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*“Where are we now, where do we want to go, and how do we get there?”*

# UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF TALANOA IN THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME

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# Abstract

**Background:** How does storytelling influence the international climate change regime? *Talanoa*, a Fijian tradition based on storytelling and dialogue, was implemented in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change structure in 2018 to promote an “open and constructive space” to “increase ambition”. This research aims to understand 1) the role of the *talanoa* approach to dialogue and storytelling in the international climate negotiations and 2) how this Pacific tradition was implemented in an intergovernmental context. The main research question is: **How has the Talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?**

**Methods:** 42 stories and 42 ministerial statements have been analysed and compared following the *Grounded Theory Approach*. All contributions of the facilitators during the Talanoa Dialogue sessions were analysed in similar fashion. Additionally, 18 interviews have been conducted with participants of the ministerial Talanoa Dialogue at COP24, organiser and observers, to better understand the experiences with Talanoa and the process itself.

## Results:

1. The specific assignment participants received – to be constructive, positive and to tell a story – distinguishes the Talanoa Dialogue (TD) from other types of dialogue in the international climate change regime.
2. Facilitation style differed per facilitator. Varying from low involvement, to active engagement through telling personal stories. Most facilitators engaged in group and content facilitation
3. Participants and others closely involved enjoyed the *Talanoa* experience. They believe that more (inclusive) dialogue should be held in the future, but whether that is in the format of *talanoa*, is less important.
4. The stories and high-level statements contained similar elements: the country’s actions and plans, the need for action, view on what should be done / how it should be done / requirements, showing commitment, and a call for action. Stories included similar, but in general fewer issues than the speeches. In the stories, the top five issues that most Parties focused on are: their actions, mitigation, their plans, inclusion and cooperation. In the speeches, this slightly differs: most Parties too focus on their actions and mitigation. However, more Parties addressed cooperation, the plans, strategies and policies and the need for action than in the stories. Responsibilities
5. The framing of the main TD issues were relatively similar in the TD stories and the high-level statements. The difference in framing between developing countries and developed countries was more visible.

**Conclusion:** Storytelling was unique to TD, however, the specific instructions to be constructive and positive, and the small setting, is what made the main difference in the participants’ experiences and stories. Dialogue should be continued in the UNFCCC, as long as they genuinely provide room for openly sharing one’s views. Additionally, future dialogues in the UNFCCC should leave more time for exchanging views and asking one another questions, and should carefully consider the central question to be discussed.

**Keywords:** *Talanoa, dialogue, storytelling, facilitator, UNFCCC, framing, grounded theory.*

*This story, which I am about to share with you, is about a group of countries trying to fight climate change in a way that seems rather unprecedented. It is about a Pacific tradition, dialogue, mutual respect and understanding, stories rather than negotiations: a fresh breeze in the international climate change regime, according to some. For others, however, it is close to their own cultures. The most cynical critics find it a wishy-washy and mainly vague project with too much of a feel-good factor.*

*This story has multiple entry points and various layers to it. Its origins lay in 1992 when the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) was established. Since then, many attempts have been made to fight climate change. However, this particular story became bigger and gained more momentum when the Fijian Presidency of the UNFCCC introduced their Pacific tradition of Talanoa into the climate change regime in 2017 (UNFCCC, 2017a). Two years before that, a landmark agreement in more than two decades of international climate negotiations was achieved in Paris. For many, the Paris Agreement was a breakthrough (Falkner, 2016) in the rather tough negotiations that seemed to be deadlocked (see Depledge, 2006; Gupta, 1997). Particularly since the deal in Copenhagen in 2009, negotiations were rather disappointing and had left people disillusioned (Hoffman, 2011).*

*In this research, you are taken along the journey of exploring how a Fijian tradition, “talanoa”, was experienced by Party and non-Party delegations, how the facilitators played their parts, and whether or not talanoa changed the story.*

*I would like to thank my supervisor for her incredible patience and support, as well as my family and friends.*

*- Annelies*

**Ambition**

*Noun*

A strong wish to achieve something.

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# CH. 1 Introduction

*"Climate change is [...] one of the most complex challenges facing the international community today and affecting our common home." (Argentina, high-level statement at COP24)*

*"We do need hope – of course, we do. But the one thing we need more than hope is action. Once we start to act, hope is everywhere." (Greta Thunberg)*

*"We are all in the same canoe, and the Paris Agreement is our guiding star; no one can sit on the side and dangle his feet from the canoe. We need to paddle; each seat and each paddle serve an important purpose. But we cannot reach our destination if we don't steer it in the right direction, further, faster and most importantly, together." (Sweden, story during the Talanoa Dialogue at COP24)*

Since establishing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, countries have tried to mitigate climate change and adapt to a new reality collectively. Unfortunately, however, these efforts were faced with many difficulties. Finally, after a long period of little progress, the Paris Agreement in 2015 marked a new period in the climate change regime. After years of tough climate negotiations, "Paris" was "ground-breaking" because it includes an "ambition mechanism" aiming to increase Parties' efforts and ambitions (Falkner, 2016). Agreements in the international climate regime are usually characterised by the lowest common denominator, which can "form the basis of an incremental process that creates international socio-political pressures rather than legal obligations to conform, although this is not always the case" (Chasek, 2001: 32). The Paris Agreement, however, includes an incremental process explicitly intended to raise conformance over time: the "ratchet" or "ambition" mechanism. It implies the expectation that countries' efforts to respond to climate change need to increase and progress. Progress means "no-backsliding", which was first described in the Lima decision in 2014 (Rajamani & Brunnée, 2017).

Furthermore, by including the 2 degrees Celsius and the aspirational 1.5 degrees Celsius, which was agreed upon by all Parties, the international community set itself an ambitious goal (Rajamani & Brunnée, 2017). Over time, countries are expected to update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and set new goals. In these NDCs, countries commit to self-set goals regarding carbon reduction and increasing sustainable practices. Although the ambitions listed in NDCs are not legally binding, many other procedural requirements tied to the NDCs are. With these requirements and the "normative expectations of progressions and highest possible ambition" (Rajamanée & Brunnée, 2017: 537), NDCs seem to have been accepted and normalised. Before the Paris Agreement, 160 countries had already submitted their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). Now, 194 Parties have submitted their NDC or an updated version (UNFCCC, 2022).

In order to assess collective progress towards the Paris Agreement's long-term goals and ambition and progression in Parties' NDCs, the Global Stocktake (GST) was proposed. With the GST, the Paris Agreement created a "reflexive approach", meaning Parties have taken up the duty to "periodically revisit their actions and assess whether their levels of ambition correspond to their best possible effort, reflecting their responsibilities, capabilities, and circumstances" (Voigt & Ferreira, 2016: 74). It is thought that countries will accelerate climate ambition by reflecting upon one's actions and efforts and seeing what other Parties are doing. Milkoreit & Haapala (2019: 104) also noted that the most important feature of GST "will be its ability to serve as a collective learning platform for the Parties".

The GST will thus be a "review of overall progress made on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support" (Thomas et al., 2020). Additional thematic areas that will be reviewed include efforts related to averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage (L&D) (ibid.). Starting in 2023, the GST will be held every five years. The 2023 GST is meant to result in revised NDCs by 2025 for the period after 2030.

At the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2015, COP21, Parties decided that prior to the first GST in 2023, "a facilitative dialogue among Parties in 2018" should be convened "to take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal referred to in Article 4,

paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement, and to inform the preparation of nationally determined contributions" (UNFCCC, 2015: 4). Then during COP22, "the President of COP22 and the Incoming-President of COP23 were mandated to undertake inclusive and transparent consultations with Parties on the organisation of the 2018 facilitative dialogue" (UNFCCC, 2016: 4). Finally, at COP23, both Presidencies presented "the approach to the dialogue to all Parties", which was now "to be known as the Talanoa Dialogue" (UNFCCC, 2017: 2). The TD was considered a precedent for the GST (Hermwille et al., 2019). In this approach, it also became clear that another aim of the Talanoa Dialogue (TD) was to "promot[e] enhanced ambition" (UNFCCC, 2017: 8).

Where are we now?

Where do we want to go?

How do we get there?

Parties and non-Parties asked themselves and each other these three questions during the TD to pave the way for more climate ambition. At first glance, these three questions may not seem very interesting, but in fact, they are, because of how Parties and non-Parties shared their answers and experiences. The Talanoa approach presented by the Presidencies of COP22 and COP23 was based on the Fijian tradition of *talanoa* (UNFCCC, 2017). A tradition in which telling constructive stories and listening are at its heart (Halapua, 2010). After some initial hesitation, the Talanoa Dialogue was welcomed by many as it was considered to be a nice change from the problematic ambience in previous negotiations (M. Beukeboom, personal communication, June 24 2019; COP23 Presidency Secretariat, 2019). TD was expected to provide an open and inclusive space for positive and constructive dialogue (UNFCCC, 2018). It also allowed states to reflect on progress and take more action before submitting NDCs before 2020 (Northrop et al., May 1, 2017). However, some have expressed disappointment in the process as there was not a very strong outcome of the dialogue (Obergassel et al., 2019; Mundaca et al., 2019).

The UNFCCC TD was the first time that the *talanoa* tradition was applied on such a large scale and outside the Fijian culture where this tradition is embedded. Nevertheless, several important Fijian thinkers had already suggested that *talanoa* could be well applied on a global scale (Halapua & Halapua, 2010). Because it was so new in the global context, it was essential to know and understand how it worked and what effects *talanoa* had on the content shared by the participants. However, besides the scale-climbing of the tradition (Kirsch, 2021), the workings of the dialogue and the influence of storytelling in the international climate regime have not been researched extensively yet. Hence, this research aims to understand better the role of the *talanoa* approach to dialogue and storytelling in the international climate regime in 2018 and how this Pacific tradition was implemented in an intergovernmental context. This research also has a moral imperative: in a world where climate action is so needed, it is good to research any possibility that potentially increases action (Hoffmann, 2011).

In this research, TD is compared with six other dialogues that have occurred in the climate change regime. In addition, participants and others closely involved shared their experiences and view on the dialogue through interviews. The contributions of facilitators have also been analysed to see how they contributed to the dialogue.

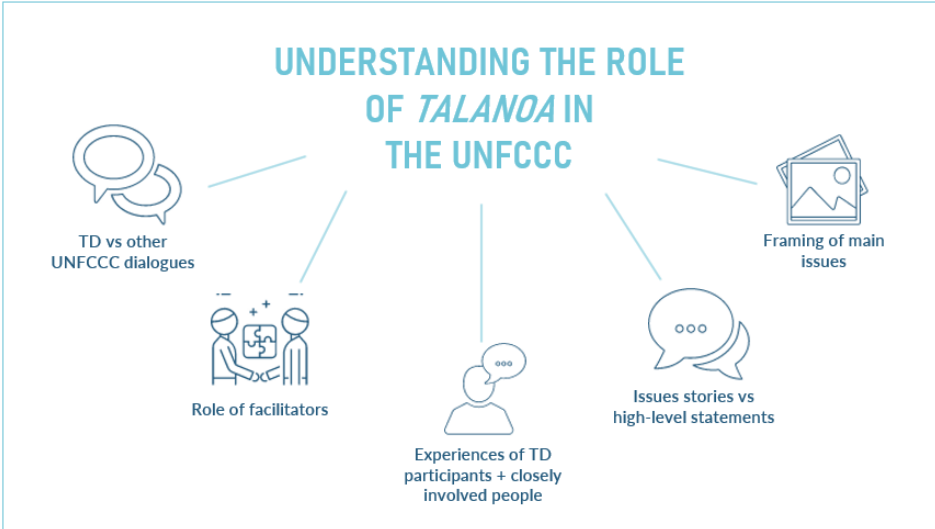


Figure 1 | Components of this research



Finally, the stories that Parties shared have been compared to the regular high-level statements at COP24 to see if and how *talanoa* played a role in the issues that Parties addressed. The research was based on the Grounded Theory Methods (GTM), which helps to find an appropriate theory for specific empirical situations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Since TD was a new concept in the UNFCCC, and little researched, GTM is instrumental in this research where it is necessary to start from the ground and build theory through the data. GTM helps to discover the theory behind the processes of the Talanoa Dialogue.

This thesis found that storytelling the specific instructions to tell constructive and positive stories made the TD unique. The latter and the small setting of the dialogue mainly shaped the experiences of the TD participants. Participants enjoyed the experience and wish to continue (inclusive) dialogue; however, this does not necessarily need to follow *talanoa*. The facilitators were able to set the tone of the dialogue. However, personal facilitation styles varied significantly, ranging from low involvement to high engagement through telling personal stories and engaging with what was said by the participants. The elements of the stories and speeches were quite similar: the need for action, country's actions and plans, view on what needs to happen next / how that should happen / requirements, and a call for action. All Parties focused on mitigation and mainly on their actions in both their stories and speeches. Issues of difference are cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, which Parties mainly addressed in the speeches, whereas most Parties focused on their plans, inclusion and cooperation in the stories. The framing of issues was relatively similar in the stories versus speeches, however, the language and call for action were stronger in the speeches. The bigger difference was in the framing of the developing countries versus developed countries.

Chapter 2 provides more background on the Talanoa Dialogue and the tradition of *talanoa*. In chapter 3, the research questions, methodology and methods can be found. Chapter 4 contains the literature concerned with dialogue, facilitation and storytelling. Then, in chapter 5, the results of the research are reported, which will then be discussed in chapter 6. Finally, chapter 7 concludes this research.

## CH. 2 Background - *talanoa* & the UNFCCC

Before continuing with the methodology and methods of this research, I first provide more information on the background of *talanoa* the tradition and the Talanoa Dialogue.

*Talanoa* is a Fijian practice that has ensured successful cooperation between societal actors in the Pacific Islands region. It was, for example, used after a coup in 2000 to reduce tensions and foster stability in Fiji (Halapua, 2008). *Talanoa* is about dialogue, storytelling and mutual respect. It is a cross-cultural process in which one strives to gain knowledge and to better understand the other. This helps to lessen tension and conflict, to increase stability and complementarity in the relationships with the other over time and space, and to increase respect amongst one another to eventually build a stronger community (Halapua 2008; Halapua & Halapua, 2010). It is how society has been organised in the Pacific Islands region for a long time. People from all walks of life get together to share their experiences, thoughts and opinions. The main aim of *talanoa* is to bring people, and thus communities, together even when people's beliefs and opinions are wide-ranging. It is not so much the outcome that is considered to be most important, but the process, which is one of the reasons why prior to *talanoa*, there are no predetermined expectations of an agreement (Robinson & Robinson, 2005).

After the COP decided to hold a facilitative dialogue (UNFCCC, 2017), the Moroccan and Fijian Presidency consulted with the Parties what that dialogue should look like. Eventually, *talanoa* was presented as an approach to the dialogue, which was now known as the Talanoa Dialogue (UNFCCC, 2017a).

During the Talanoa Dialogue, three questions were at the heart of the discussions: *Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?* The UNFCCC Talanoa process consisted of two phases in which Parties and non-Party stakeholders answered these questions. First, the preparatory phase sought "to build a strong evidence-based foundation for the political phase" (UNFCCC, 2017a: 8). During the political phase that followed the preparatory phase, high-level representatives from Parties and non-Party stakeholders came together to "take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal [...] of the [Paris] agreement, and to inform the preparation of the [NDCs]" (ibid.). Details of these two phases are outlined below.

### 2.1 PHASE I: THE PREPARATORY PHASE

The Fijian Presidency and UNFCCC Secretariat first launched an online platform to ensure that as many voices as possible could be heard. Anyone who wanted to contribute to any of the three questions could do so. Contributors were asked to provide information with analytical and policy relevance (UNFCCC 2017a). By October 29, 2018, 473 inputs were uploaded to the Talanoa Dialogue platform by Parties (both uni- and multilaterally), subnational governments, intergovernmental organisations, UNFCCC bodies, NGOs, the private sector, researchers and mixed partnerships (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, November 2018a). All these contributions were managed by the UNFCCC secretariat and overseen by the Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 (UNFCCC 2017a). The Secretariat provided an overview of the submitted inputs with the intention that the Talanoa Dialogue discussions during the political phase at COP24 were better informed. However, not all the inputs were summarised as the aim was to 'provide a general overview of "what the conversation has been about"' (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, November 2018a)

The second part of the preparatory phase consists of the Talanoa Discussion Groups that came together in May 2018 in Bonn during the intersessional meeting of the UNFCCC. A total of 207 Party and 98 non-Party representatives participated in the Talanoa sessions and shared about 474 contributions (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, May 2018). The Talanoa Dialogue commenced with an opening session on May 2 2018, in which the Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 and the UNFCCC secretariat welcomed all participants. The various actors shared expectations of the TD, followed by stories of four representatives from different organisations in the spirit of *talanoa* regarding one of the three questions (ibid.). The in-depth discussions of the three questions were held a few days later, on

May 6, 2018. All participants were divided into seven groups so that each Talanoa session would have 30 representatives of Parties and five representatives of non-Party stakeholders (ibid.).

Nonetheless, it turned out that not all representatives were present; hence groups differed in size. The groups met in parallel three times that day. One question was central for each round. Participants were asked to bring stories relevant to the questions of the Dialogue so that during the political phase of the Dialogue, the ministers would have concrete examples of issues such as 'what has worked, what has not worked, best practices and challenges encountered' (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, May 2018: p.5).

Each session was moderated by a facilitator familiar with the *talanoa* tradition, usually of Fijian descent. A rapporteur and secretariat staff member assisted the moderator in capturing the discussions. The sessions started with storytelling; each participant could share their story for 3-5 minutes. Then, if time allowed, a round of discussion followed so that participants could engage with the issues brought up by their fellow participants. Finally, the facilitator closed the sessions, summarising the dialogue's main points. Although one could participate invite-only, observers could watch the sessions via webcast (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, May 2018).

Similar to the opening session of the Talanoa Dialogue in Bonn, the Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 and the Secretariat jointly closed the Bonn sessions. They provided their reflections on the process, and there was space for Parties and non-Party stakeholders to share their thoughts on the next steps towards the political phase (ibid.).

The UNFCCC secretariat again summarised the May sessions, which were included in the final report to inform the second phase: the political phase. As mentioned, this synthesis report provided an overview of the entire preparatory phase, both the online inputs and the Bonn sessions (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, November 2018a).

The Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 and the Secretariat co-chaired the final wrap-up of the preparatory phase at COP24. In a 2-hour meeting, Parties discussed and reflected on the preparatory phase. Other inputs included in this discussion were the special IPCC report on 1.5°C global warming and the Synthesis Report of the Talanoa Dialogue Preparatory Phase. The Presidencies and the Secretariat issued the latter and published it before the wrap-up meeting (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, November 2018b).

## 2.2 PHASE II: THE POLITICAL PHASE

The political phase of the Talanoa Dialogue – in this stage, also called the Ministerial Dialogue – took place at COP24 in Poland. This phase was again jointly led and co-chaired by the Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 (UNFCCC 2017a). High-level country representatives, such as ministers and prime ministers, met to discuss the third question, "How do we get there?".

The political phase commenced with an opening meeting on December 6, 2018. After welcoming remarks by the Presidency and the Secretariat, key messages from several events were shared. These included critical messages from the 'IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C', the preparatory phase of TD, the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS)<sup>1</sup> and the high-level finance event held during the GCAS (IISD, November 6 2018). How *talanoa* works was again demonstrated; a panel of different stakeholders demonstrated how to share stories and engage in such an open style of dialogue. After this opening meeting, the ministerial dialogues in small groups started. A majority of the Parties were present in these dialogues; 119 Parties participated; 79 Parties were absent. All 42 listed non-Party stakeholders were present. They convened in 21 groups to discuss – how do we get there – ways to advance global climate action during COP24. The plan was that each group consisted of 2 non-Party stakeholders and around 8-10 Parties. The smallest group, however, included two non-Party participants and merely 3 Parties, and the largest group were two non-Party participants and 8 Parties. In all groups, two non-Party participants were present; on average, about four to five Parties participated. The Secretariat

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<sup>1</sup> Delegations from governments, businesses and civil society came together to "elevate ambition and encourage nations and others to commit to more substantial climate actions". The GCAS covered various climate policy aspects, such as mitigation, adaptation, finance, etc. (Arroyo, 2018: 1088).

summarised the main points of these dialogues and synthesised these with all the other inputs and discussions held throughout the year in a synthesis report (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, November 2018c).

The primary outcome of TD was the 'Talanoa Call for Action', which the Presidencies of COP23 and COP24 issued. As the title suggests, it was a 2-page text that urgently called for increased climate action. Because TD ran parallel to the negotiations, it was debated how this call for action should be taken up in the formal negotiation space. Proponents of TD wanted to see this call strongly reflected in the formal COP decisions. Nevertheless, after intense negotiations, Parties only managed to agree to "take note" of it and invited Parties "to consider the outcome, inputs and outputs of the Talanoa Dialogue in preparing their nationally determined contributions and in their efforts to enhance pre-2020 implementation and ambition" (UNFCCC, 2018: 6). Obergassel et al. (2019: 8) noted that "this non-committal language is compensated to some extent by other parts of the decision, which reaffirm the need for ambitious efforts to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement and stress the urgency of enhancing ambition". However, they remain very critical of COP24's task to increase ambition, for which TD should have helped. Other critics argued that it was "difficult to establish a more comprehensive overview of past experience and use it to advance future policymaking (i.e. 'how do we get there?')", because "the [TD] process was dominated by a collection of ideas, rather than a set of conclusions" (Mundaca et al., 2019: 2).

Since the Talanoa Call for Action, TD seems to have disappeared from the UNFCCC. Even the official website with the TD platform no longer exists<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> During the time of research, this website was very helpful. Unfortunately, it is nowadays no longer live but it can be (partially) retrieved from the Web Archive: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180711100448/https://talanoadialogue.com/>

## CH. 3 Research questions and methodology

This research aims to understand 1) the role of the *talanoa* approach to dialogue and storytelling in the international climate negotiations and 2) how this Pacific tradition was implemented in an intergovernmental context. The main research question is: **How has the Talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime, and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?**

The following five sub-questions will help to answer the main research question.

1. What were the main characteristics of the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, and how can it be compared with other types of UNFCCC-related intergovernmental dialogues?
2. How did the facilitators in sharing stories and ensuing dialogue in the Ministerial Dialogue sessions carry out their role – and how does this compare to the facilitator role expected in the literature?
3. How did participants in the Ministerial Dialogue experience Talanoa and its format?
4. What are issues that high-level representatives shared in their stories compared to those shared in the high-level statements?
5. How are the main issues in the Talanoa Dialogue stories framed? If these issues were included in the high-level statements, how do the framings of the same issues compare?

### 3.1 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Table 1 below lists an overview of the various methods used to answer the main research question and sub-questions. The following sections explain the data collection process and the methods used for analysis per sub-question.

Table 1 | Overview of research (sub)questions and methods.

<b>RQ</b> How has the Talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime, and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame analysis and comparison of the oral contributions during the TD sessions and the high-level segment</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• "Field research"</li> </ul>
<b>SQ1</b> What were the main characteristics of the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, and how can it be compared with other types of UNFCCC-related intergovernmental dialogues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document analysis of TD and six other dialogues within the international climate change regime.</li> </ul>
<b>SQ2</b> How did the facilitators in the sharing of the stories and ensuing dialogue in the Ministerial Talanoa Dialogue sessions carry out their role – and how does this compare to the facilitator role expected in the literature?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews (see SQ3)</li> <li>• E-mail contact with two facilitators</li> <li>• "Field research"</li> </ul>
<b>SQ3</b> How did participants in the Ministerial Dialogue experience Talanoa and its format?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-structured interviews with seven Party participants, ten non-Party participants, one UNFCCC secretariat staff member.</li> </ul>
<b>SQ4</b> What were issues that high-level representatives shared in their stories compared to those shared in the high-level statements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and comparison of the oral contributions during the TD sessions and the ministerial statements through open</li> </ul>

	coding, selective coding and theoretical coding (Glaser, 1978).
SQ5 How were the main issues in the Talanoa Dialogue stories framed? If these issues are included in the high-level statements, how do the framings of the same issues compare?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame analysis and comparison of the oral contributions during the TD sessions and the ministerial statements through open coding, selective coding and theoretical coding (Glaser, 1978).</li> </ul>

### SQ1 – TD vs other dialogues in the UNFCCC

The Fijian Presidency brought something new to the UNFCCC with *talanoa*. But how different or similar was TD from other types of dialogue in the UNFCCC? To find out, TD is compared with other UNFCCC-related dialogues.

*Data collection.* Information about the UNFCCC TD was retrieved from the UNFCCC website and the official TD website<sup>3</sup>, where official documents were published (e.g. COP decisions, informal notes etc.). To compare the TD with other types of dialogue in the UNFCCC, a search was conducted with the keywords "UNFCCC" AND "dialogue". The dialogues that appeared during this search were further investigated by using the name of the specific dialogue as search keywords. Unfortunately, not all dialogues that came up were large enough to investigate. Some dialogues provided little to no (public) information besides mentioning that the dialogue was held. Six other dialogues have been researched: the Greenland Dialogue, the informal consultations under the French Presidency in 2015, the Petersberg Climate Dialogue, the Cartagena Dialogue, the Structured Expert Dialogue, and the High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action. Information on these dialogues came from the UNFCCC website, blogs and academic articles.

*Analysis.* The main characteristics of the dialogues were examined:

- What was the purpose?
- Who was involved?
- How was the dialogue set up?
- What were the procedures?
- What were the outputs?

Information was not always easily retrievable since some of the dialogues were more "hidden". For example, the Petersberg Climate Dialogue was relatively closed to outsiders. Hence, it is a general comparison of TD with other dialogues in the UNFCCC realm. I compared TD's characteristics to the other dialogues' main characteristics.

### SQ2 – facilitator's role

According to Halapua (2013), facilitators are essential for *talanoa*. Hence, it is important to know how the UNFCCC TD facilitators carried out their role in ensuing dialogue.

*Data collection.* In order to answer sub-question 2, "field research" was needed. Unfortunately, field research was no longer possible as this research started after the TD had finished. The video materials of TD were unfortunately no longer available, months after TD's completion. Fortunately, the UNFCCC Secretariat was able to provide the audio files of all sessions, and in this way, the contributions of the

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<sup>3</sup> During the time of research, this website was very helpful. Unfortunately, this website is nowadays no longer live but it can be (partially) retrieved from the Web Archive: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180711100448/https://talanoadialogue.com/>

facilitators could be transcribed and analysed. Additionally, two facilitators, Lina Sabatiené (Lithuania, July 2020) and Luke Daunivalu (Fiji, September 2020), shared their experiences via e-mail and chat.

*Analysis.* The following elements were analysed to see if there were any significant differences in facilitating styles:

- What speaking order did the facilitator employ? Alphabetical, first Party representatives, or whoever was willing to start.<sup>4</sup>
- Timekeeping. How much time did the facilitator allow for participants to use? Do they give responsibility to participants to observe time limits? Do they use a red/yellow card system?
- Did facilitators speak of "interventions" or "stories"?
- What do facilitators say in between the different stories? Do they summarise, comment, or only thank the participant and move on to the next? Do they share personal experiences? Do they give their opinion?
- Where do the facilitators come from?
- Do facilitators talk about rules or guidelines for the dialogue? For example, do they talk about no naming and shaming or other TD principles?

Additionally, the facilitators' contributions were categorised based on process and content, for which *Atlas.ti*<sup>9</sup> coding software was used.

### SQ3 – participants' experiences

To gain a better understanding of the TD process and the experiences in the room, the views and opinions of TD participants and others closely involved were investigated.

*Data collection.* In total 18 semi-structured interviews with Party participants (7), non-Party participants (10), a UNFCCC Secretariat staff member (1) were conducted. One interviewee out of the 18 wished to stay anonymous, and is referred to as YOUNGO representative. See table 2 for the list of names of the other 18 interviewees below.

Table 2 | Overview interviewees

Name	Organisation	Type of participant	Type of meeting	Date	Reference in the results section
Carlos Fuller	International and Regional Liaison Officer Belize	Party	SB50 Bonn	18 June 2019	CFU
Colin O'Herir	Head of delegation of Ireland	Party	SB50 Bonn	20 June 2019	CO
Majid Shafipour	Country Representative Iran	Party	SB50 Bonn	20 June 2019	MS
Stefan Ruchti	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland	Party**	SB50 Bonn	21 June 2019	SR

<sup>4</sup> It could be possible that because of the facilitator, the participant's story changed slightly. In some cases, facilitators asked participants to respond to or address similar issues that other participants raised in their stories. For example, if participant A addressed certain issues in the beginning, and participant B was asked to respond to them but also raised their issues, then participant C could be asked to respond to the issues of both A and B. C then might need to respond to particular issues without having planned to do so from the beginning. Thus, one should consider the speaking order.

Marcel Beukeboom	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate the Netherlands	Party**	Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate in The Hague	24 June 2019	MB
J. (Shiv) Seewoobaduth	Mauritius Country Representative	Party	Phone	25 June 2019	JS
Jerome Ilagan	Country representative of the Philippines	Party	Skype	20 July 2020	JI
Claudio Forner	UNFCCC secretariat	UNFCCC Secretariat Head of Talanoa team	Phone	26 June 2019	CFO
Anirban Ghosh	Chief Sustainability Officer at Mahindra Group	non-Party	Zoom	27 June 2019	AG
Raphaël Edou	City of Cotonou (Benin)	non-Party	Skype	27 June 2019	RE
Sharan Burrow	General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation	non-Party	Phone	2 July 2019	SB
Anonymous	YOUNGO representative	non-Party	Skype	3 July 2019	AN
Tracey Bach	Professor at Vermont Law School (USA)	non-Party*	Skype	11 July 2019	TB
Michael Lazarus	Center Director of Stockholm Environmental Institute	non-Party	Skype	13 June 2019	ML
Theo de Jager	President of the World Farmers Organisation	non-Party	Skype	18 July 2019	TJ
Neekhil Prasad	YOUNGO representative	non-Party	Zoom	19 July 2019	NP
Peter Damgaard Jensen	CEO of the Danish Pension Fund	non-Party	Phone	15 August 2019	PDJ
Espen Ronneberg	Pacific Regional Environment Programme	non-Party***	Skype	20 August 2019	ER

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\* Has participated in the Bonn sessions only.

\*\* Has participated in the Bonn sessions but oversaw the TD process for their Party.

\*\*\* Has not participated in the Talanoa Dialogue but has helped prepare other stakeholders. They are also familiar with the Talanoa tradition and have participated in many traditional Talanoas.

Initially, the ministerial participants were the main focus, and nearly all people on the official UNFCCC participant list of the ministerial dialogue were contacted. Often, these people redirected me



to others who were involved in the TD process for a longer time – e.g. participated in the Bonn sessions or oversaw the participation of a Party or non-Party, but who had not participated personally in the ministerial sessions. Since these persons generally also knew what happened in the Ministerial Talanoa Dialogue and were sometimes even more involved in the preparations leading up to the ministerials than the participants themselves, they are included in the research as observers.

Non-Party participants have been included in this research to hear more perspectives on TD and to get a better impression of what the sentiments were in the room, as they can be rather crucial in understanding how the stories unfolded. Moreover, perhaps the most important reason for including non-Party participants is that, as the name "ministerial dialogue" indicates, many ministers and even prime ministers participated. Put differently: important people with hectic schedules. Therefore, it was expected that finding interviewees would be rather difficult, and even more so if only target Party participants would be targeted. Hence, the interview process also included non-Party participants.

Unfortunately, only 1 Party that shared their story during the ministerials and delivered a high-level statement has been interviewed. Except for Mauritius, other Parties had not responded or were unavailable for an interview.

Most of the interviews were held via Skype or Zoom, and a few by phone because of logistical reasons. Some interviews were conducted in real life during the UNFCCC intersessional in Bonn in June 2019. Usually, these interviews tended to be shorter than the Skype/Zoom interviews due to the busy environment and the limited time interviewees had.

Together with my supervisor, the questions for the interviews were created. My supervisor also participated in both the Bonn sessions and the Ministerial TD. As a result, it was decided that the following topics should be discussed:

- a) *UNFCCC experience*; in which roles and for how long one has been active in the UNFCCC. It helps to create the context and background of a person to understand their answers.
- b) *Talanoa Dialogue experience*; in terms of how the interviewee has participated, their perceptions of the process, and if, for example, they still remembered stories and shared them at home. Often their preparation process and expectations were too discussed.

During the interview process, I concluded that it would also be worthwhile to ask about what the interviewee thought the purpose of TD was. Asking for one's expectations of TD would implicitly touch upon what the interviewee considered to be the purpose. However, after the interview/conversation with professor Tracy Bach from the Vermont Law School (US), it seemed valuable to also include purpose more explicitly in the interviews.

- c) *Differences between Talanoa and other UNFCCC processes*; leading up to an evaluation of the Talanoa process, we discussed if they thought TD differed from other UNFCCC meetings and, if so, in what way. It helped to get a sense of what the format of *talanoa* has done.
- d) *Evaluation of the UNFCCC Talanoa process*; the interviewee shared whether they considered TD a worthwhile experiment. It gave insights into how the process went, what could have improved, etc. Sometimes it was also discussed whether TD should be repeated in the future, yes or no, and why and how.
- e) *Role of the facilitator*; Halapua (2013: 3) himself stated that the facilitator has a crucial role: "*This means that ultimately the practice of Talanoa hinges on the narrative condition of bringing the storytelling participants to develop a sense of belonging together in noa, which depends on the ability as well as on the acquired skill of the facilitator*". Hence, it was also discussed with interviewees what they thought of the facilitator and whether it played a different role than in other UNFCCC meetings.

The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that these topics were mainly covered, but the exact phrasing of the questions differed, and the sequence of the conversation was not always the same. Most of the interviews were relatively short: the shortest took about 15 minutes, and the average length was 25-30 minutes. Due to time constraints, the question about one's expectations of the process seems to have often gone to the background.

*Analysis.* Each interview had a plan, including guiding questions about the previously described topics. Afterwards, initial thoughts about how e.g. the conversation went, what I thought of the person or things that were remarkable were written in the interview plan. Other more generic comments about the entire interview process were saved in a separate file. While transcribing, I commented on the side as if I were conversing with the data. *Atlas.ti 9* coding software was used to analyse the interview data extensively according to the interview questions.

#### SQ4 & SQ5 – issues in the TD stories vs the high-level statements

To find out the impact that *talanoa* had on what ministers say, I compared the stories they shared in UNFCCC TD and the high-level statements they delivered at COP24.

*Data collection.* During this research's first phases, the stories were still available online on the Talanoa website. Unfortunately, however, the links no longer worked after a few months. After having contact with the UNFCCC secretariat, I was able to receive the audio recordings of the ministerial Talanoas. The high-level statements (or speeches) were also available on the UNFCCC website in the format of pdf documents (UNFCCC 2018a).

Since the stories from the political phase were compared with the standard high-level statements, the sample consisted of Parties that shared a story during the Ministerial Dialogue and delivered a high-level statement at the plenary sessions of COP24. A total of 118 Parties participated in the Ministerial Talanoa Dialogue, and 70 Parties delivered a high-level statement. 42 Parties shared both a TD story audible and delivered a speech at the high-level segment at COP24. The 42 stories were first transcribed prior to analysing.<sup>5</sup> The Parties included in the sample are in the table below. Particularly northern and southern America are underrepresented. Australia/Oceania also do not have as many cases as the other continents. Fortunately, however, there are at least two cases per continent.

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<sup>5</sup> However, several countries shared their stories in French (2), Spanish (1) and Russian (1). As my language skills do not suffice here to transcribe and translate those stories, I asked fellow students who speak the language to do so, for which they received a small compensation. Thus, four stories have been transcribed and translated. Similarly, not all high-level statements were in English: some were shared in Arabic (2) and Russian (1). Hence also three statements have been translated for me. Several written statements were in French (3) and Spanish (2), but I could translate them myself since my reading skills are better than my listening skills.

Table 3 | Sample selection of Parties

Africa	Asia	Europe	North America	South America	Australia/Oceania
Algeria**	Armenia	Croatia	Bahamas	Argentina**	Australia
Gabon**	Bangladesh	Denmark	Canada		Micronesia
Ghana	Georgia	Estonia		Honduras**	Solomon Islands
Kenya	India	European Union			
Lesotho	Indonesia	Liechtenstein			
Mauritius	Israël	Lithuania			
Rwanda	Japan	Luxembourg**			
Sierra Leone	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Monaco**			
South Africa	Pakistan	Romania			
Tunisia*	Russia**	Sweden			
Uganda	Republic of Korea				
	Singapore				
	Thailand				
	Turkey				

\* Story has been translated into English.

\*\* Both the story and the high-level speech have been translated into English.

*Analysis.* The Grounded Theory Methods (GTM) principles were applied, which came particularly to the fore while analysing the stories and speeches. First, this section explains GTM, including some primary debates. Then, it is more explained how GTM was applied in this thesis.

#### *Grounded Theory Approach*

GTM was originally introduced by Glaser & Strauss in 1967. It helps to find an appropriate theory for a specific empirical situation. Because little research has been done on *talanoa*, specifically regarding the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, not much knowledge of what theories apply to this context exists or what can be found. Therefore, although I had some initial ideas, a good and well-founded hypothesis was nearly impossible to make.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, if one were to make a hypothesis, chances are great that much

<sup>6</sup> For example: TD could have positively influenced the UNFCCC by bringing together a variety of actors, which sometimes can be more fruitful than one agreement (Chasek, 2011; Hoffmann, 2001). Moreover, because TD focused less on a particular outcome, such as a global treaty, it could give space to exchanging ideas differently (Hoffmann, 2011). These actors together could create new knowledge because "the shared outcome of what *talanoa* has integrated and synthesised will be contextual, not likely to have been already written or subjected to academic sanitisation" (Vaiolati, 2006: 26). TD was supposed to provide a platform in which one could openly discuss what is on their mind (UNFCCC, 2018). Depledge (2006: 10) has argued that creating and sharing "a lifeworld – a common system of values and norms" is essential for sustained learning, and TD seems to be a place where creating and sharing this lifeworld was possible. Additionally, TD could have created better conditions for more effective

will be missed during the research because it simply was not known what to look for precisely. Or, as Urquhart (2013: 7) stated:

*"the idea that we should seek to see what the data indicates, rather than shoehorn it into a theory that already exists, means there is more chance of discovering something new. It also seems to have more integrity as a research process, because it does not seek to impose preconceived ideas on the world".*

GTM provides "relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967: 1) and is, therefore, instrumental in research where it is necessary to start from the ground and build the theory through the data. It helps to discover the theory behind the processes of the Talanoa Dialogue.

GTM itself is a contested concept. Not only have there been "countless applications of GTM [... and] many adaptations and evolutions of the method" (Urquhart, 2013: 3), scholars have critiqued it for not being substantial enough and being a descriptive theory of everything which does not apply to a larger scale (Bryant & Charmaz, 2019). The latter concerns are not entirely unfounded, as Glaser (2019) warns for *grounded description*. GTM has received increasingly more attention over the years and is used more often; however, the correct application of GTM is not always the case. Very often, people do not reach the level of conceptualisation needed for a well-grounded theory (GT), according to Glaser (2019).

*"Grounded description is trying to describe the population studied, like a qualitative data analysis (QDA) study requires, by describing all the interchangeable indicators that grounded the concept. In contrast, GT is not to describe the population. GT is the relation between concepts which emerged from the population by constant comparing and then are related to each other by a theoretical code. The GT theory then becomes general and abstract of the study population by time, place and people."* (Glaser 2019, p. 441)

Urquhart (2013: 107) explained it as "fully leveraging GTM's capacity to describe and build concepts without going on to the next stage". Although GTM is a contested concept, Bryant & Charmaz (2007) argue that

*"...its contested nature does not detract from its value and contribution. On the contrary, it accentuates the ways in which the method has redrawn the methods map, brought to the fore some of the central practical and philosophical methods issues, and initiated a flourishing interest in methods enhancement and development."* (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007: 4).

Concluding from the previous sections, one must be careful in applying GTM and know what it exactly entails. Urquhart et al. (2010, as cited in Urquhart, 2013: 16) identified the following key characteristics of GTM:

- Theory building is the key objective of GTM;
- "As a general rule, researchers should make sure that they have *no preconceived theoretical ideas* before starting their research" (ibid.);

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communication, which used to be one of the obstacles to fruitful negotiations (Depledge, 2006). By telling stories, TD could help in making sense of climate change. The value of storytelling, according to Bietti et al. (2018: 1), "lies in making sense of non-routine, uncertain or novel situations, thereby enabling the collaborative development of previously acquired skills and knowledge, but also promoting social cohesion by strengthening intragroup identity and clarifying intergroup relations". Climate change could be considered a novel situation as the world is still trying to grasp how to (collectively) tackle climate change. Finally, some critics of the Paris Agreement have said that "rather than settled, the tensions arising in many – perhaps most – major issues [...] were ingrained into the text of the Paris Agreement, leaving them to be resolved (perhaps) through the instrument's future operation" (Viñuales et al., 2016: 2). Since *talanoa* is about reducing tensions and conflict (Halapua, 2008), TD could be a perfect vehicle for constructively addressing such issues.

- "Analysis and conceptualisation are engendered through the core process of *constant comparison*, where every slice of data is compared with all existing concepts and constructs to see if it enriches an existing category (by adding to/enhancing its properties), forms a new one or points to a new relation" (ibid.);
- "*Slices of data* of all kinds are selected by a process of *theoretical sampling*, where researchers decide, on analytical grounds, where to sample from next" (ibid.).

In addition, one should be aware of the philosophical ideas underpinning one's research (Urquhart, 2013). Although Glaser and Strauss were behind GTM, they can be considered to belong to the objectivist grounded theorists. This means that they had not included "how they affected the research process, produced the data, represented research participants, and positioned their analyses. Their research reports emphasised generality, not relativity, and objectivity, not reflexivity" (Charmaz, 2008: 399). Therefore, the constructionist approach to grounded theory methods is used in this thesis. Since I am the one who is collecting, organising, coding and analysing the data, others may find slightly different outcomes, particularly if it is not explained how the data was analysed and the theory applied. Hence, the report also contains reflective sections.

Remarkably, GTM is in line with the spirit of *talanoa*, as *talanoa* requires participants to listen to other people without preconceived ideas or judgements (Halapua, 2008); this is precisely what GTM is about. GTM is about finding what the data is telling rather than trying to look for confirmation of preconceived assumptions and ideas.

#### *Applying GTM*

Coding is a crucial part of GTM. It is possible to attach concepts to the data through codes and find relationships between these concepts that constitute the theory (Urquhart, 2013). Depending on what school of GTM one follows, different coding procedures exist (Bryant & Charmaz, 2019). The most basic procedure seems to be the Glaserian procedure, as explained by Urquhart (2013), which includes three types of coding: open/initial coding, selective/focused coding, and theoretical coding. Even though one could use different ways of coding, "even the most preliminary open/initial coding is analysis. It involves the abstracting something we see in our data and defining it with a label that is conceptual" (Belgrave & Seide, 2019: 183).

The interviews were coded based on the questions the interviewees were answering. First, the stories were examined as a whole and analysed how Parties answered the question of "How do we get there?". This resulted in codes such as actions, plans/objectives/roadmap, requirements, stating something about the purpose of TD, and a call for action. Then, it was examined what kind of actions or plans the Party representatives were specifically talking about. Next, the overarching themes were grouped. For example, all the codes related to inclusion (actions in which inclusion played a role, inclusion being a requirement, inclusion being part of the plans etc.) were grouped. Next, the number of countries that addressed a particular issue were examined for knowing the most prevalent issues. A comparison between developing<sup>7</sup> and developed countries followed<sup>8</sup>. After looking at the stories, I similarly continued with the speeches during the high-level segment of COP24. First, I tried to discover the different elements of the speeches. These elements were: showing commitment through actions (sometimes plans and objectives), need for action, call for action, view on what should be done, and the purpose of COP. Exploring the themes of each element followed. Then, the overarching themes from the stories were grouped, the issues' prevalence checked, and the difference between developing and developed countries examined. For a more detailed overview of codes, see Appendix I.

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<sup>7</sup> Using the terms "developing" and "developed" countries for differentiating between low-income and high-income countries is common practice and terminology in the UNCCC. Hence, these terms are used in this thesis.

<sup>8</sup> The distinction between developed and developing countries is based on the United Nations (2022) World Economic Situation and Prospects. Developed countries in this research sample (15): Australia, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Russia, Romania, Sweden, Turkey. Developing countries in this research sample (27): Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Lao, Lesotho, Mauritius, Micronesia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda.

For comparing the speeches versus the stories, the elements of a story or speech and the overarching themes were researched. Then, the story of a country was briefly compared with their speech to see if countries addressed similar issues in both their story and speech. Finally, for any overlapping issues, I looked at the pieces of text from the stories and speeches with a similar code to see if the Parties framed them differently.

During analysing, I wrote down my thoughts. Ranging from ideas about what should be looked into to finding relationships between the data, preliminary results or points for discussion. In other words, I was creating theoretical memos, critical to GTM (Glaser, 1978)

# CH. 4 Theoretical framework

This research aims to get a better, well-rounded picture of TD. Hence, this research draws from literature on theories regarding 1) dialogue, 2) storytelling, and 3) facilitation. The reason for doing so is that TD includes various components: participants share stories during a *talanoa* and are guided by a facilitator who helps them share their stories and facilitate dialogue. Additionally, these concepts can be linked to one another (see figure 2). Storytelling can be used to create dialogue (Black, 2008; Mourik et al., 2017; and Pässilä et al., 2012). Facilitators can help the group in ensuing dialogue (Ropers, 2017).

Figure 2 | Linking the three theories

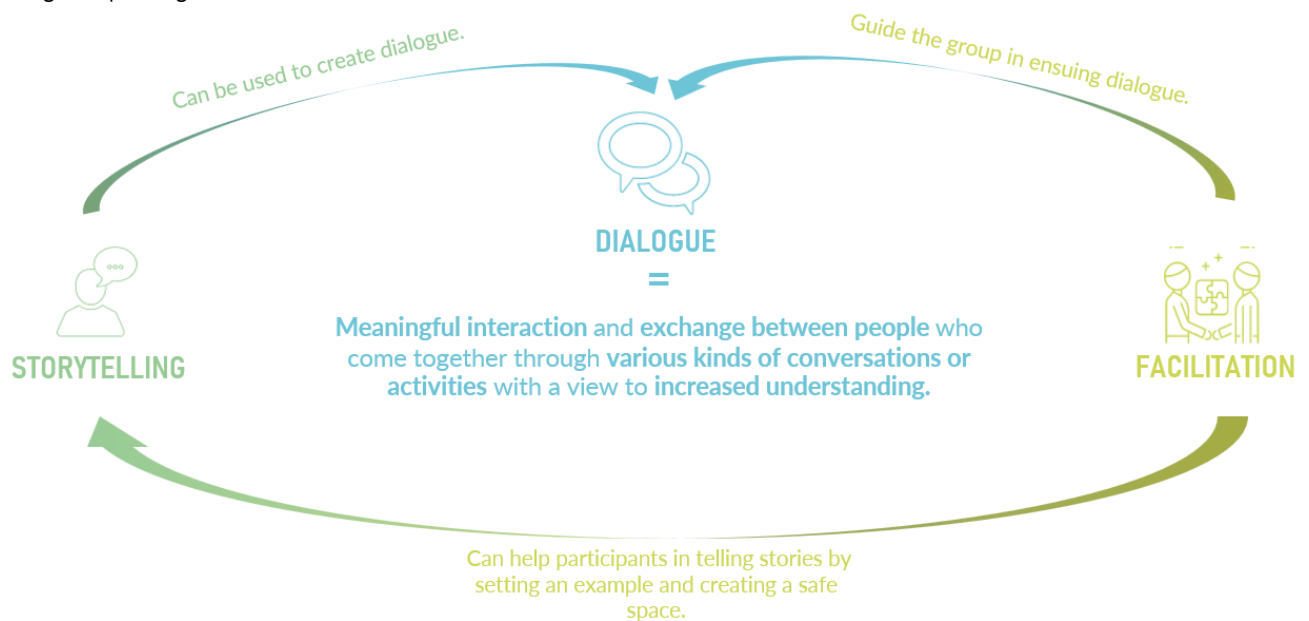


Figure 3 below points out which theories are used per sub-research question. Dialogue theory can be applied to all facets of this research and is used to understand TD as a dialogue better. Therefore, it is pictured as the 'overarching' theory in figure 3 below. Storytelling theory is used to understand and situate the TD stories, as well as to explain any possible differences between the (framing of the) main issues in the stories vs the high-level statements. Storytelling theory is also used to make sense of the experiences with TD by the participants and others closely involved. Finally, theory on facilitation is used explicitly for understanding the facilitators' role, how facilitation works in general and how TD facilitators carried out their role.

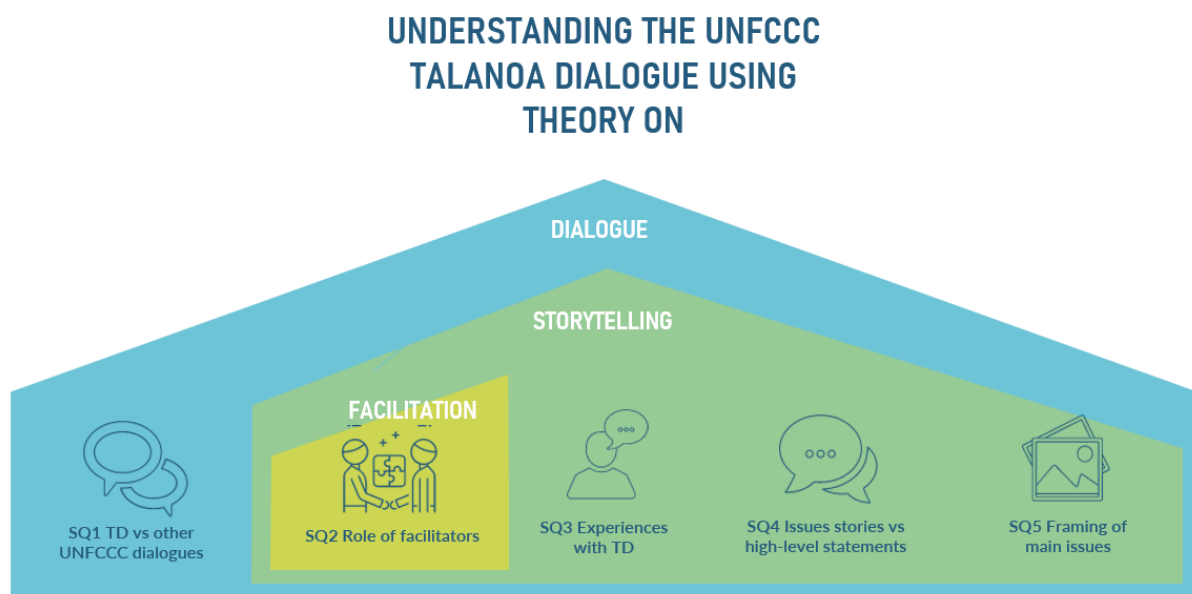


Figure 3 | Applying the theories

## 4.1 DIALOGUE: "THROUGH WORDS."

According to David Bohm (1996), the word "dialogue" comes from the Greek *dialogues*. *Dia* and *logos*, or put differently, "through" "word". Through words between two or more people, something new can be created. The concept of dialogue is receiving increasing attention across different academic disciplines. For example, in their work on dialogue theories, Slep & Sener (2013) introduced ten thinkers who are considered of great importance to the study of dialogue. These thinkers come from various disciplines such as communication studies, religious studies and interfaith dialogue, social theory, philosophy, and even quantum physics. Because dialogue has a polysemic nature, i.e. the word itself can have multiple meanings, it can be researched and understood in numerous ways (Gutiérrez-García et al., 2015). Carbaugh (2013: 13) has examined the meaning and practices of dialogue in various cultures. He and his colleagues found that

*"there is, of course, some common ground possible when coming together in dialogue, but also there can be important – socially enacted, culturally distinct, individually applied – differences. [...] Our findings [...] reveal a wide variety of possible features that are active when "dialogue" is being advocated, mentioned, translated, or conducted"*.

The ten thinkers mentioned earlier also did not all employ the same concept. Slep and Sener (2013: 17) stated: "that all appear to see dialogue as some kind of inter-human process associated with the attainment of understanding and the fostering of empathetic relationship". However, "there is no consensus on exactly what sort of activity dialogue is" (ibid.). Some see dialogue strictly as a sort of conversation, whereas others find that dialogue occurs in a much more comprehensive range of activities in which people come together, and some believe that dialogue can even occur in silence (ibid.). Gutiérrez-García et al. (2015: 751) believe that the term dialogue is challenging to coin because

*"it gives rise to a range of practical applications and effects whose degree and intensity have not yet been fully explored by scholars. One reason for this gap in the research is the complexity of dialogue as a concept and phenomenon. The nature of dialogue is conditioned by the characteristics of particular publics, the type of relationships established between them (a company–client relationship is different from the types of relationship people may form with government bodies, NGO representatives or journalists, for instance), or the purpose that prompts one of the parties to initiate the dialogic process (a company may be operating in multi-stakeholder contexts where it is one actor among others, or it may play a different role in engaging in dialogue with specific publics for its own reasons"*.

Dialogue then can be both a process and a "motivating principle" (ibid.). Black (2008: 94) argued that dialogue is different from other types of communication because it emphasises "multivocality, open-endedness, human connection, and the co-creation of meaning [which] allows group members to explore more fully the complexities of other people's commitments and perspectives as well as their own".

Although dialogue is studied in various disciplines, "dialogue studies" as an academic discipline only emerged over the past two decades, and even within that new discipline, there is no consensus on what dialogue exactly entails. Slep and Sener (2013: 11) use the "broad working definition" that The Dialogue Society also employs; *"dialogue [...] consist[s] of meaningful interaction and exchange between people (often of different social, cultural, political, religious or professional groups) who come together through various kinds of conversations or activities with a view to increased understanding"*. This working definition is adopted throughout this thesis.

Gutiérrez-García et al. (2015) have conducted a comparative analysis of the concept of dialogue in public relations, business management and corporate communication and tried to bring the fragmented research on dialogue together. They found five key elements that seem to exist across the different disciplines:

1. *Listening*: one of the most basic conditions of dialogue, genuinely listening to what the other person has to say.



2. *Openness to the other*: being open to the ideas, opinions, and feelings of the other with whom one is engaged in dialogue.
3. *Search for truth*: relates to the second point. Being open to the other and willing to seek the truth by mutually examining each other's ideas, assumptions etc. Creating new knowledge and finding the truth.
4. *Change-oriented outlook*: willingness to rethink and adjust one's "modus operandi" (ibid.: 745).
5. *Response*: "ability to recognise why things are done" (ibid.:746).

They also found that the disciplines usually focus on one of these dimensions rather than all. For example, *listening* and *response* are the most important dimensions in public relations, whereas the *search for truth* is less prominent.

Dialogue can lead to miscommunication and misunderstanding, even without any cultural differences or cases of pre-existing conflict present.

*"Each person speaks from their own inner world, with its emotions, assumptions, beliefs, life, experience, and preoccupations. Each sees the questions under discussion in the light of their own experience. Each is motivated by their own needs and fears, conscious and unconscious"* (Francis, 2019: 53).

Humans are made up very differently; hence dialogue is necessary to understand one another. Adding the cultural pluralism dimension makes the case more complex. It often adds more confusion through misunderstanding, miscommunication, and conflict, which can be caused by prejudice. Elsdon-Baker (2013: 31) stated that:

*"living with pluralism and difference means that we don't just need to reduce prejudice, we need to manage, engage with, negotiate between and understand multiple worldviews – some of which play a role in what is seemingly intractable conflict"*.

Like the concept of dialogue, *intercultural dialogue* has gained more exposure in the past decades in academics and policy-making settings (Ganesh & Holmes, 2011). One of the most prominent scholars and pioneers in intercultural philosophy and intercultural dialogue, Heinz Kimmerle (1930-2016), proposed five critical elements<sup>9</sup> for having a proper intercultural dialogue (Kimmerle, 2012), similar to elements for dialogue in general (Gutiérrez-García et al., 2015). However, he placed greater emphasis on listening, being equal yet different at the same time, and added non-discursive means of understanding. Similarly, Broom et al. (2019: 11), "who focused on the components and process of intercultural dialogue", also underlined the importance of listening.

*"Listening sets the stage for openness, validation, and empathy, and taken together, these factors can build an environment in which individuals are able to examine their own assumptions and prejudices without defensiveness, silence or withdrawal"* (ibid.: 13).

In essence, dialogue within the international community is an *intercultural dialogue*. People from all walks of life come together with different nationalities, cultures and backgrounds to discuss and exchange their ideas and views on a particular issue. That issue in the UNFCCC context is climate change and related matters. According to Dowd (2015), it is needed to understand better the negotiators' culture, religion, native tongue and way of knowing in international conflict resolution. Dialogue is needed to learn across cultures, interests, and stakeholders. However, little theory on UNFCCC-related dialogues exists.

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<sup>9</sup> The five key elements for intercultural dialogue, according to Kimmerle (2015), are: listening, equality and difference at the same time, openness to result, non-discursive means of understanding, and knowledge increase.

## 4.2 STORYTELLING

Similar to *dialogue*, *storytelling* is conceptualised differently throughout disciplines (Fischer et al., 2020). Fischer et al. (2020: 39) based their definition of storytelling on a systematic review of peer-reviewed articles; "[they] understand storytelling as a practice in which content (facts, information) is transformed and brought into a narrative form that [they] call a 'story'". Stories are often interchangeably used with narratives. However, the "active construction or plotting of stories with specific purposes (e.g. to excite or spark interest, to elicit certain emotional reactions)" distinguishes a story from a narrative, which "aim[s] to more narrowly to provide an account of events" (Mourik et al., 2017: 9).

Storytelling can be "instrumentally used as a dialogue instrument [...] to coordinate participation and inclusion of different perspectives" (Mourik et al., 2017: 14). Black (2008: 110) argues that storytelling can help because "stories can help group members understand one another's experiences and explore the connections and tensions of their collective identities". Storytelling can also be considered as a mechanism "by which stakeholders [...] can demand accountability to their needs for recognition and voice" (Chen, 2012: 904).

Several scholars have argued that wicked problems such as climate change cannot be dealt with without stories and storytelling (Stenmark, 2015; Veland et al., 2019). Stories can help "translate complex scientific data into a more comprehensible format by presenting them in a more 'life-like' format" (Paschen & Ison, 2014: 1088). Mourik et al. (2017: 6) explained that wicked problems are difficult to deal with because many stakeholders are involved with each their perspective on the "problem definition, what kind of knowledge is valid, and what values are relevant". Storytelling can help in understanding the differences between these perspectives.

Another way in which storytelling can benefit mutual understanding is through sensemaking. Bietti et al. (2018: 1) argued that the

*"specific adaptive value of storytelling lies in making sense of non-routine, uncertain or novel situations, thereby enabling the collaborative development of previously acquired skills and knowledge, but also promoting social cohesion by strengthening intragroup identity and clarifying intergroup relation"*.

Climate change and its consequences can, in a way, be considered a novel situation and new routines are still sought after. Therefore, it can be argued that storytelling could help make sense of what is currently happening. However, storytelling in the UNFCCC and its effects are unknown, as storytelling was applied for the first time in TD.

## 4.3 FACILITATION

Facilitators led the TD groups during their dialogue sessions, and facilitation can support storytelling, as shown in figure 2. In this section, first, literature on facilitators in general is explored to understand the facilitator's role better. Then, the general facilitation theory is expanded with the empirical contexts of facilitation in the Pacific *talanoa* tradition and the UNFCCC, respectively.

Facilitators can have an essential role in guiding the group process, which can be in the form of a dialogue. For example, facilitators can help advance the dialogue through active listening and speaking and systemic or circular questioning (Ropers, 2017). As stated by Kolb (2004: 207, cited in Wastchak 2013),

*"the word "facilitate" comes from the Latin word "to make easy." Thus, the job of the small group facilitator is to make the group's task easier - to help a group improve its internal functioning (process) so that its job, whether it is to make a decision, solve a problem, or perform a task, can be accomplished."*

In the TD setting, that task is to share stories, understand one another better, and eventually ramp up ambition. It is the facilitator's role to aid in that process. Effective collaboration can sometimes not be

achieved by just a "step-by-step process that directs the group effort towards the goal", but a facilitator is needed to "intervene and guide the group to follow the collaborative process" (Azadegan & Kolfshoten, 2012).

Although it is the facilitator's job "to make the group's task easier" (Kolb, 2004: 207), being a facilitator is not easy. A facilitator is not merely "managing meetings or conducting group therapy" (Raelin, 2012: 819). Azadegan & Kolfshoten (2012: 1013) stated that:

*"the skills and expertise required to facilitate a group of participants to achieve their goal successfully is a challenging task to achieve [...] A facilitator needs to operate at many different levels at the same time; understand the politics within the group; encourage interaction within the group; and guide participants through tasks and activities, while balancing the needs of the group and the client to reach real outcomes."*

It should also be noted that a "group" encompasses much more than one "group process". Three types of processes can be differentiated: cognitive, social and political. Group members experience a cognitive process in which they "structure the information, values, beliefs, and ideas held by the various members of the group" (Schuman, 1996: 4). The social process refers to process issues such as group dynamics, interpersonal interaction, communication, and so forth. The political process can be viewed as a subcategory of the social process, as it deals with relationships. However, it contains a bigger question: "who can participate and who can exercise power?" (ibid.: 6). This question is ultimately the "most basic issue in collaboration" (ibid.). Considering the political aspect helps to stay "mindful of the influence that one person has on another by virtue of their position, affiliation, and power" (ibid.) not only between participants but also between the organisations or constituencies they represent.

A good facilitator thus needs a well-developed skill set, which is necessary as the "mere presence of a facilitator [is] not sufficient to make a group successful" (Wastchak, 2013: 41). Moreover, it is more likely that a lousy facilitator harms the group process and its success. Wastchak (2013) reported nine skills that are commonly mentioned as being important to effective group facilitation:

1. Planning and designing the meeting;
2. Creating an open, positive and participative environment;
3. Keeping the group outcome focused;
4. Managing conflict and negative emotions constructively;
5. Promoting ownership and encouraging group responsibility;
6. Encouraging and supporting multiple perspectives;
7. Guiding the group to consensus and desired outcomes;
8. Being a good listener, clarifying what has been said, and integrating information;
9. Actively building rapport and relationships with the group.

Most of these skills concern "process" related skills, as facilitators ought to be neutral on a content level. Schwarz (2002: 5), for example, stated that:

*"group facilitation is a process in which a person whose selection is acceptable to all members of the group, who is substantively neutral, and who has no substantive decision-making authority diagnoses and intervenes to help a group improve how it identifies and solves problems and makes decisions, to increase the group's effectiveness."*

*Process facilitation* can be defined as "the provision of procedural structure and general support to groups through the meeting process" (Miranda & Bostrom, 1999: 90). Whereas *content facilitation* "involves interventions that relate directly to the problem being discussed" (ibid.). However, it should be noted that 1) a fine line exists between content and process, and 2) the process-content balance differs per facilitation style. Strictly, a *facilitator* should not offer content knowledge or opinion on a subject, as it can undermine the facilitator's ability to help the group. But, a *facilitative leader*, for example, who can be the formal leader of a group or just a group member, can and should "openly state his views on a subject, explain the reasoning underlying those views, and then encourage others to identify any gaps or problems in his reasoning" (Schwarz, 2005: 31). Wróbel et al. (2020: 33) concluded, however, that "a

completely people- and content-neutral facilitator does not exist in practice". Moreover, "being neutral in all the described dimensions at the same time would not only be impossible but also undesirable in facilitation".

#### 4.3.1 A *Talanoa* Facilitator

In *talanoa*, as practised in the Pacific, the facilitator plays an important role. According to the literature focused on *talanoa*, the facilitator in this tradition helps to bring "the storytelling participants to develop a sense of belonging together in *noa*" (Halapua, 2013: p.3). *Noa* "signifies the responsibility and capability of participants in storytelling to detach their perceptions, thoughts and feelings from prior commitments" (Halapua & Halapua, 2010: 6). It is a space in which they are open to hearing the stories of fellow participants without any judgement. In this way, they can truly listen and learn from the story and "come more deeply to understand one another's values" (ibid.). At the same time, it provides a safe place to share a story in which one does not have to conceal oneself, ideas, or feelings, leading to meaningful connections. Thus, the facilitator is vital in facilitating and building such connections.

Halapua has described the "four main strands of a *talanoa* facilitator" (2013: 4). First, a facilitator must be able to "become a perspective in *noa*" (ibid.). Secondly, to occupy that space in *noa*. Thirdly, "to form a sense of belonging in it; and, then and only then, to bring the different stories of those who are in the position of power into a constructive relationship with the various stories of the people concerned" (ibid.). Put differently, the facilitator is responsible for being an example of how to behave and taking participants along on that journey of *talanoa*.

The aspect of neutrality is critical in *talanoa* too. The "organising-mediator" who facilitates the process needs to be neutral and has a vital role in ensuring that the *talanoa* has an "open-agenda approach" (Halapua, 2008: 2). Without such an approach, the dialogue, or process, would not be able to flow wherever it needs to flow to. In other words: the process determines the outcomes. Halapua (2007) stated in an interview that it is his role as a facilitator "to extract the important points and then put them back to the person, and if the person says, "Sorry, that is not what I meant," then we have to change it before we actually record it." The "output of the *Talanoa* is based entirely on what the person is talking about". In this process, the facilitator has an important role to play.

However, the *talanoa* literature does not go into much more detail about what other characteristics a facilitator must have or what a facilitator can do to achieve the right conditions for open dialogue.

#### 4.3.2 Facilitators in the UNFCCC context

Leading and facilitating in the UNFCCC can be quite challenging; nearly 200 countries and thousands of organisations and businesses are collaborating on one of the most wicked problems in the world. Everyone is involved and has their stakes in the game (Monheim, 2015).

Presiding officers (the Presidency, chairs, facilitators etc.) are always "under the authority of their respective body" (UNFCCC, 2018: 1). Thus, they do not have the ultimate power and always serve the Parties. As explained in the previous section, the impartiality of presiding officers is of utmost importance in the UNFCCC. Impartiality is first and foremost mentioned in the Code of Ethics, established by the UNFCCC, to which the presiding officers must adhere.

"Pursuant to rule 22 of the draft rules of procedures being applied, elected and appointed officials shall be *impartial* and ensure the appearance of impartiality in the discharge of the duties and function to which they have been elected or appointed. In particular, they are expected to interpret interventions and provide advice to Parties without bias, prejudice, favouritism, caprice, self-interest, reference or defence, strictly based on sound, independent and fair judgement. They are also expected to ensure that personal views and convictions do not compromise or appear to compromise their role and functions as UNFCCC Officer. Officers are expected to desist from exercising the rights of a representative of a Party in the exercise of their duties and functions to which they have been elected or appointed, and to refrain from acting in any way

that might reflect negatively on their role and functions as elected or appointed officer to the United Nations climate change process." [Emphasis added]

Perhaps one of the reasons why the UNFCCC considers impartiality to be a crucial element in facilitating is because presiding officers need to "refrain from adversely affecting the confidence of Parties [...] in the work of the UNFCCC" (ibid.: 3).

Usually, presiding officers facilitate negotiations (which is the core business of the UNFCCC) rather than dialogue. The goal of a UNFCCC facilitator should be "to reach a compromise that will make all sides return home feeling as though something has been accomplished that can be built upon in future" (La Viña and Gaioa, 2013: 3.). It can be helpful for the facilitators to "make negotiators aware of the least common denominator, to illustrate how inadequate such a result would be" (ibid.), which can lead to more ambition. Additionally, facilitators should aid in creating bridges and trust among negotiating Parties. Research on the role of presiding officers in the UNFCCC negotiations demonstrated that an active facilitator is usually preferred by participants (Hernandez, 2014).

## CH.5 Results

In this chapter, the results are presented. Firstly, the dialogues related to the UNFCCC are discussed, followed by how TD facilitators carried out their role. Then, the experiences of the participants are shared. The fourth section, presents the main issues discussed by Parties in TD and their high-level statements. The final section includes how the main TD issues were framed and how Parties framed these in their high-level statements.

### 5.1 DIALOGUES RELATED TO THE UNFCCC

This section reports the results on sub-question 1: *What were the main characteristics of the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, and how can it be compared with other types of UNFCCC-related intergovernmental dialogues?*

The main characteristics of the dialogues are described by looking at:

- Who was involved?
- What was the purpose?
- How was the dialogue set up?
- What were the procedures?
- What were the outputs?

First, the main characteristics of TD are described, which are followed by six other dialogues: the Greenland Dialogue, the Petersberg Climate Dialogue, the Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action, the High-level Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, the informal consultations under the French Presidency in 2015, and the Structured Expert Dialogue. These dialogues are described based on information retrieved from official documents, websites and research papers. Finally, the dialogues' characteristics in common with TD are summarised in a table at the end of this section.

#### 5.1.1 The Talanoa Dialogue

The main characteristics of TD are summarised here, based on the background information provided in chapter 2. The Parties mandated a facilitative dialogue at COP21 (UNFCCC, 2015). The Moroccan and Fijian Presidency consulted the Parties regarding the organisation of this dialogue, after which they presented the Talanoa Dialogue Approach (UNFCCC, 2017a). TD aimed to "promot[e] enhanced ambition" (UNFCCC, 2017: 8) and "to take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement, and to inform the preparation of nationally determined contributions" (UNFCCC, 2015: 4).

The dialogue was open to all Parties, and non-Parties could also participate in small group discussions regarding the three questions "where are we now?", "where do we want to go?" and "how do we get there?". Through an online platform, Parties and non-Parties could submit their views on these questions, which the UNFCCC Secretariat synthesised. The first round of TD was held in Bonn, 2018, and the second high-level round during COP24 in Katowice. Parties and non-Parties could both participate. Participants were asked to tell positive and constructive stories relating to the three questions, after which they could engage in open discussions (UNFCCC, 2017a). TD resulted in a Talanoa Call for Action and a summary. The Call for Action was noted by the COP (UNFCCC, 2018).

#### 5.1.2 The Greenland Dialogue

The dialogue was initially started in 2005 by the Danish Minister for Climate and Energy, Connie Hedegaard, in preparation for their Presidency role during COP15 (Park, 2015). Ministers from around 20 countries came to Greenland to engage in dialogue under the Chatham House Rules with the purpose to "soften up" the "often stiff and protracted discussions under the auspices of the UN" (Hernández, 2014: 224). The rules were simple: no media, only one official per minister, no consultation documents, no conclusions were to be made, and nothing of what was said by the participants was reported. This way, ministers could focus on and see what detrimental consequences climate change causes (Hernández, 2014). After the success in 2005, the dialogue was held five more times in different countries, with the final one being in New York prior to COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009. All dialogues

*"followed the same concept: unique climate-relevant environments, limited amount of participants and informal discussions on strong and obligatory emission reductions; on the establishment of means for supporting the implementation of mitigation and adaptation actions; mitigation in developing countries; and adaptation to climate change". (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, September, 2009)*

Annex 1 and non-Annex 1 Parties participated in the dialogues, as well as parties from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). Although representatives of the major regional groupings were included, only about 20-30 Parties participated, and thus many were left out (Park, 2015). Nevertheless, many participants were enthusiastic about the dialogue and found this style of dialogue very successful (Meilstrup, 2009). Moreover, after the last Greenland Dialogue in 2009, Parties felt that "the political will to reach compromises was present" (ibid.: 127).

### 5.1.3 The Petersberg Climate Dialogue

After the failure of the climate negotiations in 2009 in Copenhagen, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel initiated the Petersberg Climate Dialogue (PCD). Since the first dialogue in 2010, ministers from around 30-40 countries from the major country groups have come together yearly to discuss climate change issues, how to make progress and what their respective countries can do in an informal setting. Keynote speeches are given to "prompt the discussion" later in working groups (FMENCNS<sup>10</sup>, 2021: 1). However, more details on what that informal setting to "encourage open debate" (ibid., 15 June 2018) precisely looks like are not disclosed. In a way, the PCD can be considered a warmup for COP as the incoming presidency for the next COP co-hosts the PCD together with Germany. After each PCD, a "co-chairs' summary" is distributed "so that the results can feed directly into the UN negotiations" (ibid., n.d.).

The Fijians also co-hosted this event in 2017 during PCD VIII, a year prior to their presidency of the UNFCCC. This time ministers discussed "which measures are needed for the complete, effective and swift implementation of the Paris Agreement in the face of new challenges in a multilateral world" (ibid., 23 May 2017). Here, the incoming COP23 President disclosed that they intended to cooperate with the Moroccan COP 22 Presidency to work on the Facilitative Dialogue (later to become the Talanoa Dialogue) (Bisiaux, 24 May 2017). Accordingly, the PCD in 2018 also considered the Talanoa Dialogue (ibid., 15 June 2018).

### 5.1.4 Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action

The Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action (hereafter: Cartagena) was first held in 2010 in Colombia, the Maldives and Costa Rica. It is a relatively closed dialogue, with little formal external communication. However, thanks to Blaxekjær's research (2020), more information is available to outsiders. Cartagena consists of "existing informal networks of experienced negotiators from Europe, AOSIS, LDCs, and Latin America and the Caribbean, who, after a common experience of failure at COP15 and the feeling of being left out by the US and BASIC, set up the first meeting in Cartagena, Colombia" (ibid.: 93). Their goal is "taking 'progressive action', understood to be in relation to advancing negotiations, creating a middle-ground, and exploring new ideas" (ibid.: 100). This is done through "genuinely listen[ing]" (ibid.: 99). However, Cartagena is also about "social interaction, shared values and a feeling of belonging" (ibid.: 96).

Cartagena is an informal space where a set group of countries come together 2-3 times a year before a UNFCCC meeting (intersessional or COP). They also meet ad-hoc face-to-face during the UNFCCC meetings. Cartagena meetings are prepared by a core group of countries representing regional views and also follow the Chatham House rule. No journalists are present to report on the meetings, nor are any other outsiders. Cartagena does invite observers to participate in their meeting, "especially the UNFCCC secretariat, COP Presidency, or specific negotiation issue co-chairs" (ibid.: 103).

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<sup>10</sup> German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

The issues discussed follow the UNFCCC negotiation issues, which are discussed in smaller working groups. A developing and developed country take the lead for each issue and subsequent working group. These lead teams prepare analyses for Cartagena, where these texts are discussed. Instead of reaching a consensus over these texts, the aim is to understand each other's viewpoints and national positions. The analyses are later used at the COP and intersessionals. Developed countries finance the meetings on a project basis.

During Cartagena, meetings in developing countries<sup>11</sup> "often involve site visits and presentations about local climate policies, activities and challenges, which for some can be a revelation" (ibid.: 105).

Cartagena produces no formal outputs; however, Blaxekjær (2020: 96) found that "the same words or phrases discussed in Cartagena would reappear in negotiation interventions by Cartagena countries".

### 5.1.5 High-level Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action

The Durban Platform for Enhanced Action was established in 2011 by COP17 as a "new platform of negotiations under the Convention", which "critically includes finding ways to further raise the existing level of national and international action and stated ambition to bring greenhouse gas emissions down" (UNFCCC, n.d.). A year later, COP18 "underline[d] the importance of high-level engagement" to the Durban Platform (UNFCCC, 2012: 19). In response, the Polish COP19 President held in 2013 a High-level Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (hereafter: Durban Platform Dialogue). The aim of the Durban Platform Dialogue was to

*"provide political impetus and direction to the collective effort to raise ambition without delay, to build momentum and support for a meaningful outcome in Paris in 2015 and to accelerate efforts to build domestic support for enhancing national action on climate change as a part of an equitable, durable, ambitious and flexible agreement in 2015."* (UNFCCC, 2013c: 1)

Parties discussed three questions<sup>12</sup> related to this aim (ibid.).

In 2013, after the first Durban Platform Dialogue organised by the COP19 Presidency, the COP decided to hold an "in-session high-level ministerial dialogue" in June and November 2014, in conjunction with the intersessional and COP20 (UNFCCC, 2013: 5). The objectives were to "motivate Parties" for increased pre-2020 action; "exchange views on the political implications of IPCC findings"; "build confidence and momentum" behind NDCs preparation processes; "provide political guidance and support for the work of the ADP" and "build political momentum in the process leading to Paris 2015" (COP19 Presidency, 2014: 1). Again, the dialogue was guided by two sets of questions<sup>13</sup>.

The COP19 and COP20 Presidents opened the dialogues as they also co-chaired the dialogues. Then, Parties were able to speak. Speakers were requested to limit their intervention to two minutes and to indicate in advance if they wished to speak. After the interventions, little time was left for plenary discussion, and the co-chairs wrapped up the session. The dialogue was broadcasted. It was also open to observers; however, interventions were limited to one intervention per constituency (COP19 Presidency, 2014). Finally, summary conclusions were made by the co-chairs and shared online.

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<sup>11</sup> These are the meetings prior to a UNFCCC meeting, not ad-hoc during the UNFCCC meetings.

<sup>12</sup> What kind of change should a successful and meaningful 2015 agreement catalyse in the world and what elements of this agreement will secure such a change? How can the 2015 agreement be made to stand the test of time for all and remain durable while adaptable to changing circumstances? How can ambitious pre-2020 actions provide for a transitional phase towards the post-2020 world?

<sup>13</sup> Set 1: What political actions are being taken and what further actions will be needed to ensure full implementation of pledges made and the unlocking of untapped mitigation potential in the period up to 2020? What political implications of the IPCC findings do ministers see for the recommended aggregate level of ambition on mitigation and adaptation and on finance, technology and capacity-building support to developing countries? Set 2: What political steps are ministers initiating in order to arrive at ambitious nationally determined contributions? How can international cooperation help to enable and accelerate domestic efforts? How does this impact the shape and content of the 2015 agreement? What should be its key features?



### 5.1.6 Structured Expert Dialogue

The UNFCCC Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) is part of a more extensive process: the periodic review. This review is "mandated to assess the adequacy of the long-term (temperature) goal in light of the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC: that is, "to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system" (Schleussner & Fyson, 2020: 272). The first review, including the first round of the SED, was held between 2013-2015, and the second review is to be concluded at COP28 (2020-2022). Since the second SED is still on the agenda, the focus lies on the first SED (2013-2015).

In 2012, the COP decided to convene the SED, open to all Parties and observers, with the goal "to increase the understanding of existing scientific knowledge and how it could be used to address the two themes of the review" (UNFCCC, 2013a: 1). As a result, over 70 experts and Parties came together during five meetings between June 2013 and February 2015. They discussed 1) "the adequacy of the long-term global goal in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention", and 2) "overall progress made towards achieving the long-term goal" (UNFCCC, 2015a: 1). Prior to SED, Parties and observer organisations could submit their views, of which twenty did.

All sessions were guided by a different set of questions related to the overall theme of that specific session. First, experts presented regarding their field of expertise. Fifty-three experts made a total of 60 presentations to inform the Parties of the "best available scientific knowledge" (UNFCCC, 2015a: 37). After the presentations by the experts, a few Parties also presented their views. A "general discussion" followed the presentations (UNFCCC, 2013b), in which Parties and experts could engage in "open and frank discussions" (UNFCCC, 2013a: 1). The sessions were broadcasted; hence questions came from the floor as well as from social media (UNFCCC, 2013b).

The SED resulted in a technical summary launched during a special event on the 2013-2015 review on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015. This summary included ten key messages from all sessions, drafted by the co-facilitators (UNFCCC, 2015a). The COP "[took] note of the work of the structured expert dialogue [...] and of the report on the structured expert dialogue, including the 10 messages highlighted therein" (UNFCCC, 2015: 23). They also decided that another periodic review would be held between 2020-2022 and "agree[d] to reconvene the structured expert dialogue" (ibid.).

### 5.1.7 Informal Consultations under the French Presidency

Before the COP in Paris in 2015, the French Presidency arranged "a series of informal consultations" in collaboration with the Peruvian Presidency. They tried to "foster mutual recognition between negotiating parties" (Walker, 2018: 11). Prior to the sessions, participants received a background paper "to inform the discussion by highlighting some key political issues on which ministers might like to give political guidance to their negotiators" (COP21 Presidency, 2015: 1). The sessions started with a round of opening statements, after which the participants continued the conversation in smaller groups. Again, these conversations followed the Chatham House Rules. The first meetings included negotiators from all the major coalitions and country groupings, after which the issues were taken to the ministerial level. These meetings aimed to "push negotiators and/or ministers towards listening, dialogue and mutual understanding" (French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as cited in Walker, 2018: 11). The outcomes of the dialogues were summarised and shared online so that everyone interested could stay informed.

### 5.1.8 Summary

All researched dialogues demonstrate that Parties, in and outside the UNFCCC, seek to progress the negotiations and engage in open discussions. Dialogues mandated by the COP are less secluded, as they are open to all Parties and broadcast online. Hence, non-Parties can observe, and in some cases, non-Party constituencies can deliver statements too. Other dialogues outside the official UNFCCC process are more exclusive: fewer Parties participate, and outsiders are not allowed. Nevertheless, they are usually in a smaller, informal setting. Apart from TD, however, COP-mandated dialogues are plenary. Unlike any other dialogue researched in this thesis (COP-mandated or not), TD provided an equal playing field for Parties and non-Parties. Moreover, the instructions to tell positive and constructive stories were unique to TD.

On the next page, table 4 displays an overview of previously held dialogues related to the UNFCCC and their similarities to TD.

Table 4 | Overview of the six researched dialogues & their similarities with TD

Dialogue	When	Participants	Similarities with TD
Greenland Dialogue	2005-2009 Annually	Ministers from +/- 20-30 countries Annex I and Annex II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal, open dialogue</li> </ul>
Petersberg Climate Dialogue	2010-present Annually, prior to COP	Ministers from +/- 30-40 countries from the major country groupings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal setting</li> <li>• Purpose: "to hold an open and frank exchange on possible ways forward in UN climate change negotiations." (FMENCNS, 2021: 1)</li> <li>• Summary to feed into the UN negotiations</li> </ul>
Cartagena Dialogue for Progressive Action	2010-present Three times a year prior to and ad-hoc during UNFCCC meetings	Experienced negotiators from +/- 40 countries in Europe, AOSIS, LDCs, Latin America and the Caribbean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal setting</li> <li>• Purpose: "taking 'progressive action', understood to be in relation to advancing negotiations, creating a middle-ground, and exploring new ideas." (Blaxekjær, 2020: 100)</li> <li>• Small breakout groups</li> <li>• Analyses prepared before the meetings, used during COP</li> </ul>
Structured Expert Dialogue	2013-2015 Five meetings during a 2-year period	Over 70 experts, open to all Parties and observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review progress</li> <li>• Broadcasted</li> <li>• A summary which the COP noted</li> <li>• Guiding questions</li> <li>• "Open and frank discussions" (UNFCCC, 2013: 1)</li> <li>• Open to all Parties</li> <li>• Mandated by the COP</li> </ul>
High-Level Ministerial Dialogue on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action	21 November 2013; 6 June 2014; November 2014	Open to all Parties and observers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose: build political momentum and motivate Parties for more action</li> <li>• Broadcasted</li> <li>• 2 COP Presidencies co-chairing the dialogue</li> <li>• Mandated by the COP</li> <li>• Guiding questions</li> <li>• Open to all Parties</li> <li>• Summary</li> </ul>
Informal consultations under the French Presidency	2015	Representatives of the major coalitions and country groupings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose: "to push negotiators and/or ministers towards listening, dialogue and mutual understanding." (Walker, 2018: 11).</li> <li>• Small breakout groups</li> <li>• Online summary</li> </ul>

## 5.2 THE ROLE OF THE TD FACILITATORS

This section reports the results on sub-question 2: How did the facilitators in the sharing of stories and ensuing dialogue in the Ministerial Dialogue sessions carry out their role – and how does this compare to the facilitator role expected in the literature?

A facilitator led each group during TD; 14 facilitators facilitated all TD sessions in Katowice. More details can be found in table 5 below. For a complete list of TD facilitators, please see Appendix II.

Table 5 | Overview of the Katowice TD facilitators

Gender	Country	Number of TD sessions facilitated
Male (12)	Fiji (5)	One TD session (9)
Female (2)	Poland (2)	Two TD sessions (3)
	Kiribati (1)	Three TD sessions (2)
	Lithuania (1)	
	Marshall Islands (1)	
	Samoa (1)	
	Slovenia (1)	
	Tuvalu (1)	
	Vanuatu (1)	

The following section first briefly describes how a TD facilitator differs from a regular UNFCCC facilitator. Then, it is discussed how the TD facilitators dealt with the process and content of the TD sessions, based on an analysis of their contributions during the TD sessions. Finally, the experiences of the TD participants and two TD facilitators, collected through the semi-structured interviews, are shared.

### 5.2.1 TD facilitators versus UNFCCC facilitators

TD facilitators were different from UNFCCC facilitators. TD facilitators were not tasked with the organisation of the dialogue. Instead, in cooperation with a special Talanoa team consisting of four UNCCC Secretariat employees, the Fijian Presidency took up this task (CFO, 2-06-2019). Hence, the TD facilitators had a limited role in the set-up of the Talanoa sessions as the question to be discussed and various rules such as telling positive and constructive stories, were already decided. TD facilitators were free to lead the discussions as they saw appropriate. No official documents, such as, for example, the Talanoa Dialogue mandate, did not elaborately describe the TD facilitator's role.

Additionally, UNFCCC facilitators are usually elected according to special procedures and with quotas in mind (UNFCCC, 2018b); however, it is unknown how the TD facilitators were selected and assigned to the task. One TD facilitator mentioned they were asked just days prior (personal communication, Lina Sabaitienė, July 2020).

Thirdly, TD facilitators were often still representing their countries. For example, one of them did not only facilitate but also shared the story on behalf of their country<sup>14</sup>. Representing one's country through telling a story whilst facilitating is in stark contrast with the impartiality principle described in

<sup>14</sup> H.E. Ralph Regenvanu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Vanuatu did not only facilitate session Nui 1, he also shared on behalf of Vanuatu a story as they were on the participant list for that session.

the Code of Ethics for UNFCCC facilitators, as they "are expected to desist from exercising the rights of a representative of a Party in the exercise of their duties" (UNFCCC, 2018a: 1).

## 5.2.2 Process – Content Balance

As described in chapter 4, facilitation can be focused on process and/or content. Process facilitation relates to procedures and how the facilitator supports the group in general, whereas content facilitation is directly concerned with the issues being discussed by the group (Miranda & Bostrom, 1999). First, this section explains the TD facilitators dealt with facilitating the process. Then, content facilitation is discussed.

### *Process*

Facilitators focused mainly on the procedures in their introductions of the dialogues. In a special guide for ministers and other participants in the dialogue sessions (Talanoa Dialogue Platform, 2018b), the "rules of engagement"<sup>15</sup> were already explained. Most facilitators repeated these ground rules during their introduction. Interestingly, however, depending on the facilitator, certain specifics were mentioned or left out, which may have influenced the ambience in the room and the setting for the stories. For example, not every facilitator mentioned that finger pointing was not allowed, and that the stories should be positive and constructive.

Each facilitator brought their own style to the dialogue and managed the sessions slightly differently. From a superficial level, this can best be seen in how the facilitators dealt with the time and agenda. Some stated that the participants had 3-4 minutes for their stories, others mentioned 5 minutes, and one did not mention time at all. The average story time throughout all the dialogue sessions was 5 minutes and 40 seconds. The longest story time average amounted to 9 minutes and 28 seconds, and the shortest was 3 minutes and 59 seconds. In one dialogue<sup>16</sup>, the facilitator stated that because only four participants were present, they had all the time they needed for their story. In other rooms, facilitator minister Ralph Regenvanu (Vanuatu) asked the rapporteur to keep track of the time, and minister David Paul (Marshall Islands) introduced a red/yellow card system: yellow when participants had only one minute left, red when they had to stop. However, in most rooms, the facilitators did not stop the participants when they exceeded the 3-5 minutes time limit.

Facilitators also differed when it came to who should be speaking when. Some appointed participants randomly, and others asked for volunteers. Others went by alphabetical order, which was actually the order from the participants' list, which entailed that Parties went first. One facilitator explicitly suggested that Parties should go first, then non-Party participants and another facilitator suggested the exact opposite. Finally, only a few facilitators suggested having a short introduction round before the storytelling.

In 15 of the 21 groups, the facilitator did not ask the participants to respond to one another's stories at the beginning. In 10 groups it was not mentioned in the beginning that the program included a discussion round at the end. However, whether or not the TD facilitator indicated that there was room for discussion does not matter for whether or not that discussion actually took place or for the length of the discussion. 17 out of the 21 groups engaged in discussion after the storytelling; on average, this comprised 15% of the total session's time (less than ten minutes). Neither did not all facilitators mention the role of the rapporteur from the Secretariat, nor did they use their services during the summary round.

Some facilitators explained their role, mainly focusing on the fact that they were there to ensure that everyone could share their story and receive an equal amount of time.

*"I am going to be your moderator. Not a boss, not a dictator [laughter], but only a moderator. So, I am going to very scarcely and fairly allocate the time to everyone." (Paul, Lolelapp 2)*

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<sup>15</sup> As coined by facilitator H.E. David Paul, Minister of Environment of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (L2, L3).

<sup>16</sup> N3

The TD facilitators set the tone of the process not only by explaining the rules, but also through their language and (personal) stories. However, not all facilitators shared a story (e.g. Yauvoli, D3). TD participants were sometimes addressed by their first name (e.g. Seruiratu, D1), or indicated as "dear friends" (e.g. Mazurek, T2), or even as "brother" (Paul, Lolelaplap 2). Humour was important too. In one room, participants were hesitant to start sharing their stories; finally, after one volunteered, the facilitator stated:

*"Come on, give an applause for Commonwealth to making the start [applause, laughter], good one, please start, go on."* (Saran, N2)

However, not all facilitators spoke of "stories" and sometimes let the more formal negotiation language slip through by talking about "speeches" (e.g. Sabaitienè, TU2) or "interventions" (e.g. Malielegaoi, V2). Another way in which the TD facilitators set the tone of the sessions was by sharing (personal) stories. Sometimes they included their story in the introduction of the session; other times, they shared it later. Nevertheless, not all TD facilitators shared a story.

One facilitator explained more about traditional artefacts present in the room, because they also wanted to "share [their] culture" (Saran, N2).

Finally, it differed widely how TD facilitators engaged in and facilitated the process. For example, some facilitators merely thanked the participant and appointed the next person to speak, whereas others summarised the central message of the participant, connected the various stories, or even shared their own views, crossing the boundaries towards content facilitation.

### Content

First, TD facilitators facilitated the content by stating what participants should share. Often they focused on stories, concrete experiences, and best practices, including solutions and innovations.

*"So, we all know that three minutes is not enough time at all to say much at all, so I would encourage you to summarise your key messages. The question that we are addressing is 'how do we get there?'. This is the third question in the Talanoa Dialogue mandate, how do we get where we want to go? How do we get there? Achievements, progress, challenges, experiences, in particular lessons, that is what we want to hear."* (Regenvanu, N1)

The facilitators often stated their expectations regarding what could be discussed before the discussion.

*"I give you the opportunity now, based on the stories that we have heard, if you can pick up on some of the raised issues. Or, can come up with options, solutions, or even some of the best practices that have been happening in your country. Or, how do you see this all addressed in terms of moving there forwards? Let's continue this."* (Serruirata, D2)

Another way in which content facilitation became visible was through the facilitator's response to the participants' contributions. Some TD facilitators addressed a specific issue the participant raised or asked a follow-up question. Sometimes, the facilitator explicitly stated that "as chair" (Regenvanu, N1), or because of their "moderator discretion" (Paul, L2), they would like to hear more on a particular topic (Regenvanu, N1). The facilitators often valued the story, agreed with the participant or gave their opinion. Sometimes, TD facilitators responded by sharing a personal account or how their country is concerned with the issue raised in the participant's story.

*"Thank you very much. Your story reminds me a lot of our story because we had to switch our energy mix after the closing of the biggest in the world, our BMK reactors nuclear powerplants. The Soviet type which was told it was unsafe, and it was our commitment to access the European Union so that we can share our experience. We are now advanced in renewables, and we have a huge ambition to become totally renewable by 2050. Thank you very much; I noted that research is again the main driver for advancing. Can I now go to Madagascar and ask for your opinion and your story?"* (Sabaitienè, TU2)

*"I like the point made by Kenya; it's very valid. Especially for developing countries and developed countries as well. I think the majority of the populations in our countries probably do not get the full impact of the risks of climate change. Which means this, the role of us leaders is to educate them, and a lot of things that they can do, for instance, in the villages, one of the things they should do is to stop burning to clear lands for cultivation, things like that. They can do quite a lot at a village level. [...] The point is well-taken." (Malielegoi, VA2).*

Sometimes, the facilitator would add points to the summary after the rapporteur shared the main summary and conclusions of the session.

*"Based on Carlos (Belize), I just want to add the linkage between political leadership, transformational change and together with financial flows and international cooperation. Need political will and commitment, but also transformation has to occur in several sectors. Financial flows very important, and the technology that comes with them." (Seruirata, D2)*

Finally, the message that nearly all TD facilitators brought across was related to the purpose of TD: creating momentum and increasing ambition. For this, they frequently mentioned the saying that how as humankind, we are "all in the same boat/canoe". Similarly, the urgency to act and the importance of the IPCC report was repeatedly underlined.

### 5.2.3 Participants' experiences with the TD facilitator

The interviewees were asked what they thought of their TD facilitator; their responses are captured below. First, the Parties' views are discussed, followed by the non-Parties.

#### *Parties*

Most interviewees focused on the process facilitation rather than the content facilitation when they shared how they experienced the TD facilitator. In particular, setting the tone for the dialogue and ensuring the spirit of *talanoa* were mentioned frequently by Party representatives. This was important because TD was considered to be something new<sup>17</sup>.

*"A lot of us weren't really sure what was going to happen here and how it was going to go. [...] By introducing a topic of, you know, this isn't about saying whose fault it is, it is not about saying, you know, "I have a problem because of you, and you need to do more, you need to reduce your emissions because I can't or whatever". It was, the facilitator set the tone that wasn't that tone and created through discussions with each party as we worked around the room... I kind of sensed that we were all bringing something to the table, and he was there kind of gathering it and sharing it back again. So, I think it was an important role. [...] It was a strong role in creating the atmosphere that it meant to Parties being more open than maybe they expected to be." (CO, 20-06-2019).*

Frequently mentioned tasks of the facilitator related to the process were: to get the conversation going, to bring people together and build on the relationships between participants and to ensure a participatory environment. Nevertheless, interviewees also recognised the importance of facilitators for collecting and assimilating different viewpoints to make people understand the larger commonalities they share. One Party representative summarised the role of the facilitator as follows: they saw the facilitator as a "midwife", as the facilitator helps "giving birth to the ideas" that come forward in the dialogue.

*"So that's actually the role of the facilitator; trying to energise, trying to make the participants imaginative and put into context; making sure that dialogue proceeds the way it's conceived. And the facilitator must also be a good documenter, a historian so to speak, that must be able to bring about the next session, maybe progresses that could be made or that are being made, and maybe analysing the implications of the dynamics. For one, the role could be that of a social observer in a social [experiment] trying to put psychological process [into perspective]. And because it is a dialogue, the facilitator must also be able to decode non-verbal statements. But at the end of the day, the facilitator is actually a support person in thriving to come up with the right message and results. [...] We, of*

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<sup>17</sup> During the May sessions in Bonn, one of the interviewees reported that the facilitator was wearing traditional Fijian clothing, which helped, according to them, to convey the message and the newness of *talanoa* even better (MB, 24-06-2019).

*course, know that Parties come from various perspectives and [that] there are many contentions [regarding] social justice and climate justice. With that, the facilitator must be able to do the nuance process." (JI, 20-07-2020)*

Another Party representative clearly distinguished between a *talanoa* facilitator and a facilitator for other UNFCCC processes.

*"Well, they [the facilitators] had another role. It's encouraging people to tell stories, [which] is a different one than keeping time and making sure that everybody gets a moment to just have an intervention. Here we have; essentially, all of us had more to say than we could. So, we had to be really brief. But it was stories, it was not, I mean, an intervention on particular points in the negotiations." (SR, 21-06-2019)*

Nevertheless, not all interviewed Party representatives shared this point of view. Some said that the facilitation during TD had a "very similar nature" to facilitation in other UNFCCC processes "because the role of the facilitator is to facilitate the discussion. And that was it." (MS, 20-06-2019).

Some of the Party participants had personal connections with the facilitator of their group. For example, one interviewee stated that they knew the facilitator and what to expect. They knew this person could ask the right questions and effectively try to get the conversation going (CFU, 18-06-2019).

Content facilitation received far less attention from the interviewees. One Party representative recognised that besides Fijians, other people who were new to *talanoa* but not new to the UNFCCC were also facilitating during TD in Katowice (CO, 20-06-2019). Precisely because they were not new to the negotiation process, they knew what kind of issues were at play. It was also mentioned that the facilitator ensures that the right topics are being discussed (MS, 20-06-2019).

#### *Non-Party participants*

Like the Party participants, non-Party participants considered the facilitator very important for setting the tone. One participant, a YOUNGO representative, described that they experienced the session as a real dialogue or conversation, which according to them, could be primarily attributed to the facilitator. The facilitator was vital in ensuring that the participants felt heard and could share their stories (AN, 03-07-2019). The President of the FAO (World Farmers' Organisation) also mentioned how "the facilitator can be the game changer" in this regard. They shared that some of the younger farmers' voices would not be heard in other settings, mainly because of the facilitator's wrongdoing. However, they felt that the facilitator during TD did an excellent job of ensuring every participant's voice was included (TJ, 18-07-2019). Perhaps more notably than in the responses by the Party interviewees came forward how important it was that participants could share their stories and were listened to.

However, one non-Party participant experienced that the group was too small<sup>18</sup> and diverse for the facilitators to get a good conversation going. The interviewee expressed that the facilitators tried really hard to get the conversation going, but it was just difficult because of the group composition and the limited time they had (PD, 15-08-2019).

More focus was placed on the personal characteristics and traits of the facilitator by non-Party participants in comparison to the Party participants. For example, one non-Party representative said they thought that "the facilitator that was there for our session was charming and effective". They also thought that facilitation generally depends on the person (ML, 13-06-2019).

Interestingly, because most facilitators were from the Pacific, they were considered legitimate<sup>19</sup> (ML, 13-06-2019).

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<sup>18</sup> The same non-Party representative reported that during the preparatory phase in Bonn, the group was too large (PD, 15-08-2019)

<sup>19</sup> Although this does not imply that non-Pacific facilitators were considered illegitimate. However, it was mentioned by one of the Party participants that non-Pacific facilitators, less familiar with *talanoa*, could have led to different dynamics within the sessions (CO, 20-06-2019).



Again, most of the answers focused more on the process side of the facilitation rather than the content side. Nonetheless, one interviewee said they did not recall any content-wise additions the facilitator made during their session (AG, 27-06-2019).

Similar to some of the experiences of the Party participants, some facilitators were already familiar with the non-Party participants. Theo de Jager, for example, mentioned that he already knew several facilitators from other settings (TJ, 18-07-2019).

An interesting final point made by the Centre Director of Stockholm Environmental Institute is that, according to them, the facilitators "framed the conversation" (ML, 13-06-2019).

#### 5.2.4 TD facilitators' experiences

It was not easy to reach the TD facilitators. Fortunately, two of the fourteen facilitators were kind to share some of their experiences. First, the Lithuanian Vice-Minister of Energy Lina Sabaitienė, shares her experiences, followed by Luke Daunivalu from Fiji, the High Commissioner to Australia.

*Lina Sabaitienė (Vice-minister of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania)*

*Talanoa* was new to Sabaitienė. "It was a surprise" for her that she was personally asked to be a facilitator by the President of COP24, just days before the ministerial sessions. She also mentioned that "it was a random experience, but an interesting one". Remarkably, she did this activity for "the first time in [her] life". She reckons, however, that her "situation was more an exception". Before the sessions, she received some information through documents and a brief instruction right before the start: "nothing special", according to her. At least for Sabaitienė, meeting other facilitators throughout the day and sharing experiences was impossible as she facilitated three TD sessions, so the day was really busy for her. Neither was she aware of any organised meetings for the facilitators. Overall, she thought that the "format [of *talanoa*] is interesting, sharing experiences in different parts of the world. [...] to use such a soft form to deliver political messages is a very interesting form. I personally liked it".

Some of the difficulties she experienced were that "it was rather hard to have VIP politicians stick to the rules (tell their stories). Some of them were delivering difficult political speeches. This made [it] difficult [for me] to summarise their messages". Fortunately, she felt "quite comfortable". She "didn't feel that there were really political leaders around the table", which is one of the reasons why she thought that "this format should have been kept afterwards in a more expert level". Alternatively, she suggested that perhaps "preparation work with the delegations or some clearer instructions to them which way the speech should be drafted". However, "it is also a question [of] whether [the politicians] feel comfortable in participating in such a style conversation. I have a feeling that not all of them liked it." Nonetheless, Sabaitienė explicitly mentioned that she was not involved in the preparatory work, so this is merely a "personal impression". She also suggested that professional facilitators might have been better for "mak[ing] the event a real storytelling".

Another critical note is that she thinks that "maybe there could have been more communication afterwards in telling the most interesting PR catching stories to the public. I was shocked by how small countries in the Caribbean are affected by climate change. This was quite new for me, I guess not only for me." Despite some difficulties and critiques, she "liked this challenge in the end." (personal communication, Lina Sabaitienė, July 2020).

*Luke Daunivalu (High Commissioner to Australia, Fiji)*

Coming from Fiji, Luke Daunivalu was familiar with *talanoa*. He describes *talanoa* "in its most simplest form" as

*"storytelling and refers to a conversation amongst persons on a topic of mutual interest or simply as a means of getting to know each other better. A Talanoa in Fiji can take many forms and its shape, size, structure, duration etc. is usually determined by the objective or desired outcome. As a traditional form*

*of interaction in the Fijian context, talanoa is part of daily life in the home, in extended family setting, in the village context as well as in official Government business and Pacific regional gatherings hosted in Fiji."* (personal communication, Luke Daunivalu, September 2020)

Also, before the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, Fiji held several Talanoa sessions "where the Pacific leaders and community came together to formulate or collate their views and positions for the annual conference".

According to Daunivalu, "the Talanoa Dialogue was not a reinventing of the UNFCCC wheel but the incorporation of a Fijian traditional form of dialogue to achieve the UNFCCC mandate in decisions 1/CP.21 paragraph 20, and 1/CP.22 paragraph 16". This also explains why he states that his role as a facilitator was "similar to other types of dialogues or meetings", however, "a particularly unique feature was the non-antagonistic atmosphere in which the dialogue was held, and this created a constructive atmosphere in which participants freely shared". Daunivalu's preparation for TD was "ensuring that every part of the UNFCCC mandate is understood and fulfilled by the process". His preparations included helping Groups of Parties and individual delegations to understand better "Fiji's management of the process as COP President". Unlike Sabaitiené, Daunivalu explicitly mentions other facilitators in his preparations; they tried to ensure that all facilitators "were all on the same page in managing different TD groups". The UNFCCC Secretariat team supporting the TD process role was to organise logistics, take notes, "advise on rules, past practice and procedure, and ensuring that Fiji and Poland as COP Presidents deliver fully on our mandate".

In addition to the non-adversary environment, one of the main differences between TD and other UNFCCC processes Daunivalu argued was

*"the open and inclusive manner in which it was conducted, where both State Parties and non-State actors were involved in the dialogue more-or-less as equal partners. [...] it was refreshing and positive that TD afforded an equal opportunity to everyone to make their contribution towards increasing ambition for global climate change action through NDCs."* (ibid.)

Other differences were "the set-up of the room to allow a more constructive environment for discussion, the size and composition of the groups to facilitate open exchange as well as the combined responsibility for the process by the COP23 and COP24 Presidents, which is unusual in the UNFCCC process". Interestingly, when I asked him about other dialogues within the UNFCCC realm, such as the Petersberg Climate Dialogue, and if this could be considered to have a similar character to TD, he mentioned that "in a lot of ways, the format of such meetings take the character of a *Talanoa* as participants would normally be sharing their own positions or views on the subject-matter without necessarily forcing others to adopt it". The facilitator here, just like a TD facilitator, also tries to create "greater understanding amongst participants and wherever possible identify common ground".

He found the process of TD a "worthwhile activity" because of the "non-antagonistic atmosphere" and because it was a "constructive and forward-looking exercise" in which all participants could learn from one another. He also thinks the dialogue format "was positively received by all delegations and enthusiastically embraced by non-State party representatives". He believes that "the objective and mandate of the UNFCCC [were accomplished] and the many countries that responded positively by signalling their commitment to increasing the ambition of their NDCs". Daunivalu would like "to see [TD] used more in the multilateral fora". He also states that "if Parties would like to utilise the Talanoa format in UNFCCC processes in the future, I would welcome that and believe it can facilitate positive progress in climate change work".

Overall, his experiences as a TD facilitator were "beneficial and positive". However, the main challenge for him was the "limited time frame within which to share experiences and learn from each other through the TD process" (personal communication, Luke Daunivalu, September 2020).

### 5.2.5 TD facilitator and the literature

The general literature on what to expect of a facilitator facilitating a multi-stakeholder process is not linear. As set out in chapter 4, most, generally speaking, facilitation can be categorised into process and content facilitation, or a combination of both. Looking at the process-content balance, most TD facilitators with a more active style engaged in content facilitation and actively provided their views. This is similar to a *facilitative leader*, as discussed by Schwarz (2005). They state that the *facilitative leader* "helps groups of which they are the formal leader or a member increase their effectiveness by diagnosing and intervening on group process and structure while contributing their content expertise" (ibid.: 28). Facilitative leaders are "skilled in process" and "involved in content" (ibid.).

Several commonly mentioned skills important to effective group facilitation, as reported by Wastchak (2013), can also be found in the TD facilitators. "Creating an open, positive and participative environment" (Wastchak, 2013: 46); many interviewees shared that the facilitator helped create this environment, particularly because TD was something new. "*Encouraging and supporting multiple perspectives*" (ibid.); various facilitators actively asked what others thought about a particular issue, trying to hear multiple perspectives. Participants underlined that the facilitators helped bring together multiple perspectives. "*Being a good listener, clarifying what has been said, and integrating information*" (ibid.); those TD facilitators that were more actively involved in the session would do so after each participant's contribution. One non-Party participant, however, stated that the facilitators "framed the conversation" (ML, 13-06-2019). "*Actively building rapport and relationships with the group*" (ibid.); facilitators did so through language, humour, and responding to the issues.

### 5.2.6 Summary

It can be concluded that facilitators each had their own facilitation style. How TD facilitators handled the procedures differed widely. Similarly, some were actively involved by sharing their stories or engaging with the participants. Others were less engaged and more distant. Most TD facilitators can be characterised as *facilitative leaders*. To most participants, the TD facilitators were well skilled and helped guide them in the process.

### 5.3 EXPERIENCES OF THE TD PARTICIPANTS

Based on 18 semi-structured interviews with participants, close observers, and one of the organisers, the following section reports their experiences. It answers sub-question 3: [How did participants in the Ministerial Dialogue experience Talanoa and its format?](#)

First, the overall experiences of the interviewees are discussed. Then, the interviewees' evaluation of *talanoa* in the UNFCCC context and how interviewees talk about a continuation of TD follows. The final section includes the account of the UNFCCC secretariat team that organised the dialogue.

#### 5.3.1 Overall experiences

In this section, the overall experiences of the interviewees are described. This includes what participants thought of TD's purpose, their expectations, and how they prepared. Then, their experiences and how these were similar or different to other UNFCCC processes are covered.

##### *Purpose of TD*

What purpose TD would serve was viewed differently. Parties saw the dialogue as a pleasant and friendly exercise, whereas non- Parties focused more on its inclusivity and purpose of raising ambition. However, that the dialogue was organised to complement the negotiations and that one should learn from one another was mentioned frequently by both Party and non-Party interviewees. For example, a Party representative stated that "the negotiations can be informed by the rather learning and sharing attitude during the Talanoa [Dialogue], to make sure that negotiations actually [go] beyond national lines, beyond national interests" (JI, 20-07-2020). Others mentioned that TD helped "[push] the critical system" (PD, 15-08-2019). Alternatively, as the Centre Director of the Stockholm Environmental Institute mentioned:

*"It is about a whole societal change, to recognise the urgency of this issue [ed. climate change] and to enact policies and making investments that can align with that. [... The Talanoa Dialogue] is an opportunity to think outside of the box for a group of folks who are usually constrained in doing so because of the political constraints of international negotiations."* (ML, 13-06-2019)

The interviewees highlighted different elements of why TD complements the negotiations. Party representatives seem to mainly focus on the friendly platform that TD provided. As the Party representative from the Philippines stated:

*"[It is] a platform for finding solutions, generating agreements that can help pursue negotiations. I think that's actually the need for the Talanoa Dialogue. [...] The mindset is [...] how we can foster cooperation; what solutions can we offer? It's more of a friendly platform than the negotiation."* (JI, 20-07-2020)

It was personal, and it was about telling stories (MB, 24-06-2019) and not about "putting forward controversial statements" (SR, 21-06-2019). Furthermore, sharing stories "can amount to, hopefully, a better mutual understanding, the main objective of the Talanoa Dialogue" (MB, 24-06-2019). One central element of TD's purpose, which several non-Party representatives clearly mentioned, is increased inclusivity. For example, YOUNGO representative Neekhil Prasad states, "my understanding of the UNFCCC [Talanoa] dialogue was to make things inclusive" (NP, 19-07-2019). The president of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) stated that it was "to change the monologue into a dialogue. To make sure that there is proper interaction between civil society and the Parties, to speak with farmers and not only about the farmers" (TJ, 18-07-2019). It also includes that every participant has an equal say and is being heard (SB, 02-07-2019). The latter is also underlined by several Party representatives (MB, 24-06-2019; MS, 20-06-2019). Another element that a non-Party representative mentioned includes that TD was, for them, a way to hold Parties accountable<sup>20</sup> (TJ, 19-07-2019).

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<sup>20</sup> "It also gave us an opportunity to kind of in an informal way hold the Parties responsible and accountable for the content of the agreement and the discussions. It... you cannot say that it was the Parties and the farmers involved yeah they are having farmers asking

Raising ambition was additionally mentioned as the purpose of TD, and in particular by the non-Party representatives. TD "was a way of helping people believe that more was possible" (AG, 27-06-2019); "for ideas to get out there, for people to reach further than they usually do in their comfort zones" (ML, 13-06-2019); and "to come up with certain goals that we need to achieve to make sure that the Paris Agreement is met in due time" (NP, 19-07-2019). The advisor for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, who was closely involved in supporting SIDS (including Fiji), stated that "the purpose was to have a non-confrontational dialogue that would raise ambition basically" (ER, 20-08-2019). Researcher Tracy Bach stated that they thought the purpose of TD was going to be a

*"dress rehearsal [... of ...] what essentially would be the GST down the road. A practice global stocktake, ideas to look at achievements collectively, meaning on NDCs or pledges. And maybe achievements is too strong, and I should use the word progress. But that is the idea to it, or at least I thought, so as to increase ambition, that functional role of it"* (TB, 11-07-2019).

This notion of TD's purpose comes less to the foreground in the responses of the Party representatives. However, the Dutch representative did mention that TD was "geared towards acceleration" (MB, 24-06-2019). Moreover, the Philippine representative stated that they saw TD "as a process of allowing the advancement of the Paris Agreement" (JI, 20-07-2020).

Finally, it is believed that TD "brings back humanity" to the UNFCCC process. One Party representative stated: "The Talanoa Dialogue appeals to the human soul rather than the laws that may be restrictive" (JI, 20-07-2020). A non-Party representative mentioned that "everything was being discussed in a different manner than, you know – we were not getting hung up on small technicalities. We were talking about specific issues that were affecting communities and countries" (EP, 20-08-2019).

### *Expectations*

Similar to TD's purpose, the expectations interviewees had differed too. Respondents stated that it was not immediately a done deal when the Fijians proposed Talanoa to be the format of the facilitative dialogue (MB, 24-06-2019). Firstly, it would entail a process rather than a one-time-only event which would go beyond the usual period in which COP presidencies preside the COP (MB, 24-06-2019). The concept of a Talanoa Dialogue was not well understood either. As a Party representative from Ireland stated:

*"It's quite different to the negotiation space. A lot of, scepticism is a strong word, fear would also be a strong word, but a little bit towards both of those things from all Parties of "what?! What is the expectation here? What do you want me to bring to the table?"* (CO, 20-06-2019).

Parties had their "reservations initially" (SR, 21-06-2019). People who had "been following and working on the negotiations, for many, many years... their eyes rolled. They were like, "yeah, the Talanoa Dialogue, that is nice dreamy stuff; let's get on with the real business here". So there still is a sense among many hardcore climate negotiators that [it] was just a bit of fluff" (ML, 13-06-2019).

At the same time, however, it was thought by the more "ambitious countries" that they should "embrace" the proposal by the Fijians "because 1) [they] want Fiji to fulfil their presidency successfully, but [they] also recognise that the UNFCCC track doesn't run smoothly" (MB, 24-06-2019). Hence, several Parties supported the process and tried to support the Fijians with the organisation as well as they could (MB, 24-06-2019). However, several Party participants from developed countries shared that they were open to TD but did not expect much from it (CO, 20-06-2019; MB, 24-06-2019). One Party representative, for example, stated that they did not think TD "was going to be something that would revolutionise the UNFCCC" (CO, 20-06-2019). On the other hand, party representatives from developing countries expressed that they expected something concrete would come out of the dialogue (CFU, 18-06-2019). TD would help elicit the "highest level of raising awareness of our interests" and raise ambition

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*the Parties how did you come to this conclusions? What are the real implications for our profitability and our sustainability if you would implement an agreement like this one."* (TJ, 19-07-2019).

(JS, 25-06-2019; JI, 20-07-2020). Additionally, one Party representative expressed that they also expected TD to help with learning how to "best communicate climate action" as "it's not easy being a developing country to understand how [to do so]" (JI, 20-07-2020). Although the expectations of developing countries' representatives were high, it was not clear to everyone how TD was "going to actually raise the ambitions and things like that" (JS, 25-06-2019).

Non-Party participants were also open to the process; as one person stated, "that is the spirit of Talanoa anyway" (AS, 27-06-2019). Both YOUNGO representatives mentioned that they expected "most of the Parties were going to show up" (AN, 03-07-2019). Furthermore, they expected TD to be an "open dialogue, a sincere dialogue with no readings, just to be concerned about the topic and each reality" (AN, 03-07-2019), filled with ambition and willingness from all participants to solve climate change issues (NP, 19-07-2019). One non-Party participant mentioned that their expectations were threefold. First, they expected to be able to get agriculture well on the agenda finally. Second, they expected farmers' voices from SIDS and other vulnerable countries are well heard. Finally, a "cross-industry pollination" was expected to occur (TJ, 18-07-2019). One non-Party participant was more familiar with TD as they immediately applied *talanoa* in their city after the introduction of *talanoa* in the UNFCCC in 2017. They saw it as a tool that needed to gain even more attention during COP24 and expected that it would be taken up by more stakeholders and used in their setting (RE, 27-06-2019). It was also expected that TD would feed into the UNFCCC process, the NDCs, and would be included in the outcomes of COP24 (RE, 27-06-2019; AN, 03-07-2019; NP, 19-07-2019).

### *Preparation*

Parties mentioned that they made sure to prepare their stories well. Several Party representatives mentioned that the country's general position towards climate change and the UNFCCC negotiations was central in their stories. However, the approach to preparing stories differed slightly. They all mentioned internal dialogue or discussions within the government to ensure the right message would be conveyed. Some mentioned consultations with different sectors (Ireland) and Switzerland even organised a special Talanoa Dialogue to collect Swiss stories. The Swiss Party representative said,

*"All of our stories were checked beforehand. [...] We didn't invent [the stories]. So they weren't our stories as such. They were all stories from within Switzerland. So they were always existing stories [...] never our own in some ways. [...] Sure, they were my own words, but they were stories that we had checked."* (SR, 21-06-2019)

The Party representative of Belize, however, stated that during the ministerial sessions in Katowice, they "felt comfortable enough to whatever would come out of, then speak about" because "[...] we knew it was going to be interactive" (CFU, 19-06-2019). Therefore, they were less concerned with bringing a particular message and more involved in the dialogue itself.

The approach by the Dutch Party representatives was more or less in between strict storylines on the one hand and almost no preparation on the other. The Dutch Climate Envoy shared that the main message they wanted to convey was how actors in the Netherlands came to a Dutch climate agreement. Moreover, because they and the Dutch minister (who partook in the Katowice TD) were extensively involved in that process, "there was no need to prepare much as they both were very familiar with the situation. You can prepare a line, so to speak, and say "tell something about that". And that makes it also personal and makes it easier to connect with other participants and their stories" (MB, 24-06-2019).

Not all interviewed non-Party participants shared how they had prepared themselves. However, those that did, mentioned again that they prepared well to bring the right message across. As the representative from Mahindra Group said, the story "went through a number of iterations. We wrote something, we discussed it" (AG, 27-06-2019). They also mentioned that they were "familiar with people from the UNFCCC, so I checked with them whether what we were going to do was in line [with] what they were expecting from [us]" (AG, 27-06-2019). YOUNGO used a personal story from the participant to introduce their proposals and positions on certain topics (AN, 03-07-2019). They tried to collect views from around the world by asking questions such as

*"what is happening in your communities? What solutions are being thought of? And is the government and stakeholders in your country doing something about climate change? And if they are doing something, what are the approaches they are having? are they making youth involved as well? Are they listening to youth voices?" (NP, 19-07-2019)*

Similarly, ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) tried to bring a "story [that] comes from the community and what they want for working people" (SB, 02-07-2019).

Particularly during the Bonn sessions, participants seemed to be very prepared. As one non-Party participant shared:

*"I think at least 10-20% of the room in Bonn didn't quite get what they had to do, so their interventions sounded more like things that would happen on the floor of the UN General Assembly rather than at the Talanoa Dialogue. [...] Most of [the participants] had prepared at least in Bonn. Some of them even had a paper they read out from, so that was obviously prepared. But not too many people were doing it extemporaneously without thinking about it before. I saw a little more of that in Katowice, but like I said, some people had gotten used to TD by then." (AG, 27-06-2019)*

Another participant (Party) shared that they, "based upon what [they] learned, or rather what [they] gained over in Bonn, tried to very much focus [their] reflections on different attitudes and processes that people have" in their preparation for the story in Katowice (MS, 20-06-2019).

#### *Experiences with TD*

Most participants shared positive experiences. Overall they had a "good", "interesting", or even "enriching" experience (SR, 21-06-2019; AN, 27-06-2019; SFU, 18-06-2019) and were "happy to have been part of the discussion" (SB, 02-07-2019). Parties and non-Parties shared that they learned much from one another during the dialogue. They also experienced a sense of comradery and felt that everybody was "in the same boat".

*"I think there was a thing of desiring discovery that ran through a lot of the stories. [...] So, as the stories were being related, it was clear that we were all in the same boat, or all trying to solve the same problem. We were all making discoveries on our own, and it was quite interesting to listen to the insightful presentations and to relate to it like, "Okay, what was your discovery? And what did you go through, and where did you reach in your journey?". (AG, 27-06-2019)*

*"We have always been having dialogues of developing versus developed country Parties. Whereas gradually, I feel, we would have to realise that there are not really two sides to the coin. There is only one side, that is: Parties, regardless of [being] developed or developing. [...] The other side of the coin that is: global warming, that is making life really so difficult for everyone on earth." (MS, 20-06-2019).*

However, the experiences of Party and non-Party participants also point out different elements of the dialogue. The friendly environment stood out for Party representatives, which was "very much appreciated" by Party representatives (MS, 20-06-2019). "People could talk [about] basically whatever. You could pick up on what somebody else said; it was not prepared scripts" (CFU, 18-06-2019). Likewise, TD had a "good and constructive atmosphere" (MB, 24-06-2019). Furthermore, "even the negotiations the next day or two afterwards, there was a feeling of "we're not enemies here". [...] I think in general that kind of sharing and taking off the masque of negotiating was a very positive experience" (CO, 20-06-2019). One non-Party representative also pointed out the friendly ambience and said, "I would suspect people were smoking something, but we weren't smoking anything. But we were very friendly" (AG, 27-06-2019).

For non-Party participants, it was an excellent experience to be able to say something oneself and to be really heard. As a YOUNGO representative put it, "I was really proud that our voice was going to be heard. And it is good because we were going to have a space" (AN, 03-07-2019). According to one non-Party participant, it felt "fulfilling" and "satisfying" to be able to talk with the Parties directly, and "it was nice to feel like you had an impact or could have it" (TB, 11-07-2019). They also expressed that they "felt very listened to [and that] there was a fair amount of eye contact" (TB, 11-07-2019). Telling

concrete, specific stories, mainly, was also crucial in the experience of non-Party participants. It made climate change and its consequences more personal. "It is materialised" by the stories, "it is not just a general problem" (AN, 03-07-2019). The stories "changed the dialogue, because when I finished my story, there was a little silence. They were all with the eyes on the table, and they were just thinking "oh my god", according to the YOUNGO representative (AN, 03-07-2019). A good illustration of how the stories materialised and visualised the issues and resonated with one's own personal background are the accounts of the Irish and Dutch Party representatives. After recalling a story from the FAO president, the Irish representative stated, "I suppose, as an Irish man, I have been very conscious of that, you know, Ireland has its own agricultural sector and its own challenges. And my father is from a farm, so it has some sense of... you know, I could see, I could visualise it" (CO, 20-06-2019). The Dutch representative said, "those personal stories of people from SIDS really stick with me [...] it does something to you" (MB, 24-06-2019). Another non-Party participant also shared how they thought that "a very important part of the Talanoa Dialogue, was the storytelling part. And I found that rather compelling, and I think it creates some level of comradery" (ML, 13-06-2019).

Some participants shared that they had mixed experiences. One Party representative shared off the record that it was somewhat challenging to get the minister to adhere to the storylines they had prepared and that, in their opinion, the original message of that respective country was lost. A non-Party representative shared that although TD, in general, was a very good experience and helped to voice their opinions and concerns, it also "brought about a lot of tension between various constituencies within the farmers" constituency" (TJ, 18-07-2019). Another non-Party representative mentioned that they found that the group size hindered fruitful discussions because merely two non-state actors and a few Parties were present during the ministerial sessions (PD, 15-08-2019). Related to this experience, a few other non-Party participants voiced very clearly some of their negative experiences, which were directly linked to how Parties behaved during the discussions. One expressed that they were disappointed in the presence, or rather absence, of the Party participants in Katowice, too (AN, 03-07-2019). Someone else shared how one of the Parties was present during the dialogue in Bonn but then "chose to pass and not speak" and to "listen in, which I found just upsetting, just silly as a negotiation envoy" (TB, 11-07-2019).

However, interviewees had contrasting reactions to the group size. According to some, it was good to have such a small setting in Katowice with few participants because one can speak normally with one another as one does in a one-on-one conversation and did not have to sit "further apart" to be able to communicate with everyone (CFU, 18-06-2019). Similarly, it was said that "no minister is going to sit in a room with thirty people and have a two minutes timeslot. That's just not going to happen" (CO, 20-06-2019). So the smaller groups were very much needed to get the ministers in the room. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the conversations were sometimes harder. Additionally, because the groups were smaller, one Party representative shared that in their experience, the dialogue

*"didn't have quite as much empathy because it wasn't, you know, this person is having challenges of flooding, this person is having challenges with desertification, this person's island is sinking, this person... you know, crops aren't growing or whatever. It wasn't that kind of... it didn't have the as diverse range of challenges, but you still had a common sense that climate change was something that we all need to fix". (CO, 20-06-2019)*

What perhaps could also be related to that decreased sense of empathy in Katowice is the experience of one non-Party participant who stated that probably more posturing occurred during the ministerial sessions than during the Bonn sessions.

*"There was always posturing from people in the government [...] especially in Katowice because there was also negotiations going on the side. So, I suppose that a little bit of that came into the room because the person making the contribution from the side of the government of a country may well have been in a negotiating room a little while before". (AG, 27-06-2019)*

Nevertheless, one Party participant recognised that some participants found it challenging to let go of the negotiation spirit and their mandate during the Bonn sessions and thus did not fully engage in the Talanoa spirit (MB, 24-06-2019).



Depending on the person, some participants did speak with people at home about their experiences during TD and shared lessons learned, and others did not so much (MB, 24-06-2019; CFU, 18-06-2019; PD, 15-08-2019; CO, 20-06-2019; SR, 21-06-2019). Similarly, it depends on the person if they can recollect the shared stories. Some could retell the stories from other participants quite lively (e.g. Colin O'Herir), whereas others had difficulty recalling specific stories in general and indicated that it probably needed to be triggered (e.g. Carlos Fuller).

#### *Similarities/differences of TD with other UNFCCC processes*

To the question of whether any differences between TD and other UNFCCC processes exist, and if so, what those differences look like, nearly all interviewees reported that the meeting was different itself. It was a "different setup" (SR, 21-06-2019), "different to other types of meetings, and it was unfamiliar to us" (CO, 20-06-2019). One non-party participant emphasised that TD was "definitely quite different from anything I had seen before [...] it was definitely not like the usual negotiation type of atmosphere" (ML, 13-06-2019).

Both Party and non-Party representatives highlighted similar issues from the Talanoa Dialogue, making it a very different meeting compared to regular UNFCCC activities. First, it was often mentioned that participants were not negotiating nor opposing one another. Moreover, naming and shaming did not occur (AN, 03-07-2019; CO, 20-06-2019; SR, 21-06-2019; ML, 13-06-2019). In relation to that, interviewees stated that the topic of the conversation: the bigger picture, was one of the main differences.

*"I suppose this is where the real difference comes in. In other processes, you are back to the bit of we all have different ideas about how and they can be a little bit adversarial. No, adversarial is a strong word, but ultimately there is a give and take, and there is a finding, a compromise, and there is moving onwards on a specific issue. [...] When you are talking about a small specific thing, it is not so much relevant that climate change is an issue for us all. It is here as a small thing, and I have this idea, and you have that idea of what we are going to do. [...] You are not looking at the bigger picture, it is very much focused on a specific small cog, and I think Talanoa reminded us that there is a big wheel there". (CO, 20-06-2019)*

*"We intentionally didn't address particular negotiations. So sure you had mitigation, you had adaptation, you had means of implementation, we had essentially stories from all aspects". (SR, 21-06-2019)*

Similarly, it was mentioned that the three questions of TD were appreciated and helpful because they guided the discussion towards the larger issue and not towards whom to blame.

*"Those three questions made all the difference. [...] They just focus on the problems; we want to solve the problems. It is not about who has the responsibility. It is about where we are, where we want to go, and how we get there. It is not about "you did this, or I did this, and you have problems". It is about the main problem: it is about [us], how are we going to solve this". (AN, 03-07-2019)*

Another non-Party representative also appreciated the increased orientation on solutions because "very often, the conversation would get stuck at where we are, and what should be done, rather than how to move forward" (AG, 27-06-2019).

Particularly non-Party representatives highlighted and appreciated the following aspects of TD, which made the meeting different from other UNFCCC meetings. First, and YOUNGO notably voiced this, it was felt that TD was more inclusive and "more horizontal" (AN, 03-07-2019). There was an "inclusiveness of open space where anyone could discuss an issue with disregard of hierarchy" (NP, 19-07-2019). One non-party representative mentioned that TD brought "government officials into a setting [in which] they don't play their usual roles" (ML, 13-06-2019).

*"In the plenary [sessions of COP], for example, civil society always speaks last. So, when we are speaking, most of the [people] are gone, so they didn't listen to us. [TD] was different; it is really*

*different. I felt that, even though there were just six Parties, you know, I think those Parties really listened to our story and understood why we were asking for those proposals". (AN, 03-07-2019)*

Party representatives did not explicitly highlight the inclusive nature of TD as much as being one of the main differences from other UNFCCC processes. Interestingly, however, one Party representative did discuss how it was no longer "developing versus developed country Parties", which was the tendency in other processes (MS, 20-06-2019).

Related to the first significant difference that the meeting itself was different, interviewees experienced TD as a proper dialogue. Party and non-Party representatives highlighted different components of dialogue. Both groups observed more interaction happening compared to other UNFCCC processes; perhaps most importantly, people listened more to one another.

*"The difference was that TD was more interactive, and also, we could actually have a... I think we went around like three times. Whereas in most instances, if ministers go to any event.. argh, somebody has prepared a statement and they read it. The other person is reading, everyone is looking at their own things to make sure they are delivering properly. They don't listen. In this case, there were actually people listening and people responding". (CFU, 18-06-2019)*

*"It was the first time in my many years that within the Convention bodies that, people listened to each other, and the atmosphere was a very different one. I mean, sure, we have good exchanges with many of our colleagues, but there you had kind of a, a group of people ready to listen to each other, and it was a different setup". (SR, 21-06-2019)*

According to some, it was easier to listen during TD precisely because the stories made it easier to listen (AG, 27-06-2019). Additionally, the stories brought a different ambience.

*"It is completely different. Usually, you're not telling stories in this setting, and you'll hold the line on your country's position, and you are trying to get it as much as possible into the final decision. [With the] Talanoa Dialogue, you didn't have that pressure. What your pressure was, were good stories that people could understand. And so, after the Talanoa Dialogue, we still had others approaching us that said, "oh, you were the ones who had the cartoon". (SR, 21-06-2019)*

*"But in the Talanoa Dialogue, you had this personal approach where you tell your story; you tell how it feels in [to be in] your position, your ideas, your background, your culture, you share so much in a story that, you can't compare that to a policy position or something like that". (AN, 03-07-2019)*

Parties emphasised how participants were more open to and learning from each other than in other UNFCCC processes. Additionally, they also sensed a feeling of togetherness. On the other hand, non-Parties emphasised how TD was more personal than other UNFCCC processes. One significant difference with other UNFCCC processes was that TD was more focused on mutual understanding according to one Party and one non-Party representative.

*"[TD] is not a meeting; this is not a negotiation either. This has a different purpose. You are still talking about the same subject, but not in a technical sense. It's about learning to understand where the other person is coming from so that you can align each other's goals later on, so that you know, "hey, we're working towards the same thing after all", and it can help you to reconsider maybe or reframe your position. Moreover, I think that that's the biggest difference." (MB, 24-06-2019)*

*"So talanoa focuses more on to understand each other's necessities, to understand how what is happening and how it is affecting lives." (AN, 03-07-2019)*

Perhaps how TD was different from other UNFCCC processes is best captured by the following statement by one of the interviewees: "it was a different setup, different kind of interaction and non-controversial interaction" (SR, 21-06-2019).

### 5.3.2 Evaluation of the Talanoa Dialogue

Resulting from the previous section, most interviewees experienced TD quite positively. In this section, it is discussed how they, based on their own criteria, evaluate TD. Based on the interview with the UNFCCC Secretariat Head of the Talanoa team (CFO, 26-06-2019), I categorised the answers according to different parts of the dialogue. 1) process: in terms of organisation and how the dialogue went, including group dynamics etc., 2) content: the topics discussed during TD. 3) outcomes: what TD brought about in the UNFCCC.

#### *Process*

When asked how interviewees would evaluate TD, a significant part of the interviewees focused on the process. Many positive aspects of the dialogue were mentioned. The possibility to learn from each other and the extent to which this was possible was mentioned frequently and valued very positively by both non-Party and Party participants (SB, 02-07-2019; JI, 20-07-2019; TJ, 18-07-2019; PD, 15-08-2019; CO, 20-06-2019; SR, 21-06-2019). Other positive aspects of TD that both non-Party and Party participants mentioned were again how TD, being a friendly and inclusive platform, is an excellent addition to the negotiations. One non-Party observer mentioned how it helped "to break through some of those silos of discussion" (EP, 20-08-2019). Similarly, the Swiss Party representative stated, "we are not putting forward controversial statements" (SR, 21-06-2019). The Mauritian Party representative expressed that the Talanoa process was actually "a sort of inspiring way of rethinking of what we are doing, whether we are on the right track or not" (JS, 25-06-2019). Perhaps TD was inspiring because participants no longer found themselves "in the itty nitty-gritty of negotiations" (CO, 20-06-2019).

Non-Party and Party representatives considered TD to be a good and open dialogue.

*"My expectations were that we would have an open dialogue, a sincere dialogue, with no readings, just to be concerned with the topic and each reality. I think this expectation was met because it was [an] open dialogue. I felt that [participants] didn't read something as they had prepared a speech. They were talking, looking you in the eyes, with no papers on the table, just being sincere. [...] People, negotiators, ministers can talk without speeches that are made. They can talk freely and directly." (AN, 03-07-2019).*

*"Everybody was telling their story, everybody else was listening, and we had good conversations on those stories." (SR, 21-06-2019)*

*"There was proper interaction." (TJ, 18-07-2019)*

TD created an environment in which participants could learn from one another, and as previously mentioned, it helped to look at the bigger picture rather than the technicalities of the negotiations. Additionally, the dialogue brought "humanity to the negotiations" and helped "to understand each other's necessities and what is happening and how that is affecting lives" (AN, 03-07-2019). For example, the Irish representative shared that they heard from a Saudi participant how the Saadians experience water shortage which can lead to three days without water for anyone. It was, for them, "an unusual glimpse of the reality behind some of the Saadian negotiation positions" (CO, 20-06-2019). Non-Party participants underlined the importance of policymakers hearing real people's experiences "first hand. Not in COP language, or SBSTA language, but in farmers' language" (TJ, 18-07-2019). "Farmers' language" may, of course, be replaced by any group that needs to be heard. Similarly, another non-Party participant mentioned how friends of them working in the negotiations "do not deal with people. They deal with policy." Through TD, they "came to understand the value of taking your time and listening to the people for whom they are making policy" (SB, 02-07-2019).

Interviewees valued some aspects of the process of TD differently. For example, several participants indicated that they thought the process was well organised and that the structure of the dialogue, such as the goals and the three questions, served the conversations well (AG, 27-06-2019; CO,

20-06-2019). However, others expressed that they thought a fourth question<sup>21</sup> should be added (AN, 03-07-2019) or that the third question was off and did not serve the original purpose of TD<sup>22</sup> (TB, 11-07-2019). Similarly, some thought the organisation was not that great because they felt the group size was not right in either session; Bonn was too big, and Katowice was too small (PD, 15-08-2019), or because TD had become too much of a "closed-side event" (SR, 21-06-2019).

However, one major critique that several interviewees uttered is that more Parties should have been present during the Talanoa sessions in Bonn and Katowice (AN, 03-07-2019; TB, 11-07-2019; PD, 15-08-2019). For example, one non-party representative mentioned that because of the absence of the Parties, the group size was not optimal for having a good conversation (PD, 15-08-2019). Furthermore, a Fijian non-Party representative even considered the absence of the Parties to be a "disrespect to the Fijian Presidency because we did not have all world leaders that contributed effectively towards addressing these issues" (NP, 19-07-2019). Similarly, the Dutch Party representative stated that in Katowice:

*"The participation was somewhat disappointing. Many ministers from a lot of countries were present, minister Wiebes also took part in a Talanoa, but many other countries did not. So they either had lower-level representation or simply did not come. The meeting that minister Wiebes attended should have had at least 15 people in total... I think only half were there. So if that's your indicator of success, you shouldn't be too positive about it".* (MB, 24-06-2019)

One Party representative suggested that "perhaps more people would have been involved if it wasn't so much a side event" (SR, 21-06-2019).

#### Content

Regarding the content of the dialogue, most people were satisfied. As mentioned before, it was very much appreciated that the dialogue concerned the "bigger picture" of the climate challenges we face (CO, 20-06-2019). Furthermore, the content of the discussions was "nice" because of the "different perspectives" (MB, 24-06-2019) and because there was "cross-industry pollination" (TJ, 18-07-2019). One Party representative shared that throughout the Talanoa process, "people had developed a more in-depth understanding of where we are coming from [...] what our perspectives are, and how we see the entire situation" (MS, 20-06-2019). This led to a "more in-depth discussion on different issues" during the ministerial sessions because "a link between why we are here, and how we could ensure that we would land at where we would like to be safely" was established' (MS, 20-06-2019). Another non-Party participant also stated that the dialogue in Katowice was more intensely orientated on solutions (AG, 27-07-2019).

Interviewees also indicated that they found TD to be a good platform to share their own messages. For example, the Centre Director of the Stockholm Environmental Institute stated they "saw that this was a perfect fit for sending our message across, getting this work into the conversation" (ML, 13-06-2019).

Although many appreciated that TD provided a chance to get out of the detailed negotiations, according to one Party representative, the content of the discussions was perhaps too broad and should be more focused on one topic, e.g. "adaptation, or impact of severe weather events, or how do we reduce emissions" (CFU, 18-06-2019).

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<sup>21</sup> "You need a "when question" [...] we need a timeline. We need to know when it is going to happen, because when you know when, the next step is to organise; we need these kinds of resources, we these kinds of work and then you can start making things possible. Talanoa is a good start if you want to talk about the solution itself, [but] if you want to materialise, if you want to take action, which is the aim of this COP, then you need another question" (AN, 03-07-2019).

<sup>22</sup> "That third question to me was off. [The] first question wasn't geared toward the global stocktake. Then the third question of "how do we get there?", how do we get to that open, honest, supportive constructively critical view, then just invited anybody to do what they want with it" (TB, 11-07-2019).

A critique articulated by one non-Party representative is that they found it unsatisfying that there was "no analysis" of the discussions. They "would rather have had someone connect the dots more" (TB, 11-07-2019). Although other interviewees did not explicitly mention this critique, it does touch upon a more significant issue of the outcome of TD (see next section).

### Outcomes

The Talanoa Dialogue's formal outcomes were the least well-evaluated of all the TD elements. The outcomes include the formal summary and the Talanoa Call for Action. For most participants, the outcomes were just not strong or clear enough. Some expected more action following the dialogue (AN, 03-07-2019; ER, 20-08-2019).

*"A bit disappointing at the end was we had so many concerns, and clearly they were coming out of the Talanoa dialogue, very strong concerns that needed us to take action and to be ambitious. Yet when it comes to the crux, that's where some countries would stop. [...] The Fijian presidency was of the view that if we sit down and discuss this without the normal set speeches and so on, then we would be in better terms of gaining consensus and we nearly got there, but in the end, we didn't." (EP, 20-08-2019).*

A YOUNGO representative shared that TD "is a good start if you want to talk [...] but we need more questions about how it is going to be materialised. [...] The final outcome wasn't integrated. So, yeah, it is just we did it, we talked, and that is all" (AN, 03-07-2019).

Several Party representatives seemed to be more optimistic about the formal outcomes of TD.

*"I think the outcomes... the other thing everybody was a bit nervous about of what is going to come from this and where is that going to. We've just put in a lot of work, and then if it is going to disappear a day later, like, what's the point? And I think, you know, another call for action was a positive outcome. [...] TD] reminded us all that we are all here because climate change is a big problem. [...] The summary of we are all not doing enough, which was an important message, links into where we are at now with the whole discussion of the adequacy of global ambition. [...] So, I mean, I'd be positive on what it did." (CO, 20-06-2019)*

*"TD delivered things that were eventually returned to the online submissions portal and from which a kind of summary was made that was brought back into the negotiations. So in that sense, it did produce something". (MB, 24-06-2019)*

Nonetheless, one Party representative also indicated that they were "somewhat disappointed that we could not, maybe, get something more substantial out of it" (CFU, 18-06-2019). One interviewee raised a possible reason why the outcomes were perhaps disappointing to some participants: some Parties "attached less importance [to the dialogue] because nothing would be decided anyway. No signed conclusion would be there at the end of the road" (MB, 24-06-2019).

### Was it worthwhile?

Considering TD's process, content and outcomes, what do interviewees think: was it all worthwhile? The responses varied. Even though some did not have a negative experience per se, they did not think TD was worthwhile. One non-Party participant strongly voiced that they did not think TD was worthwhile. TD "certainly got lots of voices in", but it did not feed into "a design for the Global Stocktake", which was its original purpose (TB, 11-07-2019).

*"I don't think it was worthwhile because from what I see about how it was summarised in the synthesis report, I don't see it moving the parties to more ambition [...] I haven't seen a clear design for the global stocktake. [...] I am not seeing there how the Talanoa dialogue fits in there. [...] Because then the reason I do not think it was worthwhile, I will just say it categorically, is because so many resources went into it; people, time and that all means money. [...] And that's what I am holding the measurement of worthwhileness to." (TB, 11-07-2019)*

Nevertheless, most interviewees that responded directly to the worthwhileness of TD were either more nuanced or rather positive. Both non-Party and Party representatives mentioned how it is not yet sure whether TD can be called worthwhile (MB, 24-06-2019; AG, 27-06-2019; PD, 15-08-2019). To the question if TD was worthwhile, one interviewee responded:

*"That's almost impossible to say, precisely because you have to define the results in those elusive terms like "better understanding", "more momentum", you know, so that's all vague too. And that's also psychological almost... I can't quantify whether this has helped us reach a decision more easily in other [UNFCCC] tracks. [...] One could say "at least TD didn't contribute negatively", but to say "it would not have been possible without TD"... I can't prove that." (MB, 24-06-2019)*

That TD does not seem to have negatively impacted the normal UNFCCC processes led a non-Party participant to the conclusion that "it definitely was a worthwhile experiment. [...] I see no harm in it. The only harm in it I could see, is it raises false expectations, and worse, distractions. But I really don't think so" (ML, 13-06-2019). Other non-Party participants expressed that they believe the Talanoa approach is very much needed and thus worthwhile (AN, 03-07-2019).

Overall, party representatives were particularly positive and considered TD worthwhile. As one Party representative stated: "it was a worthwhile experiment, and it is still a worthy experiment" (JS, 25-06-2019).

*Continuation of TD desired?*

Although many enjoyed the TD process and considered it worthwhile, the question of whether it should be continued was a different issue. Whether TD should be continued did not explicitly come up in each interview; however, some interesting things were shared in the instances that it was discussed. The Philippine Party representative proposed that "participants in the Talanoa Dialogue should continue their engagements even after the talks. So there must be a network of Talanoa participants" (JI, 20-07-2020). Several other Parties would like to see TD be continued, although it should not be done regularly. The Irish Party representative, for example, stated:

*"I don't think that it is something you could do regularly. [...] If you did it again a year later, I don't think you would get all the extra out of it. [...] You could do it again in ten years' time, or something, if people forget that what it is like to talk about the big picture, but it wouldn't be something to do regularly" (CO, 20-06-2019).*

Similarly, the Dutch Party representative emphasises the need to use "the tool that Fiji has given us wisely" and only when such a process is expected to bring added value. Both Party representatives see the added value of using *talanoa*, but only if it is used correctly and not too often. Beukeboom would like to see Talanoa back in the UNFCCC process, even if it just served to include non-state actors in the process (MB, 24-06-2019). The Belizian Party representative thinks that *talanoa*, or dialogues, serve a better place "on the fringes of these side events in the pavilions that occur at the COPs and so on" (CFU, 18-06-2019). However, this idea is not necessarily shared by everyone; the Swiss Party representative, for example, thought TD should be more integrated into the UNFCCC process rather than being on the outskirts (SR, 21-06-2019). The Swiss delegation thought that *talanoa* was a great tool, and they were very enthusiastic about the process and even wanted to organise more Talanoa Dialogues at home. However,

*"it's a bit hard to go on with a Talanoa Dialogue at the national level if at the international level it is stopped [...] I thought it was good, it would be good to have it again and in other settings, because it's, it's yeah... it brings people together rather than opposing them. So for that, I would really like it again." (SR, 21-06-2019)*

Not only the Swiss wanted to use *talanoa* as a tool at home. Others already used it, as the mayor of Cotonou (Benin) and a YOUNGO representative mentioned (RE, 27-06-2019; NP, 19-07-2019).

Non-Party representatives also expressed that they would like to see TD be continued. One YOUNGO representative mentioned that it should be held again because everybody knows what is expected of them and can improve. These improvements concern the presence (or rather absence) of the Party participants and that a concrete outcome of such dialogues should be taken up in the final decision. In YOUNGO's closing statement, they "proposed that *talanoa* should also take place every time we go on the stocktake processes" (AN, 03-07-2019).

Most importantly, everyone seems to find that dialogue, conversations in which one can speak with one another and is heard, needs to continue between all Parties and non-state actors. However, whether this is in the particular form of *talanoa* seems less critical for most. One non-Party representative stated that TD

*"brought a new dimension, and I really hope that it will renew itself all along to maintain its relevance. I hope it is there to stay, in whichever format, the very idea that in this process, in the climate negotiations, you have this open dialogue; we civil society, business and Parties engage with each other. [... it doesn't] need to be in the same format, but the dialogue must continue."* (TJ, 18-07-2019)

Others also expressed their doubts about "whether the storytelling element and the format used to follow the South-Pacific traditions has long-term resonance" (ML, 13-06-2019). One Party representative clearly stated that it is still to be seen

*"whether growing this spirit of talanoa into the climate change negotiations and processes is realistically a viable tool. [...] although we learn a lot, but the way that the negotiations are structured, the way that groups are organised, the spirit of the Talanoa Dialogue cannot really penetrate deep enough into the process."* (MS, 20-06-2019)

Whether the TD will continue or not, a YOUNGO representative shared that at least they have adopted "the spirit of *talanoa*" within their constituency.

*"Now, when we are talking about some problems [...], we say "in the spirit of talanoa", which means that we didn't want this name and shame. We focus on the solution and with the three questions. That is making life more simple. It is a good form; it is a good way for addressing problems and to start thinking about how to do things better?"* (AN, 03-07-2019)

### 5.3.3 Experience of the UNFCCC TD team

Up to this point, the views of the TD participants or those closely involved with the TD participants were discussed. The following section deals with the organisers' point of view.

The Fijians were supported by a team of the UNFCCC Secretariat, comprising of four persons, led by Claudio Forner. Although they were not in the room during the sessions, they bring valuable insights to this research as they oversaw the entire process. Overall, the TD process was for Forner "very positive and successful" (CFO, 26-06-2019). According to them, "there wasn't any attempt for, from the side of the Parties to kind of control the process, but they let the [Fijian] Presidency do it". At the same time, TD received much attention and noise, and many people participated. Forner also recognised that through TD, the UNFCCC "opened up to non-party stakeholders. And from my perspective, this is really encouraging to see [...] The discourses were actually very refreshing; when people took their hat off". Content-wise, Forner was positive, too: many inputs were submitted online, and much information was shared; the dialogues were open and not restricted to one topic but rather about action and "hope in the future".

Despite being fairly positive, Forner would not necessarily organise another round of TD. Instead, they would take certain elements, such as how people conversed with each other and apply them to other processes. They also thought that "the Global Stocktake would take over"; hence it would not be necessary to have a new TD round. Regarding the outcomes, Forner had "mixed feelings" as various more prominent actors do not seem to be significantly influenced by TD.

*"I guess where I think that maybe [TD] didn't deliver what it should have delivered in the aftermath as to how, and to what extent, this really constitutes a process whereby the actors the actors would have brought back home [the things they have heard], and say 'hey, this has changed my life and we need to shift gears'. I don't think that [TD] was [an] entire failure, [... ... the messages resonate, and they are like latent. But you know, I think that, unfortunately, the bigger Parties tend to react more seriously to things like decisions that have been put up through consensus. [...] To me, that's why I think the outcome is mixed; with again, for some [TD] didn't play a major role, but, with others, it stuck."*

Nevertheless, Forner had not had "great expectations of the outcomes" to start with, so in the end, their "expectations were more or less met".

#### 5.3.4 Summary

To summarise, most interviewees enjoyed the process of TD, would like to continue with dialogues similar in nature, and thought that the primary purpose of the dialogue was to engender greater mutual understanding. It was also a level playing ground for the non-party stakeholders in the climate change negotiations. Stronger (formal) outcomes were, however, expected by many, and in that sense, TD failed to deliver, according to the interviewees. Nevertheless, all interviewees seem to find that dialogue needs to continue between all Parties and non-state actors. Whether this dialogue would follow *talanoa* seems less critical for most. The experiences and evaluations of the Party and non-Party representatives are summarised on the next pages.



Table 6 | Overview of the participants' experiences

Overall experience	Parties	Non-Parties	TD organiser
Purpose	<p>Complement the negotiations and learn from one another:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TD provided a friendly platform;</li> <li>- lead to greater mutual understanding;</li> <li>- advancement of the Paris Agreement;</li> <li>- brought back "humanity" in the UNFCCC process.</li> </ul>	<p>Complement the negotiations and learn from one another:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to create a more inclusive environment than negotiations usually are;</li> <li>- proper interaction between Parties and non-Parties;</li> <li>- non-adversarial climate;</li> <li>- dress rehearsal of the Global Stocktake;</li> <li>- brought back "humanity" in the UNFCCC process.</li> </ul>	Not discussed.
Expectations	<p>Developed countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- open to the process;</li> <li>- did not think TD would "revolutionise the UNFCCC.</li> </ul> <p>Developing countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TD was going to raise ambition;</li> <li>- concrete outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open to the process;</li> <li>- expected Parties to be present;</li> <li>- sincere conversations;</li> <li>- TD would be filled with ambition;</li> <li>- inclusive environment where one can learn from each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not great expectations from the start.</li> </ul>
Preparation	<p>Most were well-prepared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stories lined up with their position;</li> <li>- some collected stories through national talanoa dialogue.</li> </ul> <p>Some prepared less for Katowice because they felt more comfortable in the second round.</p>	<p>Well-prepared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stories lined up with their position;</li> <li>- tried to ensure that stories would represent their constituency and was personal.</li> </ul>	Not discussed.

Experiences with TD	<p>Positive experience for most:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- appreciated friendly atmosphere;</li> <li>- stories resonated with them.</li> </ul> <p>Difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for some Party representatives, it was difficult to get their minister adhere to the storylines that were prepared.</li> </ul> <p>Group size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- most liked the small groups because it enabled true conversation;</li> <li>- some preferred more people in the room.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive experience for most:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- nice to tell their stories and to be heard;</li> <li>- TD made climate change more personal.</li> </ul> <p>Difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for some non-Party participants, TD brought about tension between the constituencies within their constituency.</li> </ul> <p>Group size:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some liked the small groups;</li> <li>- others disappointed because they thought more non-state actors should have been able to participate or that more Parties should have been present.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- good to work with the presidency on less political processes;</li> <li>- tone was about trust;</li> <li>- organisation went well.</li> </ul>
		<p>Other:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- some expressed that they thought that more posturing was happening during the Katowice sessions.</li> </ul>	

Similarities/ differences with other UNFCCC processes	<p>Interviewees mainly focused on the differences with other UNFCCC processes.</p> <p>Differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different setup: more interaction, better listening to one another, stories;</li> <li>- no negotiating, no naming and shaming;</li> <li>- focused on the bigger picture of climate change;</li> <li>- less focus on low-income versus high-income countries;</li> <li>- open space where one can learn from one another.</li> </ul>	<p>Interviewees mainly focused on the differences with other UNFCCC processes.</p> <p>Differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different setup: more interaction, better listening to one another, stories;</li> <li>- no negotiating, no naming and shaming;</li> <li>- more inclusive and horizontal, more space for non-Party participants;</li> <li>- focused on the bigger picture of climate change;</li> <li>- personal.</li> </ul>	<p>Focused mainly on the difference with other UNFCCC processes:</p> <p>Differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TD substance was not restricted to one particular issue;</li> <li>- open discussion;</li> <li>- it was more about hope.</li> </ul>
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Evaluation	Parties	Non-Parties	TD organiser
Process	<p>Positive about the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- learn from one another;</li> <li>- TD was a good addition to the negotiations;</li> <li>- friendly platform, inspiring, looking at the bigger picture;</li> <li>- open dialogue;</li> <li>- greater mutual understanding;</li> <li>- three questions helped guide the conversations.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive about the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- learn from one another;</li> <li>- TD was a good addition to the negotiations. Helped bringing people closer;</li> <li>- looking at the bigger picture;</li> <li>- open dialogue;</li> <li>- greater mutual understanding.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive about the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- received much attention;</li> <li>- Parties did not try to control the process;</li> <li>- inclusion non-Parties;</li> <li>- good participation;</li> <li>- organisation went well.</li> </ul>
	<p>Points for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TD had become too much of a closed side event;</li> <li>- more Parties should have been present with their ministers.</li> </ul>	<p>Points for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- more Parties should have been present;</li> <li>- better group size;</li> <li>- third question should be changed or fourth question added to focus more on the Global Stocktake or on making concrete action plans.</li> </ul>	
Content	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not only focused on the details, but on the bigger picture;</li> <li>- nice to hear from different perspectives.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not only focused on the details, but on the bigger picture;</li> <li>- nice to hear from different perspectives.</li> </ul>	<p>Positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- many online inputs;</li> <li>- open dialogues;</li> </ul> <p>not restricted to one topic.</p>
	<p>Points for improvement:</p> <p>conversations were too broad.</p>	<p>Points for improvement:</p> <p>analysis of the discussions was missing.</p>	
Outcomes	<p>Most were rather positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- good call for more ambition;</li> <li>- summary from TD online submissions came back in the negotiations.</li> </ul>	<p>Most were disappointed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- outcomes were not strong/clear enough;</li> <li>- action was lacking.</li> </ul>	<p>Mixed feelings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- outcomes could have been more substantial, but the messages resonate.</li> </ul>
	<p>But, again some felt that more "substantial" could have gotten out of TD.</p>		

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Worthwhile?	<p>Most are neutral/positive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- yes, worthwhile experiment;</li> <li>- not certain yet because it is hard to measure how TD contributed.</li> </ul>	<p>Responses are mixed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- yes, worthwhile as it did not negatively impact the UNFCCC and because this approach was needed;</li> <li>- not certain yet because it is hard to measure how TD contributed;</li> <li>- not worthwhile because TD did not add to the Global Stocktake, its original purpose.</li> </ul>	<p>Yes, because many actors came together and had a good dialogue.</p>
Continuation desired?	<p>Responses varied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- yes, should be a "network of TD participants";</li> <li>- TD should be continued, but not done regularly, only when it adds value;</li> <li>- some saw TD more fit as side event of the UNFCCC, whereas others wanted it to become more integrated in the UNFCCC.</li> </ul>	<p>Responses varied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yes, improve TD next time with lessons learned;</li> </ul> <p>Most important that open dialogue between all stakeholders continues, less important whether it is the talanoa format.</p>	<p>No, good interaction between all stakeholders needs to continue, but not a fully-fledged TD again. GST should take over that role.</p>

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## 5.4 IMPACT OF *TALANOA* ON WHAT MINISTERS SAY

The following sections contain the analysis results of the TD stories vs the high-level statements at COP24 to see the impact of *talanoa* on what ministers said. First, sub-question four is addressed: [What are issues that high-level representatives share in their stories compared to those shared in the high-level statements?](#) Section 5.5 deals with how the issues were framed.

The TD stories' characters are first described by looking at the components of the TD assignment. Then, the main issues that the 42 Party representatives shared in their TD stories in Katowice are presented. Finally, these issues are compared to the issues those Parties addressed in their high-level statements. For the list of the 42 Parties' names and in which TD group they participated during the Katowice sessions, please see Appendix III. This appendix also includes an overview of the group compositions and attendance by all Parties and non-Party stakeholders.

### 5.4.1 TD stories

TD participants received instructions on how to tell a *talanoa* story, which are used to describe the character of the TD stories in the following paragraphs. The central question during the Katowice TD sessions was to tell a story about "How do we get there<sup>23</sup>". Participants were asked to tell a story about their experiences and lessons learned to inspire others, build empathy and trust, and increase ambition – the stories needed to be positive and constructive without finger-pointing. Participants were encouraged to share personal stories and freely engage with one another (COP23 Presidency Secretariat, 2018). Additionally, they were asked to focus on the benefits of collective action (UNFCCC, 2017a).

*Answering the question.* Depending on what one would consider an answer to the "how do we get there?" question, all Parties responded and provided their answers. Below, I expand on the diversity of answers, but in short, Parties focused on one or more of the following: 1) past or current actions, 2) the future through sharing their plans or objectives, or 3) the requirements for getting there. Not all Parties were as good at connecting their story to the bigger picture. Some merely listed several actions or plans and failed to elaborate well, provide lessons learned or recommendations, or share the implications of their story. In some cases, the question "How do we, *country*, get there?" seemed to be central, rather than "How do we, *the world*, get there?". Parties with a broader lens focused more on the implications of their story, recommendations, suggestions for what is needed, or called for joint action.

#### 1. *Past or current actions*

Some Parties provided snippets of how one might get there. These Parties provided examples of the past or the present for how we will get there in the future. In general, Parties placed more emphasis on their taken actions in pursuit of mitigating or adapting to climate change than on their plans. For example, 40 out of 42 Parties addressed their past or current actions in their stories, whilst 27 Parties highlighted their plans.

Parties do not necessarily give a roadmap but list their country's actions and achievements. Stories in which the main focus is the country itself<sup>24</sup> do not explicitly state how others could use their practices or talk about what is necessary for getting there. Lao's story is a clear example. The representative from Lao shared their story of de- and reforestation. The people and government realised that they could not limitlessly consume the forests. Therefore, the government started taking action to tackle deforestation and facilitate reforestation. However, the Lao representative did not connect this story of reforestation to other (larger) initiatives or provide recommendations for how other countries

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<sup>23</sup> 'There' was discussed in the previous round of the Talanoa Dialogue in Bonn, May 2021, through the question "Where do we want to go?" However, no clear definition of 'there' exists. 'There' is related to the "long-term goal referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1, of the [Paris] Agreement" (UNFCCC, 2017a: 7): "In order to achieve the long-term temperature goal set out in Article 2, Parties aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that peaking will take longer for developing country Parties, and to undertake rapid reductions thereafter in accordance with best available science, so as to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty." (UNFCCC, 2018: 22).

<sup>24</sup> "How do we, *name of the country*, get there?"

could use their approach (Lao, TA1). Although the stories were alike, Armenia went further. Their representative shared that Armenia was working on a "new innovative financial tool" to help achieve their reforestation goal. Once this tool is ready, the representative stated, "we will be very happy to share with partners worldwide" (Armenia, D3). Sharing the same topic, one Party representative provided clear lessons learned after a reforestation project. Their two lessons were: to include the youth and "when you help nature, nature helps you" (Pakistan, V3). Next to their lessons, they connected their story to the bigger picture by sharing what they think is needed to get there: cooperation, trust and commitment.

## 2. The future: plans, objectives

Some Parties were more visionary and focused on their plans or objectives for the future. Most Parties shared country plans without providing a clear roadmap to how they will get there. Instead, they list a number of actions or objectives. It varied to what extent Parties would explain these actions. One of the few Parties who laid out a more comprehensive roadmap for 'getting there' is Indonesia (V3).

*"Adaptation is an important part of our NDC with [three] target areas of climate resilience. Firstly, economic resilience will be achieved through sustainable agriculture and plantation, integrated water management and conservation and utilisation of degraded land for renewable energy and improve energy consumption. Secondly, social and livelihood resilience will be achieved through the enhancement of adaptive capacity by developing an early warning system, public awareness campaigns and public health programs, community capacity and participation in the local planning process to secure access to key natural resources. Thirdly ecosystem and landscape resilience will be achieved through ecosystem conservation and restoration, social forestry, [coastal] zone protection, integrated water management and climate resilience in cities."*

## 3. Requirements

Whether or not Parties provided hints or a more elaborated roadmap for how one gets there, more was at play. The question "how do we get there?" left room for addressing a closely related question: what is required for getting there? For example, one might say, how do we get there: we need to put a price on CO2 emissions. But what is required for carbon pricing? Good policies, administration, enforcement etc. One can find this nuance in the stories the Parties shared. However, many did not delineate this difference and remained in general quite vague when they focused on "we, the world". Parties hardly shared any concrete plans or thought-out proposals. Instead, they emphasised the need for action. Parties often connected the need for action to urgency.

*Personal stories.* The Fijian Presidency strongly encouraged TD participants to share stories "close to you [... as] personal experiences and anecdotes can help bring the story to life" (COP23 Presidency Secretariat, 2018: 2). Remarkably, however, most Party representatives did not get very personal. Very few discussed personal encounters, experiences or feelings.

Party representatives often did not use personal experiences or anecdotes. In some cases, the Party representatives would talk about events that happened to their people but would not include their whereabouts or experiences. For example, one Party representative gave an account of how "heavy rains" one day caused a "huge mudflow" and eventually led to severe damage and loss of lives. But, they did not talk about, for example, where they were and how they experienced that day (Georgia, N1).

Merely one Party representative recounted a personal event:

*"In Canada, we know indigenous people are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. In the high Arctic, I met a young boy; he was fourteen. He said, "I want to talk to you about the impacts of climate change". I happened to have with me one of my amazing scientists, climate scientists, beside me. So we said, "Okay, let us know". He said, "these are the things that I think are caused by climate change". He talked about the disappearance of country foods that his community relies on for food. He talked about hunting and getting his feet stuck in thawing permafrost as the permafrost thawed. And the saddest thing is he talked about his three friends having lost their fathers. These are fathers who fell through the ice when they were out hunting. These are hunters who, for*

*millennia, have known how to hunt and can tell the thickness of the ice. And I think that really hit home; how important it is that we take this action. That it's about the air, the land, the water, the animals but most of all, it's about people.*"(Canada, L1)

This Canadian Party representative continued speaking from their perspective: "one last lesson that I have learnt and sharing"; "I have my challenges at home, political challenges and economic challenges"; "I know that Canada is absolutely committed" (Canada, L1).

Another party representative shed some light on an event that personally impacted them:

*"The last thing on my table as a minister was, there was a glacier lake, which was forming in the north. This was an overnight phenomenon and, you know, this huge wall of ice started moving because of the melting of the glacier, and there was a lake that was forming behind it. And there were people, a huge community, which was affected by it, and they wanted to be sure that nothing happened to them. When something like this happens, it really strikes you."* (Pakistan, V3)

One Party representative gets somewhat personal as they very briefly talk about their son:

*"I think most of us when we open the cell phone, we have a picture of our children on them. [...] These pictures are reminders of what is important in life. Soon these children will grow up, and they will ask us what we did whilst we had the time to act. It is a future that we hold in our hands, and I want to be able to tell my son and his peers that we did everything we could".* (Sweden, N3)

In a few instances, Party representatives shed light on their contribution or responsibility but did not elaborate or start with a story about, e.g., something they had encountered in their work.

*"As a minister, I have a target. Come 2020, I should have increased the forestry of Uganda from 12%... the forestry should have moved from 12% to 18% if I have to continue being a minister in the cabinet of Uganda. Now, also for the wetlands, I have a target to restore the degraded wetlands from 8% to 12% by 2020. So, I have about... you are talking about 12 years, but I think I have about two years to act if I have to be on the front desk of making decisions in Uganda".* (Uganda, V3)

*"For renewable energies, a major strategy that Algeria has just implemented - I am in charge of off-grid renewable energies".* (Algeria, L3)

Unfortunately, one must conclude that the stories during the Katowice sessions generally lacked personal experiences. In several stories, representatives did not even introduce themselves but instead immediately continued with their story.

*Finger-pointing.* Finger-pointing was a definite no-go in the instructions of the participants. The idea of TD was to share positive and constructive stories. No stories about whom is to blame. More specifically: "no individual Parties or groups of Parties [were to be] singled out" (Talanoa Dialogue, 2018: 1). Discussing vulnerabilities, however, in some cases gave way to finger-pointing.

*"Just on the vulnerabilities, I mean, it seems, to me, quite clear, chairperson. While some countries are more guilty than other countries, the role played by some countries is clearly because the size of the economies is more important than other countries. [...] Just on the adaptation side of it, I think we need the bigger countries in the world to embrace the fact that, unless they take it very seriously, some countries do not have the resources to make the necessary adaptations and are not the guilty Parties or not even the guilty Parties. [...] [T]he most powerful nations in the world seem to be backtracking. Backtracking in a big way, and we should be worried about it because they are the most guilty Parties in terms of percentage of emissions. [...] I don't want to mention the countries again by name, but you know, some individual countries are major contributors. Unless they change, all of our efforts are not going to yield results. All of our efforts, if a few of the biggest countries and few of the biggest emitters don't change."* (South Africa, D2)

This representative adhered to the assignment by letter as they did not mention any specific names. However, even though this representative states that they "don't want to mention the countries

again by the name", in spirit, they still failed to avoid pointing out whom to blame: the biggest countries, the biggest emitters.

One other Party representative also talked about the biggest emitters but focused less on their share of causing climate change. Instead, they focused on how the biggest emitters should help small island states to survive.

*"[W]e hope that major emitters will also take the cue and help us to not address this global issue, but to help Solomon Islands and other small island developing states further commitment to survive."*  
(Solomon Islands, TU3)

However, most Parties did not explicitly "single out" individuals or groups of Parties. Instead, they would state how they are not responsible without explicitly saying who is.

*"So, we are definitely affected by climate change, and this is why we come to these COP meetings with lots of hope, with a lot of trust in the global multi-lateral process to deliver for countries like Pakistan. And for an issue that we are not responsible for, because we are 135<sup>th</sup> on the list of greenhouse gas emitters."* (Pakistan, V3)

Alternatively, Parties stated their vulnerability as a fact without linking it to whom is responsible for climate change.

*"We believe we can reach a greater impact even though Honduras is a small, developing country that emits greenhouse gases. But we know that this is a commitment we have with the world community, considering that we are a highly vulnerable country. We have ranked in the top positions of vulnerability and are still today. We have been in the first and third positions for the last twenty years. We are not happy with this position. If we were talking about football, it would be good. But it is not good to be the second in terms of vulnerability worldwide because, as a country, that leaves us in very difficult conditions to deal with all the work necessary for the losses and damages we are having."*  
(Honduras, N1)

*Responsiveness.* Participants were asked to respond to each other's stories whilst sharing their own stories. However, judging the level of responsiveness in detail is out of this research's scope. Therefore, the following results only indicate whether or not a Party representative explicitly mentioned another participant by their name or the Party they represent, and in this way, refer to other stories. Only a few representatives explicitly referred to other TD participants. If they did, usually it was because they shared a similar story or agreed with each other's viewpoints. For example, one representative stated, "I think we have a similar issue with Madagascar; we are sharing the same effect" (Sierra Leone, TU1). Other examples are: "I subscribe to what was said by his Excellency" (Mauritius, W2); "Being in the round of smaller countries, I fully agree with what some of you already said" (Luxembourg, N2); and "Thank you, Honourable minister, for pointing out that technology is going to be a very great enabler, because I think that is really key" (India, W1).

One Party representative seemed to have addressed an issue raised by others, which they may not have addressed otherwise.

*"One point that I would like to pick out from what the Minister from Slovenia has said is that, of course, we all need to do it, and I think that has been identified. But I think the point – some of the discussions here are stuck on the point that, yes, we all need to do it, but not all of us need to do it equally."*  
(Thailand, TA1)

Another Party representative commented on how a fellow Party representative brought a youth representative and integrated that into their story. However, it remains debatable whether the youth representative changed the story, but it was a nice link.

*"That project has taught us a lot of very good things. One, I appreciate our friend from Germany, our colleague from Germany, having the youth representative come here because that project in Pakistan taught us that energising the youth is key to fighting climate change. [...] I mean, we have about 230*



*million population, 120 million of that is youth under 35 years of age. And that is a real enabler for the future of Pakistan; so, I think it is very important to engage the youth in this fight against climate change." (Pakistan, V3)*

*Focusing on the benefits of collective action.* Parties did not emphasise the benefits of collective action. Instead, they mainly talked about how everybody needs to do something and that Parties need to collaborate without explicitly stating the benefits.

*"Together, we can do it." (Argentina, L3)*

*Other remarks.* Another observation is how Party representatives told their stories differently. Some Party representatives listed the country's actions or plans without taking the listeners on a journey. In contrast, other Party representatives retold events or explained how things came about. They would situate their contribution by telling a bit about the country's history and people. For example, the representative from Liechtenstein (W3) first talks about the size of Liechtenstein, where it is located, the number of inhabitants, how they are experiencing a temperature increase since 1850, where they currently are in the debate etc. and then continues with their actions taken to fight climate change.

#### *Most common issues*

The stories the Party representatives told were very diverse. However, Parties mainly focused on their actions and plans, requirements for getting there, and the need and call for action. Thematically speaking, the main issues discussed (whether in the form of actions, plans, requirements etc.) were mitigation, inclusion and cooperation, adaptation, plans/strategies/policies, political will/commitment/leadership, TD process, mindset shift, view on COP, the Rulebook and the Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC). Table 7 displays the issues ranked on the number of Parties that addressed these issues in their stories. In addition, a complete overview of what issues are addressed per Party is displayed in Appendix IV.

Table 7 | List of issues Parties mentioned in their TD stories:

1. Mitigation (42 Parties)	Includes the actions Parties took to mitigate climate change, their plans to do so, and the call for mitigating climate change.
2. Actions taken by country (38 Parties)	Actions that Parties have taken to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.
3. Plans of country (25 Parties)	Plans Parties shared to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
4. Inclusion (25 Parties)	Actions and requirements concerned with including other stakeholders (e.g. civil society, business, citizens) for doing, learning or empowering.
5. Cooperation (25 Parties)	Actions, plans, requirements and calls for cooperation.
6. Adaptation (24 Parties)	Includes actions by Parties and their plans to adapt to climate change.
7. Requirements (23 Parties)	Actions and conditions necessary for getting "there".
8. Plans, strategies and policies (23 Parties)	Actions and requirements related to creating plans, strategies and/or policies.
9. Political will, commitment and leadership (17 Parties)	Parties showcasing their political will, commitment, and leadership in fighting climate change. Includes call for doing so and requirements.
10. Call for action (16 Parties)	Parties calling for action.
11. TD process (14 Parties)	Parties' view on TD.
12. Mindset shift (11 Parties)	Seeing the opportunities of climate action, costs are investments, and inaction will be more expensive.
13. Need for action (10 Parties)	Concerning the need for action.
14. View on the COP (5 Parties)	Parties' views on the COP, includes what it could deliver.
15. Rulebook (4 Parties)	Parties' views on the Rulebook.
16. Common But Differentiated Responsibilities – Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) (3 Parties)	Inclusion and importance of the CBDR-RC principle in the UNFCCC.
17. Responsibility (3 Parties)	Parties' views on whom is responsible for climate change. Does not include the CBDR-RC principle.

### Developing versus developed countries

After the first round of analysis of the stories and speeches, it became clear that developing countries addressed slightly different issues than developed countries and vice versa. Hence, the issues addressed by developing countries are compared to those addressed by developed countries<sup>25</sup>. The results are displayed in table 8.

Table 8 | Most common issues in the TD stories addressed by developing versus developed countries.

Most common addressed issues in the TD stories by:	
Developing countries (total 27)	Developed countries (total 15)
1. Mitigation (27)	1. Mitigation (15)
2. Actions taken by country (23)	Actions taken by country (15)
2. Inclusion (16)	3. Plans of country (12)
3. Cooperation (15)	4. Plans, policies, strategies (11)
4. Adaptation (15)	5. Cooperation (10)

Developing and developed countries focused on their actions and mitigation, but then the issues diverge: plans are frequently mentioned by developing Parties, in contrast to developing Parties, who focused on inclusion and cooperation.

#### 5.4.2 High-level statements

High-level statements – that is, short speeches of ministers or other high-level government representatives – are delivered at each meeting of the UNFCCC and are well-established in the UNFCCC meeting structure. In contrast to the TD stories, Parties were free to share any message they wanted to in the high-level statement. Nevertheless, the analysis showed that the components of the speeches are pretty similar to those of the stories: stating the need for action, calling for action, listing the country's actions (often to demonstrate their commitment), sharing views on what should be done, talking about the requirements, thanking the organisers/formalities.

Interestingly, some Party representatives even shared personal experiences in their speeches, as did the Israeli representative:

*"I am emotionally moved to stand here today as the representative of the State of Israel. It has been almost 80 years since most of my extended family was wiped out by the Nazis during the Holocaust. The fact that I am here, representing Israel and its contribution to the global effort tackling the challenges brought by climate change, could not have been imagined by my family, who suffered greatly seven decades ago. It is beyond words to describe how proud and happy they would be. This is a story of hope and belief in mankind. [...] We need to fight [climate change] and fight it now. It may seem a far dream that is not achievable but as the dream of my family 70 plus years ago it can happen, it will happen."* (Israel, high-level statement at COP24)

#### Most common issues

<sup>25</sup> Developed countries in this research sample (15): Australia, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Russia, Romania, Sweden, Turkey. Developing countries in this research sample (27): Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kenya, Lao, Lesotho, Mauritius, Micronesia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda.

The issues Parties addressed in their speeches are listed in table 9 below, based on the number of Parties including the subject in their high-level statement. For a complete overview of addressed topic per Party, please see Appendix IV.

Table 9 | List of issues Parties mentioned in their TD speeches:

1. Mitigation (42 Parties)	Includes the actions Parties took to mitigate climate change, their plans to do so, and the call for mitigating climate change.
2. Actions (40 Parties)	Actions that Parties have taken to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.
Cooperation (40 Parties)	Related to actions, plans, requirements and calls for cooperation.
Plans, strategies and policies (40 Parties)	Actions and requirements related to creating plans, strategies and/or policies.
3. Need for action (37 Parties)	Concerning the need for action.
View COP (37 Parties)	Parties' views on the COP, including what it could deliver.
4. Requirements (36 Parties)	Actions and conditions necessary for getting "there".
5. Political will, commitment and leadership (34 Parties)	Parties showcasing their political will, commitment, and leadership in fighting climate change. Includes call for doing so and requirements.
6. Call for action (31 Parties)	Parties calling for action.
7. Rulebook (25 Parties)	Parties' views on the Rulebook.
8. Adaptation (21 Parties)	Includes actions by Parties and their plans to adapt to climate change.
9. TD process (18 Parties)	Parties' view on TD.
10. Common But Differentiated Responsibilities – Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), adaptation and loss and damage (16 Parties)	Inclusion and importance of the CBDR-RC principle in the UNFCCC, as well as including adaptation and loss and damage.
11. Inclusion (16 Parties)	Actions and requirements concerned with including other stakeholders (e.g. civil society, business, citizens) for doing, learning or empowering.
12. Responsibility (10 Parties)	Parties' views on whom is responsible for climate change. Does not include the CBDR-RC principle.
13. Plans of country (9 Parties)	Plans Parties shared to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
14. Mindset shift (6 Parties)	Seeing the opportunities of climate action, costs are investments, and inaction will be more expensive.

Parties' speeches were particularly concerned with mitigation, actions taken by the Parties, cooperation, and creating plans, strategies and policies.

*Developing versus developed countries*

The differences between developing and developed countries (displayed in table 10) show that both focused on similar issues. One point of difference is that developed countries spoke more about their view on the COP and the need for action, but developing countries about requirements.

Table 10 | Most common addressed issues in the high-level statements by developing versus developed countries.

Most common addressed issues in the high-level statements by	
Developing countries (total 27)	Developed countries (total 15)
1. Mitigation (27)	1. Mitigation (15)
2. Actions taken by country (26)	Actions taken by country (15)
3. Cooperation (25)	Cooperation (15)
Plans, strategies, policies (25)	Plans, strategies, policies (15)
Requirements (25)	View on COP (15)
	2. Need for action (14)

**5.4.3 Stories versus high-level statements**

Apart from the country's actions, the focus on issues is different in the TD stories than in the speeches. TD stories focused mainly on mitigation, the country's plans, inclusion, and cooperation, whereas speeches focused mainly on mitigation cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, and the need for action. Remarkably, with the CBDR-RC principle, the Rulebook and the Party's view on COP, Parties addressed the need for action the least in their stories. On the other hand, Parties focused the least on their plans and the mindset shift. An issue that was significantly more discussed in the Parties' speeches than in their stories is the CBDR-RC principle and the need to consider adaptation and loss and damage. Similarly, responsibilities generally received more attention in the speeches than in the stories. The issues mentioned in the stories and speeches by about an equal number of Parties are 1) mitigation, 2) actions, and 3) adaptation.

Developing countries focused in their stories more on mitigation, their actions and inclusion, whereas in their speeches, they are more concerned with mitigation, cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, and requirements. Developed countries, too, focused on their actions and mitigation, as well as their plans in their stories. However, in their speeches, next to their actions, they were more concerned with cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, the need for action and mitigation.

Most Parties shared similar topics in their stories and their speeches. However, the speeches generally contained a larger variety of issues than the stories. For example, the number of Parties addressing the following issues in their stories is much smaller than the number of Parties addressing them in their speeches: 1) their view on COP, 2) the need for action, 3) the Rulebook, 4) plans, strategies and policies, and 5) political will, leadership and commitment. Additionally, 65% of all stories (27) were slightly shorter than the high-level statements. Stories counted on average 698 words, with most stories around 602 words. However, on average, the high-level statements counted 798 words, with most high-

level statements counting around 717. The shortest story contained 263 words and the longest 1732 words. The shortest high-level statement had 356 words and the longest 1935 words.

As previously mentioned, Appendix IV comprises all the issues discussed in the TD stories and the high-level statements from developing and developed countries researched in this thesis.

#### 5.4.4 Summary

The stories and speeches contain similar elements and issues. All Parties addressed mitigation and most Parties addressed their actions in the stories and speeches. Issues of difference are cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, which Parties mainly addressed in the speeches, whereas they focused more on their plans, inclusion and cooperation in the stories. The most frequently mentioned issues in the stories by developing countries versus developed countries differ the most in contrast to those in the speeches. Most Parties addressed a few similar topics in their stories but included more topics in their speeches than in their stories. Table 11, displayed below, summarises the issues alphabetically and how many Parties addressed these issues.

Table 11 | summary of issues in the stories and speeches addressed by developing and developed countries.

Issue addressed	By	In TD stories addressed by no. of Parties	In high-level statements addressed by no. of Parties
Actions	Developing countries	23	26
	Developed countries	15	15
Adaptation	Developing countries	15	20
	Developed countries	9	2
Call for action	Developing countries	9	21
	Developed countries	7	10
CBDR-RC	Developing countries	3	14
	Developed countries	NA	2
Cooperation	Developing countries	15	25
	Developed countries	10	15
Inclusion	Developing countries	16	10
	Developed countries	9	7
Mindset shift	Developing countries	6	3
	Developed countries	5	3
Mitigation	Developing countries	27	27
	Developed countries	15	15

Need for action	Developing countries	8	23
	Developed countries	7	14
Plans of country	Developing countries	13	5
	Developed countries	12	4
Plans, strategies, policies	Developing countries	12	25
	Developed countries	11	15
Political will, commitment and leadership	Developing countries	12	23
	Developed countries	5	11
TD process	Developing countries	8	10
	Developed countries	6	8
Responsibility	Developing countries	2	9
	Developed countries	0	1
Requirements	Developing countries	14	25
	Developed countries	9	12
View on COP	Developing countries	5	22
	Developed countries	0	15



## 5.5 FRAMING OF THE ISSUES

In this section, the results to sub-question five are displayed: *How are the main issues in the Talanoa Dialogue stories framed? If these issues are included in the high-level statements, how do the framings of the same issues compare?* The results are based on comparing the stories' and the high-level statements' issues.

The examined issues are the top three issues addressed by most Parties in their TD stories, which are: the country's actions, mitigation, and country's plans. Although the issues of responsibility and CBDR-RC are not frequently mentioned in the TD stories, they link closely to one of the dialogue instructions, namely, no finger-pointing. Therefore, it is also examined how responsibility and CBDR-RC are framed in the stories compared to the speeches.

### 5.5.1 Mitigation

Parties mentioned mitigation in their stories and speeches. Additionally, mitigation links to all other issues. However, overall, Parties mainly addressed mitigation as something that has to be done urgently, collectively, and holistically to tackle climate change for the world's future.

*"Climate change is not a vague threat on a horizon uncertain. As shown in the IPCC report on a warming of 1.5°C, it is already seriously affecting populations, ecosystems and means of subsistence. And the recent devastating climatic events, which do not spare in any region of the world, constantly remind us of this anxiety-inducing reality. In this report, which we, the States Parties to the Convention, have expressly called for in 2015, scientists provide us with evidence ruthless. We cannot ignore its conclusions. To us, decision-makers to have the courage to act without delay to radically change the way we do business trajectory." (Monaco, high-level statement at COP24)*

*"The Paris Agreement provides for a great opportunity for the global economy to smoothly transition to low-emissions and climate resilient economies. This transition is the key to long-term sustainable economic growth and wellbeing, creation of green jobs and improvement of ecosystems and health." (Romania, high-level statement at COP24)*

*"We believe that there is urgency for certain actions to help our future generations have a sustainable environment that they could live in. And in this way, we believe, in fact, as it was mentioned before that technological advances also play a huge part in this future process. We made several steps forwards in regards to mitigating the climate change effects, but there is still a huge pathway before us." (Lithuania, WR1)*

Mitigation received much attention through the countries' actions, and plans shared in their stories and speeches. These actions and plans illustrated how climate change could or would be mitigated.

*"In this regard, Lithuania has also managed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions quite significantly compared to the 1990 years, but we do not think that we will stop there. We are trying to increase the use of our renewable energy, increasing our energy efficiency. Currently, we are in development of our national climate change strategy. This strategy foresees that [in the long time] we have to have specific measures and specific policies developed to change the way we are currently using our resources and how we are dealing with climate change." (Lithuania, WR1)*

*"We need to limit global warming to 1.5 Degrees. The IPCC has shown us that we must step up our global ambition to reach our common goal. I know we can do it. We already have many of the solutions at hand at low price. Our story shows that we have [cost] technologies at hand and also solutions in system integration that can enable [their roll out]." (Denmark, V1)*

But, mitigation was also something Parties called for, although it was usually more implicit in their call for action. The call for action was stronger in the high-level statements as they generally contained stronger language than the stories.

*"The recent IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C highlighted the importance of early action against climate change, which makes the role of pre-2020 ambition even more critical. Therefore, Indonesia would like to urge our developed country partners to meet their pre-2020 commitment, and to rapidly increase their ambition in meeting the objectives of the Paris Agreement, both in emission reduction and in providing means of implementation, to developing countries."* (Indonesia, high-level statement at COP24)

Developing countries focused not only on the future of the world but also on their survival as "we are indeed fast approaching the point of no return to be able to reverse the adverse impacts of climate change" (Bangladesh, high-level statement at COP24).

*"So what do we get from here? We need urgent action and ambitious GHG reductions. Short-lived climate pollutants are known to be one of the best near-term solutions, as underlined in the IPCC report. Such a step can prevent catastrophe [warming] up to 2050 and help us buy some time."* (Micronesia, V1)

*"In Rwanda, we are already seeing impacts of climate change; prolonged droughts, flooding as well as extreme landslides have tragically claimed the lives of 243 people this year alone. And since the 1970s, the average temperature in Rwanda has increased by 1.4 Degrees Celsius, and we understand that if no [substantial] action is taken to mitigate climate change, the average temperature in Rwanda will rise by 2.4 degrees Celsius by the middle of the century. These changes are already impacting food security through reduced water availability for irrigation, increasing runoff, nutrient [leaching] and rain variability."* (Rwanda, N3)

### 5.5.2 Actions Parties have taken to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.

Actions were slightly differently used in the speeches and stories. Actions were used to demonstrate one's commitment to the UNFCCC and mitigate climate change, and to illustrate what can be done. The latter seemed more present in the stories than in the speeches. Developing countries often used the actions they took despite the challenges they face in both the stories and the speeches to demonstrate their commitment and then ask for assistance from others (the developed countries).

*"So these are ways in which we are trying to tighten within our means to see that before others come in to help, we have also stood up. [...] So with this, as a country, we invite partners to support Uganda to ensure that the full and effective implementations of our NDCs are achieved by 2030."* (Uganda, V3)

*"However, despite these challenges and noting that my people are least responsible for causing this warming up of the mother earth, my Government is totally committed to playing its role based on our national circumstances. Already Government has put in place the policy, institutional and legal framework to respond to this 'monster'. Our National Climate Change Policy and the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) are quite ambitious in contributing to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from mainly the forestry, energy, transport, wetland and agriculture sectors, as well as promotion of carbon market mechanisms. Water, health, human settlements and infrastructure climate proofing are equally important in our adaptation measures. [...] Uganda strongly urges the developed countries to honour their pledges of mobilising the USD 100 Billion per annum by the year 2020."* (Uganda, high-level statement at COP24)

More Parties focused on actions to mitigate climate change rather than actions to adapt to climate change in both the speeches and the stories. However, the stories differ from the speeches as more Parties mentioned actions related to inclusion in their stories, whereas creating plans, policies and strategies was more prominent in their speeches.

### 5.5.3 Plans of Parties to mitigate and/or adapt to climate change.

Like the country's actions, Parties used their plans to demonstrate their commitment to the UNFCCC and mitigate climate change, and to illustrate what can be done.

*"The way as a government we have committed to the Paris Agreement, as a new government, only seven months in governance, we are putting in place to make a national development plan, which will include climate change."* (Sierra Leone, TU1)

*"As we think about—one last lesson that I have learnt and sharing, is that pricing pollution is one of the measures that we are doing. It will go up, it's starting at \$ 20 a ton next year and it's going to rise to \$ 50 a ton by 2022, at which point we will re-evaluate, but the importance of making life affordable and talking to people about the opportunities and about jobs."* (Canada, L1)

In doing so, Parties focussed more on mitigation plans than adaptation plans.

#### 5.5.4 Responsibilities and the CBDR-RC principle

Neither responsibilities nor the CBDR-RC principle were frequently mentioned in the TD stories. Most likely, because the TD instructions explicitly stated that no finger-pointing was allowed, and talking about responsibilities then is a dangerous topic. Therefore, these issues can potentially well illustrate the difference *talanoa* has caused in framing issues.

Responsibilities were hardly mentioned in the TD stories but much more in the speeches. In the TD stories, developing countries focused more on how they are not responsible for climate change and are already doing everything they can and thus should be helped or have a different "pace" (Thailand, TA1), related to the CBDR-RC principle. In the speeches, developing countries continued this frame but addressed the developed countries more directly. Several explicitly called the developed countries to take up their responsibilities.

*"Indonesia would like to urge our developed country partners to meet their pre-2020 commitment, and to rapidly increase their ambition in meeting the objectives of the Paris Agreement, both in emission reduction and in providing the means of implementation to developing countries."* (Indonesia, high-level statement at COP24)

Additionally, the call to take one's responsibility was linked to how the current actions and level of ambition is not enough to combat climate change, and thus threatens the survival of the world.

*"We therefore urge Annex I Parties to demonstrate leadership and raise their level of ambition to the scale required by science and equity. It is alarming to note that, as we become more aware of the intrinsic need to combat climate change, our actions are not commensurate with the essential level of commitment to the objectives agreed under the Convention and the Paris Agreement."* (Lesotho, high-level statement at COP24).

*"Twelve years is not a long time... Neither my country nor the sum of all emission-reduction efforts of the small islands in the world can make a significant difference to slow down the advance of climate change, though we MUST AND WE WILL do our part... Thus, we put our hopes in your hands, our global brothers and sisters to sit with us at the table and realise positive global impact and save our planet. [...] It is only a matter of time until all of us are impacted ... IF ... action is not taken. ACTION that can make a difference, ACTION that can save our planet."* (Micronesia, high-level statement at COP24; emphasis original).

One developing country explicitly called for how the CBDR-RC principle should be respected in the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement.

*"During COP 24, we have the opportunity to adopt an inclusive and comprehensive Programme of Work to operationalise the Paris Agreement. However, as we work towards this objective, we need to be careful not to re-negotiate the Convention or the Agreement. We must also maintain the principles and spirit of the Convention and the Agreement including the principle of intra-and-inter-generational equity and common but differentiated responsibilities."* (Kenya, high-level statement at COP24)

Developed countries generally did not speak about responsibilities in their stories; only Turkey (D3) and Sweden (N3) do so. Turkey focused on how they, compared with other developed countries, have little responsibility. They continued this frame in their speech too. Sweden talked about how the UNFCCC “needs to set a route that doesn’t blame people, but offers ways forward and take responsibility”. Two other developed countries addressed responsibilities in their high-level statement, however their focus is more on CBDR-RC being required in the Rulebook as, according to them, this helps achieving “the strongest possible outcome”, rather than aiming for “the lowest common denominator” (EU, high-level statement at COP24). Generally speaking, the developed countries focused more on how everybody needs to do something in the stories, which shifted more to the need and call for collaboration in the speeches.

*“So just to finalize, I would like to say that although we are a small country we believe that everyone matters and we believe that everyone should take part in this process.” (Lithuania, WR1)*

*“To achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement, we must take actions immediately. Let us tackle this momentous challenge for humankind together.” (Japan, high-level statement at COP24)*

### 5.5.5 Summary

The largest difference in framing is between the developed and the developing countries rather than between stories and speeches. Throughout their stories and speeches, developing countries focused on how they are very vulnerable, but do everything they can despite their challenges. Therefore, they stated the need for action or called for action for helping them fighting and adapting to climate change, whilst they can still develop, and have a future. In the speeches, this frame was slightly broader as it focused more on how the developing countries have little responsibility. Developed countries, however, focused more on how everybody needs to do something to fight climate change. In the speeches, the focus shifted slightly more to that Parties need to collaborate.

## Ch. 6 Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss the results of this research and link it to the theoretical concepts of dialogue, storytelling, facilitation, and other literature. The central question was: [How has the Talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime, and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?](#) Implicitly, this question also touches upon the value of the TD, which I will discuss later. First, I discuss the outcomes per sub-question. Then, any leftover overarching themes will be discussed, as well as the research methods.

### 6.1 DIALOGUES RELATED TO THE UNFCCC

Sub-question 1 was: [What were the main characteristics of the UNFCCC Talanoa Dialogue, and how can it be compared with other types of UNFCCC-related intergovernmental dialogues?](#) The six researched dialogues demonstrate that Parties, in and outside the UNFCCC, seek to progress the negotiations and engage in open discussions. Dialogues mandated by the COP are less secluded, as they are open to all Parties and broadcast online. Hence, non-Parties can observe, and in some cases, non-Party constituencies can deliver statements too. Other dialogues outside the official UNFCCC process are more exclusive: fewer Parties participate, and outsiders are not allowed. Nevertheless, they are usually in a smaller, informal setting. Apart from TD, however, COP-mandated dialogues are plenary and thus with many more participants. Unlike any other dialogue researched in this thesis (COP-mandated or not), TD provided an equal playing field for Parties and non-Parties. Moreover, the instructions to tell positive and constructive stories were unique to TD.

Interestingly, most interviewees thought TD was unique in the UNFCCC and that no similar dialogues had been held. However, dialogue has taken place before to try to create mutual understanding. Not even Cartagena was mentioned by interviewees whose countries do participate in this dialogue (CFU; SR; CO; MB), although Cartagena, in a way, seems to resemble TD most due to the informal, small setting and open discussions. However, as Blaxekjær (2020) argued, Cartagena is very personalised, so it could be that the interviewees I spoke have not participated in Cartagena themselves. Nevertheless, it seems likely that they would know about it from their colleague delegates, so another reason for not mentioning it could be because COP does not mandate Cartagena and is not open to all Parties. Only TD facilitator Daunivalu, after I explicitly had asked him about other dialogues within the UNFCCC realm, such as the Petersberg Climate Dialogue, that "in a lot of ways, the format of such meetings take the character of a *Talanoa* as participants would normally be sharing their own positions or views on the subject-matter without necessarily forcing others to adopt it" (personal communications, Luke Daunivalu, September 2020). But then again, he is most likely talking about the more informal UNFCCC-related dialogues not mandated by the COP.

In contrast to the other dialogues, TD was very open and public, also in their external communications, which was also recognised by the Head of the UNFCCC Secretariat TD team, as they positively stated that TD generated lots of noise.

The six examined dialogues were compared by their superficial characteristics. Based on the (usually limited) availability of information, it was difficult to find out how well people were really listening and how open they were to the results of the dialogue: components of dialogue that occur on a deeper level. To further enhance the research of Blaxekjær (2020) and observations in this thesis, more research on UNFCCC-related dialogues, in which participants of the dialogue are interviewed, could be conducted. This can help to get a better understanding of how dialogue is used in an intergovernmental setting.

### 6.2 THE ROLE OF THE TD FACILITATORS

Sub-question 2 asked: [How did the facilitators in the sharing of stories and ensuing dialogue in the Ministerial Dialogue sessions carry out their role – and how does this compare to the facilitator role expected in the literature?](#) TD facilitators each had their own facilitation style. However, it remains difficult to explicitly state the facilitator's effect on the participants and their stories. That would require knowing what kind of stories participants were planning to share before the dialogue and seeing how

they deviated from these. Even if one knew all this, any deviations in the stories could still be caused by other factors, such as stories from other participants, how they were feeling that day, if the negotiations were going well, etc.

Nevertheless, from the results of this research, it seems that the facilitators had at least a significant influence on the ambience in the room. Some facilitators were not very engaged in the dialogue and mainly said something like, "thank you, next person, please". However, most facilitators were actively involved. They set the tone through their language, humour, engaging with the participants and their stories, and even sharing their stories. To most participants, the TD facilitators were well skilled and helped guide them in the process. Additionally, it makes a difference if the facilitator is willing to open themselves up. For example, when facilitator Mazurek in Tuchola 2 shared his battle with cancer, one could hear the room's silence as he shared his story.

Most TD facilitators can be characterised as *facilitative leaders* (Schwarz, 2005) actively involved in content and group facilitation. In contrast to most facilitation theories, they are not neutral regarding the content and provided their own experiences and opinions. However, one could argue that facilitators not being entirely neutral, which some have even said that it is impossible (Wróbel et al., 2020), helped TD as they set the tone by moving people's hearts by telling personal stories. Similar to the *talanoa* literature (e.g. Halapua, 2013), they were an example for TD participants how to behave and took them on the *talanoa* journey. Still, many facilitators actively valued the participants' contributions, whereas *talanoa* requires openness to hearing the participants' stories without any judgements (Halapua & Halapua, 2010).

Hiring an outsider, as opposed to a Party representative, could have reduced the chance of facilitators influencing the content of the dialogue. However, an outsider to the UNFCCC most likely lacked the personal connection with the topic, which may led to a different ambience in the room. Additionally, their legitimacy could have been questioned because how does one know that these neutral, external facilitators do not have a hidden agenda. Now, it was plain in the open, and people generally knew the positions of the Small Islands States' representatives upfront. Interviewees, too, thought that the TD facilitators were very legitimate as they considered that the facilitators knew much about *talanoa*. Furthermore, Penetrante (2012: 308) talked about how representatives from relatively weak countries can actually be well-suited to play the facilitator's role as it "may prevent other countries from seeing them as threats".

From the statements of the two facilitators who shared their experiences in this thesis, it becomes evident that facilitators received little preparation. That could be something to gain for a next round. Additionally, more could have gotten out of the facilitation as some facilitators were little involved and quite distant.

### 6.3 EXPERIENCES OF THE TD PARTICIPANTS

Sub-question 3 was: *How did participants in the Ministerial Dialogue experience Talanoa and its format?* Most interviewees enjoyed TD and its friendly environment. They would like to continue with similar dialogues; however, they do not have to follow the *talanoa* tradition specifically. Wamsler et al.<sup>26</sup> (2020:227) found that there is a "need for experimental, safe spaces" in the UNFCCC and briefly noted that TD could provide such a space.

Interviewees also thought the primary purpose of the dialogue was to engender greater mutual understanding. TD was a level playing ground for the non-party stakeholders in the climate change negotiations. Stronger (formal) outcomes were, however, expected by many, and in that sense, TD failed to deliver, according to the interviewees.

Particularly the non-Parties expected more, which could be related to the absence of several Parties during the TD sessions and the limited input Parties had provided to the online TD platform in

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<sup>26</sup> They interviewed COP attendees to "investigate decision-makers' views of the need for a different mindset and inner qualities" in the UNFCCC (Wamsler et al., 2020: 227).

the first place (Mundaca et al., 2019). Other reasons for the disappointment about the outcomes could be because TD

*"has failed to clearly characterise the nature and evolution of policy portfolios that underlie NDCs. This was most like due to its limited scope, combined with a lack of data and systematic reporting regarding the national measures already in place. Consequently, the process was dominated by 'a collection of ideas, rather than a set of conclusions'. Altogether, these challenges made it difficult to establish a more comprehensive overview of past experience and use it to advance future policymaking (i.e. 'how do we get there?')." (ibid.: 2)*

Nonetheless, many interviewees mentioned how TD was important and were glad it had happened because it brought people together, provided a friendly environment, and helped focus on the bigger picture rather than the itty-nitty details of the negotiations. Kirsch (2021: 344) too, argues that TD was important because

*"given the cumulative nature of the problem [ed. climate change], it is important not to ostracise countries that fall behind or drag their feet, because continued participation is necessary. It is precisely this dynamic of facilitating collaboration, avoiding criticism and promoting consensus that makes the Talanoa Dialogue an appropriate and effective speech genre in which to conduct these discussions".*

Interviewees highlighted TD as an inclusive platform. One reason Kirsch (2021: 330) provides is that "*talanoa* includes practices that temporarily mitigate differences in hierarchy and rank, which help to facilitate the formation of consensus". Particularly non-Party interviewees expressed that they enjoyed the inclusive nature of TD and felt heard. It amounts to the trend of including non-Party stakeholders in the UNFCCC as they gain more influence (Hoffmann, 2011).

Another way in which TD is inclusive is because TD "makes it possible for countries with different levels of economic development to discuss their respective commitments to reducing the threat of global climate change" (ibid.: 332)

#### 6.4 ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE STORIES VERSUS THE SPEECHES

Sub-question 4 asked: *What are issues that high-level representatives share in their stories compared to those shared in the high-level statements?* The stories and speeches contained similar elements and issues: the country's actions and plans, requirements, need for action, and a call for action. Some speeches, too, included personal experiences and were quite story-like. Perhaps, that was the influence of TD, but for claiming that, more research would be needed. One could also argue that speeches in themselves are a form of a story. Storytelling is "a practice in which content (facts, information) is transformed and brought into a narrative form" (Fischer et al. (2020: 39), with the purpose to "e.g. excite or spark interest, to elicit certain emotional reactions" (Mourik et al., 2017: 9). Speeches are aimed at stating one's views with the purpose to convince others.

All Parties addressed mitigation, which is not surprising as the entire purpose of the UNFCCC is "to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system" (UNFCCC, 2022a). Most Parties addressed their actions in the stories and speeches. Issues of difference are cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, which Parties mainly addressed in the speeches, whereas they focused more on their plans, inclusion and cooperation in the stories. The most frequently mentioned issues in the stories by developing countries versus developed countries differ the most in contrast to those mentioned in the speeches. In the stories, next to mitigation and actions, developing countries focused on inclusion, cooperation and adaption, whereas developing countries focused on their plans, policies and strategies, and cooperation. An issue that more Parties addressed in their speeches than in their stories was the CBDR-RC principle and responsibility.

The greater focus on inclusion and cooperation in the stories and the stronger focus on the CBDR-RC principle and responsibility could be explained by the TD assignment, which was to tell positive and constructive stories with no fingerpointing. Kirsch (2021: 343) argued that "the strive to avoid confrontation or conflict in an effort to reach consensus" are "rhetorical strategies strikingly different

from the politicised negotiations". The interviewees had reported too that TD was a friendly platform. Overall, the majority of Parties adhered rather well to the TD assignment but, in some cases, engaged in fingerpointing, in spirit, as Parties discussed their vulnerability. One could argue that developing countries talking about the need for assistance from developed countries could be considered fingerpointing, as they are singling out a group of Parties. Nevertheless, in most instances, this was not linked to addressing historical responsibilities, which changed the tone of the conversation.

Another interesting point is that the need for action was much more prominent in the speeches than in the stories. 15 Parties included the need for action in their stories, in comparison to 37 in their speeches. It made it seem as if Parties were still fighting to establish the importance of climate action in the negotiation space or to justify their positions. The need for action was possibly less mentioned in the Katowice TD sessions because the questions "where are we now?" and "where do we want to go?" from the previous TD rounds probably already established that need.

Most Parties addressed a few similar topics in their stories but included more topics in their speeches than in their stories, which could be explained by the short time they were given in the TD sessions. But, it could also be that reading from paper, with well-crafted messages, helps representatives to bring across more messages than from the top of their heads (which most representatives did).

## 6.5 FRAMING OF THE MAIN TD ISSUES

Finally, sub-question 5 was: *How are the main issues in the Talanoa Dialogue stories framed? If these issues are included in the high-level statements, how do the framings of the same issues compare?* Most issues were brought quite similarly in the stories and the speeches. However, the stories focused slightly more on illustrating how a particular issue can help to get there (the central question during TD was "how do we get there?") rather than showing Parties' commitments, which happened more in the speeches. Speeches generally had stronger language and a call for action. A more significant difference in the framing of the issues Parties brought up in stories versus speeches is what developing countries versus developed countries mentioned as main issues. Throughout their stories and speeches, developing countries focused on how vulnerable they are, but also stressed how they put in maximum effort despite their challenges. Therefore, they stated the need for action or called for action to help them fight and adapt to climate change, whilst they can still develop and have a future. In the speeches, this frame was slightly broader as it included more explicitly how the developing countries have little responsibility and developed countries do. Developed countries, however, focused more on how everybody needs to do something to fight climate change. In the speeches, the focus shifted slightly more to that Parties need to collaborate.

## 6.6 TD AS DIALOGUE

Looking at the definition of dialogue, by Slep & Sener (2013) adopted in this thesis: *"dialogue of meaningful interaction and exchange between people (often of different social, cultural, political, religious or professional groups) who come together through various kinds of conversations or activities with a view to increased understanding"*, TD can be considered a dialogue as interviewees reported that meaningful interaction and exchange between participants took place.

Additionally, looking at the five components of intercultural dialogue (listening, equality and difference at the same time, openness to result, non-discursive means of understanding, and knowledge increase), most can be found in the TD sessions. First of all, from the analysed stories, it became clear that participants were hearing what other participants were saying by briefly mentioning the point raised by the other. Interviewees, too, reported that they felt listened to. Secondly, TD was a level playing ground for Parties and non-Parties, indicating equality. However, depending on the facilitator, Parties received slightly more attention. The third component of dialogue, the openness to result, is harder to verify. Several interviewees stated they went openly into the TD sessions. However, several stated that in hindsight, they expected more from the TD outcomes. Fourthly, TD participants were able to look one another in the eye and communicate through non-discursive means of understanding as they were seated around a round table. This contrasts sharply with sharing high-level statements, where Parties are



then seated in a large room, looking at the COP Presidency and a large screen. Nevertheless, the non-discursive means of understanding in TD have not been researched in this thesis. Finally, various interviewees shared that they left TD with more knowledge regarding the positions of other Parties.

Although storytelling can be used as a “dialogue instrument” to “coordinate participation and inclusion of different perspectives” (Mourik et al., 2017: 9), no or little room was left after the sharing of stories to exchange views on the topics addressed, or to ask further questions. Additionally, the stories themselves were rather short, stories lacked a good storyline, and some merely summarised the Parties’ actions and plans, rather than connecting them to how others could potentially use them.

## 6.7 HOW WAS TD IMPLEMENTED AND HOW DID IT INFLUENCE THE PARTICIPANTS?

The objectives of this research were to understand 1) the role of the *talanoa* approach to dialogue and storytelling in the international climate negotiations and 2) how this Pacific tradition was implemented in an intergovernmental context. The main research question was: *How has the talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime, and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?*

*Talanoa* was introduced by the Fijians to the UNFCCC after the COP had already decided to hold a facilitative dialogue prior to the first round of the Global Stocktake to be held in 2023. Unique to TD was its storytelling component, which was not previously used in COP-mandated dialogues. Most facilitators contributed to the dialogue by setting the tone and actively contributing, similar to a *facilitative leader*. Participants enjoyed the experience, and through that TD provided an inclusive and friendly platform. However, they were somewhat disappointed in TD’s outcomes. The latter raises the question of what exactly TD’s added value was. Its original purpose was to ramp up ambition and some considered TD to be a practice round for the GST. However, as several interviewees pointed out, they thought action after TD was lacking. As some interviewees pointed out, this could have been improved by changing the third question, “how do we get there?”, by including a timeframe. Or adding a fourth question, more directly related to how future stocktaking could take place or how the outcomes of the TD could feed into the negotiations.

The analysis of the stories and the speeches demonstrated that Party representatives shared similar issues in their stories, however the call for action and language in the speeches in general was stronger. The main takeaway is that storytelling and the specific instructions to be constructive and positive was unique to TD. However, the latter and the small setting, is what made the main difference in the participants’ experiences and stories. Dialogue should be continued in the UNFCCC, as long as they genuinely provide room for openly sharing one’s views. Additionally, future dialogues in the UNFCCC should leave more time for exchanging views and asking one another questions, and should carefully consider the central question to be discussed.

## 6.8 METHODS

GTM served well to openly examine a phenomenon that had not been studied much before. For example, before analysing any data, I had not yet determined that facilitation could be valuable. However, during the analysis, the differences in facilitation style appeared, so I included the facilitators too. A weakness of GTM, however, is that the practice is highly interpretive: data can be interpreted in many ways and thus can be quite dependent on the researcher.

It would have been great if more information on the researched UNFCCC-related dialogues had been available; however, at least from a superficial level, the characteristics of these dialogues could be determined and compared with TD.

Regarding facilitation, more TD facilitators providing their experiences more extensively would have helped better explain the difference in facilitation. Nonetheless, next to the analysed contributions of TD facilitators during the sessions, the interviews with TD participants helped to understand better how facilitators carried out their role.

The interviewees' experiences were of great value for knowing what TD contributed to the participants on a deeper level. For example, based on the superficial characteristics of TD, as examined for the first sub-question, it did not become apparent that TD indeed provided a friendly environment or that participants felt listened to. However, one limitation concerning the interviews is that the interviews were held about 6-18 months after the TD sessions in Katowice. Therefore, for some interviewees, remembering the details of the dialogue was hard. Perhaps one could use remembrance as a "success indicator", assuming that the better someone remembers TD, the more impact it has had. The more impact it had, the more successful the event was. Nevertheless, it could, of course, also have been a negative impact. But then again, other personal factors could lead to a better or worse recollection of the dialogue. Leaving this "success indicator" aside, one should consider the timing of the interviews as some valuable details may have been forgotten, or interviewees misremember certain things.

This research could have been enriched by interviewing Parties who did not participate in the dialogue to see what they thought the dialogue brought to the UNFCCC, as well as their reasons for not participating.

The comparison between the stories and speeches helped to understand better what difference *talanoa* made in the oral contributions of the Parties as it resulted in the different issues being addressed and how they were framed differently or similarly.

Finally, one should be careful with applying the results of this research to other cases, as the results are very case specific.

## CH. 7 CONCLUSION

This thesis sought to understand 1) the role of the *talanoa* approach to dialogue and storytelling in the international climate negotiations and 2) how this Pacific tradition was implemented in an intergovernmental context. The main research question was: *How has the talanoa approach been implemented in the international climate regime, and how has it influenced its participants in the high-level segment of COP24 in 2018?*

This thesis found that the specific instructions to tell constructive and positive stories made the TD unique. Participants enjoyed the experience and wish to continue (inclusive) dialogue; however, this does not necessarily need to follow *talanoa*. The facilitators were able to set the tone of the dialogue. However, personal facilitation styles varied significantly, ranging from low involvement to high engagement through telling personal stories and engaging with what was said by the participants. The elements of the stories and speeches were quite similar: the need for action, country's actions and plans, view on what needs to happen next / how that should happen / requirements, and a call for action. All Parties focused on mitigation and mainly on their actions in both their stories and speeches. Issues of difference are cooperation, plans, strategies and policies, which Parties mainly addressed in the speeches, whereas most Parties focused on their plans, inclusion and cooperation in the stories. The framing of issues was relatively similar in the stories versus speeches, however, the language and call for action were stronger in the speeches. The bigger difference was in the framing of the developing countries versus developed countries.

The main takeaway is that storytelling and the specific instructions to be constructive and positive was unique to TD. However, the latter and the small setting, is what made the main difference in the participants' experiences and stories. Dialogue should be continued in the UNFCCC, as long as they genuinely provide room for openly sharing one's views. Additionally, future dialogues in the UNFCCC should leave more time for exchanging views and asking one another questions, and should carefully consider the central question to be discussed. As one of the main reason for disappointment was the lack of stronger outcomes.

There are several avenues for future research. In general, more research on dialogue in the UNFCCC is needed as not much is available. It would be interesting to learn more about what COP attendees consider to be dialogue, what conditions are needed and for what purposes it can be used. Similarly, as Fischer et al. (2020: 48) pointed out, more research is needed on when "storytelling can be used for what purpose" and by whom. It would also be interesting to learn more about their ideal facilitator.

Although it is probably challenging, it would be very interesting to research high-level intergovernmental dialogue in an experimental setting to see the effects of different types of dialogue. Future research could also dive more into tracking the dialogues and examining what influence they have in the negotiations. This is linked to researching more about the potential dialogue has for learning and how this materialises in the UNFCCC, which could – potentially – be done by tracking participants before and after the dialogue. Hopefully, researching these avenues could help create suitable structures in the UNFCCC where Parties can constructively and collectively build on a climate-resilient future. Another avenue for future research could be examining if and how high-level statements at other COPs tell stories and include personal experiences.

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# APPENDIX I – Codes list for analysing the TD stories and high-level statements

## STORIES

### MAIN ELEMENT OF STORY

*Main category*

### THANKS/FORMALITIES

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

### PLAN

- Adaptation* capacity building
- Cooperation* collaboration  
providing assistance
- Mitigation* energy change  
nature conservation  
pricing
- Objectives* emission reduction  
resilience  
sustainable development 2050
- Other* create strategy/policy

### ACTIONS

- Adaptation* creating plans/strategies/policies
- inclusion: doing  
empowering  
learning
- water management

<i>Mitigation</i>	creating plans/strategies/policies	
	cooperation:	collaboration providing assistance
	inclusion:	doing empowering learning
	less GHGs:	pricing change energy nature conservation
<i>Other</i>	mobilising finance	

## REQUIREMENTS

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<i>Cooperation</i>	assistance providing assistance wanting everybody needs to do something
<i>Inclusion</i>	doing empowering learning
<i>Other</i>	climate justice mindset shift plan, strategy, policy political leadership + will + commitment

## NEED FOR ACTION

---

climate change effect  
urgency  
more action  
urgent action  
vulnerability

## CALL FOR ACTION

---

*Action* urgent  
more (ambitious)

*Cooperation* assistance wanting  
collaborate together  
everybody needs to do something

*Other* change energy  
inclusion general  
mindset shift  
political will, leadership and  
commitment  
use evidence

## HIGH-LEVEL STATEMENTS

### MAIN ELEMENT OF HIGH-LEVEL STATEMENT

*Main category*

---

---

### THANKS/FORMALITIES

---

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

---

### NEED FOR ACTION

---

climate change effect  
urgency  
more action  
urgent action  
vulnerability

### COMMITMENT TO PARIS AGREEMENT/UNFCCC

---

*Actions* adaptation

creating plans/strategies/policies  
water management

mitigation

carbon pricing  
creating plans/strategies/policies  
change energy  
inclusion – doing  
inclusion – empowering  
nature conservation  
objectives

other

climate diplomacy  
reporting  
sustainable agriculture

*Plans* adaptation  
mitigation

*Responsibility* little responsibility

## **COUNTRY'S VIEWS ON**

---

*COP process* Paris Agreement as building block  
purpose COP  
Talanoa Dialogue

*Requirements* cooperation

assistance wanting  
assistance providing  
collaborate  
everybody needs to do something

other

attention for adaptation and L&D  
common but differentiated responsibility principle  
inclusion – doing  
inclusion – empowering  
evidence  
market mechanism  
mutual trust  
political leadership, commitment and will  
transparency

## CALL FOR ACTION

---

*Action* urgent  
more (ambitious)

*Cooperation* assistance wanting  
collaborate together  
everybody needs to do something

*Other* account for adaptation and loss &  
damage  
take responsibility  
mindset shift  
create Rulebook  
ratify  
include CBDR-RC

## Appendix II – List of TD Facilitators Facilitating the Ministerial Sessions in Katowice

Group	Name, position	Nationality
Dreketi 1	H.E. Inia Seruiratu, Minister of Defence and National Security, Fiji	Fiji
Dreketi 2	H.E. Inia Seruiratu, Minister of Defence and National Security, Fiji	Fiji
Dreketi 3	H. E. Amena Yauvoli, Ambassador for climate change and oceans, Fiji	Fiji
Lolelapolap 1	H.E. Enele Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tavulu	Tavulu
Lolelapolap 2	H.E. David Paul, Minister for Environment from the Republic of the Marshall Islands	Marshall Islands
Lolelapolap 3	H.E. David Paul, Minister for Environment from the Republic of the Marshall Islands	Marshall Islands
Nui 1	H.E. Ralph Regenvanu, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vanuatu	Vanuatu
Nui 2	H.E. Deo Saran, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Belgium from Fiji	Fiji
Nui 3	Replacement Roving Ambassador, name unknown	Fiji
Tarawa 1	H.E. Taneti Maamau, President and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kiribati	Kiribati
Tarawa 2	H.E. Lina Sabaitiencé, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Energy, Lithuania	Lithuania
Tarawa 3	H.E. Luke Daunivalu, High Commissioner to Australia, Fiji	Fiji
Tuchola 1	H.E. Lina Sabaitiencé, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Energy, Lithuania	Lithuania
Tuchola 2	H.E. Sławomir Mazurek, Deputy Minister of the Environment, Poland	Poland
Tuchola 3	H.E. Lina Sabaitienė, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Energy, Lithuania	Lithuania
Vaisigano 1	H.E. Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Samoa	Samoa
Vaisigano 2	H.E. Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Samoa	Samoa
Vaisigano 3	H.E. Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Samoa	Samoa
Wroclaw 1	H.E. Norbert Kurilla, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Slovakia	Slovakia
Wroclaw 2	H.E. Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister for Entrepreneurship and Technology, Poland	Poland
Wroclaw 3	H.E. Jadwiga Emilewicz, Minister for Entrepreneurship and Technology, Poland	Poland



## APPENDIX III – Group composition of Katowice sessions & attendance

The following table displays the composition of the TD groups during the Katowice sessions in December 2018, during COP24. It also provides an overview of which Parties and non-Party stakeholders were present or absent. 115 Parties and 42 non-Party stakeholders participated during the Katowice sessions. 81 Parties did not attend. The 42 Parties whose stories and high-level statements are part of this research are listed after, including in which group they participated.

\* I interviewed the representative who participated in the Talanoa Dialogue in Katowice.

\*\* I interviewed a representative closely involved with the Talanoa Dialogue in Katowice.

For clarity, I have changed the numbers of the groups. Originally, they were numbered from 1 to 21. However, to indicate that the groups ran in parallel, I used the room names and the numbers 1-3. So Dreketi 1 ran in parallel with Lolelplap 1 etc.

Group	Present		Absent
	Parties	Non-Parties	
<b>Dreketi 1 (D1)</b>	Australia	Global Energy Interconnection Development & Cooperation Organisation	Dominica
	Bahrein	South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development	Montenegro
	Barbados		Portugal
	Chile		
	Malawi		
<b>Dreketi 2 (D2)</b>	<u>Belize*</u>	CLIC! - Latin American and Caribbean Youth Climate Movement	Albania
	Latvia	Holy Roman Church	Eritrea
	South Africa		Marshall Islands
			Mauritania
			Liberia

<b>Dreketi 3 (D3)</b>	Armenia	Solar Impulse Foundation	Andorra	
	Bahamas	Tulele Peisa	Namibia	
	<u>Iran*</u>		Niue	
	Greece		North-Korea	
	Myanmar			
	South Sudan			
<b>Lolelapp 1 (L1)</b>	Canada	Maersk Group	Central African Republic	
	Congo	Greenpeace	Niger	
	Czech Republic		Senegal	
	France			
	Gambia			
	<u>Switzerland**</u>			
<b>Lolelapp 2 (L2)</b>	Israel	City of Oslo, Norway	Cameroon	Mozambique
	Malta	<u>Stockholm Environmental Institute*</u>	Djibouti	
	<u>Netherlands**</u>		Guinea	
	Tuvalu		Mali	
<b>Lolelapp 3 (L3)</b>	Algeria	State of Yucatán (Mexico)	Burundi	
	Argentina	United Nations for Disaster Risk Reduction	Cyprus	
	Benin		Ukraine	
	Timor-Leste			
	Tunisia			
	Turkey			
	Spain			

<b>Nui 1 (N1)</b>	Brazil	Iberdrola	Angola	Paraguay
	European Union	WWF	Cuba	San Marino
	Georgia		Equatorial-Guinea	
	Honduras		Nicaragua	
	Vanuatu		Panama	
<b>Nui 2 (N2)</b>	El Salvador	The Commonwealth	Ecuador	
	Luxembourg	<u>City of Cotonou (Benin)*</u>	Guatemala	
	Malaysia		Papua New Guinea	
	Singapore		Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	
	Uruguay			
<b>Nui 3 (N3)</b>	Venezuela			
	Peru	<u>Danish Pension Fund*</u>	Bolivia	Eswatini
	Rwanda	California Air Resources Board	Bulgaria	Saudi Arabia
<b>Tarawa 1 (TA1)</b>	Sweden		Dominican Republic	Sudan
	Ethiopia	<u>International Trade Union Confederation*</u>	Palau	
	Grenada	<u>Mahindra Group*</u>	Tanzania	
	Lao's People's Democratic Republic			
	Nepal			
	Slovenia			
	Thailand			
	United Kingdom			

<b>Tarawa 2 (TA2)</b>	Lesotho	City of Chefchaouen (Morocco)	Bosnia & Herzegovina
	Nauru	Women of the Americas	Saint Lucia
	New Zealand		
	Slovakia		
	South Korea		
<b>Tarawa 3 (TA3)</b>	Costa Rica	Wageningen UR	Jamaica
	Hungary	<u>Pacific Regional Environment Programme*</u>	
	Japan		
	Nigeria		
	Seychelles		
	Trinidad and Tobago		
<b>Tuchola 1 (TU1)</b>	Qatar		
	Belgium	City of Quelimane (Mozambique)	Guinea-Bissau
	Finland	Schneider Electric	Kiribati
	Iceland		Morocco
	Madagascar		
	Sierra Leone		
	United States		
<b>Tuchola 2 (TU2)</b>	Côte d'Ivoire	Abze Solar	Chad
	Gabon	IKEA	Democratic Republic of the Congo
	Ghana		Saint Kitts and Nevis
	Mexico		
	Norway		
	Serbia		

<b>Tuchola 3 (TU3)</b>	Antigua and Barbuda	State of Saõ Paulo (Brazil)	Cambodia
	Burkina Faso	<u>World Farmers' Organisation*</u>	Estonia
	Cook Islands		Solomon Islands
	<u>Ireland*</u>		Somalia
	Togo		
<b>Vaisigano 1 (V1)</b>	Brunei Darussulam	Microsoft	Aghanistan
	Denmark	SUEZ Group	Cabo Verde
	Egypt		Iraq
	Micronesia		Jordan
	Romania		Syrian Arab Republic
	Viet Nam		
<b>Vaisigano 2 (V2)</b>	Bangladesh	Max Financial Services Ltd.	Kuwait
	Colombia	World Meteorological Organisation	Libya
	Italy		Oman
	Kenya		Yemen
	Lebanon		
<b>Vaisigano 3 (V3)</b>	China	Mars Incorporated	Botswana
	Germany	SEforAll	Haiti
	Indonesia		Tonga
	Pakistan		
	Uganda		
	United Arab Emirates		

<b>Wroclaw 1 (W1)</b>	Austria	National Power Company of Iceland	Azerbaijan	Republic of Moldova
	India	OPEC	Comoros	Sri Lanka
	Mongolia		Fiji	
	Lithuania		Guyana	
<b>Wroclaw 2 (W2)</b>	Maldives	City of Jaworzno (Poland)	Kazakhstan	
	<u>Mauritius*</u>	Unilever	Kyrgyzstan	
	Monaco		Uzbekistan	
	<u>Philippines*</u>			
	Poland			
	State of Palestine			
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia			
	Zimbabwe			
<b>Wroclaw 3 (W3)</b>	Bhutan	International Indigenous Peoples' Forum	Belarus	
	Croatia	Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research	Samoa	
	Liechtenstein		Tajikistan	
	Russia		Turkmenistan	
	Suriname		Zambia	
<b>Total</b>	115 Parties present	42 Non-Parties present	81 Parties absent	

**The 42 Parties whose stories and speeches have been included in this research**

1. Algeria L3
2. Argentina L3
3. Armenia D3
4. Australia D1
5. Bahamas D3
6. Bangladesh V2
7. Canada L1
8. Croatia W3
9. Denmark V1
10. Estonia TU3
11. European Union N1
12. Gabon TU2
13. Georgia N1
14. Ghana TU2
15. Honduras N1
16. India W1
17. Indonesia V3
18. Israel L2
19. Japan TA3
20. Kenya V2
21. Lao People's Democratic Republic TA1
22. Lesotho TA2
23. Liechtenstein W3
24. Lithuania W1
25. Luxembourg N2
26. Mauritius W2
27. Micronesia V1
28. Monaco W2
29. Pakistan V3
30. Romania V1
31. Russia W3
32. Rwanda N3
33. Sierra Leone TU1
34. Singapore N2
35. Solomon Islands TU3
36. South Africa D2
37. South Korea TA2
38. Sweden N3
39. Thailand TA1
40. Tunisia L3
41. Turkey L3
42. Uganda V3

## APPENDIX IV – Issues addressed in the stories and the speeches

The table on the next page displays an overview of which issues Parties addressed in their stories and speeches.



		Issues																	
		Action	Adaptation	Call for action	CBDR-RC	Cooperation	Inclusion	Mindset shift	Mitigation	Need for action	Plans of country	Plans/strategies/policies	Political will + commitment + leadership	TD process	Responsibility	Requirements	Rulebook	View on COP	
Developing	Algeria	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes
Developing	Argentina	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Developing	Armenia	story	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
Developed	Australia	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Bahamas	story	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Developing	Bangladesh	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Developed	Canada	story	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Croatia	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Denmark	story	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Estonia	story	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	European Union	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Gabon	story	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Georgia	story	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes
Developing	Ghana	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Honduras	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no
Developing	India	story	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes
Developing	Indonesia	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Israel	story	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Developed	Japan	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Developing	Kenya	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Developing	Lao	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes
		speech	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
Developing	Lesotho	story	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Developed	Liechtenstein	story	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes

Developed	Lithuania	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Developed	Luxembourg	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no
		speech	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Mauritius	story	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Micronesia	story	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Monaco	story	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Pakistan	story	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Romania	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Russia	story	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no
		speech	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Rwanda	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Sierra Leone	story	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Singapore	story	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Solomon Islands	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Developing	South Africa	story	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	South Korea	story	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Developed	Sweden	story	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	no
		speech	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes
Developing	Thailand	story	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes
		speech	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no
Developing	Tunisia	story	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no
		speech	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes
Developed	Turkey	story	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Developing	Uganda	story	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
		speech	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
<b>Total # Parties mentioning issue in story</b>			<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total # Parties mentioning issue in speech</b>			<b>40</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>