed level
	Well-known ENGO	1	When needed people could find the ENGO

The most important enabling factors that explain the political influence of ENGOs in Yasuní will be discussed.

Most often mentioned and of a rather high importance are *individual actions*. However, most mentioned does not mean these are most important, it only indicates that the individual actions are highly visible. Margot Bass and Matt Finer for example started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní together as a personal initiative. Events like these are highly visible and are of importance. Nevertheless they could only have success when other people or institutions were also working on the same topic. Rather remarkable is that the people that did those individual actions or were involved in individual actions often mentioned *coincidence* as a large explaining factor, often unaware of actions or activities undertaken by others. Instead, a person that had a good overview of the negotiations in Yasuní only mentioned *coincidence* once; he explained that the success of ENGOs depended on so many factors that some luck was necessary to achieve its goals. He explained that the right political climate is needed, the right influential people on the right jobs, a network reaching into the government, some help from the public opinion and the media, enough financial resources at that time. When all these things came together one might call it *luck* or *coincidence* he said. That is true: **many different variables together explain the change of success of ENGOs.**

It is rather easy for ENGOs in Ecuador to join negotiations, *access to negotiations* are therefore an important factor. This is called *rules of access* in Betsill and Corell (2008). They state that ENGO influence is enhanced when ENGO participation is facilitated. This is what happened in Yasuní too. ENGOs could join official meetings of several ministers easily. Even some international actors could join official meetings on a tourist visa, while they were on holiday (interview). Nonetheless

it becomes more difficult every year for ENGOs to join these meetings. The government becomes more and more closed. **The easy access of ENGOs to negotiations enhanced their influence.**

Almost certainly the most important factor to explain ENGO influence is the personal network of ENGO-employees. As can be seen in the negotiations concerning block 31 and Yasuní ITT, the connections of people from ENGOs played a decisive role. According to an Ecuadorian political analyst, this is because Ecuador is ruled by an elite (Natalia Greene, interview). Everyone from this elite knows everybody else. With the Rafael Correa's new government many people from ENGOs and universities were able to join this elite. People from ENGOs became minister, high civil servant, or member of the House of Representatives or the constitutional assembly. With these people in place it became easier to invite other people from ENGOs to join the decision-making process. These people on key positions enabled ENGOs to influence the government from within and to join more closed meetings. This also comes back in two another factors: *alliances with key governmental bodies* and *the institutional network*. This easy-access has been restricted in recent years since the president thought the influence of the civil society groups were too large. **The personal network of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence.**

One of the most influential activities undertaken by ENGOs is *scientific research*, the negotiations of block 31 and Yasuní ITT are built on a fundament of scientific research done by different ENGOs. The recommendations and conclusions from these reports can be found in official government texts like the results from the SCY in the official text for Yasuní ITT. **Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation to the negotiation.** This is also underlined by another mentioned factor: *knowledge and experience of ENGOs*.

The *stage of negotiations* could also explain ENGO influence, especially on Yasuní ITT. ENGOs were active and influential in a very early stage. Although their influence diminished during the negotiations they already had so much influence in the beginning, the final document still represents much of their position. **When ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher.**

The final important enabling factor is being a *watchdog*. Several ENGOs are continuously controlling governmental functioning, when decisions are taken opposing ENGOs' policy goals actions are taken. Some respondents call this opportunism but it looks like it works pretty well, however it is also important that other groups work all the time, not only when action is needed. **Acting as a watchdog is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions.**

Other mentioned factors do not seem to have played a large role in Yasuní. *Being in touch with grassroots movements*, *Confidence between actors*, *ENGO-coordination*, *Being a well-known ENGO* do not appear to have played a decisive role. *ENGO-coordination* in fact, is also mentioned as a restricting factor.

Restricting factors are also of importance explaining the political influence of ENGOs. In the case of Yasuní the following factors respondents mentioned the following factors, including a brief explanation (table 6).

Table 6: Restricting factors for ENGO influence with explanation

Ranking	Factor explaining political influence	Times mentioned	Most given explanation
1	Economic stakes	4	The economic stakes are high in Yasuní, this makes it hard to influence governmental decisions
2	Political stakes	3	The political stakes are high in Yasuní making it hard to influence decisions
3	Financial capabilities	2	Both mentioned as a lack of funds
4	ENGO-coordination	1	Mentioned as a lack of coordination (also mentioned as a explaining factor)
	Bad atmosphere between ENGOs and government	1	This restricted the influence of ENGOs
	Lack of continuity within ENGOs	1	A restricting factor

The most often mentioned factor: *economic stakes* also seems to be the most important. The economic stakes in Yasuní are high. Ecuador is a poor country and needs income from oil to fund education, healthcare and energy. With already 20 percent of the oil reserves in ITT the economic stakes are enormous. The political stakes in the case of Yasuní do not differ much from the economic stakes because the political stakes are in essence also economic: the money is needed by the government, raising the political stakes. Betsill and Corell also state that ENGO influence is constrained where economic interests are at stake. **The economic stakes in Yasuní are high; this restricts ENGO influence.** At the same time the influence of the oil-lobby is enhanced by these high economic stakes. This is scientifically underwritten by Betsill and Corell (2008).

In comparison to the government and oil companies, ENGOs have little *financial capabilities*. This lack of funds also restricts the functioning of ENGOs in Yasuní. **The small financial capabilities of ENGOs, compared to those of the government and oil companies, restrict the influence of ENGOs.**

The lack of *ENGO-coordination* also seems to restrict ENGO influence. Although Betsill and Corell state that it has a neutral effect it seems to restrict ENGO influence a bit, with coordinated actions more impact could be achieved. In the case of the ZI several groups of ENGOs demanded different things, making a diffuse sound and creating a competition of ENGOs for governmental attention. Although also mentioned as an enabling factor **ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor.**

This bad coordination has its basis in the *lack of continuity within ENGOs*, another mentioned factor. With new people aboard ENGOs every few months no strong alliance between ENGOs could be build. Because many people changed jobs very often not a lot of experience could be gained in a specific topic, this also restricted ENGO influence. **The lack of continuity within ENGOs led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs.**

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. It became harder to join meetings and ENGOs have less access to key governmental actors.

Hereunder the explanatory factors will be analysed for all three cases separately. The difference in the three cases lies in the enabling factors, the restricting factors seem to be the same among the three cases, these say more about Yasuní as a political arena than over the cases separately. Therefore the following three sections focus on the enabling factors.

Not all enabling and restricting factors are of the same importance for all three cases. In the case of the Zona Intangible one seems to be the single most important: **acting as a watchdog**. Without ENGOs participating in the negotiations the creation of the final boundaries of the Z I might have

gotten off the agenda resulting in a Zona Intangible without boundaries. This would have made it impossible to protect this area from loggers and even worse, oil exploitation.

For the decision-making process concerning block 31 other factors have been important. The **individual actions** mentioned above mostly concerned block 31. Margot Bass and Matt Finer that started the Scientists Concerned for Yasuní initiative. Their effort made a large difference on the negotiations. It included many more actors, the issue was reframed: from normal oil production to the destruction of a natural area with an unique biodiversity. **The personal network of some ENGO employees was also of major importance**, several ENGO employees knew people within the government, this made it easier to access negotiations. This **access to the negotiation** enabled ENGOs to execute a lot of influence: all different groups of people could join formal meetings with the GAT and the minister of environment, especially when Alban became minister. ENGOs introduced her to the problems from an ENGO perspective, making a powerful ally of her. Finally **a lot of scientific research was executed** to investigate the influence of oil extraction and the construction of roads on biodiversity and the indigenous people of this region. Later this knowledge was used in the discussion of Yasuní ITT and the Zona Intangible (see 5.1).

For the Yasuní ITT initiative two factors enabled the large influence of ENGOs. First the **stage of negotiations** at which ENGOs joined. ENGOs were part of the group that created the initial idea. Later several ENGO employees were part of the ITT committee, enabling ENGOs to project their ideals and policy goals on this official governmental document. All **this was possible due to the personal network of some key actors** like Esperanza Martinez, Alberto Acosta and Yolanda Kakabadse.

5. Discussion

In this chapter the results will be analysed using the literature presented in the theoretical framework. Also the contribution of this thesis to the literature will be discussed.

5.1 Discussion of the Results

The three different cases cannot be seen completely separated from each other. As can be seen in the timeline in figure 5, the three cases have a lot of overlap in both time and actors. Also the same contextual factors influence the three different negotiations, often in a similar manner. With a greener president ENGOs gain influence, with a less eco-oriented president they lose power. New laws, for example, also apply to all three cases. This however is already recognized in the theoretical model in figure 4, whereas the influence between the cases has not been studied yet. In this chapter the interdependence and influence of the different cases will be discussed.

The Zona Intangible did influence the other cases; first it set an example for conservation in the region. Secondly, it placed an important oil well in block 31 off limits, Imuya. Since then people no longer talk about block ITTI but about ITT.

From ENGO's perspective the central case in Yasuní is block 31. The start of these negotiations started the active role of ENGOs in Yasuní, where previous decision-making (for the ZI) took place without ENGOs. **While ENGOs tried to frame the issue of block 31, they actually framed the larger issue of oil production in Yasuní.** The SCY wanted to preserve block 31, and did research in Yasuní to use the results as lobby material. The outcomes of their research, "Yasuní has an unique biodiversity and its greatest threat are roads" are still quoted. These results were even used for official government policy for the Zona Intangible and Yasuní ITT. One can state that **the scientific research done for block 31 is the backbone of Ecuador's policy concerning Yasuní.** The success of ENGOs on block 31 positively influenced the chances of conservation for the ZI and ITT. Only after the successes in block 31 the final boundaries of the ZI were finally drawn. The battle of block 31 made ENGOs the most experienced actors in Yasuní. With the new governments of Palacio and Correa they could gain influence because they knew how things worked, and the history of the negotiation was also know to them.

Another remarkable similarity between the three cases are the actors, not only on an organizational level, but specially on a personal level. Some key actors come back in all three negotiations. They could even have a different role in all three negotiations.

At one time some people thought that block 31 got too much attention, at that time ITT became more important in the negotiations. In January 2007 the focus changed from block 31 to Yasuní ITT. **The interdependence of block 31 and Yasuní ITT is very large.** They are destined to the same future, either oil extraction or conservation. Basically what will happen to block ITT will happen to block 31. When the ITT initiative will be executed the extraction of oil in 31 would no longer be profitable. When ITT will be extracted the oil from block 31 will be used to mix 31's lighter oil with the heavy crude from ITT.

Since Petrobras returned block 31 to the state and the official document of Yasuní ITT is published the influence of ENGOs diminished. The Correa administration excluded ENGOs from the decision-making process and eco-oriented ministers and advisers were replaced. What this will mean for the future is still unknown.

The three dimensions of power from Lukes (1974) can also be found in the case of Yasuní. The first dimension is most seen in Yasuní: the openly executed influence between actors. The government is the central player in this dimension, it states what other actors should do and what decisions will be taken. The second dimension can also be found, many decisions are not taken, the final boundaries of the ZI took eight years; eight years in which no decision has been taken

because those boundaries were not in line with the policy preferences of the government and oil companies. The same can be said for Yasuní ITT, it has not yet been started because there is a covert conflict within the government and between all actors. Some do not want to keep the oil underground: no decision on the activation of Yasuní ITT is in line with their policy preferences. The third dimension of power is hardest to observe; however, in the Yasuní case, the “real” interests are overt. The separation of the actors in two groups have been made earlier in this thesis, groups that want to extract the oil and the groups that want to keep the oil under ground. Later a third group was added that wants to extract the oil with minimum social and environmental impact. This separation reflects the “real” interests of the actors. The extraction of Yasuní’s oil has long been a latent conflict, however in the investigated period it was clearly overt. Before 1999 many conflicts have been latent, but since block 31 everything happens more openly. Except for the conflicts within the Correa administration: these best represent the third dimension of power in this thesis.

Some political scientists in Ecuador, for example Natalia Greene (interview), recognize the existence of an elite that rules Ecuador. In Ecuador there is a small group of people in which everybody knows each other; these people rule the country, or rule a theme like nature conservation. This implies that the ideas from Wright Mills (1956) are still applicable for Ecuador. In this thesis special attention has been given to ask open questions to verify if in Ecuador the pluralist theory, the elitist theory or a hybrid is most relevant. Therefore neither the elitist question “who rules?” is asked nor “does anyone have power?” like a pluralist would ask.

The choice for a political arena has been a good choice for this thesis, although the situation sometimes resembles a policy network. However the central player is most certainly the Ecuadorian government, therefore there is as strict hierarchy of actors. For Yasuní it is as follows: on top are the governmental players, underneath international players like UNDP or UNESCO, followed by powerful groups and businesses, ranging from oil companies to powerful indigenous organizations, ending with NGOs. Another hint that it is not a policy network is the fact that the public and private players are not mutually dependent, in fact the government can do what it wants. At times this provokes an intense reaction by other players, but it does not mean that the policy will be changed.

Whereas Arts (2008) solely focuses on intentional influence, this thesis also underlines the importance of the unintentional influence of ENGOs. Some ENGOs, especially those with a more radical view had a lot of unwanted unintentional influence on the negotiation. They radicalized, which made cooperation with some other actors impossible. This history has been repeated by several respondents and demonstrated the important role of Acción Ecológica. The discussion whether influence has to be intentional can be explained for Yasuní. Many groups try to influence the decision-making and the key actor: the government. This is done because these groups want to achieve their policy goals. However aiming at positive influence they might at times experience unexpected and unwanted side effects. For example in the discussion of the ZI the claims made by Acción Ecológica to make the entire Amazon a No-Go Zone for development almost ruined the chances to create the actual ZI. Therefore the importance of unintentional influence in this thesis is rather large.

The distinction made in governance literature between NGOs that work in partnerships and NGOs that focus more on action has also been found in this thesis. Van Huijstee (2010); Visseren-Hamakers (2009); and Humphreys (2006) have found a similar distinction. In Ecuador partnerships are still rare, especially in the Yasuní region. However a group of NGOs cooperates more with the government and others, whereas the second group solely consists of more radical NGOs. In time partnerships might be a part of the Ecuadorian NGO-landscape. The terms “collaborative” and “campaigning” NGO seem to suit the situation in Ecuador.

The results from this thesis can be linked to the outcomes of Betsill and Corell (2008). The latter found eight factors that can explain political influence of NGOs, and also a brief explanation of how these factors explain political influence. In this thesis a number of these factors are mentioned by respondents, six of these have also been listed by Betsill and Corell.

ENGO coordination had a neutral effect according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in this thesis however it was mentioned as a restricting factor. The lack of coordination was restricting the influence of ENGOs on the government according to the respondents. In Yasuní's case it seems to be a restricting factor rather than an factor with a neutral effect. Betsill and Corell (2008) did mention that all levels of ENGO influence were achieved under varying levels of ENGO coordination, in Yasuní the influence of ENGOs could have been higher if the actions of like-minded ENGOs were more synchronized.

Betsill and Corell state that ENGO influence is enhanced when active steps are taken to facilitate NGO participation. In Yasuní it was at times facilitated like in the Yasuní ITT committee, at times it was not facilitated but the participation of ENGOs was still high. While Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence does not decline, in Yasuní ENGO influence declined with more restrictive rules of access, particularly in the last 3 years.

Betsill and Corell (2008) underwrite the importance of joining the negotiations in an early phase, however this is often not enough to achieve influence in a later phase. The same can be seen in Yasuní, and especially in Yasuní ITT. ENGOs joined early but over time the policy less and less resembles the ENGOs' opinion.

The political and economic stakes are very high in Yasuní, this reduces influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), and that is true. The government and other players are less open to the ideas from ENGOs since so much money and power is at stake.

Alliances with key governmental bodies enhances influence according to Betsill and Corell (2008), in Ecuador this is done at times, although only mentioned by one respondent. This implies that it is not the most usual way to influence the government in Yasuní.

The last two factors from Betsill and Corell (2008), *institutional overlap* and *competition from other NGOs* have not been found in this thesis. However the competition from other NGOs might have played a role in the drawing of the ZI's final boundaries. Two groups of ENGOs had completely different goals, protecting the proposed area or protecting the entire Amazon. This battle between ENGOs did no good for the negotiation, but the goal of the larger group was reached: protecting the proposed area. Betsill and Corell (2008) state that ENGO influence is not a zero-sum game and that competition between NGOs does not necessarily constrain NGO influence.

5.2 Contribution to the literature

This thesis investigated the decision-making process of the major issues in Yasuní: la Zona Intangible, block 31 and Yasuní ITT. This is one of the first investigations to combine these three major cases, and the first that analyses the decision-making process of these cases. Also the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has not been studied widely yet. Other than the works of Narvaez (2007) and Lara (2007) the role of ENGOs in Ecuador has only been touched superficially. This is the first complete overview of the last twelve years in Yasuní. The timeline created for this thesis is also a novelty. It is of importance that these cases finally have been linked formally since the negotiations influenced each other, although it was not yet recognized.

This thesis is also another verification of explanatory factors, Betsill and Corell (2008) do not mention the personal network of ENGO employees, while in Ecuador this is the single most important enabling factor for ENGO influence. This might be a valuable addition to the list of Betsill and Corell (2008). Many others (6 out of 8) have also been found in this thesis; underlining the quality of Betsill and Corell's (2008) list.

The use of Arts' (1998) model demonstrated that there is a large difference in the area of research between Arts' and this research. His methodology was not applicable to the situation in Ecuador where there is no strict boundary between ENGO-people and governmental or other employees. This behaviour of Ecuadorian decision-makers might not be typically Ecuadorian, this happens among many political players in environmental issues (Carter, 2008). The distinction between two types of NGOs, one more pragmatic the other more radical in its message has not only been found in this thesis but is a mayor area of investigation. Van Huijstee (2010) and Visseren-Hamakers (2008) have found the same outcome in their investigation. Humphreys (2006) also investigated this phenomenon in governance.

5.3 Discussion of the Model

The model used in this thesis was adapted from Arts (1998) before carrying out the research, and was a useful simplification of the reality. However further adaptations could be made to enlarge the explanatory power of the model; it makes the model more suited for Yasuní. To introduce this model, it is necessary to understand the background of the situation in Ecuador. Figure 6 below provides a schematic guide to reading the following section.

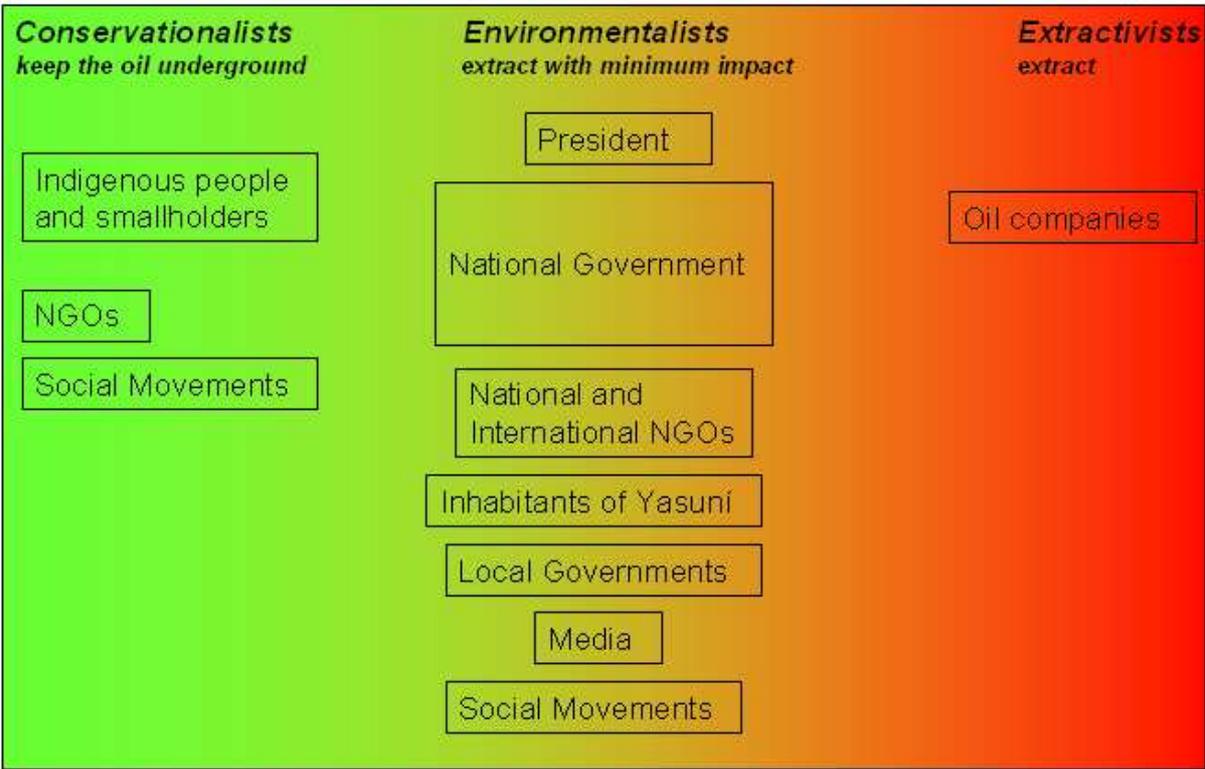


Figure 6: The major actors of this thesis

Three different groups can be categorized in Yasuní, those in favour of extracting Yasuní's oil, *extractivists*; those that want to keep the oil underground, *conservationalists* and those to want to extract the oil but with minimum impact: *environmentalists*. The *extractivists* consist, nowadays, solely of oil companies. The *conservationalists*, consist of some NGOs, some social movements and indigenous people and smallholders living in the Amazon. Here the distinction between NGOs and social movements is used since these behave differently. Social movements in Ecuador often represent an group of people, like the social movements of indigenous or women. If policy is designed that touches these people in a negative way, actions are taken whereas NGOs work with projects on specific themes. However this distinction not needed for the entire thesis, since for Yasuní these groups have similar goals. However, several people interviewed for this thesis worked both at NGOs and at social movements. The *environmentalists* are the most diverse

group. They consist of some inhabitants, governmental actors and NGOs that believe in oil extraction with minimum impact; some NGOs, social movements and governmental bodies that believe in a pragmatic approach, where minimum impact extraction is the best they can achieve; and actors that reached this consensus since they are internally divided: such as the national government, the media and the president. This is a rather strange claim, but it seems that the president of Ecuador swings back and forth between keeping the oil underground and extracting it. The National Government at this time consists of both pro-oil people and pro-conservation people.

This new knowledge can lead to a new model, still simple but with some nuance. While the basic structure remains the same, the grey scale from figure 6 are included to indicate the political opinion of these groups. The second difference is that NGOs are split in ENGOs and NGOs. The first group consists of campaigning NGOs the second of collaborative NGOs, this same distinction can be found in governance literature (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009). Separating these two groups of NGOs enlarges the explanatory power of this model without making it overly complicated. The main focus for this research would lie on the political influence of ENGOs instead of NGOs. The adapted model is showed hereunder in figure 7. A final change is that this model acknowledges that the government makes the final decisions, rather than participating in negotiations (arrow V, explained below).

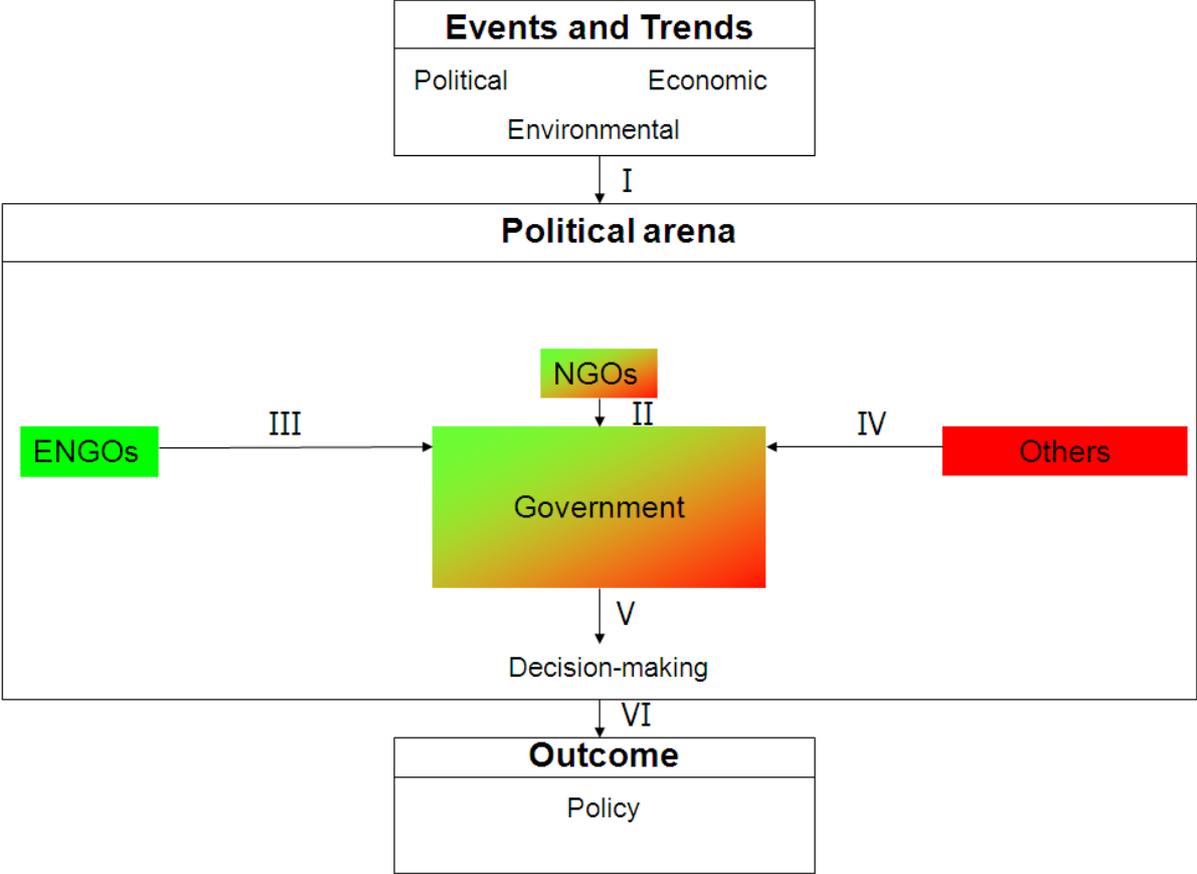


Figure 7: The adapted theoretical model

Arrow (I): enabling/constraining. The exterior factors are all political, economic, environmental factors that influence the political arena and the players in the political arena. These factors may not be fixed, what is a constraint for one player may be an enabling factor for another. Examples of these are new governments, changed international politics, economic wellbeing or a crisis, etc.

Arrow (II): *political influence*. This is the political influence of *collaborative* NGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing.

Arrow (III): *political influence*. This is the political influence of (*campaigning*) ENGOs on the government, including agenda-setting and issue framing. This arrow is the main focus of the research. In the governance literature this group can also be called campaigning NGOs (Visseren-Hamakers, 2009)

Arrow (IV): *political influence*. This is the political influence of actors other than NGOs on the government (primarily oil companies, for a detailed list, see figure 6). It has to be stressed that arrows II, III and IV are one way only and that there is no arrow between “Others” and “NGOs”, this is done to prevent an image of a policy network in the model (Arts, 1998, p. 70). In this model the government is conceptualized as the dominant player in the political arena, given its formal status and position. However governments do in reality influence other players and NGOs it is excluded since it is of lesser interest in this study.

Arrow (V): *does*. The government is the most important actor in decision-making, but during the process it might be influenced.

Arrow (VI): *leads to*. The policy processes lead to policy.

In this model NGOs are able to impact policy outcomes in principle but they are restrained or enabled by other players and the contextual factors.

5.4 Discussion of the Methodology

As was mentioned in the introduction and the research methodology chapter, the first methodology selected was replaced by one more suitable for the specific situation in Yasuní. The first methodology was based on the assumption that respondents could be divided in three different groups: people from ENGOs, people from the government and other respondents. The first group could provide an EGO-perception of ENGO-influence on the negotiations. The second group would give an ALTER-perception, the view from people in the government on ENGO-influence. The third group consisting of specialists could provide a more objective view, the Causal Analysis. This Causal Analysis would be a researcher’s assessment of NGO claims on the basis of policy documents and additional interviews. This methodology was used by Arts (1998) to analyse NGO influence on international conventions. Initially, this methodology appeared to provide an adequate examination of ENGO influence in Yasuní. While the international environmental negotiations and the negotiations concerning Yasuní looked rather similar beforehand, in the practice the international dimension was non-existent. This led to several complications: instead of resembling international political negotiations it was more similar to regional politics; where one small group of people that knows each other well, an ‘elite,’ governed Yasuní. This small group of people dominated the negotiations, but did not stick to one position. People changed from influential ENGO jobs to professorships and some even became minister or member of the constitutional assembly or House of Representatives. Furthermore, these changes were not one-way, after a job in the government some people returned to ENGOs. These changes in employment led to new employees bringing their expertise and network with them, and to an exchange of ideas between different groups.

These changes in careers were common; many people did exceed two years in one job, making the planned division between EGO- and ALTER-perception and Causal-Analysis impossible. This was also due to the fact that, during the interviews, many people did not have the kind of job they had during the various events in Yasuní. It was therefore decided to consider a large group respondents as a part of an *elite*. People outside this ‘elite’ considered the other actors as a group where they did not belong to. Therefore the division in three groups was cancelled and all answers from respondents were equally analysed.

The main source of data in this thesis consisted of semi-structured interviews, using the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008). During the interviews it seemed impossible to structure

an interview accordingly. Many people gave their version of events, which had to be structured into the framework to present the results.

The original plan for this thesis was to interview the three main actors in Yasuní: NGOs, governmental bodies and oil companies. Due to circumstances the latter could not be interviewed. New licenses were given to oil companies during the fieldwork. This made it impossible for an outsider to have meetings with them, oil companies were too afraid any outcome might influence their new contracts. This reduced the interviewed participating parties to two: NGOs and governmental bodies.

Another restricting factor was Ecuador's political situation in October 2010. On 30 September 2010 an attempted coupe d'état was executed by the police. During this chaos there was even an attempted murder on the president. The weeks following 30 September it was impossible to contact governmental bodies for an interview, and later in November and December people were still less open than they might have been beforehand. Therefore only a few names are mentioned in this thesis, the names of politicians openly talking about the times they were minister. Other actors wanted to remain low profile and anonymous. Guaranteeing their anonymity made them more open, so more reliable information could be retrieved.

6. Conclusions

This chapter brings together the most important consequences of this thesis. It starts with conclusions on the scientific objective: answers on the research questions. Subsequently hints for further research will be given and finally recommendations for ENGOs active in Yasuní are presented.

6.1 To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 1: “To what extent did ENGOs influence the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?” This will be done first for the three topics and later a general answer will be presented.

In the Zona Intangible the influence of ENGOs was low when the framework from Betsill and Corell (2008) was used. ENGOs participated in the negotiation but without noticeable effect on the process or outcome. However in the counterfactual analysis it was demonstrated that the creation of final boundaries might have been put off the agenda if it were not for ENGOs. Therefore **the actual influence of ENGOs on the ZI might have been higher, however this is only an indicated guess by the researcher.**

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning block 31 was high: ENGOs participated in the negotiations and had some success in shaping the negotiation process; also the effects of ENGO participation can be linked to the outcome. If it were not for ENGOs the oil in block 31 was currently exploited, destroying the living grounds of the indigenous groups in the area and its fragile ecosystem.

ENGO influence on governmental decisions concerning Yasuní ITT was high: ENGOs participate in the negotiations and they have some success in shaping the negotiation process. ENGOs’ effects of participation can be linked to the outcome. Especially in the first phases of the negotiation the role of ENGOs was significant. However their role weakened, the policy goals of ENGOs are still largely represented by the government on this topic.

ENGO influence in Yasuní is case specific, their influence was different in all three cases. However ENGOs had high influence in two of the three cases, therefore it is possible to conclude that **ENGOs have significant overall influence on governmental decisions concerning oil extraction in Yasuní.**

6.2 What factors explain ENGOs influence on the governmental decisions concerning oil exploitation in Yasuní?

This chapter will give an answer on research question 2: “What factors explain the political influence of ENGOs on the governmental decisions on oil extraction in Yasuní?”

The enabling factors found in this thesis are in sequence of importance: the **personal network** of ENGO employees is almost certainly the most important enabling factor of ENGO influence. People involved in Yasuní form a small *elite*; everyone knows each other. This enables the exchange of information and enlarges the possibilities of ENGO employees to join important meetings. The importance of the fact that all actors in this political arena are just a phone call away is hard to overestimate.

Scientific research is most often done by ENGOs and gives the foundation for the negotiations. Especially for block 31 a lot of research has been executed by ENGOs on the effects of oil extraction and road construction on the natural and cultural environment of Yasuní. No other

group has delivered so much valuable scientific information. Whereas the government takes the decisions in Yasuní, their decisions are based on the information delivered by ENGOs.

The **Stage of negotiation** was also of large importance: when ENGOs joined early in the negotiations their influence is higher. Important is that ENGOs did often join early, except for the Zona Intangible discussion. Yasuní ITT underlines the importance of joining early in these negotiations. ENGOs only joined early phases of the negotiation but their influence of the outcome was still large because they designed the outline of the entire plan.

The **easy access of ENGOs to negotiations** enhanced their influence. This can be linked to the personal network of ENGO employees and the network of the ENGOs. The rules of access are rather informal or non-existing, which makes it easier for non-governmental actors to joined when compared to other negotiations.

Acting as a **watchdog** is an effective way to execute influence on governmental decisions. When ENGOs were excluded from the decision-making they controlled the government. As soon as the government did something undesired by ENGOs they started actions to influence the government.

Opposite the enabling factors are the restricting factors; the most important restricting factors. These are listed hereunder:

The single most important factor is the presence of very high **economic stakes** in Yasuní. These make it harder for ENGOs to join the decision-making process and to influence the outcomes. This factor has a lot of overlap with the **political stakes** in Yasuní, which are mainly of an economic character.

The small **financial capabilities** of ENGOs compared to the government and oil companies restrict ENGOs' political influence. The amount of money available for demonstrations, research and lobby-activities is restricted, especially compared to the budget of the other actors like the government and oil companies.

ENGO-coordination was almost non-existing and therefore a restricting factor. With better coordination the influence of ENGOs could have been higher and more precisely focussed on important issues. Also the overlap of scientific research would have been reduced.

The **lack of continuity within ENGOs** led to less experienced employees and restricted the cooperation between ENGOs. Since the personal network is the most important enabling factor of political influence in Yasuní, the turnover rate of employees is a severe threat to the positions of ENGOs.

The bad atmosphere between ENGOs and the government of the recent years also restricts ENGO influence. Since 2008 the role of ENGOs in the decision-making process has been diminished. The authoritarian style of the government does not recognize the role of ENGOs and other groups from civil society. This effectively destroyed the strong ties between the Correa administration and ENGOs, this is a critical problem for ENGOs in the near future.

6.3 Conclusions regarding the used model and methodology

The original theoretical model should be adapted to increase its explanatory power while keeping it simple. Two groups of NGOs should be included in the model: one group aiming to keep the oil underground (ENGOs) and a second group aiming at extraction with minimum social and environmental impact (NGOs). This separation between more radical and more pragmatic NGOs can also be found in governance literature.

For succeeding studies a methodology that recognizes the fact that the people in power consists of an actual elite would be preferable. The initial methodology from Arts (1998) was not applicable in the case of Yasuní. In the methodology should be recognized that people in important positions change their jobs often, making a distinction between governmental employees and ENGO employees impossible.

The changing opinion of the Ecuadorian government should also be recognized in advance: Ecuador has changed five times of president during the investigated processes (1999-2011). Therefore a model should recognize that the government is not an unchanging or stable actor. The framework of Betsill and Corell (2008) was highly suited to this research. It supported and guided this research, even without making major adaptations. Only the procedural issues of the final agreement were not used, since they were not discussed in any of the three cases.

6.3 Recommendations for ENGOs

Research goal two was formulating recommendations for ENGOs in cases similar to Yasuní. Hereunder four brief recommendations extracted from this thesis are formulated.

1 invest in an extensive personal network existing of other people in the political arena, this certainly enables exerting influence on governmental decisions

2 provide the governmental and other actors with scientific reports based on research executed by ENGOs, this will lead to a broader and better discussion based on facts provided by ENGOs.

3 join early in negotiations. The more early ENGOs join the better the final document will be in line with ENGOs' policy goals.

4 try to coordinate actions between ENGOs and other civil society groups. Working together gives a broader and stronger voice. This is needed to tackle the difference in funds.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Ego-Perception

Name of Organization:

What kind of NGO:

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What specific achievements did this NGO make concerning Yasuni?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de esta ONG en Yasuní (ZI, ITT & 31)?

Greatest success of this NGO concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande esta ONG en Yasuní?

What documents or policy did you change; How?

Que documentos o gestión cambió esta ONG; Cómo?

What would have happened without this NGO / no NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la influencia de esta ONG?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

What factors explain your political influence, Why?

Qué factores pueden explicar el influencia de las ONGs; Porqué?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influencia politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

Alter-Perception and Specialists Interviews

	Influence indicator	Evidence		NGO influence? (yes/no)
		Behaviour of other actors...	... as caused by NGO communication	
Influence on negotiating process	Issue framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How was the issue understood prior to the start of the negotiations? • Was there a shift in how the issue was understood once the negotiations were underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to bring about this understanding? 	
	Agenda setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the issue first come to the attention of the international community? • What specific items were placed on or taken off the negotiating agenda? • What were the terms of debate for specific agenda items? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the agenda? 	
	Positions of key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the initial position of key actors? • Did key actors change their position during the negotiations? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to shape the position of key actors? 	
Influence on negotiating outcome	Final agreement/ procedural issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement create new institutions to facilitate NGO participation in future decisions making processes? • Does the agreement acknowledge the role of NGOs in implementation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these procedural changes? 	
	Final agreement/ substantive issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the agreement reflect the NGO position about what should be done on the issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did NGOs do to promote these substantive issues? 	

What are the specific achievements of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cuales fueron los logros específicos de las ONGs en Yasuní (ITT, ZI & 31)?

Greatest success of NGOs concerning Yasuní?

Cual fué el logro más grande las ONG en Yasuní?

What would have happened without any NGO's at all?

Que hubiera pasado sin la presencia de las ONGs?

Is there negative influence of NGOs? How/Why?

Hay una influencia negative de los ONGS? Porqué/Cómo?

What factors can explain the political influence of NGOs in Yasuní?

Que factores pueden explicar la influence politica de las ONGs in Yasuní?

➔ Checking claims made by discussed NGO in previous interviews

Appendix 2: List of interviewed groups

List of interviewed organizations:

ENGOs and Social movements

Acción Ecológica
Amazonia por la vida
Ciudadanos por la vida
EcoCiencia
Fundación Natura
Fundación Pachamama
FondoAmbiental
Instituto de estudios ecologistas de tercer mundo
Oilwatch
Save America's Forests
Secretaría de Pueblos
WCS-Ecuador
WWF

Government

Co-authors of Yasuní-ITT Initiative: Yasuní ITT committee
Committee de gestion de Yasuní (Yasuní's Biosphere Reserve management committee)
Ministry of environment
Ministry of cultural and natural heritage
Ministry of mining and energy
Ministry of politics

Specialists

University of San Francisco de Quito
University Andina Simon Bolivar
FLACSO
Boston University
Tiputini Biodiversity station
Radio France Internacional
Wereldomroep Nederland / VPRO

List of organizations that gave lectures on this specific topic, including groups that were active in Yasuní but did no longer have the knowledge required for this thesis.

CEDA (Centro Ecuatoriano de Derecho Ambiental)
Conservation International
Ecoflex
EcoFund
IEETM
International Alert
Plataforma de Responsabilidad Social
UNDP
UNDP-PPD