

## REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	Mexico and climate change in the international context according to political agendas
<b>Author of the thesis:</b>	Marjhory Melissa Iturbe Perez
<b>Referee:</b>	Mgr. Bc. Jakub Tesař, Ph.D.

### **Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the five numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).**

First of all, I would like to acknowledge that the author has chosen a highly relevant and timely topic and attempted to fill the hole in the academic literature by focusing on a country that is often not in the spotlight of climate change negotiations, seeking to understand its role and ambition concerning the global regime.

#### **1) Theoretical background:**

The thesis presumably builds on the agenda-setting theory (Kingdon's policy streams model), and on the discourse analysis, which is mentioned in the methodology section. Nevertheless, neither of the two possible theoretical frameworks is clearly explained or reflected directly in the analysis. On top of that, if both frameworks were actually used, the author would have to clarify how they can co-exist in a thesis to inform a coherent analysis of the case.

#### **2) Contribution:**

The thesis seeks to answer two research questions -- whether Mexico is a leader in multilateral processes on climate change and whether Mexican climate policy is strengthening or deteriorating over the selected period (p. 9). Both questions are to some extent addressed in conclusion. But the key concepts are not defined (what does "multilateral leader" or "improving in addressing climate change" look like in this context), and there is not much evidence provided for the author's conclusions. From my perspective, it is unclear what the thesis contributes to the studied phenomena. I would say the bulk of the thesis (description of Mexico policies toward climate change negotiations and actions) could be written in a 15-pages seminar essay. On 63 pages, many claims are repetitive, and there is no clear value added compared to the literature used to compile the thesis.

It is also unclear why the thesis focuses on the period 2012-19. The information is often outdated, and the author claims that something "will happen" even though it has already occurred. One example -- Andrés Manuel López Obrador is often referred to as "president-elect" even though he has been in office since December 2018.

#### **3) Methods:**

After carefully reading the thesis, I am still not sure what was the selected method of analysis. The author claims that she used the "qualitative method", mention "political discourse analysis", and "inductive method" (p.22), consisting of analyzing the positions of Mexico in terms of both the participation in international negotiations and domestic political actions. However, the author does not delaminate what the discourse analysis should consist of, what sources, and how they will be analyzed. We also do not know why we should focus on a given period (how is it interesting or relevant?) or on G20 (instead of, e.g., COP to UNFCCC).

#### 4) Literature:

The thesis is based on a significant number of sources. However, the number of academic journals or monographs is limited. It is consequential, especially in theoretical and methodology sections (sec 2.4-2.5) – a good part of these sections describes the case instead of theoretical or methodological aspects of the thesis. More specifically, the author is not clear on how the agenda is expected to be set, and this theory will be reflected in the analysis of the case.

Throughout the text, the documents are mentioned but not referred to directly in the relevant section of the text. In the bibliography, there are multiple issues (e.g., single book, Kingdon – *Agenda, alternative, and public policies* – is included six times in the bibliography), and much bibliographic information is missing regarding individual sources (volume/issues/pages, publisher, date of access, ...). But the sources seem to be all included and referred to somewhere.

#### 5) Manuscript form:

Overall, the manuscript is not in very good shape. It is not structured well; many arguments are repeated multiple times, and the structure is hard to follow. There is an immense number of language issues – I do not claim that all works have to be written in perfect English, especially by non-native speakers. But the text is not comprehensive enough to convey the intended argument. There are also several factual issues in the thesis (Conference of Parties is not a "climate change agreement" (p.11), "international organization such as United Nations of climate change" (p. 12) – what is it? "every day but distinguished responsibilities" (p. 30) – you mean Common but Differentiated Responsibilities principle? "for Obrador, the climate change is not relevant matter" (Klotz, 2015) – how can the source contain this information when Obrador is a president from 2018? (p. 64); etc.

#### Suggested questions for the defence are:

- Why is the G20 forum "most compelling summit on the subject [of climate change]"? Why should it be more relevant than, e.g., COPs to UNFCCC?
- How does Kingdon's policy streams model work? How has this model been helpful to analyze the selected case?

**I do NOT recommend** the thesis for the final defence.

#### **SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED** (for details, see below):

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20 points)</i>	8
<i>Contribution (max. 20 points)</i>	12
<i>Methods (max. 20 points)</i>	5
<i>Literature (max. 20 points)</i>	10
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20 points)</i>	8
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)</b>	<b>F</b>

**DATE OF EVALUATION: January 25, 2022**

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**Referee Signature**