Chapter 5
Identity-Based Cooperation in the Multilateral Negotiations on Climate Change: The Group of 77 and China

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Abstract This chapter analyses the cooperation in multilateral negotiations on climate change among developing countries, focusing on the Group of 77 and China, based on a constructivist approach of International Relations. Constructivism identifies how the formation of identities affects the Southern alliances, in contrast to other theoretical approaches of IR mainstream that rely on the material elements as a way of explaining actor behaviour and regimes evolution. Constructivism considers that these material aspects are significant as they compose, together with the ideational aspects and interests, the social structure. Therefore, this chapter states that the idea and construction of a 'South', as a space of multidimensional cooperation where the developing countries, with their multiple material and historical differences, find common positions based on all the elements of the social structure, is the source of the G77 and China cooperation and strength. This 'South identity' is closely linked to poverty eradication and other development dilemmas that have a concrete expression with regard to the adverse effects of climate change. The chapter makes specific emphasis in Latin American countries of the G77 and China, which is composed of all the countries of the region, except for Mexico.

Keywords Climate change · Negotiations · Constructivism · Identity

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1   Introduction

This contribution argues that climate change is socially constructed beyond a collection of facts such as temperature or extreme weather events. This approach from constructivism of International Relations tends to clash with traditional solutions of collective action problem. As stated by Onuf (2007) if the problem of the commons lies in the unintended consequences of the rational choices, it seems to be that only an agreement can forgo individual choices. Moreover, since climate change is defined as a global dilemma or problem, a global agreement should be conveyed in order to provide solutions at this scale.

However, it is not only a problem of regimes solutions and regime structure. Much debate took place between the top-down and bottom-up architecture of multilateral architecture, in particular at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) since its adoption at the Rio de Janeiro Summit in 1992 (Rayner 2010; Hare et al. 2010; Leal-Arcas et al. 2011; Green et al. 2014). From different theoretical perspectives, has been stated that bottom-up approach according to the Paris Agreement design can provide the flexibility and large-scale social change needed to overcome a state-centric design full of dichotomies: public versus private; developed versus developing countries; state versus non state actors; public finance versus mobilization of resources; mitigation versus adaptation, among many others. Not only this, much work has been done regarding the design, as well as the effectiveness and robustness of climate change regime by itself and in comparison with others such as the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol (Oberthür 2001; Canan et al. 2015).

Many others focused their work on the importance of improving the predictability of negotiations by reducing the number of references for negotiation (Lax and Sebenius 1991; Dupont 1996; Bhandary 2015). Likewise, recognizing the asymmetry of power relations—material aspects—at the international level and on the climate terrain, the structuralist paradox is posed by which weak states can negotiate with stronger positions and obtain more significant benefits, as a result of the association (Betzold et al. 2012; Habeeb 1988; Zartman 1997; Bhandary 2015). Thus, institutionalism has been successful in delivering the message in terms of the benefits of international regimes formation and even when they are not effective enough to accomplish their objectives, the problem identified is not the theory behind, but the design or the implementation of rules.

For constructivism of IR regimes matter but they are not the silver bullet of the collective action dilemma. That is the main reason why the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as a territory of negotiations, disputes and solution construction, continues to be valid but not unique from a climate change constructivist analysis.

Therefore, in this chapter, we build upon the common interest in international cooperation in multilateral negotiations on climate change, but the focus is to analyse identity formation among developing countries or the so-called South identity.

Similar to what happens with the study of international regimes, coalitions and alliances theories acknowledge what constructivism name a material approach of social reality. Constructivism identifies how the formation of identities affects the Southern alliances, in contrast to other theoretical approaches of IR mainstream that rely on the material elements as a way of explaining actor behaviour and regimes evolution. Constructivism considers that these material aspects are significant as they compose, together with the ideational aspects and interests, the social structure.

Therefore, this chapter states that the idea and construction of a South, as a space of multidimensional cooperation where the developing countries, with their multiple material and historical differences, find common positions based on all the elements of the social structure, is the source of the G77 and China cooperation and strength. This 'South identity' is closely linked to poverty eradication and other development dilemmas that have a concrete expression concerning the adverse effects of climate change.

These arguments are also valid regarding regional South–South cooperation. Thus, we make a trial in contributing to the study of climate change cooperation between Latin American countries, collaboration long debated to the extent that the region has not managed to articulate a unique position in the negotiations at the UNFCCC.

The chapter starts by making a short contribution related to identity formation from a constructivist approach of IR. Then, we study G77 and China as identity representation of the South climate cooperation. The last part of the chapter is concentrated in the role of Latin America and the Caribbean and its system of climate solidarity: its strengths and weaknesses.

2   Identity and Constructivist Approach

Pettenger (2007) has pointed out the three main constructivist principles regardless the many differences between the authors aligned with this approach: the relationship between material and ideational forces; the agent/structure dilemma and the relevance of processes and social change. Additionally, we can mention the role of institutions and norms and the state-centrism features. What Pettenger so name principles are key ontological differences and breaking points with the mainstream of IR.

As expressed by Pettenger (2007), the constructivism denies the ontological primacy of material forces over the ideational ones. In terms of Wendt (1999), and referring to the mainstream, the problem is that neoliberalism shares the Waltzian concept of structure. This concept is intrinsically materialistic since even recognising the importance of ideas, do not realise that power and interests are its effects. For this reason, Wendt affirms it is necessary to re-conceptualise the structure as an idea, understanding it is more a social phenomenon. However, it is inaccurate to say that Wendt focuses his criticism to Waltzian neorealism in its state-centrism, but instead argues that both this approach and liberal neo-institutionalism present a materialist ontology (Wendt 1999). In sum, with ideational forces, actors gain agency as the ability to make choices as social beings interacting within the structure (Pettenger 2007).

In this way, agent and structure are co-constituted and can produce both cooperative and conflictive relations.

Constructivism assigns prominence to change as a result of the idea of the social construction of phenomena including social reality. Therefore, Cox (1981) states that the fact that neorealism considers social variables as immobile and generates obstacles in the possibilities of change in the system. Hence, it supports an International System mainly unchangeable and unfair. That is why the critical theory of IR has anchored its assumptions in social change.

From this perspective and unlike Waltzian neorealism, the structure is found in constant change due to the dynamic relationship between the structure and the process, just as it happens with the agent and the structure. These are critical elements that enable social change.

There are different approaches to constructivism, in some cases, authors put some emphasis on material and non-material forces. In other cases, ideational aspects and their influence on material issues, which together make up the social structure, retain more attention when looking for explanations of behaviours, interests and identities of the actors, whether or not they are states. In these cases, ideas can be seen as a precondition for behaviours and interest construction, as well as the diverse identities of the actors (Wendt 1999; Copeland 2006).

Identities are cognitive constructions motivated by the actors that are in turn co-constitutive with the structure they make up, building and being constructed in the process of social interaction. This assessment enables a view of the social change to the extent that seeks explanations of behaviours and interests instead of focusing on the consequences of them. However, it does not presuppose an automatic change to the extent that, for it to occur, it must be institutionalised. It is institutionalisation, especially in Wendt (1999), a process of social internalisation rather than a material structure, an agency or a written or unwritten rule. Institutions are defined by the author as relatively stable sets or structures of identities and interests (Wendt 1992). For that reason, we understand UNFCCC as a territory composed of many identities of different types, including geographical, historical and political. A territory traditionally moved by dichotomies where the differentiation between developed and developing countries and their differentiated responsibilities and actions are the main feature of the architecture. Despite the efforts of the developed countries to erase the differentiation between Annex I and not Annex I Parties of the Convention, the Group of 77 and China and, in particular, some subgroups have upheld the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) as a pillar of the system. We cannot deny its divergences in terms of composition, membership and approaches, but common positions should be recognised, in particular, historical ones, such as adaptation and finance.

In a critique of constructivism, Purdon (2014) affirms that this approach is focused on incremental levels of awareness towards climate change as a result of climate science and from a moral responsibility. With which, the author asserts that constructivism does not explain the question about why the transnational norms of moral responsibility are insufficient to generate a response to climate change. This perception from Purdon could imply a moral view of constructivism. Constructivism can

afford to recognise the omission and the breach of written and unwritten environmental and climatic rules. The explanation of why this occurs lies in the internalisation of the norms in the international society. In Wendt's view, the low internalisation seen as Hobbesian climate culture can advance asymmetrically between the actors towards Lockean and Kantian cultures as a product of the gradual and heterogeneous internalisation of new behaviours and interests. This process with different times inside and outside the states coexists with interests and perceptions of the legitimacy of the variable norms.

Analysing the national relevance assigned in the USA, Germany and the UK to international environmental standards and in a normative constructivist analysis named after Pettenger (2007) and Cass (2007) also agrees that both affirmation and compliance with norms can occur as a result of coercion or as a result of persuasion, a notion similar to what Wendt identified as legitimacy. Now, Wendt assumes that the advance of history is necessarily progressive. It means that once the international society internalises a culture, there will be no regression.

Some might say that the recent defection of the USA constitutes a setback. However, we understand that different interests, perceptions and therefore cultures related to climate change have survived and persisted within the USA that also transcend geographical frontiers. However, those actors who have already internalised a change of culture in Wendt's words hardly go back on their interests and identities.

In this regard, we see that various state and non-state actors from the USA have continued their fight against climate change impacts and energy transition related to mitigation contribution of the USA even when the federal administration has announced the withdrawal of the Paris Agreement.

With this, we are interested in applying this look to analyse an object that has traditionally been viewed from the perspective of liberal institutionalism, such as political and regional alliances within the multilateral climate negotiating process. In this regard, we are preparing to analyse the causes that motivate the continuity of the cooperation of the developing countries in the Group of 77 plus China as well as, at the regional level, the atomisation of groups in Latin America and the Caribbean.

3   The G77 and China as Identity Representation of the South Climate Cooperation

It is not by chance that the establishment of the G77 took place in the context of the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964, a space formed by and from the developing countries as a common platform of efforts. UNCTAD and G77 pursued from their origins to combine common aspirations, unity and solidarity of the South, seeking the conformation of an own economic and social development agenda, in the context of the East–West conflict, but also of a world in the process of decolonisation with a growing number of newly independent developing states. These aspirations and common interests advanced in a programme of

South–South cooperation that was expressed in diverse agendas having as standards equity and justice, especially in international economic relations. This process of progress in the search for common positions in different agendas was accompanied by a constant increase of members until reaching the 134 countries at present.

The areas of interest that were established in the declaration of the seventy-seven countries agreed upon in Geneva in 1964 were reiterated and deepened in various documents, such as the Ministerial Declaration for the fortieth anniversary of the formation of the group held in Sao Paulo in 2004. In Brazil, the group not only recalled its foundational pillars and the need to achieve an equitable international trade regime, but also alluded to some of the many features of current cooperation, such as finance, foreign direct investment, capital markets, external debt, food, agriculture, industrialisation, intellectual property rights, social development, health, education, sustainable development, science, technology, information and communications and among many others.

Beyond the existence of the group as an articulator of the efforts of the developing countries, the category of South has been continuously discussed in the literature and whether the distinction between developed and developing countries maintains or does not apply anymore (Krasner 1989; Miller 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000; Kamrava 1993, 1995; Williams 2005; Berger 2004; Najam 2005). In this sense, we have argued that the persistent recurrence to its conceptual function from the theoretical debate evidences its actuality (Bueno 2013). Much more is evidenced by the diversification of the South's agenda parallel to the international agenda, with the G77 constituting the first reference space in which at least macro common positions are sought.

Taking into account the chosen theoretical matrix, we are interested in analysing some of the group's identity conditions that explain the fact that developing countries continue to seek in the G77 and China a cooperation territory in climate negotiations.

Some authors have indicated the automarginative logic of the group concerning the category of South as well as the debates about the qualification of these countries as Third World, underdeveloped and developing (Najam 2005). This has generated a process of collective identification behind the developed countries that supposedly reached a stage that the developing countries are still looking for. In this way, it involves a tacit qualification where the former operates as leaders that condition the way forward and the latter as mere followers and in some cases as proselytes. This logic of exclusion entrenched in the theories and discourses of the North and the South entails dispossession and self-inflicted renunciation of power as well as to the capacity to build it. The process described is endorsed, in turn, by theories of power anchored exclusively in material conditions, not promoting change to the extent that they understand that only the accumulation of certain specific capabilities such as the military and economic are liable to invest the States as relevant actors of the International System. This position would entail and condition a dynamic of collective disempowerment that, nevertheless, does not coincide with reality. Regarding climate change negotiations, this material conditionality could be expressed in the determinism of mayor emitters as the most important players (Bueno and Yamin Vázquez 2017).

Another issue very much claimed regarding the South and the G77 as a space for the articulation of developing countries' interests is the heterogeneity of its members (Harris 1986; Caparros et al. 2004; Roberts 2011). From this perspective, cooperation is more viable if members have similar conditions (Constantini et al. 2007), especially referring to traditional economic indicators. In this sense, some authors have argued that the basis of the continuity of the G77 lies in the homogeneity of interests concentrated in three aspects: the validity of shared problems with different degrees of political vulnerability, poverty and economic underdevelopment (Kasa et al. 2008). These qualities generate some dilemmas when analysing the impact of the growth of some of the countries in the group, such as China, India or Brazil in comparison with others. It could be thought, therefore, that they can operate as new leaders or Sherpas in the development process or that they can deepen the heterogeneity of the group.

We wonder how heterogeneity constitutes an identity element of the G77 including social, economic, political and environmental indicators. This does not mean that identities are unchangeable, in fact, identity construction is a social process in motion that cannot be considered immutable. Considering the question about whether Chinese, Indian or Brazilian growth can officiate as a dynamic element of confidence among other members, in the sense of a demonstration effect, we do not have an answer. Since the identity is based on elements that include material capabilities but also other ideational aspects that give meaning to the former, neither economic nor social progress is denied, but the possibility of programming that other actors may want the same is discarded, since their starting points, histories, trajectories and needs are different.

In the UNFCCC scenario, the G77 and China have operated as a framework for the construction of power especially in the identification of some strategic positions of the group. It does not constitute a platform to resolve all the issues, but it allows framework political consensus, as well as build and maintain historical battles of the developing world in terms of climate change, such as adaptation, finance and other means of support. This does not take away other vital aspects such as agriculture, response measures and technology, coinciding with what was stated in the 2005 Declaration in Sao Paulo.

At the same time, important differences persist among members regarding the concept of responsibilities and their relation to capacities, as well as especially regarding vulnerability and special needs. Although the group has granted preferential treatment to small island states (SIDS) and the less developed countries (LDCs), it has not consented to include Africa in such a group, despite its many and heated attempts at the Paris (COP21) and Marrakesh negotiations (COP 22). This pursuit has the main background to have achieved this recognition in the Green Climate Fund (GCF). This debate was reflected in the Paris Agreement through greater flexibility in the presentation of national determined contributions (NDCs) by these two groups of countries (LDCs and SIDS).

Focused disagreements referring to vulnerability have not radically altered the group's unity in other agenda items. Reaching common positions is an arduous

process due to the heterogeneity of interests and the big number of actors. However, when the level of alignment is achieved, it is usually broad.

The existence of subgroups or alliances, whether regional or political, that coexist within the G77 and China are part of the heterogeneity, and for some observers is a sign of weakness. For others, they operate as a complement to the positions reached in the large group (Chasek and Rajamani 2003). We understand the subgroups can reduce the number of actors in the negotiation tables of the G77 and China when it is necessary to take decisions, as well as help to organize positions in terms of clusters, identifying critical points for the different subgroups based on the principle of no harm, main pillar of the Southern climate cooperation in the group.

The principle of no harm has had different interpretations and meanings in environmental regimes. It is related to principle 21 of the Stockholm Declaration of 1972 and principle 2 of Rio Declaration of 1992 which urge not to cause damage to areas beyond national jurisdiction (Khan and Roberts 2013). Schroeder and Okereke (2013) also argue that there are many references to the same principle applied to reducing emissions from deforestation and land degradation (REDD plus) projects in terms of no harm to local communities. However, some authors have recognised that this principle extensively applied to environmental law and regimes was almost replaced by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in climate change multilateralism. Concerning developing countries cooperation within the G77 and China, this principle refers to the practice of developing countries of avoiding open opposition to an interest expressed by another country or group of developing countries. However, this rule has its limits when there are red lines between the subgroups that opposed. In those cases, the resolution is political and of the highest level.

In this chapter, we address the situation of Latin America and the Caribbean in recent multilateral climate change negotiations, recognising their atomisation and seeking explanations from theory in terms of identity formation and change.

4 Latin American and the Caribbean and Its Solidarity System

The Latin America and the Caribbean region has been the centre of various debates regarding the difficulty in establishing permanent cooperation mechanisms, especially in political matters. This includes the debates around regionalism and how the region sought integration from the European model, which often resulted in disappointment.

The issue of solidarity has been closely linked to the debate on homogeneity versus heterogeneity and its impact on cooperation. The common colonial past anchored to a greater extent in Spain and to a lesser extent in Portugal, Holland, Great Britain and France has left an important linguistic community. Furthermore, as Lander (2001) points out, both the theories and the predominant forms of thought in Latin America that come, in many cases, from Europe and/or the USA, assume an ethnocentric and

colonial role. These are the cases of liberal independence thinking, conservatism, positivism, Marxism and neoliberalism, among others.

Nonetheless, a confluence of Latin American thought has been progressively forged, claiming identity, traditions and common past, both colonial and pre-colonial that belongs to the original people of America. All these experiences define Latin American identities, which overlap political demands on marginalisation and inequality and reproduce ethnocentric models linked to the Northern concept of development.

In addition to the debate on heterogeneity and diversity, attention is usually drawn to the fact that Latin America is a democratic area, a zone of peace and one that is prone to integration and consensus (Rojas Aravena 2013). These aspects also forge Latin American identities that, despite claiming to be a land of peace, dangerously increase the level of intra-national violence (Salama 2008).

At the same time, the differences persist, especially as regards how Latin American elites perceive the way to achieve development, which in some cases adheres to concepts of equity and redistribution, as was the case of the governments included in the so-called left turn. While in other cases, it seeks an international opening to markets, foreign investment and the expansion of trade with either traditional regions such as the USA and Europe or with Asia, especially with China with whom the commodity trade represented a significant factor in the boom of the last decade.

Thus, both homogeneity and heterogeneity shape the American and Caribbean identities. In terms of how this diversity and parallelism of pathways and knowledge has an impact on climate debates, it should be noted that Latin America and the Caribbean represent between 7.20 and 8.31% of total greenhouse gas emissions at 2014 values (either including or not including sector emissions, land use and afforestation). Also, its population is close to 8% worldwide.[1]

Debate on how material sources feed climate change conversations and Southern cooperation includes the contribution of the region to total greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the profile of the main regional emitters. The three main regional issuers (at 2012 values and using the Climate Data Explorer (CAIT) of the World Resources Institute) are Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, in that order. However, when referring to emissions per capita, this position is strongly modified, given that some of the small island states occupy the first positions (Table 1).

Brazil is responsible for 32.35/ 39.97% of regional GHG emissions (excluding or including LULUCF). Its profile is below the regional and global average excluding LULUCF emissions and above the average including LULUCF both in regional and global terms. Mexico is the second regional emitter with 23.13/ 16.42% of GHG emissions in Latin America and the Caribbean and it is below the regional average in per capita emissions, either including or excluding LULUCF. Finally, Argentina is responsible for 10.8/ 8.88% of Latin American and Caribbean emissions of GHGs and is above the regional average of per capita emissions both including and excluding the land-use sector. It should be noted, in the latter case, that the Latin American and

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[1]Data collected from CAIT, available in www.cait.wri.org.

Table 1   Main emitters of Latin America and the Caribbean (2012)

Country/region	Total greenhouse gases emission excluding LULUCF	Total greenhouse gases emission including LULUCF	Total greenhouse gases emission excluding LULUCF per cápita	Total greenhouse gases emission including LULUCF per cápita
	$MtCO_2e$	$MtCO_2e$	tCO_2 Per capita	tCO_2 Per capita
Latin America and the Caribbean	3130.03	4560.99	5.18	7.55
Argentina	338.00	405.03	8.23	9.86
Brazil	1012.55	1823.15	5.10	9.18
Mexico	723.85	748.91	5.99	6.20
World	43,286.10	46049.41	6.20	6.60

Source Own elaboration based on data from CAIT

Table 2   Sectorial emissions in Latin America and the Caribbean (2012)

Country/Region	Energy	Industrial processes	Agriculture	Waste	LULUCF
Latin America and the Caribbean	1835.31	135.10	901.42	241.41	1430.96
Argentina	205.73	9.70	106.73	15.83	67.03
Brazil	469.73	53.88	444.41	44.54	810.59
Mexico	490.69	40.54	83.44	109.20	25.06

Source Own elaboration based on data from CAIT

the Caribbean average of GHG per capita emissions in relation to the global one is already high.

It is possible to distinguish some significant differences between the three main emitters of the region from a sectoral point of view, as it results from Table 2. The sectorial pattern of emissions at the regional level is given by a distribution of 40% of emissions from energy, just over 30% of the land sector, 20% of agriculture and between 3 and 5% for industrial processes and waste, respectively. This pattern is reproduced more faithfully for the Argentine case, with the only difference of alternating the land sector with agriculture. However, it must be taken into account that the CAIT numbers do not coincide exactly with the Argentine inventories of the same date and that, in turn, the measurements from 2016 involve a change in the methodology of measuring agriculture emissions that reduces its participation in the total of emissions.

The profile of Brazil alternates the main emitting sector to land (45%), with energy and agriculture involving 50% of total emissions. The most significant difference in the Brazilian profile compared to the rest of the region lies in a more diversified energy matrix.

The Mexican case is radically different, as 65% of its emissions come from energy and the sector of waste has bigger participation (15%) in comparison with the other countries of the region. The difference in the emissions pattern of Mexico is also reflected in the smaller participation of LULUCF and agriculture.

From a material point of view, the numbers expressed could show some reasons for the pre-2016 Argentina–Brazil partnership in the climate change negotiations in terms of agriculture. However, with the formation of ABU (Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay) alliance in 2016, it was striking that the only two areas in which the group did not achieve a common position were agriculture and markets. The explanations must go beyond the material aspects, given that the sectoral aspects specified in terms of emissions have not changed. Nor has the identity relevance of the land sector changed for countries like Brazil and Argentina and in fact, it also applies to Uruguay. However, Argentina, with the change of government and political sign, stopped paying the political price to block discussions related to mitigation in agriculture. In this sense, Argentina moved towards a position that more closely resembles the Uruguayan.

The same material perspective would allow understanding why Mexico cooperates more with developed countries, from its participation in the Environmental Integrity Group (EIG) with a more industrial-type issuer profile when analysing the energy sector. Mexico no longer shares the developing countries grouping (G77). Unlike Chile, when Mexico acceded to the OECD, it stopped participating in the G77 and China.

The material perspective is not enough to explain cooperation and comprehend the reasons why countries decide to start or stop participating in groups, alliances or coalitions with regional or extra-regional actors.

Coming back to the Argentine case, this country emissions profile has not changed significantly since it chose to participate in the Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) group to Paris and then decided to partner with Brazil and Uruguay since 2016. What changed was the management of the national government that considered the first group was a burden on their interpretation of international climate negotiations. It should be noted that former political opposition, in the context of the Paris negotiations, now the government, interpreted LMDC's positions and countries as unwilling to assume international climate responsibilities. This image, supported by the idea that Argentina had had an active profile in the negotiations until the early 2000s, cultivated the need for 'change' and 'return', in some way, as the general motto of the new government also applied to encompass climate positions in the UNFCCC.

So, in Argentina, as in many other countries, there are forces that promote more ambitious climate actions at the international level as a way of pushing decisions in the domestic sphere, together with other forces that could be seen as a backsliding with varied perceptions about climate change. Some continue to identify climate action as contrary to development policies, others refute climate science and others prefer to build a refugee around agriculture activities or carbon emissions from energy sector looking for others to take the lead. However, in a specific moment, one discourse gains predominance over another one and that is what Pettenger (2007) classifies

as discourse-oriented constructivism. The same author also inquires how certain dominant norms and discourse gain power and knowledge in a certain moment? This idea provides a classification of constructivism in the norm, discourse and structure oriented (Burch 2002).

As Pettenger (2007) affirms, climate change must be understood from the context of social settings. These social contexts allow to explain why certain countries question climate science like the USA, while in Germany climate change knowledge is interwoven with nuclear debate (Cass 2007); Dutch climate change policy is based on sustainable development norms (Pettenger 2007) and Japanese policy was interlaced with domestic norms related to energy efficiency, economic growth, international cooperation and environmental protection (Hattori 2007). Thus, social settings are critical to understanding the development and evolution of climate change debate, norms, discourses and policies.

Different elements that contribute to the formation of Latin American identities that lead to participation in one or another alliance or negotiation groups in the UNFCCC. These include material aspects such as emissions profile, but also immaterial aspects, of an ideational nature that help to interpret the former. From pre- and post-colonial identity constructions, through the relationship with extra-regional actors, changes in political elites, the progressive but asynchronous increase of awareness towards the effects of climate change, climate science and social perceptions about vulnerability and risks are just some of the many elements to take into account when rethinking why Latin America is atomised in the multilateral climate negotiations.

We wonder why would a country like Brazil traditionally reluctant to negotiate in subgroups that could limit its margins of manoeuvre decided to join with Argentina and Uruguay in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement? It is true that Brazil continues to participate in the G77, but the traditional positions of this group as adaptation or financing are not the primary interest of Brazil in the multilateral negotiations, but other issues such as REDD plus, markets, mitigation and transparency to the extent that it affects the last two. It is true that it also participates in BASIC, but it is not a negotiation group that discusses individual agenda items but a macro-political consensus developed in light of COP15 in Copenhagen and the risk that the burden of climate action will migrate from developed countries to the main emerging countries (Bueno and Pascual 2016).

There are traditional, historical and geographical aspects that allow us to think of ABU as a possible option for Brazil in 2016. However, still, we have the question on why to gamble autonomy when Brazil always played alone and achieved good participation in the themes of its main interest? There are contextual aspects of political, economic, social and institutional weakness that generated a substantial increase in domestic and international criticism against Brazil climate policy. With the arrival of Dilma Rousseff to the Presidency of Brazil, there is a change in the development model based on her interpretation of international conditions with conservative–regressive consequences in environmental policy and particularly climate change. This includes not only the support of the government for the reform of the Forestry Code, but the deepening of support for fossil fuels, the increase

of benefits to the industry and the promotion of consumption, as a product of its support for economic growth. This was evidenced by Viola and Franchini (2014) in the fact that Brazil, as host of the Rio + 20 Summit, supported fundamentally the economic and social pillars and the agreement, undermining the environmental one, in the context of sustainability dimensions (Bueno 2017).

If the ABU alliance is analysed correctly, the topics in which common positions were reached and those in which no, it is possible to affirm that Brazil has not seen its main positions eroded. In terms of mitigation and transparency, there are ABU positions, but they are led by Brazil based on the group's rotating leadership system. With which, rather it has achieved an alliance for the defence of its interests where Argentina and Uruguay have not had significant differences. While in markets and agriculture, there is no common position, thus Brazil can continue to play on its own. We understand that, as recognised by Pettenger (2007), starting with Brazilian ideational forces, the country interprets it could gain agency being more cooperative with its neighbours in the interaction within the structure. It does not mean it could come back to less cooperative scenarios if it interprets agency power gained is not enough.

The case of Mexico is significant and striking at the same time, since it still considers itself a developing country but has left the G77 and China after its entry into the OECD and negotiates in the UNFCCC with the only group made up of countries both of Annex I and non-Annex I (Environmental Integrity Group, EIG). This implies that Mexico understands that the distinctions between annexes are not necessarily applicable to the negotiating process anymore and that is a profound difference with the G77 and China. On the other hand, EIG is a group led by Switzerland that develops most of the interventions on behalf of the group, especially on sensitive issues such as mitigation, transparency, markets and financing.

It is also remarkable that Mexico's positions on means of implementation seem to be from the level of official information, not so distant from the G77. Perhaps one of the key differences lies in its greater acceptance of the mobilisation of private financing, which is not something that the G77 questions as a primary source, but rather a struggle for developed countries to comply with their public finance commitments. However, in other points such as transparency and mitigation, Mexico has had a position that some members of the G77 have interpreted as diluting the CBDR principle. However, Mexico is not alone in Latin America and the Caribbean with this kind of proposals, during Paris negotiations, other groups, such as the alliance of small island states (AOSIS), composed by Caribbean countries and the Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC), composed by countries of the Pacific Alliance, had mitigation positions closer to EU than to other developing countries. However, it does not mean that both AOSIS and AILAC, when negotiating adaptation, do not have clarity in their membership and support to the common position of the G77 and China.

Thus, Latin America and the Caribbean includes very diverse alliances, not only ABU, AILAC, AOSIS, EIG, but also the countries included in the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America (ALBA) that also participate in the LMDC group.

Anyway, everyone—except Mexico—cooperates in the G77. The subgroups are seen as arenas for the construction of positions and interests that in many cases coincide with geographical, political and ideological affinities.

We still wonder why LAC has not achieved a single negotiation group in climate change negotiations so far? Despite historical environmental inter-ministerial cooperation in the region, it has not been possible for this cooperation to become a regional alliance, as happened with the African group. As we have already explained, the interpretations are very varied. Is that a weakness? Maybe. That is why the region only joins an external threat of significant dimensions such as the potential recognition of special needs and vulnerabilities in Africa. In the context of the Paris negotiations and currently during the first stage of implementation of the Paris Agreement, the region has been very specific in rejecting the recognition of Africa's special needs and vulnerability. This means that solidarity systems exist but that they focus mainly on the defensive scheme and the cooperative dimension of the G77 and China.

5   Conclusions

This is a work in progress on multilateral climate cooperation in the UNFCCC by developing countries, emphasising, first, the positions and identity formation of the G77 and China, and then in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. We were interested in studying identity aspects that affect the participation of the States in one or another alliance or group, seeking to banish ideas based solely on elements of a material nature, such as the emissions profile, the distribution of emissions by sector or per capita emissions, among others. These aspects are relevant but do not have an explanatory power by themselves. If this were the case, the participation in alliances would be stagnant, or its main variation would occur due to a substantive change in some of these aspects.

Most recent cases of changes in climate alliances in Latin America, i.e. Argentina and Brazil, suggest that countries can change its negotiating alliances or groups or participate in new groups because of many reasons of domestic and international nature if it is possible to make this distinction just for the analytical purpose.

The identity aspects are crucial to understanding the association and cooperation including climate change negotiations. The G77 and China is a group formed today by 134 developing countries that share a common history, at least, since 1964 and whose claims began in the socio-economic field and had been extended to other agendas. Despite the debates about the heterogeneity of the group and its segregation at certain moments of negotiation, it was a keystone to reach the Paris Agreement. Except for Mexico and Tuvalu, all the developing countries are included, and it has been critical to install political parity between mitigation and adaptation, the relevance of climate financing and other crucial means of implementation for climate action.

The analyses that opt exclusively or mainly to examine the supposed interests that the members of the G77 have in common, in the understanding the interests as derivatives of material indicators, forget the identity of the South and how the

countries consider it a platform of solidarity. For us, there is certainly common ground expressed in terms of development priorities, poverty eradication and common needs related to those that express themselves in these traditional common positions such as adaptation and finance.

Latin America does not negotiate as a single regional group in the UNFCCC, but the constituency of countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) only operates as a group of negotiation of candidacies. The atomisation in subgroups can be seen as a weakness and as a reflection of the diversity of the region and again of its interests, as was the case with some G77 analysis. We can also note that beyond the different emitting profiles and energy matrices, other identity elements that allow solidarity in the large group of the G77 but not in the GRULAC. The only case that is connoted by the GRULAC unit in the context of recent climate negotiations is the search to block Africa from being considered more vulnerable, together with other groups such as SIDS and LDCs. This could show that the LAC has a joint climate agenda underdeveloped. However, if the region has achieved progress in integration and cooperation processes and these processes involve environmental aspects: why is the climate agenda still lagging behind? Given that it is a provisional work, we understand that more research is required regarding these aspects, seeking to cross identity variables with political change, economic indicators, social perceptions and national and international contexts for specific cases.

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