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## Peasant and indigenous transnational social movements engaging with climate justice

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### ABSTRACT

This article offers a comparative account of the engagement of two key transnational social movements, the agrarian movement La Via Campesina (LVC) and the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), in global climate discussions, particularly the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Since 2007 these movements have each developed their own framing of climate justice and sought political and legal opportunities to advocate rights-based policies. LVC has advanced a development paradigm grounded in food sovereignty and agroecology, and IIPFCC has sought to increase indigenous participation in United Nations climate schemes and regain control over ancestral territory.

### RÉSUMÉ

Cet article présente un compte rendu comparatif de la participation de deux mouvements sociaux transnationaux clés, le mouvement agricole La Via Campesina (LVC) et l'International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), aux débats mondiaux sur le climat, notamment à la Convention-cadre des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques. Depuis 2007, ces mouvements ont développé leur propre formulation de la justice climatique et cherché des opportunités politiques et légales afin de promouvoir des politiques axées sur les droits. LVC a mis de l'avant un paradigme de développement fondé sur la souveraineté alimentaire ainsi que l'agroécologie, et IIPFCC a cherché à accroître la participation autochtone aux dispositifs des Nations Unies liés au climat de même qu'à reprendre le contrôle du territoire ancestral.

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## Introduction

This article offers a comparative account of the engagement of transnational peasant and indigenous movements with global climate discussions, particularly with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Conferences of Parties (COPs). It focuses on two key actors of the global climate justice movement: the transnational agrarian movement La Via Campesina (LVC), which is a network of peasants and small farmers' organisations, and the International Indigenous Peoples

Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), which speaks for indigenous peoples (IP) at UNFCCC meetings. The term “climate justice” is used to designate both the various networks that contest the unequal impacts of climate change (the “climate justice movement”) and the mobilising discourse that those activists deploy when engaging in climate politics (Featherstone 2013).

LVC and the IIPFCC are quite distinct from other actors of the climate justice movement, which are mostly environmental and development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and urban-based social movements, on which the literature on climate justice has so far focused. Transnational peasant and IP movements are both recognised as speaking on behalf of those who will be (and already are) most affected by climate change (Gonzalez 2012; Havemann 2013). They have participated in global governance debates with their own voice, rejecting and reforming mechanisms built to facilitate the participation of NGOs talking on their behalf (McKeon 2009). Both sets of movements have shown an ability to organise transnationally, and to find common ground across the Global North and South. Finally, both have mobilised in defence of their land and territorial rights in diverse subnational and national contexts (Delgado Pugley 2013).

In this article, we show that peasant and indigenous movements have substantially integrated climate change in their discourse and struggles in the last decade, not so much in response to the threat of climate change but in reaction to the market-based and state-led strategies advanced by the international community to mitigate it. We argue that peasant and indigenous movements organised at the transnational level have, each in their own way, developed their own global framing of the climate issue. They have used climate discussions as political but also legal opportunities to advance their rights-based climate solutions. Peasant movements have not participated in UNFCCC meetings but have used climate discussions to advance their alternative development paradigm grounded in food sovereignty, agroecology and peasants’ rights. IP movements have demanded the respect of their rights to land, territory and resources in climate-related actions, and have influenced the various climate schemes discussed within the UNFCCC to increase their participation and regain control over their ancestral territories.

The analysis we provide in this article is grounded in a combination of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and an analysis of documents issued by both movements between 2007 and 2015. Deborah Delgado Pugley has studied the involvement of indigenous organisations in the COPs from 2010 to 2015 as well as struggles related to deforestation in indigenous territories in the Amazon Basin of Bolivia and Peru.<sup>1</sup> Priscilla Claeys has studied LVC from 2007 onwards, through fieldwork<sup>2</sup> in more than 10 countries in which the movement is active, as well as in a number of UN arenas other than the UNFCCC in which climate change was discussed. In our discussion, we combine insights from the sociology of social movements, including frame analysis (Snow et al. 2014), political opportunities (McAdam 1996; Tarrow 1998) and collective identity processes (Melucci 1996; Polletta and Jasper 2001). We contribute to recent developments in the field that are helpful to understand transnational collective action, such as global framing and international political opportunities (Heijden 2006; Abélès 2008; Siméant 2010; Benford 2011).

Next, we present the two movements that are the focus of this article and describe their respective trajectories around the UNFCCC process from 2007 to 2015. In the subsequent core of the article, we discuss the similarities and divergences between these movements,

focusing on: how they have framed the climate issue at the global level; how they have seized global climate discussions as an opportunity to claim their rights and influence the human rights regime; and how they have sought to enhance their transnational political participation. In the conclusion, we touch on some of the challenges facing both movements as agriculture and land use are increasingly integrated in climate policies.

### **LVC and the IIPFCC in the UNFCCC process, 2007–2015**

IP engagement with the UNFCCC process can be traced back to 1998, when the first indigenous participants coming from the North attended the COP (Powless 2012) and issued a declaration demanding an inclusion of indigenous rights in the Convention (Indigenous Peoples of North America 1998). A global involvement followed, and, in 2001, IP were recognised as a UNFCCC constituency. The IIPFCC was formally established in 2008 as the Caucus for IP participating in UNFCCC meetings. The IIPFCC is composed of representatives from IP organisations from seven regions,<sup>3</sup> but any indigenous person present at a UNFCCC meeting has the right to participate in the IIPFCC. The mandate of the IIPFCC is to come into agreement on what IP will be negotiating for. As tensions exist between different organisational agendas, advocacy points are usually discussed before the COPs and issues that are too contentious are not included in the IIPFCC objectives. This way of working has enabled the IP constituency to speak with a single voice, while not preventing IP organisations from engaging in coalitions (Meckling 2011) with other social movements, NGOs, business or donors.

LVC is a transnational agrarian movement that was established in 1993. As of its last International Conference of 2013, it counts 164 local and national organisations in 73 countries and represents about 200 million small-scale and peasant farmers.<sup>4</sup> The movement relies on a decentralised structure: the International Conference decides on the movement's strategic and policy orientations, and the International Coordinating Committee – which is composed of one woman and one man from each of the movement's nine regions – meets twice a year to engage in collective analysis and define joint action at the international level.<sup>5</sup> The International Secretariat was first based in Belgium (1993–1996), then in Honduras (1997–2004) and Indonesia (2005–2013) and recently moved to Zimbabwe. The movement is best known for its actions against trade liberalisation and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), industrial agriculture and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). LVC has refrained from getting formally involved in the UNFCCC process, and is not part of the UNFCCC farmers' constituency.<sup>6</sup> LVC has nevertheless been very vocal on the issue of climate change, an involvement that finds its origins around the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13), in 2007 in Bali. Our analysis covers both types of interaction – from inside and outside – with the COP process.

We take the COP 13 as our departure point because it showed considerable involvement by both sets of movements but also marked the beginning of a new cycle of negotiations on land-related issues in Non-Annex I countries,<sup>7</sup> with the decision to include the reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation as a mitigation mechanism. The various systems and incentives to reduce deforestation have since been referred to as REDD+, and have been discussed within two subsidiary bodies of the COP: the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). Since 2007, the issue of how to account for and reduce emissions

from agriculture – which is treated in a fragmented manner under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol – has received increased attention but has made little progress.<sup>8</sup>

IP organisations came with well-organised delegations to Bali.<sup>9</sup> They felt that REDD+ compromised their lands and territories, and that the decision had been taken without proper consultation of their constituencies. As indigenous leader Victoria Tauli-Corpuz from the Philippines put it:

We decided to engage actively in this process because we feel that with the role that forests will play in climate change, everybody is interested to go into our communities and be the ones who will be receiving such benefits to the detriment of indigenous peoples. And secondly, we also fear that governments will not recognise our rights to our territories and also to carbon.<sup>10</sup>

The IIPFCC demanded the creation of an Expert Group on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples, and the creation of a voluntary fund to enable their full and meaningful participation, as adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Some important indigenous organisations made explicit their full rejection of REDD+ (IIPFCC 2007). LVC elaborated its first position paper on climate change on the occasion of COP 13. What triggered LVC's involvement in climate debates<sup>11</sup> was the threat raised by “false solutions” promoted to respond to climate change, such as GMOs, carbon trading, REDD+ and agro-fuels (LVC 2007). LVC exposed the fallacy of these solutions and joined the Climate Justice Now coalition that came into being following conflict with the “relatively moderate” Climate Action Network (Bullard and Müller 2012, 56).

The COP 14, in Poznan, took place in the midst of the 2008 global food crisis. This prompted LVC to further elaborate on the links between climate change, agroecology and food security. The movement was also mobilised against land grabbing. The focus of the IIPFCC was on ensuring the recognition, within the UNFCCC process, of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), approved the year before by the UN General Assembly. Indigenous movements launched a No Rights, No REDD campaign, following the refusal by many parties to make explicit mention of the UNDRIP (Tebtebba Foundation 2008). The IIPFCC also expressed disappointment at the lack of political will to implement participation mechanisms for IP.

The COP 15 in 2009 in Copenhagen was described by observers as a complete failure, leading to what many called the end of the global climate justice movement (Bullard and Müller 2012), or at least its reorganisation (Parks and della Porta 2014). LVC activists were strongly mobilised in Copenhagen, in coordination with the “Climate Justice Action” (CJA) network, which had established itself as a platform prior to the Copenhagen meeting (Chatterton, Featherstone, and Routledge 2013). IP organisations also participated in the CJA network but they were not at the forefront. A few months later, both sets of movements took part in the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, a summit gathering civil society and governments, organised in 2010 in Cochabamba by the Bolivian government. LVC endorsed the proposed Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth and the Cochabamba People's Agreement, a text that rejected market mechanisms for the reduction of emissions. IP took a different stance because they were rather sceptical in regard to Evo Morales' government. Lowland indigenous movements made public their different views on the management of indigenous territories, on the presence of extractive industries and on REDD+. While the Morales

government had officially agreed to REDD+ in 2009, its administration later became one of the most vocal opponents to it (Delgado Pugley 2014). This oppositional stance was at odds with the position of some subnational IP organisations that were already involved, as early movers, in cash transfers for conservation.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, natural gas extraction and coca leaf production were pushed by the Bolivian state in several indigenous territories, against their will.

At the COP 16 in Cancun in 2010, LVC demanded respect of the Cochabamba People's Agreement and again rejected privatisation, REDD+ and Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) schemes as inadequate responses to climate change. Several IP movements expressed their rejection of REDD+ because of the risks of dispossession it entailed, particularly if it was included as an offset mechanism under the COP. At the same time, as the Mexican Presidency was strongly promoting REDD+, IP organisations made use of this context to assert the recognition of UNDRIP by the UNFCCC. They were partly successful, in that respect of the UNDRIP was "noted" as a safeguard provision of the REDD+ mechanism.

At the COP 17 in Durban, in 2011, the World Bank promoted climate-smart agriculture and sustainable intensification as solutions to climate change. LVC issued a statement rejecting the introduction of agriculture in climate talks and insisted that agriculture should not be treated "as a carbon sink" (LVC 2011). The COP18, which took place in Doha in 2012, saw a drop in the participation of observer organisations, as the cost of participating in the conference was high and the possibilities to influence it were perceived as low. At the COP 19, which was held in Warsaw in 2013, an agreement was reached on REDD+ called the Warsaw Framework. A year later, in September, a Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA) was launched at the UN Climate Summit in New York. LVC criticised the Alliance for being a continuation of the green revolution project, and engaged in alliances to defend agroecology as the most promising alternative (LVC 2014).

In December 2014, the COP 20 took place in Lima, with a strong focus on the post-2020 agreement to be reached in 2015 in Paris. IP organisations got a lot of visibility in this COP, hosted by an Amazonian country with high rates of deforestation. Along with labour and environmental networks and IP organisations, LVC organised a Peoples Summit to promote bottom-up solutions to the climate crisis. LVC denounced climate-smart agriculture for taking the tenets of REDD+ and applying them to farmland (LVC 2015). In a dialogue with states prior to COP 21, in October 2015, the IIPFCC alerted governments to the "serious implications" for the rights of IP of the proposals discussed under the Clean Development Mechanism and demanded the adjustment of REDD+ activities "to incorporate indigenous proposals and initiatives that look beyond carbon benefits and market-based approaches" (IIPFCC 2015).

At the COP 21 in Paris, the IIPFCC demanded that a clear commitment to the rights of IP be included in the operative text of the agreement, but to no avail. The Paris agreement only references human rights in its preamble – which also acknowledges the concept of "climate justice" – and does not convey a legally binding obligation for parties to place their climate actions in a human rights framework. This is of serious concern, considering that the agreement does not aim for a collective goal but rather collectivises the pledges made individually by states in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), with some degree of transparency, international comparability and

accountability. After the failure of Copenhagen, the agreement was celebrated by parties as a historical achievement, but not by LVC. Peasant activists reaffirmed that system change would not come from such institutional processes and therefore “made no demands of government leaders” (LVC 2016). Pat Mooney, from ETC Group, lamented: “What we have is something much worse than Copenhagen [ ... ] because people believe that governments have achieved something here and they have not” (LVC 2016). The Warsaw Framework for REDD+ was not formally included in the Paris agreement because it did not explicitly allow for offsetting. The text instead recognises the need for adequate and predictable financial resources and other “positive incentives” for results-based payment approaches. For observers, there is a bright future for market-based approaches in the new climate regime post-2020 (Fuhr and Schalatek 2015).

### **Key dimensions of peasant and indigenous engagement in climate debates**

In the following sections, we analyse three key and interrelated dimensions of peasant and indigenous engagement with climate debates: global framing and framing dynamics; the creation of international legal opportunities to transform the human rights framework; and transnational political participation.

As political decision-making has considerably shifted from the national to the international level, social movements face the challenge of having to act at different levels of politics. Research on the “international political opportunities” that are open to transnational movements is still incipient. The concept – which designates a complex composite of International Governmental Organisations (IGOs) establishing a number of international regimes and systems of global governance and norms (Heijden 2006) – is useful in our opinion because, as we show in this article, movements indeed engage with different dimensions of that composite at the same time, and on distinct terms. We also mobilise the concept of “international legal opportunities”; that is, the opening by social movements of institutional spaces allowing for legal changes (Israël 2003) at the international level. We use it to look at how peasant and IP movements seek to achieve the recognition and respect of their collective rights across multiple UN arenas. Finally, we explore the specific challenges that transnational movements face when it comes to “framing” global climate governance. In order to reshape global governance, transnational movements need to identify discursive opportunities at the global level, such as global meetings and international norms (Benford 2011). This requires the development of a discourse that identifies both a common identity (the us) and the target of protest (the other) at a supranational level, in defence of an alternative vision (Touraine 2002; Pleyers 2008). We assume that frames are constantly produced and reshaped by movement leaders and constituents, notably in response to counter-framing by opponents (Chong and Druckman 2013). In addition, frames follow complex processes that have an impact on and are the result of a movement’s strategy, action repertoires and collective identity processes (Snow et al. 2014).

### **Collective action frames at the global level**

Transnational peasant and indigenous movements have global political agendas that are distinct from and extend beyond climate change.<sup>13</sup> When entering climate debates,

both sets of movements had to integrate the climate issue into their broader strategy (Bullard and Müller 2012), making room for it in their pre-existing frames. Peasant movements have demanded food sovereignty (Wittman 2011), land and resource rights (Borras, Franco, and Suárez 2015) and a restructuring of the global food system (Desmarais 2007; Rosset and Martínez-Torres 2010), while indigenous movements have claimed the right to self-determination and autonomy as well as respect for their distinct relationship with their land and territories (Stavenhagen 2012; Cadena, Foster, and Reichman 2015). Peasant movements have deployed global frames such as “Food Sovereignty” and “Peasants’ Rights” (Claeys 2015a), while indigenous movements have used frames such as “Mother Earth” (*Pacha Mama*) and “*Buen Vivir*” (living well) (Postigo 2013). These frames share several characteristics: they have had considerable resonance within the global climate justice movement (Chatterton, Featherstone, and Routledge 2013), they are tied to collective identities that have sought to reposition peasants and IP – once seen as remnants of the past – as modern actors embodying the key to alternative development models (Desmarais 2008) and, as we develop below, they are anchored in the human rights framework and more specifically in the defence of sovereignty and autonomy in regard to the state.

Looking back at the framing and counter-framing dynamics of the last decade, it is striking how both sets of movements have put efforts into changing the perception that other climate politics actors had of them as social agents. Indeed, the depiction of these constituencies in climate debates shifted: from major drivers of climate change because of their number and practices on the ground to particularly vulnerable populations, as climate change is associated with declining yields in agriculture, extreme weather events and consequent displacements. In response, both peasant and IP movements gradually presented themselves as assertive actors, holding “solutions” coming from the field, inducing rhetorical shifts from “climate change solutions” to “peasant solutions” and from “sustainable forestry” to “indigenous/community management of forests”. This frame transformation (Benford and Snow 2000) – a strategic process that transformed existing meanings and generated new ones – occurred on several levels.

LVC came out in 2007 with a position paper entitled “Small Scale Sustainable Farmers Are Cooling Down the Earth”, which was slightly revised in 2009 (LVC 2009). The objective of peasant activists was to react to the “false solutions” – agrofuels, carbon trading and GMOs – advanced by the corporate sector and governments, and to advance their own. The movement’s involvement in climate discussions was perceived as an opportunity to promote food sovereignty. In the words of a French peasant activist: “we are re-stating [food sovereignty] while adjusting it”.<sup>14</sup> Part of the framing effort of LVC and allied NGOs such as GRAIN and ETC Group was to highlight that a new food system could be a major solution to climate change. GRAIN, for example, calculated that the industrial food system was responsible for 44–57 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions (11–15% from production, 15–18% from land use change and deforestation, 15–20% from processing, transport, packing and retail and 2–4% from food waste) (GRAIN 2011).

Taking advantage of the attention paid by the international community to the potential role of small-scale farmers following the food crisis of 2007–2008 (McMichael 2009), peasant activists came out strongly in defence of agroecology and peasant farming as alternative models that can simultaneously “feed the world” and “cool the planet” (LVC 2009). GRAIN established that a sustained focus on agroecological practices could

capture 24–30 per cent of the current global annual greenhouse gas emissions (ETC Group, GRAIN, and La Via Campesina 2013). LVC's political endorsement of agroecology did not only respond to the need to develop a position on climate change, it also constituted a counter-framing effort to discard the international community's emerging response to the global food crisis, which promoted the conversion of peasants into entrepreneurs (De Schutter 2008).

IP movements, on their end, made a strong push to change the framing of initiatives to control deforestation under the UNFCCC, such as REDD+, in order to increase the participation of indigenous organisations and communities in these initiatives. IP movements strived to be recognised as efficient actors against deforestation, advancing the idea that IP with respected rights are the best guarantee to keep forests alive. Frame transformation, however, was slightly hampered by internal divisions about REDD+. Some IP networks expressed stark opposition to carbon markets for land use activities (where they coincide with LVC), while some networks considered these schemes as a way to regain control and autonomy in their territories and influence the regulation of other investments on their lands (such as oil, cattle ranching and palm plantations). As a result, some IP organisations tried to influence the constitution of the REDD+ scheme, whilst others decided to boycott it or ask for an international moratorium. They were united, however, in their demand to be recognised as actors in the territory, with local organisations holding tenure rights over land and forests.

At the risk of losing the support of other actors who had come out strongly against REDD+, the IIPFCC strategically used REDD+ discussions to further its own agenda, demanding that REDD+ schemes respect human rights and include IP in the decision-making process and modalities of benefit sharing. The IIPFCC demanded the broad application of the principle of free prior and informed consent (FPIC) to REDD+ strategies at national and subnational levels, and sought to demonstrate how to do this in a cost-effective manner (as in Indonesia, Thailand or the Philippines). IP movements also developed more ambitious proposals, such as the “Amazonian Indigenous REDD+”, in which IP organisations are directly involved in REDD+ actions through a scheme that includes safeguard provisions and empowers them to enhance REDD+ impacts (Brown, Seymour, and Peskett 2008). The Indigenous REDD+ proposal is interesting because it places indigenous rights and FPIC at the core of REDD+, and goes beyond carbon capture by encouraging a holistic management of the territories and by including non-carbon benefits.

### ***Human rights framing and the creation of international legal opportunities***

Both peasant and indigenous movements have emphasised human rights in the framing of their claims. Placing their demands within the rights master frame (widely studied; see, for example, McAdam 1996; Benford and Snow 2000) is a way to facilitate the common formulation of claims across diverse networks, and a way to facilitate their insertion in global governance debates. Both peasant and indigenous movements have pushed the boundaries of the international human rights regime in order to make human rights relevant to their local and global struggles (Claeys 2015b). Their efforts to “localise” human rights (Feyer et al. 2011) have largely relied on the creation of “new human rights” (Bob 2010) for their constituencies.

After two decades of struggles in different international arenas, IP succeeded in getting the UNDRIP adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007. The UNDRIP grants IP the right to self-determination, as well as collective rights to own, use, control and manage their lands, territories and resources (Daes 2000, 2004). Since 2007, the focus of IP has been on getting this new framework recognised, and on seeing their new group rights implemented. Peasants are also likely to see new human rights recognised for rural working people in the years to come (Claeys 2015b). With the support of the Bolivian government, LVC succeeded in initiating a process to elaborate a Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas at the UN Human Rights Council (Claeys 2015a). These advances testify to the emergence of transnational social movements as “makers of law” (Rajagopal 2003).

One of the main goals of indigenous movements within the UNFCCC process has been to mainstream the UNDRIP. As early as 1998, indigenous movements demanded that one of the key principles contained in the draft Declaration – free, prior and informed consent – be applied to all adaptation and mitigation plans affecting indigenous communities. After the UNDRIP was adopted, the IIPFCC consistently insisted that a reference to the rights of IP be included in the UNFCCC decisions (Third World Network 2009). However, with the exception of the recognition of the UNDRIP in REDD+ safeguards, which the IIPFCC achieved, this demand has not been properly addressed by the UNFCCC. As discussed above, the Paris agreement achieved in 2015 does not make explicit reference to the human rights obligations of states, mainly due to the fierce opposition of Norway, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

LVC has also used global climate talks to advance its rights-based claims, insisting that the “rights to our farms, lands, seeds and natural resources need to remain in our hands”, thereby using a rights discourse in opposition to the logic of appropriation promoted by mechanisms such as REDD+ (ETC Group, GRAIN, and La Via Campesina 2013). Peasant networks, however, were not able to back their claims with a specific international instrument protecting their collective rights, such as UNDRIP, because such an instrument does not (yet) exist. LVC activists therefore resorted to demanding new human rights, such as the right to land, biodiversity and seeds, not within the UNFCCC but within other UN arenas perceived by peasant activists as more legitimate (Claeys 2012).

Building on the global food crisis momentum, LVC activists seized discussions on food, agriculture and climate change, in particular within the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and the UN Human Rights Council (Brem-Wilson 2015; Edelman and James 2011; Golay 2015), as international legal opportunities to demand an expansion of the human rights regime. In these various settings, peasant movements justified their demand for new group rights by emphasising the important role that smallholder farmers play in feeding – and cooling – the planet while caring for the environment. If their demand for new human rights has been met with some success, their level of recognition as a constituency in the UN system is much less advanced than that of indigenous groups. IP have a longer experience in international legal regimes that comes, to a large extent, from their colonial past. They have long asserted their status as “peoples” as well as their governance and territorial rights. In contrast, the weak recognition of peasants as collective rights-holders is likely to hinder their demand for collective rights (Jovanovic 2015).

### ***Transnational political participation***

Contrary to IP networks, which have deployed an inside/outside strategy of involvement in climate debates, LVC has focused its efforts on political mobilisation with no involvement in climate negotiations at all. This does not mean that LVC rejects the accreditation of its members, notably to organise disruptive activities inside (as was done in Cancun and Lima), or that it does not follow the state of negotiations through close contacts with insiders. Rather, the movement has adopted a strategy of trying to shift the terms of the debate from the outside, while local member organisations have managed to halt the implementation of disruptive projects (Bullard and Müller 2012). As a result, the food and agricultural interests that are represented by the UNFCCC farmers' constituency are quite at odds with those defended by LVC.

The farmers' constituency is biased towards organisations representing mid-sized to big farmers defending industrial agriculture. It is composed of national, regional and international federations of farmers, such as the World Farmers Organisation (WFO), the Pan-African Farmers Organisation (PAFO)<sup>15</sup>, the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), as well as research organisations such as the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The spokesperson for the farmers' constituency is usually the representative of WFO. In its joint statement before COP 21, the farmers' constituency demanded the inclusion of agriculture in the agreement, as well as "a positive incentive-based approach to build resilience through innovation and technology transfer" (Farmers' constituency at UNFCCC 2015). The WFO was more specific in demanding investment in climate-smart agriculture and the recognition of "sustainable bioenergy" (energy crops, bio-gas from manure) in the accounting rules of mitigation. It also demanded the establishment of voluntary schemes rewarding farmers for carbon sequestration, for example through the payment for ecosystem services (World Farmers' Organisation 2012).

With increased attention given to agriculture in adaptation and mitigation policies, some of our interviewees expressed concerns that the interests of small-scale and peasant farmers are not represented in the negotiations. One climate justice activist suggested that engagement would be useful; at least to block agreement on what LVC perceives as wrong solutions,<sup>16</sup> such as biomass energy carbon capture and storage (BECCS) technologies. It is certainly true that, if IFOAM has made statements in defence of agroecology and against climate-smart agriculture (IFOAM 2015), it is not in a position, alone, to change the position of the farmers' constituency. For LVC, however, the risk is too great to lend legitimacy to the "climate game". One of the LVC activists we interviewed compared the movement's stance on the UNFCCC to that adopted in the late 1990s towards trade liberalisation, when the movement focused on undermining the legitimacy of the WTO (Desmarais 2003). She insists: "For LVC, Copenhagen is not seen as a failure. It was better to have no agreement than a bad agreement. It is like for the WTO".<sup>17</sup> The UNFCCC, however, makes less of a target than the WTO, in part because other actors of the climate justice movement, such as IP organisations, have chosen to engage. If the effectiveness of LVC's strategy is difficult to assess, the movement's involvement in climate discussions nevertheless shows that processes such as the UNFCCC may be seized as political opportunities even without any formal engagement. As transnational movements such as

LVC differentiate their engagement across various international settings (in this case other UN arenas), their ability to induce political and legal changes at the global level needs to be assessed across all these arenas.

IP organisations, in contrast, have used their political engagement within the UNFCCC to gain respect for their territorial and human rights and the means of exercising these rights. This insider strategy has proved effective to some extent because the IIPFCC clearly succeeded in influencing the REDD+ schemes. One important example is the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), which counts IP organisations among its decision-making bodies, both globally and in some countries such as Peru and Colombia. As a result, part of FIP investment and other funding coming from bilateral agreements will be dedicated to land titling and demarcation of indigenous territories. However, some key demands that IP movements made in regard to the UNFCCC have not been addressed, such as the creation of an Expert Group on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples, or the creation of a voluntary fund to facilitate the participation of IP.

How to balance participation in institutional processes, and more confrontational types of activism, have long been debated within the IP movement. Until today, the consensus over the importance of autonomy and territory has not broken, despite serious internal debate on IP involvement in green economy schemes such as REDD+. IP activists continue, overall, to see the international human rights framework as useful to assert their rights in regard to the state. The fact that the global indigenous movement is not homogeneous is probably what has given it the capacity to make use of different frames and strategies without breaking solidarity. At the same time, indigenous movements' frames such as "*Buen Vivir*" and "Mother Earth", which played an important role in the rise of some progressive governments in Bolivia and Ecuador, for example, are now trapped in contradictions. Conflicts between IP organisations based in resource-rich areas and the governments that used to be their allies but have since encouraged resource exploitation show that the adoption of these frames by governments did not lead to the establishment of effective mechanisms allowing IP to assert their rights and autonomy.

## Conclusion

The peasant and IP movements we study in this article have seized global climate discussions as political and legal opportunities both to influence decisions affecting their access to land and territorial autonomy (in the case of indigenous groups) and advance alternatives such as agroecology and food sovereignty (in the case of peasant organisations). To achieve this, both sets of movements have invoked a human rights framework. Having already secured the recognition of their collective rights at the UN, IP movements have attempted to influence the climate regime from the inside, and have insisted that whatever is negotiated within the UNFCCC should ensure their participation and respect their rights as outlined in the UNDRIP. Peasant movements, in turn, have used the human rights frame to denounce the logic of appropriation/commodification promoted by mechanisms such as REDD+ and the green revolution approach at the heart of climate-smart agriculture. While LVC has not formally engaged with the UNFCCC, the movement has used the climate threat to demand new collective rights for peasants in other UN arenas, such as the UN Human Rights Council and the CFS. Both peasant and IP movements have put forward alternative solutions that seek to reinforce their control over land and

resources, and which are grounded in local practices and knowledge coming from the field. Yet, IP have taken a somewhat more pragmatic approach. They have engaged in the implementation of climate projects, particularly in Asia, Central America and the Amazon Basin, and have built on these experiences to try to modify specific climate schemes.

At the time of writing (February 2016), it is difficult to anticipate how IP and peasant movements will respond to the post-Paris climate regime, and in particular to the inclusion of land and agriculture in the next round of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and countries' strategies to lower their greenhouse gas emissions. It is clear, however, that the land–agriculture–climate nexus is gaining visibility, and that the issue of which agricultural development model needs to be supported will become increasingly prominent. While the Paris agreement gives no guidance on land use, and provides no common accounting methodology for agriculture, climate policies are increasingly influencing territorial and natural resources management. The implementation of these policies will considerably change the modalities that dictate IP and peasants' access to land in the future, understood as the capacity of controlling its development (Ribot and Peluso 2003). How to anticipate and respond to such changes is likely to be a key issue for indigenous and peasant organisations alike. Will peasant and IP movements succeed in further advancing “solutions” that will enhance their control at the local and territorial level? Will the climate regime develop the institutional arrangements needed to respect the collective rights of social actors on the ground? These matters are of great academic interest and of vital importance for the future of our global society.

## Notes

1. Deborah Delgado Pugley participated in 13 UNFCCC meetings and followed discussions within the IIPFCC between 2010 and 2015. She also conducted fieldwork for a total of six months in indigenous territories in the Amazon Basin of Bolivia (Moxos, Yuracaré, Tsimanes) and Peru (Ashaninkas, Aminahuas, Huni-kuy) to study the action of indigenous organisations in relation to climate change and in reaction to public interventions by the state.
2. Priscilla Claeys conducted 115 interviews with food sovereignty and right to food activists, and participated in more than 80 meetings attended by LVC activists, either at the national level or at the UN, between 2008 and 2014. For the most part, she conducted fieldwork with a view to understand how human rights were mobilised by peasant activists in defence of food sovereignty. The legal mobilisations around climate change were the specific focus of additional interviews conducted in 2014. She wrote this article while a postdoctoral researcher at the French Institute of Pondicherry.
3. For more information of the IIPFCC and its structure, see <https://iipfcc.squarespace.com/>
4. LVC also includes organisations of agricultural workers and indigenous peoples from Panama, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru and Malaysia.
5. For more information on LVC, see <http://viacampesina.org/en/>
6. At the time of writing (February 2016), the status and composition of the farmers' constituency is still provisional and is in the process of being validated by the UNFCCC.
7. These are mostly developing countries.
8. The farmers' constituency convinced the SBSTA at its June 2014 session in Bonn to undertake scientific and technical work on agriculture, which will focus on contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events, risk and vulnerability assessment, identification of

adaptation measures and assessment of agricultural practices and technologies to enhance productivity in a sustainable manner.

9. Interview with indigenous representatives of the Kuna Yala in Bonn during SBSTA meetings, 2012.
10. Interview with Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Copenhagen, 13 January 2009.
11. Interview with LVC international support staff, Brussels, 15 July 2014.
12. Interview in La Paz, Bolivia, in October 2010.
13. Efforts to integrate climate change in those organisational frames can be characterised as “frame bridging”; that is, the “linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem” (Snow et al. 1986, 467).
14. Skype interview with French peasant woman activist from LVC, 12 September 2014.
15. The PAFO includes small-scale farmers’ organisations such as the Network of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA), the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF), Plateforme Sous-Régionale des organisations Paysannes d’Afrique Central (PROPAC) and others.
16. Skype interview with international climate justice activist, 11 September 2014.
17. Skype interview with French peasant woman activist from LVC, 12 September 2014.

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