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**RUSSIA'S ROLE IN
INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE
AGENDA IN THE XXI CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT

Daria Zotova: Russia's role in international climate change agenda in the XXI century

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Climate change issues are turning into one of the top priority issues in international relations along with security and economic development. In international relations climate change represents a global problem of (excess) greenhouse gas emissions. Russian climate-related policy has been widely discussed ever since the country refused to join second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. However, Russia's national role conceptions in the sphere of climate change have not been studied to a sufficient extent. This dissertation describes Russia's role in international climate change agenda. The hypothesis is that the Russian Federation plays a role of agenda acceptor due to Russian elites' focus on national economic development interests that do not imply readiness to switch to a more environmentally-friendly production and policies. The topic is studied under the role theory that explains decision-making process from the decision-maker's perspective. The dissertation analyses Russia's climate change policy through analysis of the main strategic documents in the field. The author comes to the conclusion that economic incentives, as well as considerations about Russia's reputation in international arena have been the main factors driving Russia's climate change policy. By describing evolution of the country's domestic climate policy and comparing domestic documents to international climate agreements, the author demonstrated that Russia sees its' role in climate change politics based on its' self-interpretation as a great power.

Keywords: Russia, climate change, climate change politics, foreign policy analysis, role theory, Kyoto Protocol, UNFCCC

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INTRODUCTION

Climate change issues, as well as politics of climate change have recently been widely discussed all over the world. Different solutions on different levels have been suggested in order to mitigate the effects of global warming. The problem of developing more effective political means to maintain the existing temperature and climate on Earth worries most politicians, scientists and various public figures, as well as international organizations and public in almost every state.

In international relations, climate change represents a global problem of (excess) greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Regarding transnational relations and international networks, it is important to note that the problem of climate change has become one of the central themes in the United Nations' (UN) agenda and its institutions, thus occupying an important place on the agenda of the most influential international forum.

This dissertation describes Russia's role in international climate change agenda: whether the country is an important actor (great environmental power) in this sphere that is deeply involved in global effort to prevent climate change processes to save the planet, or whether the country is guided by other incentives such as making sure measures against climate change that are negotiated and agreed on in international arena would not harm Russia's internal economic development.

Russian climate-related policy has been widely discussed ever since the country chose to not participate in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. It is important to define Russia's role in international climate change agenda due to Russia is an important actor in the world's politics because of its' leadership within the former USSR states, as well as Russia's permanent member status on the UN Security Council and its' economic strength of its extraction industries. On top of that, Russia's economy is one of the most carbon intensive ones in the world, and that also definitely makes the country a crucial actor in global climate change politics. Nevertheless, various measures and policies aimed at reducing the GHG emissions in Russia are being implemented and the total amount of GHG emissions in Russia has already decreased significantly compared to 1990 levels. During climate summit in Paris (2015) Russian President Vladimir Putin (2000-2008, 2012-ongoing) assured that Russia's activities have already slowed global

warming on Earth and that the country will continue to contribute to joint efforts to prevent global warming. Consequently, according to the Presidential Decree dated November 4, 2020, the amount of emissions should be reduced by 70% by 2030 in relation to the 1990 emissions level.¹ However, most analysts consider that this goal is not ambitious enough since it should be taken into consideration that emissions were still on high level in 1990 due to a different degree of industrialization and type of production facilities at that time.

Despite the leadership's statements and adopted policies, nowadays the situation in Russia is still characterized by a significant level of anthropogenic influence on climate system (e.g. depletion various biological resources such as soil, water, mineral, etc. as a result of human activities). For example, it is stated in Fundamentals of state policy in the field of environmental development of Russia for the period up to 2030 that in almost half of the Russian regions more than 54% of the people living in bigger cities live under the influence of high atmospheric air pollution that is mostly caused by benzopyrene, which comes into the air as a result of burning solid fuel.²

That is why Russia's engagement in preventing and mitigating climate change processes has been seriously doubted by other actors in the world politics. It is important to study Russia's role in international climate change agenda from the inside perspective since national laws on climate change can encourage integration of climate-related issues into various aspects of regulation and multiple institutions and policies both national and international.

Furthermore, when it comes to climate change politics, state's national interests (one of which is a desire for national economic development) can be considered an often used explanation for foreign policy decision-making. In the article "Differentiated responsibilities and prosocial behaviour in climate change mitigation"³ it is argued that such countries as the US, Saudi Arabia and Russia (as well as other developing and industrialized countries) concentrate mostly on domestic economic development which

¹ Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 666 «О сокращении выбросов парниковых газов» (2020)

² Основы государственной политики в области экологического развития Российской Федерации на период до 2030 года (2012)

³ Kline, R., Seltzer, N., Lukinova, E. et al. (2018) Differentiated responsibilities and prosocial behaviour in climate change mitigation. *NatHumBehav* 2, pp. 653–661

has affected those countries' decisions to implement and promote international climate-related policy. Hence, a climate-related dilemma arises from interdependence between the desire for economic growth that causes anthropogenic climate change and the need to mitigate the negative effects of global warming at the same time. So it is possible that Russia's participation in climate change diplomacy is dependent on heavily Russian self-interest that is often related not to environmental concerns but rather to economic development that is based on natural resources extraction. Henry, Sundstrom, Korppoo, Kokorin and other researchers share this point of view, emphasizing that Russia's main incentive in foreign policy is getting economic benefits for future national economic growth.

However, recently, there have been certain shifts in Russian climate change policy goals. For example, solving environmental problems is currently increasingly seen as one of the top policy priorities. In the Presidential Decree "On national goals and strategic objectives for the development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2024"⁴ dated May 7, 2018, "ecology" is listed among the main priorities. In another Presidential Decree "On the National Development Goals of Russia until 2030"⁵ dated July 21, 2020, a comfortable and safe environment for life is also mentioned as one of the national goals. In addition, environment has been mentioned in constitutional amendments that were adopted in summer 2020, which brings environmental problems to the highest legislative priority.

So it is significant to find out what role does Russia see for itself in international climate change agenda and what its' actual role is. The hypothesis is that each country can take one of four roles in international climate change politics: agenda shaper, agenda accepter, agenda dropper (this role implies that an actor decides to stop participating in negotiations, for example, like Russia did when it refused to take part in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol) or agenda breaker (an example of this role can be Trump's climate policy, when he not only decided to stop participating in international climate agreements but also tried to prove to the whole world that climate change does

⁴ Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 204 «О национальных целях и стратегических задачах развития Российской Федерации на период до 2024 года» (2018)

⁵ Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 474 «О национальных целях развития Российской Федерации на период до 2030 года» (2020)

not exist, thus trying to change the whole international climate regime). Additionally, there is also a role of non-participant: for example, China used to be a non-participant in international climate change negotiations until the country signed the Paris Agreement and declared climate neutrality goal for 2060. Another hypothesis is that the Russian Federation is an agenda acceptor since the country explicitly highlights its focus on national economic interests that do not imply readiness to switch to a more environmentally-friendly production any time soon even though it would be more economically beneficial in the long-term perspective, but at the same time there are internal beliefs among the country's elites in Russia's great power status that motivates country to participate in international climate negotiations due to great power's responsibilities.

Thus, the main aim of the research is to define Russia's role in international climate change agenda in the XXI century in accordance with its national role conceptions, as well as to retrace development of Russia's climate change policy.

Research questions are the following:

1. How does Russia view climate change?
2. What role does Russia desire for itself in international climate change agenda?
3. What does Russia actually do in relation to solving climate change issues?

The topic is studied primarily under the role theory, which focuses on the agent-structure debate and explains decision-making process from the decision-maker's point of view which is very important for Russian case due to its semi-authoritarian regime within which a President plays the most important role in setting policy goals. To define Russia's role in accordance with its national role conceptions in international climate change agenda empirical data such as official domestic documents on climate change and international agreements need to be analyzed.

The data will be used in English and Russian languages. The collection and choice of data follows the criteria of relevance regarding the research questions. The research also considers the relevant timeframe. Among the data in Russian language official documents of the Russian Federation are presented: concepts, strategies, doctrines,

Presidential Decrees, Governmental Orders, Federal Laws. International agreements in the field of climate change constituted a special category of data in English language.

The dissertation is based on the works of Russian and foreign researchers. Climate change politics topic has become one of the most controversial in recent decades, so both foreign and Russian scientists pay attention to it. Moreover, researchers apply various theoretical constructs, trying to explain why states behave certain ways in addressing environmental activities. Such theories as realism, liberalism, and constructivism figure most prominently in studying this issue. Constructivist arguments, which emphasize impacts of ideas, norms and identities, are very common, especially because they relate to developmental disparities and climate justice. Below⁶ is one of the advocates of this approach to climate change issues. Another theory that is widely discussed nowadays in regard to climate change is role theory. This theory shares an obvious affinity with constructivism theory, since proponents of both traditions are interested in studying interdependence between agent and structure. However, role theory focuses primarily on exploring the national role conceptions and their influence on actor's behavior on international arena. Breuning⁷, Holsti⁸, Thies⁹, Stryker¹⁰ argue that the use of theory is more beneficial than constructivism because it considers structural changes in the existing system and importance of perception of these changes by agents, as well as agents' perception of their own roles. Moreover, role theory shows that an actor is able to form his own role and change it through certain mechanisms adapting to changes in the system.

The need to protect the environment and mitigate the effects of the global warming is recognized by majority of the world's states. This fact led to the need for international cooperation, and, starting since late 1980s, one can see the emergence of a new vision of climate change issues that have transformed from purely scientific problem to the political one, which is also reflected in the social science literature. For example, the importance of prosocial behavior, which is, in regards with climate change topic, can be

⁶Below, A. (2017) Climate Change in Foreign Policy. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*

⁷Breuning, M. (2019). *Role Theory in Politics and International Relations*. Oxford University Press

⁸Holsti, K. J. (1970) National role conceptions in the study of foreign policy. *International Studies Quarterly*, 14(3)

⁹Thies, C. G. (2017) *Role Theory and Foreign Policy*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies

¹⁰Stryker, S. (2006) Traditional Symbolic Interactionism, Role Theory, and Structural Symbolic Interactionism: The Road to Identity Theory. In Turner, J. (ed.) *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, New York: Springer

described as developed countries' voluntary desire to help developing countries by taking more responsibilities and actions in climate change mitigation, was described by Kline, Seltzer, Lukinova and Bynum.¹¹ New forms of governing that appear around the international climate regime and emerge from the bottom up, producing a dissipated pattern of governing which is called "polycentric", are discussed in the work of Jordan, Huitema, Schoenefeld, Asselt and Forster.¹² Moreover, carbon markets that appeared with the Kyoto Protocol and their influence of countries' economies were analyzed by Newell and Paterson¹³ who claim that "carbon markets need to be designed and expanded to make sure that the wider economy is unable to ignore the limits implied by aiming for a maximum of 2 °C warming, as it currently does"¹⁴, as well as Klein¹⁵, who, throughout her book "This Changes Everything", describes the climate crisis as a confrontation between capitalism and the planet.¹⁶ Much of Klein's book is focused on showing the problem of denial of climate change in the world.

An undeniable indicator of increased interest to Russian climate change policy is a large number of researches that are dedicated to analysis of Russia's climate-related policy development conducted by such scholars as Tynkkynen¹⁷, Henry and Sundstrom¹⁸, Korppoo, Upston-Hooper and Yliheljo¹⁹. For example, Korppoo has also analyzed how climate change, as well as climate change diplomacy is understood in Russia. In her article "Domestic frames on Russia's role in international climate diplomacy"²⁰ the author enhances one's understanding of the cultural factors behind Russia's position in international climate change negotiations by interviewing Russian non-climate

¹¹ Kline, R., Seltzer, N., Lukinova, E. et al. (2018) Differentiated responsibilities and prosocial behaviour in climate change mitigation. *Nat Hum Behav* 2, pp. 653–661

¹² Seltzer, J. and Nachmany, M. (2018) National Governance. *Governing Climate Change: Polycentricity in Action?*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 47–62

¹³ Newell, P., Paterson, M. (2010) *Climate capitalism: global warming and the transformation of the global economy*. Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Klein, N. (2014) *This changes everything: capitalism vs. the climate*. New York : Simon & Schuster

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Tynkkynen, N. (2010) A Great Ecological Power in Global Climate Policy? Framing Climate Change as a Policy Problem in Russian Public Discussion. *Environmental Politics*, 19, 2, pp. 179–95

¹⁸ Henry, L., McIntosh-Sundstrom, L. (2012) Russia's climate policy: International bargaining and domestic modernization. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64(7), pp. 1297–1322

¹⁹ Korppoo, A., Upston-Hooper, K., Yliheljo, E. (2015) *Chapter 30: Climate change mitigation in Russia: foreign policy, environmental action or simple economics?* Edward Elgar Publishing

²⁰ Korppoo, A. (2020). Domestic frames on Russia's role in international climate diplomacy. *Climate Policy (Earthscan)*, 20(1), 109–123

professionals on the topic. Kokorin²¹, Russian climatologist, head of the Climate and Energy Program of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has a lot of works dedicated to the factors that are driving Russian environmental policy. A report called “Turn to Nature” has recently been released by the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs of the HSE University under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the support of the Roscongress Foundation, the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma, as well as the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy and the journal “Russia in Global Affairs”, in which a new role that should be desired for Russia in climate change politics is outlined.²² The report has also pointed out suggestions on reforming Russia's environmental policy that are divided into two directions: domestic and foreign.

At the same time, both in foreign and in Russian research community, at the moment, a comprehensive study of Russia's role in international agenda in the field of climate change in the XXI century from the national role conceptions perspective based on the official documents has not been carried out.

The research methodology is presented in the form of analytical approach, comparative method, discourse analysis, as well as other general scientific methods used in modern political science. Analytical approach is necessary to use due to the interdependence between the underlying need for domestic economic development that drives anthropogenic climate change and the consequent dilemma resulting from the need to mitigate the negative consequences of climate change processes. That is why it is reasonable to look for causes of certain foreign policy decisions within the state, where the decisions were made. The comparative analysis used in comparing Russian domestic climate-related concepts and international climate-related agreements made it possible to trace similar and different aspects of their conceptual guidelines in the field of environmental policy. Discourse analysis and other methods of texts analysis help to provide understanding, which role a particular state sees for itself in international

²¹Kokorin, A.O. (2014). "Economic And Environmental Factors Behind Russia's Climate Policy Development". *International Research Journal*, № 11-3 (30), pp. 34-40

²² Национальный исследовательский университет «Высшая школа экономики». (2021). *Поворот к природе: новая экологическая политика России в условиях «зелёной» трансформации мировой экономики и политики*. М. “Международные отношения”

relations and if there is a different role that it desires to play, according to the beliefs prevalent among decision-makers of this state that are expressed in the policy goals that are set in the official strategic documents.

The structure of the dissertation is determined by the research questions. The thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter sets the theoretical and methodological framework of the dissertation. The second chapter outlines the main actors in Russian climate change policy, as well as points out the main directions of Russia's climate change policy in the XXI century. The third chapter aims to evaluate the country's international engagement in the climate change sphere and describe Russia's role in the international climate change agenda by presenting the results of a comparative analysis of Russian and international climate-related documents.

Scientific novelty of the study:

- Practically, the dissertation can be used in order to anticipate possible discursive and policy turns in Russian foreign policy on climate change;
- Usage of the second-generation role theory places the research among the most modern ones;
- The combination of documents introduced for analysis and comparison in the thesis in order to define Russia's role in the international climate change agenda makes this paper unique and contributing to the field;
- The author is introducing original official documents of the Russian leadership to the academia, so that scholars without knowledge of Russian can get familiar with them.

1. THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Foreign policy analysis

Arguments over how to address climate change (if it is agreed that addressing climate-related issues is needed at all) are recently becoming a common feature of domestic political contestation in many countries. That is why it is necessary to use foreign policy analysis (FPA) for the dissertation since FPA explains what factors can influence foreign policy decision-making (including domestic factors). Domestic factors encompass, for example, power struggles between branches of government, as well as struggles between political parties (and even factions within the political parties), economic factors and even such sources of influence as think tanks, voters and even churches. However, it is important to note that the total amount of influence factors is overwhelming.

Regarding voters as a source of influence, it is important to note that the connection between public opinion and foreign policy is extremely complex and currently scholars are still debating on the issue. The question who influences whom (whether leader influences public opinion, or public opinion influences leader) remains unsolved or is only case-specific. Nevertheless, when it comes to public opinion's influence on foreign policy, Hill has emphasized that "the overwhelming majority of the voting public demonstrates a distinct lack of interest in, and understanding of, international affairs"²³ with greater concern to economic, health and education issues. However, one can argue that importance of public opinion depends on the state's regime. And it is true; the nature of the nation's regime is yet another factor in FPA. For example, Dahl suggested that the nature of the state's regime (which is a "degree of inclusiveness and public contestation"²⁴) can predispose states to particular patterns in politics.²⁵

Van Belle has classified regime approaches based on the following motivations: first is the desire to avoid harming political career and reputation, and the second is the desire to improve the standing in the political arena.²⁶ In addition, the degree of public approval

²³ Hill, C. (2003) *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy*. New York: Palgrave

²⁴ *Regimes and oppositions*. (1973). Yale Univ. Press.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Van Belle, D. (1993) Domestic Imperatives and Rational Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making. In *The Limits of State Autonomy: Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*, edited by David Skidmore and Valerie M. Hudson, 151–83. Boulder, CO: Westview.

may determine the motivation for the decision-maker: if approval ratings are relatively high, risk aversion might develop, but if approval ratings are low, then “risk-acceptant strategies”²⁷ are likely to be used. So risk orientation differs depending on how high or low public approval ratings are.

At the same time FPA also focuses on regime strategy and how it affects foreign policy decision-making. There are four regime strategies, which are not mutually exclusive and can be sometimes used simultaneously:

1. ignoring a domestic political challenge. This tactic seems to be very dangerous since it can leave advantage of discussion to the opposition, which will then have a chance to persuade other domestic actors to take their side;
2. direct tactics to quash a challenge. These tactics provide notable rewards or punishments to certain actors of the opposition;
3. indirect tactics. There are three such tactics:
 - a. overpersuade the opposition,
 - b. form alliances with other groups to maintain the regime’s position to get something in return,
 - c. somehow switch the nation’s attention from the struggle to a different issue that is capable of increasing support for the government.

And all of them share one same objective: to summon enough support on the matter so that there would be no need to change policy directions;

4. compromise means that a regime builds some “wiggle room”²⁸ into its policy, giving some space for insignificant compromise so to make it seem as to have engaged and defused opposition’s claims. However, these minor compromises might eventually be reversed later.²⁹

²⁷Van Belle, D. (1993) Domestic Imperatives and Rational Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making. In *The Limits of State Autonomy: Societal Groups and Foreign Policy Formulation*, edited by David Skidmore and Valerie M. Hudson, 151–83. Boulder, CO: Westview.

²⁸Hudson, V. M. (2014) *Foreign policy analysis : classic and contemporary theory*. Second edition. [s. l.]: Rowman & Littlefield Pub.

²⁹Ibid.

Hudson points out that “the effects of domestic political competition on foreign policy will vary according to the strategy chosen by the regime to carry on that competition”³⁰. It is important that certain strategies (ignoring and some direct tactics) are likely to have just little or no effect at all on foreign policy while other regimes (indirect tactics) might have essential effect.

Hence, the regime of the nation itself can be considered one of the key factors that influence foreign policy of a state even before one widens the analysis to the larger polity such as institutions. FPA recognizes that institutions are also able to create means by which the polity addresses certain problems. Ways of enacting policy preferences can include approval (or disapproval) of foreign aid, appropriation of funds, etc. Additionally, institutions are able to purposefully construct obstacles by using veto right, special budgeting system, supermajority necessity for certain types of legislation, etc. Nevertheless, capabilities of environmental institutions are very weak in Russia due to the country’s semi-authoritarian regime.

Lastly, foreign policy analysis can be divided into studying objective or subjective domestic factors that influence foreign policy. It is important to note that there is bigger number of approaches that pay attention to objective rather than subjective domestic factors. However, the number of approaches, paying attention to subjective factors, such as values, ideas, perceptions, etc. is increasing throughout recent decades. Understanding the Russian leadership’s perceptions of Russia’s role in international climate change politics offers possibilities to understand the logic behind adoption of Russian documents as well as helps with their interpretations.

1.2. Role theory

Another theoretical framework of this paper is role theory. It is necessary to apply this theory because everything that happens in between state in international arena is grounded, first of all, in decision-makers’ actions. Thus, it is important to understand how these decision-makers perceive themselves (and their states) and surrounding world.

³⁰Hudson, V. M. (2014) *Foreign policy analysis : classic and contemporary theory*. Second edition. [s. l.]:Rowman& Littlefield Pub.

The theory has first emerged in the 1970s when researchers started to notice certain behavioral patterns of the actors in the Cold War structure of international relations, e.g. “non-aligned,” “allies,” “satellites”.³¹ This way, role theorists began to describe various roles for states (such as leader, mediator, initiator), as well as counter-roles (such as that of follower, aggressor).³²

Later, according to Cameron and Breuning, European scholars rather began to concentrate their attention on roles in the context of the European Union and international relations in general, while the use of role theory in FPA seemed to wane in the US.³³

Nowadays, proponents of the role theory argue about sources and factors shaping the roles: American scholars consider that determining factors for shaping the roles are actors’ material or cognitive characteristics, and that stability of these roles is seen as causes for further actions, whereas European theorists stress the importance of constructivist understanding which studies language and social interaction and in which roles provide “reasons for action”³⁴.

It is important to define roles and other central concepts of the role theory. According to Thies, “roles are social positions (as well as a socially recognized category of actors) that are constituted by ego and alter expectations regarding the purpose of an actor in an organized group”³⁵. Additionally, functions of these positions depend on the group’s structure and purpose and is also limited by various factors such as scope or time.

It is also important to look at the history of this concept to understand it better. During the 1990s scholars used to clearly distinguish role and identity by dividing roles into separate ego and alter parts. Later, drawing on Wendt and Mead, ego part of a role has been seen as self-understanding and conceptualization of one’s social position with regard to a certain social group.³⁶ According to Harnisch and Nabers, the ego part is “then endogenized in the process of role taking, where a corporate identity meets the role

³¹*Role theory in international relations : approaches and analyses.* (2011). Routledge.

³²Ibid.

³³Cameron G. Thies, Breuning M. (2012). Integrating Foreign Policy Analysis and International Relations through Role Theory. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 8(1), 1–4.

³⁴*Role theory in international relations : approaches and analyses.* (2011). Routledge.

³⁵Thies, C. (2017). Role Theory and Foreign Policy. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*.

³⁶*Role theory in international relations : approaches and analyses.* (2011). Routledge.

identity – that is, anticipated attributes of a social role as interpreted by the role beholder”³⁷.

Role expectations encompass domestic expectations as to what the desired role is (ego expectations), and both explicit and implicit demands by others (alter expectations). Moreover, role expectations vary in relation to the scope, communality and obligation.³⁸ So role conceptions comprise actor’s social identity (as Wendt has called it) as well as perceptions of others. This “structural environment of roles”³⁹ can put certain (sometimes rigorous) limits on the actor’s behavior. Thus, roles being part of the structure have been ascribed with a rather static influence on actors’ behavior.

Additionally, it is important to define national role conceptions (NRCs), which are “domestically held political self-views or self-understandings regarding the proper role and purpose of one’s state in the international arena”, according to Krotz.⁴⁰ Holsti’s definition of national role conceptions, on the other hand, has an implicit interactive component: according to the scholar, state’s role should be defined in terms of its’ actions on the global stage, as well as in terms of interactions with other actors. Although it is important that national role conceptions are shaped not only by role expectations of other actors and interactions with them (not only states but also international organizations, etc.) Holsti also pointed out that “it seems reasonable to assume that those responsible for making decisions and taking actions for the state are aware of international status distinctions and that their policies reflect this awareness”⁴¹. Moreover, decision-makers also take into account their state’s capabilities relative to those of other actors. Hence, decision-makers are aware of other actors’ expectations of their state’s role on the global stage; at the same time these expectations are based in assessments of capabilities, as well as previous interactions.

This way, national role conceptions are shaped both by role expectations of other actors and by domestic considerations. Importantly, national role conceptions that guide state’s decision-makers are reinforced through role enactment. Breuning argues that national

³⁷ *Role theory in international relations : approaches and analyses*. (2011). Routledge.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Krotz, U. (2002). *National Role Conceptions and Foreign Policies: France and Germany Compared*. CES Germany & Europe Working Papers, No. 02.4, 2002.

⁴¹ Holsti, K. J. (1970). National Role Conceptions in the Study of Foreign Policy. *International Studies Quarterly*, 14(3)

role conceptions not only matter in situations of national survival but also guide countries in other ways that are shaped by ideational factors.⁴²

It is important that NRCs can also be changed through interaction: when decision-makers confront the role expectations of different states' decision-makers, first ones can either modify their role enactment to meet the others' role expectations or to challenge those expectations and keep acting according to their domestically derived national role conceptions. Changes in roles can come in adaptation, learning or transformation. Role adaptation describes a shift in strategies and/or instruments while keeping stable foreign policy goals and identity through crisis learning or socialization via social influence. Thus, adaptation refers to a process where behavioral shifts do not lead to reassessment of values and goals. Role learning implies a change of beliefs and goals as a result of interpretation of experience or normative persuasion. Transformation of the role implies change of identity and thus interests through identity (re-)formation or socialization via internalization.

Lastly, it can be asserted that NRCs reflect the actual order in which a state lives; at the same time the world's social stratification can be seen in the tensions within various role conceptions. Thus, it is useful to use this theory for understanding Russia's role in international climate agenda.

To sum up, role theory focuses primarily on exploring the factors shaping NRCs and their influence on foreign policy behavior. There are many benefits from using this theory: it considers structural changes in the existing system and importance of perception of these changes by agents, as well as agents' perception of their own roles. Moreover, role theory shows that an actor is able to form his own role and change it through certain mechanisms adapting to changes in the system.

The author of this thesis distinguishes four main roles for actors in climate change politics: agenda shaper, agenda acceptor, agenda dropper and agenda breaker. Agenda shaper is a role that implies that an actor is suggesting new climate initiatives or formats for discussion, thus leading the climate regime to its aim of mitigating climate change effects and reducing anthropogenic impact on climate system. Agenda acceptor is an

⁴²Breuning, M. (2019). *Role Theory in Politics and International Relations*. Oxford University Press

actor that agrees on the commitments suggested at climate negotiations and follows all recommendations but does not bring anything new to the agenda. Agenda dropper is a role within which an actor decides to stop participating in international climate regime for some reasons and stops fulfilling its commitments. Agenda breaker is an actor that not only chooses to ignore the mainstream climate agenda but actively tries to create a new regime and convince other actors to join it. Importantly, actors in global climate change politics may take different roles at different times due to various reasons.

Thus, role theory is used in this dissertation in order to explain Russia's national role conceptions and Russia's desired and actual role in regard with climate change politics, as well as trace the behavioral shifts in Russian climate policy and explain the reasons behind them.

1.3. Methodological framework

In designing the research strategy and in the choice of the method, the author thinks that **analytical approach** should be used in the dissertation.

Analysis is the research method, which states that individual components and not the whole system are units of research. In other words, this approach implies breaking a problem down into smaller elements that are helpful to solve the problem. When it comes to international relations studies, analytical approach can be used to study reasons behind certain actions of an actor. It is important that reasons within this analysis are to be found within the actor itself. So when it comes to foreign policy analysis one should look for causes of certain foreign policy decisions within the state, where the decisions were made.

Moravczik emphasized that one should pay equal attention to both objective and subjective domestic factors, influencing foreign policy. He considered the following objective factors: struggle for power and economic interests of certain pressure groups or the whole country. So it can be stated that specific trait of climate change issues is interdependence between the need for economic development that is responsible for anthropogenic impacts on climate system and the need to mitigate climate change consequences at the same time.

Thus, Russian climate change policy should be analyzed with the focus on the inner factors such as Russia's regime, involvement of the green movements in domestic politics, national interests, etc. For this purpose, domestic documents, speeches and statements on climate change, as well as environmentally-oriented political parties' representation in the parliament should be analyzed. Analysis of these factors helps to understand Russia's role in the climate change sphere: agenda shaper or agenda acceptor.

Regarding the analysis of various documents, speeches and statements, it is also significant to use **discourse analysis**. Discourse analysis helps to provide understanding, which role a particular state plays in international relations and which role it desires to play, according the beliefs prevalent among elites of this state. Nevertheless, it is important to note that using this method means that the object of this research is not international events or documents but the presentation and perception of these events in certain texts that make up the primary sources of this particular study.

In international relations studies, as well as in other social sciences, discourse analysis method gained popularity thanks to Foucault works, in which he demonstrated specific ways of applying discourse analysis with the aim at determining of the structure of human knowledge that affects features of international relations in particular region in particular time due to the mutual influence of knowledge and power.

Nowadays, discourse analysis in international relations studies implies studying social foundations of international relations, which include studying the use of the language accepted in a certain society for discussing specific issues by oratory, written or symbolic means, and, more broadly, any semiotic event. Therefore, by means of discourse analysis, as well as semiotic analysis, it is possible to analyze any semiotic event, including words' use in both oratory and written forms. More generally, it is possible to analyze characteristics of any discourse that is formed within the boundaries of a particular community about any phenomenon that is the subject of interest of international relations studies. Foucault's adherents proceed from the conviction that discourses, with all the variety of narratives existing within them, make a noticeable impact on the policy.

Analyzing words or signs used in a given context when, for example, discussing climate change issues helps to determine the picture of the world shared by the majority of those

who used those words or signs in this context. This picture of the world becomes societal beliefs when it is agreed on by the most society members, appearing in variety of public debates, media, leaders' statements. Once beliefs are shared among most members of the community, they achieve "the phenomenological status of objective reality, making those who hold them more confident, imbued with a sense of rightness and power"⁴³.

For this dissertation the author classified official Russian documents according to their primary topics. This classification has offered a general idea of data, actors and most significant topics, which became the basis for further analysis. Then, following Snow and Benford's idea⁴⁴, the author coded diagnostic framing (indicator of the main characteristics of the problem) as climate change which is identified as a policy problem and prognostic framing (indicator of suggested resolutions) as suggested solutions for climate change issues. Analysis of the data conducted within such framing is crucial because the results are able to show interrelation between the problem's definition and solutions to it, as well as the conjunction of these definitions with the actual actors' practice. Thus, discourse analysis, based on analysis of domestic documents, allows reconstructing Russia's role expectations in the field of climate change politics.

Comparative analysis is another method that is also important for this thesis. The author used it to compare most significant Russian documents that address climate issues directly with most valuable international documents in the field of climate change. Seeing if there are any conjunctions between those documents helps to answer research question: what role Russia plays in international climate change agenda.

Hence, the comparison shows whether Russia develops its climate change politics by independently or in accordance with international recommendations. And if Russia does suggest something different from international agreements, does it put forward its' suggestions for evaluation of international community. In this comparison one must also take into account the release dates of Russia's domestic documents if they coincide with international events in the climate change field. The following criteria were used for the comparative analysis:

⁴³Korppoo, A. (2020). Domestic frames on Russia's role in international climate diplomacy. *Climate Policy (Earthscan)*, 20(1), 109–123.

⁴⁴Snow, D., Robert, B. (1988). Ideology, frame resonance and participant mobilization. *International Social Movement Research*, pp. 197–217

- What strategy was prevailing: prevention and mitigation or adaptation. This criterion is able to show whether the strategy implies beliefs that it is possible to slow down the global warming or if the strategy implies not trying to slow down or stop the climate change processes but rather learn to live in new conditions. The latter choice might appear due to the reducing the GHG emissions that are happening now will only impact future climate change, which is why actors that are more focused on short-term outcomes would rather focus on adaptation strategy since it brings quicker noticeable results without harming the economies since so far there is no reliable estimate of the financial losses to the developed states' economies caused by delayed mitigation (however, such estimates exist for global level and for most vulnerable countries)⁴⁵. Hence, fast and significant emissions reduction (as a mitigation strategy action) is not the main goal for the leading economies, even though vulnerable countries keep trying to make other actors take those actions through the UN.⁴⁶ In addition, beliefs that global warming is a natural phenomenon (not anthropogenic) also decrease the justification for mitigation actions for many actors.
- Mentioning only negative impacts of climate change or pointing out benefits from this process as well. Although the need for adaptation to more frequent and intense extreme weather events is acknowledged by most countries in the world, normally there are no announcements of actions intended for adaptation before the damage has become too evident and irreversible. Realizing this, the criterion allows seeing whether an actor is looking for benefits from those irreversible consequences. And if it does, then its motivation to fight the global warming and slow down its' consequences is biased towards letting the permafrost melt to get economic or political advantages.
- Is greening the economy one of priorities in the document. Ecological modernization (which is the main aim of the "green economy" concept) can be considered an adaptation of industrial society within the global biosphere by such means as advanced clean technologies, in order to improve the Earth's capacity and make development more sustainable. National governments around the world

⁴⁵Kokorin, A.O. (2014). "Economic And Environmental Factors Behind Russia's Climate Policy Development". *International Research Journal, № 11-3 (30), pp. 34-40.*

⁴⁶Ibid.

suggest that the emphasis should be put on technological innovation. Nevertheless, according to Kokorin, electricity and fuel prices together with accessibility of energy resources and their importance in dealing with social problems in various countries, including Russia, postpone development of renewable energy.⁴⁷ Thus, it is important to analyze whether an actor is ready for greening its economy and investing in technological innovation to save the planet.

⁴⁷Kokorin, A.O. (2014). "Economic And Environmental Factors Behind Russia's Climate Policy Development". *International Research Journal*, № 11-3 (30), pp. 34-40.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA'S CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY IN THE XXI CENTURY

Russia is the one of the biggest emitters (overall GHG) in the world due to its' natural resource-based economy, and that makes the country one of the most vital actors in international climate change politics. It is important to analyze Russia's domestic climate change policy development due to the importance of domestic factors for foreign policy decision-making since, for example, national legislation on climate change is able to encourage integration of climate-related issues into various aspects of various institutions and policies, both inside and outside the country.

2.1. Actors in Russian climate change policy

Every country has a desirable role that it wants to play in international relations. Regarding climate change dimension of international politics, Tynkkynen points out that key decision-makers in Russia have presented three visions of Russia as a great environmental power:

1. “Russia as a world leader with a prominent ecological mission”⁴⁸. This vision was mostly supported by Dmitry Medvedev during his presidency (2008-2012). During the years of his presidency Russia's main climate-related document – the Climate Doctrine – was released, which states that Russia develops its climate-related policy in regard with understanding that the country's interests in the climate change sphere are not limited only to the territory of Russia but are global; it was also suggested in the document to not only mitigate effects of climate change but also look at the benefits that permafrost melting can bring to the world in general and Russia in particular;
2. “Russia as a great power following its national interest”⁴⁹. This vision is widely supported by Vladimir Putin and his administration. This vision implies that in development of state's climate-related policy and in international climate cooperation, priority will always be given to national interests. One example of this vision can be considered Russia negotiating beneficial terms for the country in

⁴⁸Tynkkynen, N. (2010) A Great Ecological Power in Global Climate Policy? Framing Climate Change as a Policy Problem in Russian Public Discussion. *Environmental Politics*, 19, 2, pp. 179–95

⁴⁹Ibid.

relation to the compensation for carbon sinks and, in exchange for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, as well as receiving the European Union's support for Russia joining the World Trade Organization (WTO);

3. “Russia having a duty as a great power to help limit climate change”⁵⁰. This vision can also be clearly seen in the process of Russia’s ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 2004 (during the first presidency of Vladimir Putin (2000-2004)), when the country’s elites specified multiple times that the Protocol only enters into force because Russia has chosen to participate in it as it feels responsibility for the world’s development. The circumstance around ratification of the Kyoto Protocol will also be discussed below. Hence, this vision implies that Russia as a great power has responsibility to help tackle climate change but it does not see its’ role in being a leader in the field.

However, the question is rather who is included in the definition of “elites”? Who actually shapes Russia’s climate related policy?

It is important to begin with stating that opportunities for domestic negotiations over Russia’s foreign policy goals are very limited due to the supremacy of the highest leadership visions, as Korppoo, Tynkkynen and Hønneland argue.⁵¹ So it is reasonable to examine the President’s role on shaping climate change policy first.

During his first two Presidential terms Vladimir Putin (2000-2004, 2004-2008) focused on pragmatism, great power thinking (Putin can be considered “great power balancer”⁵²), as well as use of trade and economy as main tools of foreign policy. However, Putin has never been a complete climate change denier. Rather, he did not take it seriously enough at the beginning of his political career.

When Medvedev came to power, foreign policy has shifted to being means of “facilitating domestic change and overall modernization project of the Russian

⁵⁰Tynkkynen, N. (2010) A Great Ecological Power in Global Climate Policy? Framing Climate Change as a Policy Problem in Russian Public Discussion. *Environmental Politics*, 19, 2, pp. 179–95

⁵¹Korppoo, A., Tynkkynen N., Hønneland G. (2015). *Chapter 2: Environmental regimes and Russia’s approaches to environmental and foreign policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁵²Ibid.

economy”⁵³; it can also be stated that Medvedev chose to take a role of a pro-Western liberal.

During Putin’s current presidency, the country’s approach to foreign policy has seemed “all but clear-cut”⁵⁴ as it is argued in “Environmental regimes and Russia’s approaches to environmental and foreign policy”. For example, Putin himself referred to foreign policy as a domestic politics’ derived function (thus implying that national interests and internal development are main incentives in foreign policy decision-making process) in the article that he wrote shortly before 2012 Presidential elections.⁵⁵ Thus, Putin’s vision of foreign policy emphasizes importance of national sovereignty and balance of power system. Nevertheless, the President also highlights use of soft power, which should aim at improving Russia’s image abroad.

Hence, Russian President has one of the key roles in foreign policy decision-making as well as in climate change policy-making process; for example, as a President, Medvedev pushed forward many important climate reforms and legal acts. His overarching goals were not that different from his predecessor (and successor) Vladimir Putin since both politicians had the same goal to reconstruct Russia’s great power position in the world’s politics as well as to guarantee stable economic growth; yet the strategy and means chosen by Medvedev were different from Putin’s.⁵⁶

Thus, involvement of highest political leadership is crucial for setting the policy course in Russia. However, there are also other types of actors that are involved in Russian climate governance.

Some researchers suggest that climate-related policies are able to bind bureaucratic actors to the energy efficiency and modernization goals in order to come up with incentives for more pressure on other domestic actors to implement modernization policies since success of these policies’ implementation to a great extent depends on bureaucracy. Nevertheless, “Russian ministries that have jurisdiction over climate-related policy areas

⁵³Korppoo, A., Tynkkynen N., Hønneland G.(2015). *Chapter 2: Environmental regimes and Russia’s approaches to environmental and foreign policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Путин, В. (2012, February 27). *Россияменяющийсямир*. Политика | Московские Новости. <https://www.mn.ru/politics/78738>

⁵⁶Henry, L., McIntosh-Sundstrom, L. (2012). Russia’s climate policy: International bargaining and domestic modernization. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64(7),pp. 1297–1322

previously ignored the issue, in part because it was not seen as having a significant impact on the economy”⁵⁷ argues Hvosťunova in her article on climate change negotiations. However, Putin’s decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol has been of a key importance for bringing more governmental actors into climate-related policy work.⁵⁸ A conclusion can be made that climate change engagement amongst governmental actors was some sort of a wait-and-see for a course-setting signal from President that was given in a form of ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

Administrative bodies that are responsible for climate change policy are Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, and Ministry of Energy. Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring (Rosgidromet) also plays a vital role in Russia’s climate change politics. For a long period of time Russia has been represented by Rosgidromet on international negotiations (both higher and lower levels) that were related to climate issues.⁵⁹ The representatives’ choice seems reasonable since initially climate change had been considered as a scientific challenge, and, according to Rowe, political implications appeared to be acknowledged only during the Kyoto ratification process.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Rosgidromet later was in charge in establishing the Interagency Commission on Climate Change (ICCC) after Russia had signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1994. In 2008 Rosgidromet was included into Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment, thus raising the climate profile of this ministry. The Ministry took the lead in one of most significant Russia’s knowledge resources on climate change. Participation in the Kyoto Protocol commitments had also necessitated a lot of reporting and, therefore, creation of new functions for governmental bodies. That is why the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment was given additional tasks related to fulfillment of the Kyoto requirements such as establishment and operation of Russian national carbon register, as well as being responsible for preparing Russia’s 2007 National Report to the UNFCCC. Nowadays the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment works on issues related to use and protection of subsoil, water, forests and

⁵⁷Хвостунова, О. (2009, December 6). *Передовикипроизводства*. Коммерсантъ.
<https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1284664?query=%D1%85%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D1%83%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0>

⁵⁸Rowe, E. W. (2013). *Russian climate politics. [Elektroniskresurs] When science meets policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid..

wildlife; specially protected natural areas; production and consumption wastes (excluding radioactive wastes); as well as improving economic mechanisms for natural resources use regulation.⁶¹

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade appeared to be the leading ministry within the ICCC. Eventually, as a result of inter-governmental bargaining the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also became a crucial agency since it is in charge of contacting with investors, especially when Joint Implementation (JI) projects involve inter-governmental agreement. Nowadays JI project applications are proceeded by a commission headed by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (with four representatives) with delegates from the ministries of Natural Resources and the Environment (one representative), Foreign Affairs (one representative), Agriculture (one representative), Energy (two representatives), and Industry and Trade (two representatives).⁶²

Another state actor in Russian climate policy is the Parliament. Russian Parliament consists of two chambers: the Federation Council (upper chamber) which represents the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and the State Duma (lower chamber) which acts as a representative of citizens.

Various environmental activists in the country tried to start green political parties but struggled to gather political representation and thus joined different alliances. Although no party has managed to establish environmental agenda, parties like Yabloko and Kedr used to promote “environmental legislation and sought a leading role for Russia in international agreements”⁶³.

As it is nearly impossible to get proper political representation for the “green” political parties Kedr (transformed into The Greens) had tried to ally with one of the mainstream parties (Just Russia) but ended up joining with the Pobeda in 2020. Nowadays The Greens has most of its’ members in Krasnoyarsk that suffers from environmental

⁶¹Milutin, S. (2021, March 4). *The Law Reviews - The Environment and Climate Change Law Review*. The Law Reviews. <https://thelawreviews.co.uk/title/the-environment-and-climate-change-law-review/russia>

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³*Russian Political Forces Meet Climate Change*. (2021, April 6). Center for Strategic and International Studies. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-political-forces-meet-climate-change>

degradation because the city is home of Nornickel and some other industrial giants, and similar problematic cities. Yabloko has most of its' active members in big cities such as St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk, and Yekaterinburg, yet its national electoral rating is only around 1-2%. More recently, in 2019, the Green Alternative political party was founded by a group of environmentalists that support Greta Thunberg's ideas. During 2020 regional elections the Green Alternative got two mandates in the Chelyabinsk region and Komi republic which are regions that also “marred by environmental problems”⁶⁴. Thus, environmentally-oriented political parties in Russia gain representation only in a few regions that already suffer from climate change effects, whereas rest of regions seem to lack environmental awareness.

Nevertheless, environmental parties in Russia do not have any clear policy suggestions anyway. For example, The Greens suggest active participation in solving international environmental problems as one of the top priorities in its program; however, the program does not include any references to any international environmental agreements. Similarly, in its 2016 program Yabloko has emphasized environmental protection and energy efficiency as one of the main policy goals, emphasizing the need more climate-friendly policy that would include transition to renewable energy sources, as well as new standards of efficiency in energy sector; yet, there were no concrete green policy proposals. The Green Alternative also set fighting global warming as a policy goal but did not specify by what means it should be done, so all the statements were purely declarative.⁶⁵

Yet the situation is even worse with mainstream political parties that choose to ignore climate change problem as such because their program statements normally do not mention climate change issues at all.⁶⁶ There are four main parties that are represented in the Parliament: the United Russia, the Communist Party, Liberal-Democratic Party, and Just Russia. Together they exercise great regulatory power since they are responsible for producing national legislation and ratifying international agreements. However, international agreements, decisions on adoption of which were made by the President, are

⁶⁴*Russian Political Forces Meet Climate Change*. (2021, April 6). Center for Strategic and International Studies. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russian-political-forces-meet-climate-change>

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

submitted to the State Duma for ratification by the President as well, which means that it is still the President who makes the main choice in participation in certain agreements. Moreover, a Federal Law that is adopted by the Parliament on the ratification of an international agreement shall be sent back to the President for signing and promulgation.

Thus, it can be clearly seen that environmental political parties in Russia have not been successful electorally and they do not play a key role in setting Russian climate change agenda. Same can be said about the Parliament in general since it does not really make any actual decisions on participation in international agreements but rather simply adopts additional legislation in case if the agreement's implementation requires changes in existing legislation and adoption of new Federal Laws.

Another group of actors that are involved in climate change policy are non-state actors such as business groups, NGO's and public.

Firstly, business associations hoped to benefit from JI mechanism since it offered investments for improving technology and increasing efficiency in the industry. On the other hand, there was a different group of business actors that were against development of climate change policy since it would only harm their income. These actors can be considered an influential lobby, and they have been successful at affecting the climate change policy in Russia (in limiting climate restrictions of extraction of natural resources, etc.). Moreover, position of these industries has been supported by government that also constantly emphasizes the importance of economic growth that is also currently based on natural resources extraction. Korppoo, Tynkkynen and Hønneland give an example of business's influence on climate change policy decision-making: the case of the Sakhalin oil and gas project in which the Russian Ministry for Natural Resources and the Environment accused foreign investors of infringing environmental laws to be able to transfer the project from foreign companies to Russia's Gazprom.⁶⁷

In the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol period and right after it, NGOs and scientists played a significant role in creating media debate around climate change and its' origins.⁶⁸ Henry and Sundstrom point out that environmental NGOs were also important

⁶⁷Korppoo, A., Tynkkynen N., Hønneland G.(2015). *Chapter 2: Environmental regimes and Russia's approaches to environmental and foreign policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁶⁸Rowe, E. W. (2013). *Russian climate politics. [Elektroniskresurs] When science meets policy*.Palgrave Macmillan.

for Russia's decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol: NGOs with offices in Russia (WWF and Greenpeace) "used their international networks to apply third party pressure"⁶⁹ like WWF did with French and German leaders to pressure Putin to ratify the Protocol. Nowadays there is a great diversity of environmental NGOs in Russia that range from local to national and even transnational organizations that work on various topics from environmental education to nuclear waste. Some of these environmental NGOs also try to pressure government, as well as inform the public. However, NGOs' engagement does not usually influence Russian policy-makers' decisions nowadays. Only sometimes organizations like WWF-Russia manage to affect authorities' position to a certain extent: for example, an idea to include forest protection in JI scheme that was suggested by Russian delegate during international negotiations was initially proposed by WWF-Russia.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, researchers argue that changes in domestic political and economic conditions after the Kyoto Protocol ratification have not had a noticeable impact on the limited political weight of environmental NGOs.⁷¹ Therefore, environmental NGOs do not play any substantial role in Russia's climate change policy.

Public opinion on climate change also has not affected development of Russia's climate change policy. Moreover, in general it is not common for Russia to consult with organized groups in society or public opinion during decision-making process due to Russia's domestic semi-authoritarian regime. Nevertheless, it is important to note that in general Russian citizens are not particularly worried about climate change issues; in addition, economic recession that happened recently might suppress the salience of climate change issues for the country's citizens even more. Furthermore, insufficient work to promote responsible consumption ideas and general environmental awareness is being done in the country. So it can be stated that there is rather low level of climate-related issues awareness among Russian population, and that is one of the reasons why climate initiatives usually do not receive widespread support among citizens. Thus, the current level of environmental activism in Russia is quite low, which might be one of the reasons why the policy-makers do not take public opinion into account.

⁶⁹Henry, L., McIntosh-Sundstrom, L. (2012). Russia's climate policy: International bargaining and domestic modernization. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 64(7), pp. 1297–1322

⁷⁰Rowe, E. W. (2013). *Russian climate politics. [Elektroniskresurs] When science meets policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

⁷¹Korppoo, A., Tynkkynen N., Hønneland G.(2015). *Chapter 2: Environmental regimes and Russia's approaches to environmental and foreign policy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

To sum up, there is great variety of actors that are involved in Russia climate-related policy. However, it can be clearly seen that the President has a key role in setting climate agenda that is later spread to other governmental bodies for implementation. This can be explained by Russia's political system that normally uses centralized top-bottom approach in decision-making process.

2.2. Legal framework for Russian climate change policy

Moving on to the legal framework of Russia's climate change policy it is reasonable to start with understanding of the country's legal system.

The main source of law in Russia (after the Constitution) is Federal Laws that can further be detailed by regional legislation, Presidential Decrees or Governmental Orders, etc. Additionally, Federal Laws tend to be a vehicle for establishing policy frameworks and instruments that are to be used to achieve policy goals.

Nevertheless, when it comes to climate change issues, policy goals are usually announced in form of Presidential Decrees or Governmental Orders. Therefore, climate change issues are normally regulated by acts of secondary legislation.

Regarding Russia's legal framework for climate change policy, the area can be divided into two main directions:

1. direction related to the regulation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
2. direction related to adaptation to the effects of climate change.

2.2.1. Regulation of greenhouse gas emissions direction in Russia's climate change policy

Environmental problems in Russia are caused mainly by inefficient use of natural resources that are the basis of the country's economy. Consequently, one of the main goals of Russia's climate-related policy is to decrease the anthropogenic impact on the climate system by improving environmental efficiency of the economy. Thus, chronologically, the greenhouse gas emissions regulation direction was the first to emerge in Russian climate change agenda. Siddi suggests that Russia limits its fossil

fuels' consumption due to two main reasons: "improving environmental security and freeing part of its oil and gas production for more lucrative sales in foreign markets".⁷² Nevertheless, the link to domestic political discourse of energy efficiency was "auspicious one for climate change"⁷³ since otherwise it could have remained primarily an international matter. The GHG regulation direction in Russia has developed through several stages (that started with taking part in UNFCCC) that are going to be described below.

It can be stated that climate change policy in Russia started primarily as an issue of bilateral and multilateral direction of foreign affairs, and only then turned into a domestic policy matter. So the foundation of the Russia's national climate change policy has officially started with two Federal Laws: on Russia's ratification of the UNFCCC⁷⁴ and on ratification of the Kyoto Protocol⁷⁵.

Russia ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by adopting Federal Law №34-ФЗ dated October 4, 1994⁷⁶. In this document Russia confirmed that it shares the UNFCCC idea of importance of global GHG reductions. Moreover, the country has chosen a position, according to which it would agree to take on new binding commitments if the UNFCCC international regime included all countries, especially such GHG emitters as the USA, China and India. Since that moment, the Russian Federation started a process of formation of a state climate change policy by adopting documents and strategies aimed at combating an increase in GHG emissions as the main cause of climate change processes on the planet.

In the period between UNFCCC ratification and Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol (1994–2005), most of the adopted climate-related measures were related to the energy sector matters, as well as to reducing resource intensity because implementation of the UNFCCC's obligations depends on the implementation of appropriate measures in the energy sector, which accounted for 98% of anthropogenic emissions in the country.

⁷²Siddi, M. (2018). The Role of Power in EU-Russia Energy Relations: The Interplay between Markets and Geopolitics. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 70(10), 1552–1571

⁷³Korppoo, A., Tynkkynen N., Hønneland G.(2015). *Chapter 2: Environmental regimes and Russia's approaches to environmental and foreign policy*. EdwardElgarPublishing.

⁷⁴Федеральный закон N 34-ФЗ "О ратификации рамочной Конвенции ООН об изменении климата" (1994)

⁷⁵Федеральный закон N 128-ФЗ "О ратификации Киотского протокола к Рамочной конвенции Организации Объединенных Наций об изменении климата" (2004)

⁷⁶Федеральный закон N 34-ФЗ "О ратификации рамочной Конвенции ООН об изменении климата" (1994)

Hence, various decrees and laws on energy saving have been adopted after ratification of the UNFCCC. In total, 43 regional laws and 362 normative legal acts on energy saving were adopted in the fuel and energy complex in the given period.

Another Federal Law that is of a key importance is the Federal Law № 128-ФЗ “On Ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”⁷⁷ dated November 4, 2004. The document states that the Russian Federation proceeded on the premise that the obligations imposed by the Protocol on the country would have vital consequences for its economic and social development. That is why the decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol was made, according to Russian authorities, after a comprehensive analysis of all factors, including the importance of the Protocol for the development of international cooperation, as well as considering that the Protocol would only become legally binding if the Russian Federation participates in it.⁷⁸ Hence, to Russia ratification of the Kyoto Protocol was certainly seen as an important political contribution to international climate change agenda. Henry and Sundstrom argue that ratification of the Protocol was a good chance for Russia to present itself as a “good international citizen”, and that the uncertainty around the Russian leadership’s position has only intensified the dramatic impact of the final acquiescence.⁷⁹ On the other hand, some researchers suggest that opportunities provided by the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms (e.g. carbon trading system) were the incentives that supported the country’s decision to ratify the Protocol and take part in the first commitment period. Nevertheless, it was not enough to stimulate participation in the second commitment period. Korppoo, Upston-Hooper and Yliheljo point out that “the marginality of the precautionary principle in Russian climate policy, domestic mitigation actions are driven by economic and energy security interests unrelated to climate mitigation”.⁸⁰

In the period after ratification of the Kyoto Protocol (during participation in the first commitment period (2008–2012)) Russia made an attempt to build a system of carbon

⁷⁷Федеральный закон N 128-ФЗ "О ратификации Киотского протокола к Рамочной конвенции Организации Объединенных Наций об изменении климата" (2004)

⁷⁸Об участии Российской Федерации в реализации Рамочной конвенции ООН об изменении климата (1994–2014 гг.). (2014). М.

⁷⁹Henry, L., McIntosh-Sundstrom, L. (2007). Russia and the Kyoto Protocol: Seeking an alignment of interests and image. *Global Environmental Politics*, 7(4), pp. 1–18.

⁸⁰Korppoo, A., Upston-Hooper, K., Yliheljo, E.(2015). *Chapter 30: Climate change mitigation in Russia: foreign policy, environmental action or simple economics?* Edward Elgar Publishing.

emissions accounting to be able to participate in international carbon market that was established by the Kyoto Protocol. So this period is notable for the start of the national energy efficiency policy, which was developed due to the need to develop programs to reduce GHG emissions to ensure the country's participation in the carbon trading system.

Regarding carbon trading system, it is important to note that the economic restructuring that followed the collapse of the USSR led to a dramatic decline in Russian emissions during the 1990s. As a result, the Kyoto Protocol recognized Russia as a “country undergoing transition to a market economy”⁸¹. According to the Kyoto Protocol, Russia’s quantified emission reduction target was set at 100% of the base year 1990, which allowed Russia a large surplus of tradable Assigned Amount Units (AAUs).⁸² Although there was a significant economic growth in the 1990s in Russia, since 1999 the total level of GHG emissions in the country has been 30% lower than in 1990. Hence, Russia has fulfilled its quantitative commitments in regard with GHG emissions without resorting to any serious measures.

In 2008 Russian President Medvedev set out a goal to reduce energy intensity of the Russian GDP by 40% by 2020 compared to 2007 in a form of Presidential Decree.⁸³ In pursuance of the Decree, a the Russian Federation Energy Strategy for the period up to 2030 set an objective to reduce Russia’s energy intensity of GDP with a requirement of making it at least two times more efficient than in 2005 by the year 2030.⁸⁴

In the 2009 Governmental Order on Renewable Energy⁸⁵ was adopted, according to which Russia aimed for 11 GW of new renewable generation capacity and expected to generate 4,5% of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020. In a further effort to meet the energy objectives, a Federal Law on Energy Conservation and Increasing

⁸¹United Nations.(1995).*Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*.<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.html>

⁸²Korppoo, A., Upston-Hooper, K., Yliheljo, E.(2015). *Chapter 30: Climate change mitigation in Russia: foreign policy, environmental action or simple economics?* EdwardElgarPublishing.

⁸³Указ Президента РФ N 889 "О некоторых мерах по повышению энергетической и экологической эффективности российской экономики" (2008)

⁸⁴Распоряжение Правительства Российской Федерации N 1715-р "Об утверждении Энергетической стратегии России на период до 2030 года" (2009)

⁸⁵Распоряжение Правительства Российской Федерации N 1-р"Об утверждении Основных направлений государственной политики в сфере повышения энергетической эффективности электроэнергетики на основе использования возобновляемых источников энергии на период до 2035 года" (2009)

Energy Efficiency №261-ФЗ⁸⁶ was adopted in November 2009. It introduced measures to save energy and improve energy efficiency, as well as created legal, organizational and economic foundation for stimulating these actions. The document sets energy efficiency requirements for circulation of goods, as well as bans and restrictions on production of goods with low energy efficiency.

Before turning to adaptation direction of Russia's climate change policy, the end of Russia's participation in the Kyoto Protocol commitment period should be taken into consideration.

During the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP) serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Doha in December 2012, an amendment to the Kyoto Protocol was adopted. It included new commitments contained in Annex I such as revised list of GHG that parties of the Protocol commit to report further, as well as amendments to some articles of the Kyoto Protocol that relate to the first commitment period and need to be updated for the second commitment period. Russia did not support those amendments. Moreover, Russian negotiator Oleg Shamanov claimed that Russian representative had not been consulted over texts under discussion, so the decision to stop discussions was "an outrageous violation" which would have "legal consequences".⁸⁷

Furthermore, Russia had emphasized already in December 2010 (COP 16 in Cancun) that it did not intend to take quantitative commitments under the second commitment period. Russia emphasized that economic and technical capabilities of certain developing countries have improved significantly since the Kyoto Protocol entered into force and nowadays a lot of high-emitting developing countries have fast-growing GDPs, whereas some developed countries are in economic stagnation.⁸⁸ Consequently, low global participation in the arrangement leads to inefficiency of this international regime and to the issue of inequality, given the non-participation of major GHG emitters such as China, India and Brazil.

⁸⁶Федеральный закон 261-ФЗ "Об энергосбережении и о повышении энергетической эффективности и о внесении изменений в отдельные законодательные акты Российской Федерации" (2009)

⁸⁷Climate Home. (2013, February 5). *UN climate chief dismisses Russia 'hot-air' protest in Doha*. Climate Home News. <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2012/12/10/un-climate-chief-dismisses-russia-hot-air-protest-in-doha/>

⁸⁸Gordeeva, Y. M. (2014). The Russian Federation and the International Climate Change Regime. *Carbon&ClimateLawReview*, 8(3), 167–174

An additional impetus to intensify the discussion on Russia's participation in international climate change agreements was caused by the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement in 2017. Trump's decision inspired Russian opponents of the Paris Agreement. They got the opportunity to refer to the United States' case to declare that there is no scientific basis under the policy of reducing GHG emissions and that it is undesirable for Russia to make new commitments that might have bad outcomes for Russian economy that is based on extraction of natural resources.

Moreover, a draft of the low-carbon strategy⁸⁹ demonstrates Russia's readiness to increase emissions up until 2050. This runs counter to both the goals of the Paris Agreement and general global trends: currently, the majority of countries declare not only the need to reduce emissions but also to achieve carbon neutrality by the middle of the century.⁹⁰

It is also important to note that the biggest share of GHG emissions in the country comes from the energy sector. One way to increase energy efficiency would be to develop renewable energy and. However, power generation based on renewable sources is still not used widely due to the progress still being at the development stage. The problem with renewable energy sources is that its use in the country is not economically justified since the country has enormous hydrocarbon reserves that are more economically beneficial in a short-term perspective.⁹¹ Economic short-term benefits are one of the main criteria for many Russian reforms. Therefore, renewable energy sources development is not a priority in Russian energy policy. This is also stated in the Energy Strategy for the period up to 2035 that was adopted in the summer of 2020.⁹²

Hence, the actual policies and measures implemented in Russia after ratification of the UNFCCC have been designed primarily to address such goals as conservation of energy

⁸⁹ Минэкономразвития России подготовило проект Стратегии долгосрочного развития России с низким уровнем выбросов парниковых газов до 2050 года. (2020, March 23). Министерство Экономического Развития Российской Федерации.

https://economy.gov.ru/material/news/minekonomrazvitiya_rossii_podgotovilo_proekt_strategii_dolgosrochnogo_razvitiya_rossii_s_nizkim_urovнем_vybrosov_parnikovyh_gazov_do_2050_goda.html

⁹⁰ Национальный исследовательский университет «Высшая школа экономики». (2021). *Поворот к природе: новая экологическая политика России в условиях «зелёной» трансформации мировой экономики и политики*. М. «Международные отношения»

⁹¹ Milutin, S. (2021, March 4). *The Law Reviews - The Environment and Climate Change Law Review*. The Law Reviews. <https://thelawreviews.co.uk/title/the-environment-and-climate-change-law-review/russia>

⁹² Распоряжение Правительства РФ № 1523-р «Энергетическая стратегия Российской Федерации на период до 2035 года» (2020)

resources and the indigenous development of clean technologies. Currently one can see improvements in Russia's energy efficiency sphere that is characterized by high energy intensity becoming greater concern for the highest leadership on the country. Nevertheless, according to Korppoo, Upston-Hooper and Yliheljo, Russia has low administrative capacity that represents a serious hurdle to effective implementation, even though authorities adopted several laws that are able to significantly reduce GHG emissions.⁹³

Currently Russian authorities keep adopting a climate-related set of goals to improve the economy's energy efficiency. So far it is impossible to predict whether these policy measures help to reduce GHG emissions, or simply end up creating new taxes on industry that might have a rebound effect. Thus, the administrative capacity is not the only factor that influences this policy direction since reduction of GHG emissions is a complex problem that has various dimensions.

2.2.2. Adaptation to the effects of climate change direction in Russia's climate change policy

Since the beginning of the XXI century dangerous weather events have increased in number to around 400 per year in Russia.⁹⁴ Yet adaptation (and rarely mitigation) as a separate direction in Russia's climate change policy is just being launched.

Adaptation to climate change effects is a system of political, legislative, economic and social measures that are aimed at reducing the vulnerability of the national security system, economy and population to the consequences of climate change, as well as aimed at the use of favorable conditions due to these changes.

What has motivated this direction in climate change policy to emerge? Motivation related to the Kyoto Protocol do not appear to be the driving force here since the adaptation direction has only emerged a decade after the Protocol had already been in place. On the other hand, the authorities' increasing concern over competitiveness of Russia's economy

⁹³Korppoo, A., Upston-Hooper, K., Yliheljo, E.(2015). *Chapter 30: Climate change mitigation in Russia: foreign policy, environmental action or simple economics?* Edward Elgar Publishing.

⁹⁴Kokorin, A.O. (2014). "Economic And Environmental Factors Behind Russia's Climate Policy Development". *International Research Journal, № 11-3 (30), pp. 34-40.*

that is based on natural resources' extraction can explain changes in Russia's climate change policy goals. Significant changes began after Medvedev's inauguration in 2008 since he changed domestic and foreign policy rhetoric concerning how Russia should get its political and economic weight back. In his opinion, Russia needed more diversified economy that would concentrate on innovative technologies to be able to stay competitive to other economies in the world. So Medvedev started a lot of reforms aimed at modernization of the country, including adoption of some crucial policies on climate change.

Nowadays the main environmental policy document in Russia is the Climate Doctrine⁹⁵. Adopted in 2009 (most likely not to arrive empty-handed to the Copenhagen negotiations in December 2009), the document finally recognized the problem of anthropogenic interference on climate at the highest political level. In a nutshell, the document formulates Russia's goals in relation to climate change issues as "providing for safe and sustainable development of the country, including institutional, economical, ecological and social (and demographical) aspects of development in conditions of a changing climate"⁹⁶; so the document's main idea is to prove that adaptation of the Russian economy to current and expected climate change is more important than an attempt to prevent or mitigate global warming's effects. In this regard, benefits and not only disadvantages of global warming are listed in the document.

Importantly, the Doctrine faced a lot of criticism. For example, Climate Doctrine has no timeframe or does not mention any financial resources that should be used for the implementation of the document's proposals. No numerical specifications characterizing climate change are indicated, for example, the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere or the increase in the planet's average surface air temperature. Moreover, the declarative character of the document makes it difficult to estimate the results that have already been achieved and will be achieved in the future. Nevertheless, Climate Doctrine has one main advantage that has been pointed out by Yelena Gordeeva: "its major significance is in

⁹⁵Распоряжение Президента РФ N 861-рп "О Климатической доктрине Российской Федерации" (2009)

⁹⁶Ibid.

stimulating further action and endorsement of climate policies at the highest legislative level”.⁹⁷

In 2011 Climate Doctrine policy implementation plan was adopted in pursuance of the Climate Doctrine, calling for specific changes to programs in social and economic development⁹⁸. The document outlines action requests for various ministries and other subordinate governmental agencies. Nevertheless, the Plan still does not include any quantitative objectives or separate budget for its implementation so it can be considered as purely conceptual as the Climate Doctrine.

Nowadays one of the newest documents on climate change issues in Russia is National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022⁹⁹ that was adopted in 2019. Firstly, the document distinguishes two types of adaptation: preventive and post-crisis. Secondly, the Plan shows possible advantages of climate change in Russia such as less energy consumption during the heating season, improving the ice conditions that open up new possibilities for the transportation in the Arctic, as well as access to the continental shelf of the Russian Federation, increased productivity of boreal forests, etc. Among negative consequences of climate change processes in Russia increased risks to public health; increased frequency, intensity and duration of droughts in some regions and extreme floods in others; increased fire hazard in forests, etc. were named.¹⁰⁰

According to the Plan, sectoral plans for adaptation to climate change should be approved in the third quarter of 2021 in the following sectors: transport, fuel and energy sector, housing services, agro-industrial sector, environmental management, healthcare, epidemiological well-being of the population, foreign and domestic trade, civil defense, protection of the population and the country’s territory from natural and man-made disasters. Working on adaptation plans for the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation is highlighted as a separate point from other fields. All other sectors should adopt

⁹⁷Gordeeva, Y. M. (2014). The Russian Federation and the International Climate Change Regime. *Carbon & Climate Law Review*, 8(3), 167–174

⁹⁸Распоряжение Правительства РФ N 730-р (ред. от 31.01.2017) <Об утверждении комплексного плана реализации Климатической доктрины Российской Федерации на период до 2020 года> (2011)

⁹⁹Распоряжение Правительства РФ № 3183-р <Об утверждении национального плана мероприятий первого этапа адаптации к изменениям климата на период до 2022 г.> (2019)

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

adaptation plans in the IV quarter of 2022. Thus, measures to adapt to climate change will begin to be implemented in the Russian Federation only from 2023, while measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions already gradually spread into economic activity. Nevertheless, noting the importance of the adaptation to climate change issues for Russia, this document does not suggest any specific measures to adapt the economy and population to climate change consequences but rather sets the framework for organizing the process that ensures the development of specific adaptation measures, their adoption and consistent implementation.

To sum up, analysis of Russia's climate change policy shows that domestically the climate change effects are seen as rather mixed, including not only disadvantages and dangers but also benefits such as the opening of the Northeast Passage and access to Arctic resources that are often noted as a counterpoint to damages caused by melting permafrost. Moreover, while the country consistently emphasizes the need and desire for modernization, the economy still relies heavily on the export of oil and gas.

To date, Russia's climate commitments and its mitigation and adaptation actions have not been coordinated in a proper way. Moreover, despite the fact that the central most important document in the field of climate policy - the Climate Doctrine of the Russian Federation - was published back in 2009, it can be stated that the development of the Russian domestic climate policy is still at an early stage because the actual policy action plans have only started appearing in 2020. In accordance with the terms of participation in the Paris Agreement, the following legislation has been prepared: National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022¹⁰¹ (approved in 2020), the Nationally Determined Contribution of the Russian Federation (submitted to the UNFCCC Office in 2020) , Presidential Decree on reducing greenhouse gas emissions¹⁰² (signed in 2020), Strategy for the long-term development of the Russian Federation with low greenhouse gas emissions (expected to be approved in the first half of 2021), etc.¹⁰³ Nevertheless, the Kremlin has made it clear that the country's internal

¹⁰¹Распоряжение Правительства РФ № 3183-р<Об утверждении национального плана мероприятий первого этапа адаптации к изменениям климата на период до 2022 г.> (2019)

¹⁰²Указ Президента Российской Федерации «О сокращении выбросов парниковых газов» № 666 (2020)

¹⁰³Национальный исследовательский университет «Высшая школа экономики». (2021). *Поворот к природе: новая экологическая политика России в условиях «зелёной» трансформации мировой экономики и политики*. М. «Международные отношения»

interests and “rational cost-benefit prism of foreign policy”¹⁰⁴ are to be prioritized over any form of moral imperative given by international climate change negotiations.

Furthermore, through analysis of Russia’s domestic climate related policy one can see a link between nationally determined contributions and global goals. Korppoo, Upston-Hooper, and Yliheljo argue that Russia’s position on international climate change negotiations reflects the country’s values and approaches as in domestic politics due to the centralization of political power in Russia which results in lack of environmental civil society.¹⁰⁵ This position implies a scientific rather than sociopolitical approach to the problem; climate change issues are also considered uncertain in regards with impacts and costs, as well as weakness of the domestic policy implementation system, whereas most of Western countries apply precautionary principle central to environmental and public health policy actions.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Russia remains a “top–down player in an increasingly bottom–up world”¹⁰⁷ with a President being the most important actor in Russia’s climate change policy since one can see that most of Russia’s climate related legislation has been adopted by the President in form of secondary legislation (Presidential Decrees).

¹⁰⁴Korppoo, A., Upston-Hooper, K., Yliheljo, E.(2015). *Chapter 30: Climate change mitigation in Russia: foreign policy, environmental action or simple economics?* Edward Elgar Publishing.

¹⁰⁵Ibid..

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

3. RUSSIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE AGREEMENTS IN THE XXI CENTURY

Russia's role in international climate change negotiations and related international agreements can be partly explained by the correlations between Russian legislation in the field and international climate agreements.

To help answer research question about Russia's role in international climate change agenda a comparative analysis of international and Russian documents in the field of climate change was used.

Variables' choice depended on the objective of the thesis and its' general hypothesis. The main hypothesis is that the Russian Federation participates in climate change negotiations as an agenda acceptor due to its status as a great power that has responsibility to help limit climate change, however, without a desire to lead the process because of the focus on domestic economic growth that is now achieved mostly due to extraction of natural resources. Consequently, Russia is trying to follow a soft line in climate change politics, supporting the fears of international community about the negative consequences of climate change but at the same time pointing out the favorable consequences of this process.

3.1. Analysis of Russia's involvement in international climate change agenda

3.1.1. Rationale for international documents selection for comparative analysis

The author has decided to focus on UN's climate change documents among international documents, since this organization is by far the most influential and has almost all countries as its' members. In addition, Russia is an important actor in the UN structure since it is a permanent member of the UN's Security Council.

There are many UN documents focusing on climate change. The most comprehensive of these are the UNFCCC¹⁰⁸, the Berlin Mandate¹⁰⁹, the Kyoto Protocol¹¹⁰, the Marrakesh

¹⁰⁸United Nations.(1992). *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>

¹⁰⁹United Nations. (1995). *Report of the Conference of the Parties on Its First Session, Held at Berlin from 28 March to 7 April 1995*. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/cop1/07a01.pdf>

¹¹⁰United Nations.(1995).*Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*.<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.html>

Accords and the Marrakesh Declaration¹¹¹, the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development¹¹², the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development¹¹³, the Copenhagen Accord¹¹⁴, the Cancun Agreements¹¹⁵, The Future We Want¹¹⁶, the Doha Amendment¹¹⁷, Lima Call for Climate Action¹¹⁸, Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts¹¹⁹, the Paris Agreement¹²⁰, the Marrakech Action Proclamation For Our Climate And Sustainable Development¹²¹, the Bali Action Plan¹²². However, these are only the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement that establish the institutional framework for international climate change politics. Below the author will provide more reasons for choosing exactly these documents for the comparative analysis.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the main UN document on climate change; nowadays it is practically a universal international legal instrument, “the epicenter of global climate action”¹²³. It is also important since Russia refers to in almost all of its domestic documents.

¹¹¹United Nations. (2001). *The Marrakesh Accords & The Marrakesh Declaration*. https://unfccc.int/cop7/documents/accords_draft.pdf

¹¹²United Nations. (2002). *The Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development*. https://unfccc.int/cop8/latest/1_cpl6rev1.pdf

¹¹³United Nations. (2002). *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development*. https://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POI_PD.htm

¹¹⁴United Nations. (2009). *The Copenhagen Accord*. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/cop15/eng/l07.pdf>

¹¹⁵United Nations. (2010). *Cancun Agreements*. <https://unfccc.int/process/conferences/pastconferences/cancun-climate-change-conference-november-2010/statements-and-resources/Agreements>

¹¹⁶United Nations. (2012). *The future we want*. https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E

¹¹⁷United Nations. (2012). *Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol*. https://unfccc.int/files/kyoto_protocol/application/pdf/kp_doha_amendment_english.pdf

¹¹⁸United Nations. (2014). *Lima call for climate action*. https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima_dec_2014/application/pdf/auv_cop20_lima_call_for_climate_action.pdf

¹¹⁹United Nations. (2013). *Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM)*. <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/workstreams/loss-and-damage-ld/warsaw-international-mechanism-for-loss-and-damage-associated-with-climate-change-impacts-wim#:~:text=The%20COP%20established%20the%20Warsaw,that%20are%20particularly%20vulnerable%20to>

¹²⁰United Nations. (2015). *Paris Agreement*. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

¹²¹United Nations. (2016). *Marrakech Action Proclamation For Our Climate And Sustainable Development*. https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/application/pdf/marrakech_action_proclamation.pdf

¹²²United Nations. (2007). *Bali Action Plan*. https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_13/application/pdf/cp_bali_action.pdf

¹²³Kuyper, J., Schroeder, H., & Linnér, B. O. (2018). The Evolution of the UNFCCC. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 43(1), 343–368

Negotiations within this framework change and develop over time due to factors such as emergence of new scientific evidence, public opinion on the topic, and political changes. Thus, the UNFCCC declared an era of global climate governance and negotiations that nowadays has grown to the extent that climate change issues are considered a global concern that is put on the same level as “hard” issues like security and trade.

Kyoto protocol develops provisions of the UNFCCC by assuring that developed countries and the European Union reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with agreed national commitments. Adoption of the Protocol was necessary because the UNFCCC contained only calls to pursue policies and prevent climate change but it did not contain any actual obligations. Thus, the Kyoto Protocol made an attempt to fight climate change challenges through a legally binding structure, and it was the first UN document in the field of climate change to do so.

The Paris Agreement has replaced the Kyoto Protocol. It is important that the Agreement came into force in less than a year after the conference, therefore in an extraordinary short time for an international agreement. The document was marked by The Guardian as “the world’s greatest diplomatic success”¹²⁴ and by the New York Times as a “landmark agreement”¹²⁵. The Paris Agreement’s most crucial difference from the Kyoto Protocol is in the shift from legally binding emissions targets towards nationally determined contributions on emission cuts, which are embedded in an international system of accountability.

3.1.2. Rationale for Russian domestic documents selection for comparative analysis

Moving on to Russian documents, it is important to mention that a lot of subordinate legislation that is not directly related to climate issues exists in Russia. Nevertheless, it still contributes to reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This legislation includes federal and regional programs, as well as legally adopted norms in the field of energy conservation and energy efficiency. There are also many documents directly related to

¹²⁴Harvey, F. (2018, February 14). Paris climate change agreement: the world’s greatest diplomatic success. *The Guardian*.<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/dec/13/paris-climate-deal-cop-diplomacy-developing-united-nations>

¹²⁵The Paris Climate Accord. (2015, December 12). *The New York Times Company*.<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/12/12/science/document-final-cop21-draft.html>

climate change issues that can be divided into the following groups: Federal Laws (primary source of law in Russia after the Constitution), Presidential Decrees and Governmental Orders (both are sources of secondary legislation).

Presidential Decrees include documents that were adopted personally by the President and that are mandatory for implementation. Presidential Decrees on climate change include, for example, Presidential Decree No. 236 “On the state strategy of the Russian Federation for environmental protection and sustainable development”¹²⁶ dated February 4, 1994, Presidential Decree No. 440 “On the Concept of the Russian Federation's Transition to Sustainable Development”¹²⁷ dated April 1, 1996, Presidential Decree No. 889 “On some measures to improve the energy efficiency and environmental efficiency of the Russian economy”¹²⁸ dated June 4, 2008, Fundamentals of state policy in the field of environmental development for the period up to 2030¹²⁹, On the Environmental Safety Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025¹³⁰, etc.

Governmental Orders are issued on the basis of and in pursuance of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Federal Laws and Presidential Decrees. Governmental Orders that directly address climate change issues include Environmental doctrine of the Russian Federation¹³¹, Governmental Order No. 504-p “On approval of an action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions”¹³² dated April 2, 2014, Governmental Order No. 2344-p (amended on 23.12.2019) “On approval of the plan for the implementation of a set of measures to improve state regulation of greenhouse gas emissions”¹³³ dated November 3, 2016 (together with the “Plan for the implementation of a set of measures to improve

¹²⁶Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 236 “О государственной стратегии Российской Федерации по охране окружающей среды и обеспечению устойчивого развития” (1994)

¹²⁷Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 440 “О Концепции перехода Российской Федерации к устойчивому развитию” (1996)

¹²⁸Указ Президента Российской Федерации N 889 “О некоторых мерах по повышению энергетической и экологической эффективности российской экономики” (2008)

¹²⁹Основы государственной политики в области экологического развития Российской Федерации на период до 2030 года (2012)

¹³⁰Указ Президента Российской Федерации № 176 “О Стратегии экологической безопасности Российской Федерации на период до 2025 года” (2017)

¹³¹Распоряжение Правительства РФ N 1225-р “Об Экологической доктрине Российской Федерации” (2002)

¹³²Распоряжение Правительства РФ №504-р “О сокращении объёма выбросов парниковых газов” (2014)

¹³³Распоряжение Правительства РФ “Об утверждении плана реализации комплекса мер по совершенствованию государственного регулирования выбросов парниковых газов” (вместе с “Планом реализации комплекса мер по совершенствованию государственного регулирования выбросов парниковых газов и подготовки к ратификации Парижского соглашения, принятого 12 декабря 2015 г. 21-й сессией Конференции Сторон Рамочной конвенции Организации Объединенных Наций об изменении климата”) (2016)

state regulation of greenhouse gas emissions and preparations for the ratification of the Paris Agreement adopted on December 12, 2015 by the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”), Governmental Order No. 1-p (amended on 24.10.2020) “On the main directions of state policy in the field of increasing energy efficiency of the electric power industry based on the use of renewable energy sources for the period up to 2035”¹³⁴ dated January 8, 2009, Concept of long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation until 2020¹³⁵, National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022¹³⁶, etc.

Russian documents for comparative analysis were chosen based on the type’s similarity between Russian documents and UN documents, that is, both Russian and international documents should indicate the priorities and goals of policy, thus having strategic nature.

Environmental doctrine of the Russian Federation is the first Russian domestic strategic document on climate change in the XXI century. It is also first strategic document in Russia that focuses specifically on climate change and sustainable development issues, as well as points out clear goals and priorities for Russian climate change policy.

Climate doctrine of the Russian Federation is a vital basic document, which emphasizes the need for development and implementation of a whole range of measures at various levels against climate change. The document introduces goals, principles and ways of implementation for this policy within the country and in the international arena. This document serves as a guideline for future development of climate change legislation, highlighting the desire to cooperate with the international community on global warming.

National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022 is one of the newest domestic documents on climate change issues, so it represents the latest shifts in Russian political thoughts about climate change.

¹³⁴Распоряжение Правительства РФ<Об основных направлениях государственной политики в сфере повышения энергетической эффективности электроэнергетики на основе использования возобновляемых источников энергии на период до 2035 года> (2009)

¹³⁵Распоряжение Правительства РФ N 1662-р<О Концепции долгосрочного социально-экономического развития Российской Федерации на период до 2020 года> (2008)

¹³⁶Распоряжение Правительства РФ № 3183-р<Об утверждении национального плана мероприятий первого этапа адаптации к изменениям климата на период до 2022 г.> (2019)

3.2. Results of the comparative analysis

Going back to comparative analysis, Russia's domestic documents should be compared to international documents to see if there are any conjunctions between them. By doing this one can see if Russia develops its climate change politics independently or in accordance with international recommendations.

The author has chosen three criteria for the comparative analysis that, in the author's opinion, can help answer the question what role Russia sees for itself in climate change field: agenda shaper or agenda accepter (see Table 1).

Criteria for comparative analysis:

- What strategy was prevailing: prevention and mitigation or adaptation;
- Mentioning only negative impacts of climate change or also pointing out benefits from this process;
- Is greening the economy one of priorities in the document.

Feature	Does the feature exist?					
	The UNFCCC	Kyoto Protocol	Paris Agreement	Russia's Environmental Doctrine	Russia's Climate Doctrine	National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022
Adaptation strategy	+/-	-	+/-	-	+	+
Prevention and mitigation strategy	+	+	+	+	+/-	-
Advantages of climate change	-	?	-	-	+	+
Disadvantages of climate change	+	+	+	+	+	+
Economic factor (is greening the economy necessary?)	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	?

Table 1. Comparison of Russian and international instruments on climate change

The UNFCCC was adopted in 1992.The document pays great attention to mitigation and prevention process, believing that climate change consequences should be at least

stabilized and preferably minimized. Convention's main objective is "to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system"¹³⁷. Moreover, parties to the Convention should also develop measures to prevent and minimize climate change adverse effects. So one of the main commitments that parties to the Convention should take is to "reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol in all relevant sectors"¹³⁸. However, it seems like mitigation and prevention should be a strategic goal for developed countries, while adaptation should become developing countries' strategy, since the word "adaptation" is mentioned four times in total, and every time it was used in relation to developing countries only.

Regarding advantages and disadvantages of climate change process, it is important that advantages of climate change are not mentioned in the text at all. Moreover, "adverse effects of climate change" exists in Convention's definitions; unlike any term related to positive effects. The term includes production, export, and/or consumption of fossil fuels and associated energy-intensive products, so the Convention suggests helping developing countries whose economies are dependent on such income by "funding, insurance and the transfer of technology"¹³⁹. All in all, the UNFCCC highlights the idea of economic development being extremely important for creating measures to address climate change, recognizing that this process will be most effective if it is based on scientific, technical and economic considerations. So, according to the Convention, it is indeed necessary to switch usage of fossil fuels to a greener alternative as source on countries' income.

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997. The document imposes quantitative obligations on developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 5% on average for 2008-2012 compared to 1990 levels. So the Protocol clearly sets its' main goal on mitigation strategy because the reduction commitment system itself shows world community's desire to rather mitigate adverse effects. The Kyoto Protocol emphasizes

¹³⁷United Nations.(1992). *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹Ibid.

that “The Parties included in Annex I shall strive to implement policies and measures under this Article in such a way as to minimize adverse effects...”¹⁴⁰.

The Kyoto Protocol tried to come up with benefits from emissions reduction, so transfer of emission reduction units through projects and emission trading was invented. These carbon markets were supposed to represent the beginning of greening of international economy. Regarding emission trading, it is important to note that Russia has suggested a number of initiatives, one of which is the scheme of “green investments” that was proposed at the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol in 2000, which implies using the money from the sale of carbon quotas for the implementation of only “green” projects.

Importance of greening economy was also emphasized in the document by stating the need for “enhancement of energy efficiency in relevant sectors of the national economy”¹⁴¹ in achieving their emissions limitations.

Environmental doctrine of the Russian Federation was adopted in 2002. The Doctrine was the first strategic in its nature document on climate change in Russia in the XXI century.

Mitigation and prevention was chosen as the core strategy to deal with climate change. Main areas that were covered in the document include:

- Ensuring sustainable environmental management;
- Reducing environmental pollution and saving resources;
- Conservation and restoration of environment;
- Economic regulation of market relations to ensure sustainable environment management, its protection, etc.

A list of factors that harm environment and cause climate change took a special place in the Doctrine. One of its points was predominance of resource-extracting and resource-intensive sectors in the economy that leads to the rapid depletion of natural resources and degradation of the environment. Thus, Russia declared its understanding of damage that unsustainable energy-intensive production can cause. So one of the objectives of this

¹⁴⁰United Nations.(1995).*Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*.<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.html>

¹⁴¹Ibid.

document became economic regulation of market relations to ensure sustainable environment management, reduce the load on the environment, protect it, and raise capital for environmental protection. However, nothing was said about transferring to more environmentally friendly and sustainable production, which gives an idea that Russia just agreed with one of the UNFCCC's concerns but did not plan to do anything that would cause difficulties for its transitional economy at this time.

Climate Doctrine was adopted 2009. Analysis of the document shows that the Doctrine assumes adaptation of the Russian economy to current and expected climate change, rather than an attempt to prevent or mitigate the effects of the global warming. The document states that a characteristic feature of the climate response to both anthropogenic impact and measures to mitigate anthropogenic impact is its lag in relation to these impacts. Within the framework of policy document, this feature predetermined the importance of timely adaptation to inevitable changes in the future.

Nevertheless, the document confirmed the country's willingness to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also argued that such global problem cannot be solved unless other countries will do the same. In its turn, Russia claims to reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and increase their absorption by sinks and storage facilities. For this purpose, following measures were planned to implement:

- increasing energy efficiency (which in other words means that Russia does not plan to decrease energy consumption but just make it more efficient);
- implementation of financial and tax policy that stimulates reduction of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (does not specify for what sectors of economy will this policy work);
- development of the use of renewable and alternative energy sources;
- protecting and improving the quality of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases.

The document also provides lists of current and expected climate change effects, primarily negative ones; however, the Doctrine also considers positive impacts of global warming for the country. For example, "improving the ice situation and, accordingly, conditions for transportation in the Arctic, facilitating access to the Arctic shelves and

their development”¹⁴² was named among possible advantages of climate change for Russia.

The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015. The main objective of the UNFCCC has always been to limit dangerous anthropogenic impact on the climate system. So it is no wonder that the Agreement considers that “the current need for adaptation is significant and that greater levels of mitigation can reduce the need for additional adaptation efforts”¹⁴³, thus recognizing a strong need for mitigation and prevention strategy.

However, one can notice a shift in this field exemplified in the Paris Agreement: from early fixation only on mitigation to broadening focus to inclusion of adaptation and finance sectors. It can even be seen in the frequency of using “adaptation” term which was used 47 times in the text, whereas the term “mitigation” that was only used 23 times.

Thus, the Paris Agreement aims also to develop adaptive capacity and resilience, as well as reduce vulnerability through technology transfer, finance, and capacity building (Article 7 on adaptation and Article 11 on capacity building).¹⁴⁴

Regarding finance part of the Agreement, it must be said that the Paris Agreement admits that mitigation and adaptation efforts require different sources of funding since adaptation is aimed to deal with past emissions and mitigation efforts are supposed to prevent future damage.

Regarding the Agreement’s economic significance, the document suggests that the Parties to the Agreement should build “resilience of socioeconomic and ecological systems, including through economic diversification and sustainable management of natural resources”¹⁴⁵, as well as accelerate, encourage and enable innovation because it is “critical for an effective, long-term global response to climate change and promoting economic growth and sustainable development”¹⁴⁶. So the document has financial and economic significance, reflecting the global low-carbon trend.

¹⁴²Распоряжение Президента РФ N 861-рп "О Климатической доктрине Российской Федерации" (2009)

¹⁴³United Nations.(2015). *Paris Agreement*.https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

National action plan for the first stage of adaptation to climate change for the period up to 2022 was adopted at the end of 2019. This is one of the latest document focusing on climate change issues in Russia. The Plan has two main parts: describing advantages and disadvantages of climate change process and describing different types of adaptation to climate change, which gives an idea that Russia gave up its efforts to prevent or mitigate negative impacts of global warming and instead decided to come up with a strategy of how to live in new circumstance.

Thus, positive effects of climate change in Russia include:

- energy consumption reduction during the heating season;
- better ice situation and, accordingly, better conditions for transportation in the Arctic (repeating the Climate Doctrine);
- increasing productivity of boreal forests;
- getting benefits in climate-dependent economy sectors by implementing the best possible economic decisions based on information about current and expected state of environment there.

Negative impacts for Russia correlate with international main worries about adverse effects of climate change, which include melting ice and rising seas, risks for human health, risks for wildlife, extreme weather, etc.

The other focus of the document is in distinguishing different types of adaptation that are needed for successful development of the country. It includes:

1. preventive (proactive) adaptation that aims at reducing risks of climate change (including construction of dikes, forest shelter-belts, expansion of seeding drought-resistant crops, etc.);
2. post-crisis adaptation, which is supposed to minimize consequences of negative impacts of climate change, including related emergencies (evacuation of the population, remedial actions, vaccination, temporary resettlement, etc.);
3. adaptation to direct (real and expected) and indirect consequences of climate change for the population, infrastructure and economy.

One of the events that is planned for 2021 includes “formulation of proposals for developing new and improving existing economic, financial instruments and insurance

mechanisms, taking into account public and private funding, contributing to an increase in the effectiveness of measures to adapt to climate change”¹⁴⁷, which can be interpreted as measures for supporting sectors/industries which will be affected by climate change as another adaptation measure.

The analysis has shown that in international documents related to climate change issues, Russia takes an interesting position, since it only technically belongs to developed countries because of its status of “economy in transition”. This means that in terms of emission reduction it has more flexible commitments and should not finance developing countries at the same level as other developed countries. This can partly explain why political documents in Russia are predominantly declarative in nature.

Regarding Russian domestic documents on climate change issues, it is important to note that unlike the international community, Russia pays attention to seeking benefits from the climate change. In terms of positive impacts of climate change, Russian authorities often argue that the country will benefit from global warming: new opportunities will open up for resource extraction and transportation in the Arctic, new agricultural land will appear, energy for heating during winters will decrease, etc. For the rest, most commonly, Russian documents contained general comments without any specifics regarding the fulfillment of obligations.

Comparative analysis also helped to notice shifts in the evolution of both the UNFCCC and Russian domestic documents: firstly, the move away from prevention and mitigation (proactive measures) to adaptation (reactive measures) and finance; secondly, the shift from binding emissions targets for developed countries under the Kyoto Protocol to voluntary contributions under the Paris Agreement. The second shift raises a question of what role Russia sees for itself and what role international community sees for Russia. The Paris Agreement does not divide its participants into developed and developing countries. So depending on what Russia considers itself and what the world community considers it to be, its role and functions within the framework of the Paris Agreement can be different. As one can see, the role of developed, developing and least developed countries in the treaty is strikingly different: “developed country Parties should continue

¹⁴⁷ Распоряжение Правительства РФ № 3183-р<Об утверждении национального плана мероприятий первого этапа адаптации к изменениям климата на период до 2022 г.> (2019)

taking the lead by undertaking economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets. Developing country Parties should continue enhancing their mitigation efforts, and are encouraged to move over time towards economy-wide emission reduction or limitation targets in the light of different national circumstances. The least developed countries and small island developing States may prepare and communicate strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emissions development reflecting their special circumstances”¹⁴⁸. Russia was considered a developed country (though with economy in transition) since the Kyoto Protocol, however, in 2009 President Medvedev justified Russia’s unambitious emission reduction goal by claiming that “we will not cut off our development potential” and “climate change has to be addressed by everyone or not at all”¹⁴⁹, which was repeated in the Climate Doctrine of 2009. Moreover, the Doctrine was supposed to be updated by the end of 2020, but this did not happen, however, it is important to also emphasize the difficult nature of the problem which makes it an issue that takes time to develop proper solutions. Nevertheless, Russia sees its mission in helping develop international climate regime due to its responsibility of a great power.

To sum up, it can be stated that international and domestic Russian documents have some similarities but correlate only to a certain extent. The analysis also shows that normally Russian documents were adopted right after ratification of international agreements in their pursuance or right before new climate meetings to which Russia had to bring reports and results of the implemented measures to limit climate change processes. Hence, Russia's climate policy started developing primarily due to international activities in the field of climate change, in particular as a result of the adoption of international agreements like the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, since in most of its domestic documents Russia specifies that these documents were adopted in compliance with the UNFCCC and other international climate change treaties that Russia is a party to. Therefore, climate change area of Russian politics has started as primarily a foreign policy issue, and then transformed into a domestic policy area. These facts lead to a conclusion that Russian documents are usually just responses or reactions to the international ones, which makes Russia an agenda acceptor actor in international climate regime.

¹⁴⁸United Nations.(2015). *Paris Agreement*.https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

¹⁴⁹Rowe, E. W. (2013). *Russian climate politics. When science meets policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

CONCLUSION

Environmental issues are turning into one of the top priority issues in international relations along with security and economic development. The coronavirus pandemic has only exacerbated this trend since the deep crisis that the world economy has stepped in during 2020 once again highlighted the need for structural changes in relation between human and nature, as well as impossibility of the endless increase in consumption. Realizing this matter and rightly associating the solution to climate-related problems with social and technological progress, most of world's countries will strive to develop green economy and improve environmental goals.

National role conceptions in climate issues for each country are partly decided upon by main decision-makers in the state. Due to Russia's semi-authoritarian domestic regime the central decision-makers in determining both domestic and foreign policy priorities are the highest political leadership (the President himself). Since all Russian Presidents in the XXI century have highlighted idea of Russia becoming a great power again, partly Russian behavior in international climate change negotiations can be explained by Russia's desire to act as a great power even in environmental sphere. Hence, both in domestic and international climate discourse Russian authorities see the country's role as a "do-gooder"¹⁵⁰ for global climate politics.

Secondly, the dissertation reveals the evolution of Russia's climate policy in the XXI century. Analysis of the development of Russia's climate-related policy has shown that this policy area can be divided into two main directions. The first direction is GHG emissions reduction within which Russia tries to get more countries involved in the process, as well as actively participates in the global carbon markets, and sets domestic reduction goals. The second direction is adaptation to climate change consequences that includes focus on advantages of the global warming effects. This direction was launched not so long ago so it is hard to estimate its effects yet. Nevertheless, Russia's key climate-related documents present climate change as a problem but not only due to its expected impacts on Russian territory or the planet in general; the major focus of the Russian leadership seems to be put on the possible impacts caused by the GHG reduction policies of other countries on Russia's energy-export based economy.

¹⁵⁰Rowe, E. W. (2013). *Russian climate politics. When science meets policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

The conducted research shows that climate change in Russian discourse is often presented either as a positive development for the country (in the form of decreased heating season and general softening of the weather conditions in some parts of the country) or as a secondary concern to other more significant social problems (unemployment, financial crises, military conflicts). At the same time, Russia demands global participation in international climate change agreements from all countries. The aforementioned features of Russian climate-related policy make the author adhere to the opinion that in the future Russia will not stop participating in international climate negotiations, despite its refusal to participate in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. Rather the country will support only certain initiatives that would correlate with Russia's national interests even if these initiatives will be non-binding: for example, Russia could become involved in projects aimed at the development and implementation of for pollution control, sustainable use of renewable resources and development of environmental recommendations for large-scale industries, elimination of consequences and prevention of climate emergencies, cleaning the Arctic region from radiation pollution, etc.

Russia's weakness in climate-related policy can be explained by the following factors: prioritization of economic growth over protection of the environment; dependency on the energy sector; weak capabilities of environmental institutions; as well as low level of population climate awareness. Russian climate-related policy is biased towards protecting its' national interests of a sovereign state, which corresponds to the priorities of the Russian Federation outlined in the corresponding foreign policy strategies.

Thus, the author came to the conclusion that economic incentives, as well as concern for Russia's international image have been the main factors driving Russia's climate change policy. Describing evolution of the country's domestic climate-related policy and comparing domestic documents to international climate agreements in the preceding sections, the author demonstrated that Russia sees its' role in climate change politics based on its' self-interpretation as a great power. The thesis contains several visions regarding what can make Russia "great" in climate change politics:

1. The US rejection to participate in the Kyoto Protocol gave Russia a received the decisive vote because Russia's Protocol ratification was deciding for the Kyoto

Protocol to become legally binding. There are two different views among researchers on why Russia waited for so long before ratifying the Kyoto Protocol and what were the reasons behind this decision. Some consider that political factors such as proving an image of a great power to the rest of the world were the driving force for ratifying the Protocol. Others suggest that economic benefits (such as JI mechanism and EU's support in Russia joining WTO) were prevailing factors that affected Russia's decision. The author considers that both factors played decisive role in Russia's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

2. Regarding JI mechanism, Russia holds the “largest portfolio of carbon credits worth US\$ 40-60 billion and more than 50% of the world's Joint Implementation projects market with the total GHG reduction potential over 150 MtC”¹⁵¹. Therefore, Russia will be one of the key actors in the future carbon-trading mechanisms. However, since Russia does not take part in the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol the country is now ineligible for participation in the JI mechanism and unable to transfer its surplus AAUs. So, according to some scholars, there is a chance that Russia will sell them abruptly, thus devaluing the whole carbon market.¹⁵²
3. Russia has one of the largest terrestrial carbon pools associated with boreal forest. In the future, climate change consequences most likely will cause further changes in the carbon exchange between the terrestrial carbon pool and atmosphere. Fair distribution of the future carbon quotas would require intensification of international cooperation in assessment and monitoring of carbon stores, which would be impossible without Russia's participation in the process.¹⁵³
4. The foreign policy concept, introduced in February 2013, underlines Russia's increased responsibility for setting the international agenda as one of the general provisions for its own foreign policy.¹⁵⁴ Currently, after years of procrastination in international climate change negotiations, Russia has officially joined the Paris climate agreement. It shows that Vladimir Putin's views of climate change are

¹⁵¹Lioubimtseva, E. (2010).Russia's Role In The Post-2012 Climate Change Policy: Key Contradictions And Uncertainties. *ClimateChange*. 45.

¹⁵²*ibid.*

¹⁵³*ibid.*

¹⁵⁴Концепция внешней политики Российской Федерации(утверждена Президентом Российской Федерации В.В. Путиным 12 февраля 2013 г.) (2013)

changing for the better and he wants Russia to be a more active actor in the sphere. Putin's decision to join the accord can be considered a signal of the Moscow's growing seriousness about the climate threat.

Thirdly, the author of this thesis distinguishes four main roles for actors in climate change politics: agenda shaper, agenda acceptor, agenda dropper and agenda breaker. The conducted research allows one to assert that Russia has two main roles in regard with international climate change agenda: agenda acceptor and agenda dropper. These roles are asserted for the country because it does not put forward proposals to improve the climate change situation independently but participates in international cooperation in order to get economic and geopolitical benefits, as well as to prove to the rest of the world that the country is a great power without which the climate regime is likely to collapse. And, indeed, Russia can hardly be ignored when it comes to climate change politics, however not due to its status of a great environmental power but rather because of its emissions, especially now when Russia is not a party to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.

Thus, Russia plays a role of agenda acceptor (and sometimes agenda dropper) when it comes to global climate change politics as it follows main patterns of international agreements both in terms of main concerns and timeframe. Nevertheless, Russian national role conception rather shows that the highest leadership in the country sees it as a great environmental power with a mission to limit climate change effects.

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