



## From Funding Projects to Influencing Policies: Are International Financial Institutions Players in Borrowing Countries' Public Policy Arena? Sub-Saharan Africa Case

Napo Tchassante-Tchedre

Master Degree in Sociology and Master Degree in Public Policy and Social Change  
Social Consultant and Independent Researcher  
Lomé, TOGO

E-mail: [napoother@yahoo.fr](mailto:napoother@yahoo.fr)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v8i12.3149>

---

### **Abstract**

Most international funds are channeled through international financial institutions (IFIs). Borrowing from these institutions entails to abide by some policies. These policies operate as a vehicle for disseminating policy objectives set out and advocated by these IFIs, giving them an edge to getting involved in the policy making of borrowing countries. Arises, therefore, the following question. From Funding Projects to Influencing Policies: Are International Financial Institutions Players in Borrowing Countries' Public Policy Arena? Scholarships on the effects of IFIs development assistance on countries too often address economics aspects. Purporting to highlight the poorly addressed aspects, this paper applies, within a neoliberal theoretical framework, the discourse coalition approach to environmental and social sustainability, and came up with the following finding. IFIs built a discourse coalition, with their policy requirements as story lines, environmental and social experts as actors, and sustainable development as discourse. This discourse resonates better and more powerful in the development space so as to become the dominant discourse. By uttering sustainable development discourse, IFIs gain leverage for shaping the preference strategies of borrowing countries in their agenda setting as well as influencing their preferences, beliefs, and strategies as far as environmental as social sustainability of projects is concerned.

**Keywords:** *Borrowing Countries; Discourse Coalition; Framing; Funding; International Financial Institution; Policy Arena; Policies; Projects; Sub-Saharan Africa; Sustainable Development; Environmental and Social Sustainability*

### **Introduction**

Governments, in pursuit of their political agenda, formulate and implement policies in various sectors, which requires securing funds either domestically or internationally. And, international financial

institutions (IFIs) are agencies most international funds are channeled through. There are, in addition to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, several regional development banks whose purpose is to finance productive development projects or to promote economic development in a particular region (Bunich et al. 2019). The list of funding agencies comprises the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IAB). The loan rates of these agencies are very attractive, and governments often turn to them for funding (Leiteritz, 2001). Borrowing from these agencies entails, meanwhile, to abide by some polices, as required by each specific agency. Abiding by funding agencies polices entails navigating the terms and conditions, with some implications at domestic levels such as institutional and policy reforms. And, should reforms be required, IFIs would retain, for technical assistance services, experts knowledgeable about, and with experience in, the sector-specific policies. This technical assistance, operating as an extension of the funding agency's management, secures accurate and effective implementation of required reforms. "World Bank's Development Policy Lending are loans or grants that are accompanied with conditions that take the form of prior actions, triggers and benchmarks. Despite the Bank's willingness to improve ownership, countries are consequently incentivized to adopt the World Bank's preferred policies to receive funding"<sup>1</sup>. Policy, Van der Waladt (2002) points out, is seen as a series of related decisions taken after liaison with public managers and political office-bearers that convert the specific needs of the community into objectives to be pursued by public institutions. Public policy is, thus, the product of the policy-making process (Masango, 2001). And policy-making process is, Anderson 1997 put it, a comprehensive process involving several participants, such as legislatures, public officials, political parties, interest groups and individual citizens. The role of the funding agency, in the policy space, at this juncture, it should be underscored, is not merely one of funds supplier, but also one of a policy player. Observing the evolving role of these agencies, one cannot help asking the following question. From Funding Projects to Influencing Policies: Are International Financial Institutions Players in Borrowing Countries' Public Policy Arena? Scholarship on the effects of IFIs' development assistance on countries too often address economics aspects, so that little is currently known as far as the actual agency by these IFIs in the policy arena of borrowing countries is concerned. A lot of scholarship has, for instance, been devoted to the effects, through structural adjustments, of IFIs' conditionality on the economy of developing countries. Little by way of scholarships was, meanwhile, comparably devoted to the effects of IFIs' environmental and social policy requirements on developing country institutions and policies. Actually, even though structural adjustments are not currently required as has been the case over the past decades, conditionality attached to loans by IFIs-abiding by environmental and social policies-has, since their development and introduction in the IFIs' procedures, become part of the bargaining. The main goal of this research paper is, therefore, to contribute to shade light on these currently poorly addressed effects of development project funding by IFIs. It is, then, one of the distinctive features of this paper to look, through discursive power, at the agency of the IFIs in the public policy arena of developing countries rather than at the macro-economic effects of the conditionality attached to funding. Focusing on environmental and social governance in loan-recipient countries is another distinctive feature of the paper. In concerning itself with this agency by the IFIs, the paper purports to contribute to highlight (i) the pathways through which their influence takes place, (ii) the ways borrowing countries respond to this influence by the IFIs, and (iii) whether these responses are country-specific or exhibit some common traits. And, in addressing these aspects as mentioned above, the paper is divided into four sections: (i) Statement of the problem, (ii) State-of-the-art literature, (iii) Research design, and (iv) Results and discussion.

---

<sup>1</sup> How international financial institutions and donors influence economic policies in developing countries. By Tiago Stichelmans • September 2016 A Eurodad discussion paper

### ***1/-Statement of the Problem***

International financial institutions (IFIs) have been established in order to financially support developing nations, provide them with consultancy services in the education, legal and health fields, and stabilize the economic system through global cooperation<sup>2</sup>. Set up in the aftermath of the World War II, with their architectural design being expended over years, IFIs became central to fostering a more prosperous, open, and peaceful global economy. Broadly based on the core assumption rooted in neoliberal economics that channeling substantial financial resources—often tied to conditions emphasizing economic liberalization, the rule of law, and human rights—IFIs would set developing nations on a path toward sustainable economic growth, these institutions became a cornerstone of the world financial architecture (Cottiero & Schneider, 2025). As financial resources provided by these institutions are frequently crucial to the stability of recipient economies, governments in developing nations became dependent on these agencies for development aid and investment. And, consistent with the neo-liberal economics-driven objective of fostering a more prosperous, open, and peaceful global economy, access to funding by these agencies became conditional upon implementing, as required, some economic and governance reforms by loan-recipient countries. “Conditionality has long been understood as the counterpart of financial assistance, with the donor assuming that its aid will be more effective for development if it is granted in a favorable economic and political environment”<sup>3</sup>

As the environmental issues -ozone layer depletion, greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation- emerged decades ago, threatening the efficiency of economic production, these agencies framed the solution to these issues as sustainable development, and consequently developed policies aimed at promoting social and environmental sustainability of projects, while pursuing economic growth. Issues are, according to discursive scholars, not given, but rather framed. “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993). “Framing and boxing limit experience, shut in desired themes or shut out intruding ones” (Douglas, 1966). The World Bank has developed safeguard policies that aim to minimize the negative impacts of the projects it funds (Himberg, 2015; World Bank 2016). These safeguards were adopted by the Bank in the early 1990s after successful campaigns by civil society organizations convinced U.S. legislators to withhold funding unless reforms were implemented (Wade, 1997). Sustainable development is conceptually framed by “the discursive affinity among the moral argument that nature should be respected, the scientific argument that nature is to be seen as a complex ecosystem (which we will never fully understand), and the economic idea that pollution prevention is actually the most efficient mode of production (this is the core of the discourse of sustainable development)” (Fischer & Forester 1993). Crucial in all policy practice is framing, specifically what and who is actually included, and what and who is ignored and excluded (Apthorpe & Gasper, 1996). “All knowledge on policy issues is mediated by language and interpretation. Therefore, objective and universal knowledge claims cannot be made” (van Hulst, 2024). This move by IFIs to incorporate, in addition to historical requirements- adoption of economic policy measures in exchange for financial support-issues of social and environmental sustainability, broadened the scope of conditionality. “Furthermore, conditionality is now also linked to donors’ requirements in terms of social rights, respect for the environment even though it is applicable at the level of the eligibility of projects that donors are likely to finance<sup>4</sup>. At present, the environmental assessment process is fully effective for a limited section of the Bank's portfolio.

---

<sup>2</sup> International Financial Institutions, Sustainability, and Accountability Afreen Hinaya Naushathali,

<sup>3</sup> The Evolution of Aid Conditionality: A Review of the Literature of the Last Twenty Years WORKING PAPER SEPTEMBER 2023 Patrick Guillaumont, Matthieu Boussichas, Andrea Dsouza

<sup>4</sup> The Evolution of Aid Conditionality: A Review of the Literature of the Last Twenty Years WORKING PAPER SEPTEMBER 2023 Patrick Guillaumont, Matthieu Boussichas, Andrea Dsouza

“However, EAs have not been sufficiently integrated into structural adjustment instruments as well as strategic documents, such as Country Assistance Strategies (CAS)”<sup>5</sup>.

The IFIs have overarching environmental and social policies for financing investment projects. These agencies are the ones that framed environmental and social issues to be addressed through their policies. And, frames are never neutral and can be powerful, they can influence public opinion and policy making – and sort reality effects (Entman, 1993), for a common denominator in the diverse usage of frames seems to be that something, like a notion of a problem or solution, can be understood in different ways, according to different frames, highlighting specific aspects and leaving out others (van Hulst et al. 2024). Each IFI has the environmental and social framework (ESF) of its own, which sets out its commitment to sustainable development, through a bank policy, and sets out the mandatory requirements that apply to the borrower and projects. These requirements are referred to, depending on the specific IFI, as safeguards or standards. And, it sets out the requirements for borrowers relating to the identification and assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts associated with projects supported by the bank. These requirements come under a diversity of such name-giving as Environmental and Social Standards by the International Development Association (IDA), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IAB), Environmental and Social Requirements by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Performance Standards by International Financial Corporation (IFC), and Environmental and Social Operational Safeguards by the African Development Bank (AfDB). Whatever the terminology used to refer to policies by any given agency, the bottom line remains the requirement made to the borrower to abide by some standards considered to be fundamental and essential to project social and environmental sustainability. The agency conducts the environmental and social due diligence of project during the project identification and design phases so as to screen and scope the project in order to evaluate its potential for risks and impacts. It also assesses the borrowing country’s environmental and social framework (ESF), which “includes those aspects of the country’s policy, legal and institutional framework, including its national, subnational, or sectoral implementing institutions and applicable laws, regulations, rules and procedures, and implementation capacity, which are relevant to the environmental and social risks and impacts of the project”<sup>6</sup>. Involvement in these activities gives the agency the edge to accessing to information on the policy and institutional frameworks for the environmental and social governance of the borrowing countries. And, should shortcomings in these frameworks be identified, and subsequent corrective actions or measures be required, the agency, as both the project funder and the one knowledgeable about it policies, may recommend addressing these shortcomings, which move may trigger off institutional and policies reforms aimed at enhancing specific capacities, as they pertain to project implementation and monitoring. By recommending actions and measures as appropriate, and by monitoring them for accuracy and effective implementation, the agency steps, as players, into the public policy arena of borrowing countries. The funding agency gains, thereby, though indirectly, access to the policy making table of the loan-recipient country. “In addition to financing activities, donors and international financial institutions can influence policymaking in developing countries and therefore undermine country ownership through their research, surveillance activities and technical assistance” (Stichelmanns, 2016).

‘Encounters between the state and its citizens are power-laden and fraught with competing interests’ (Gutheil, 2022). To paraphrase this assertion, we advance that encounters between funding agency and its loan-recipient countries are power-laden, and potentially inductive of a policy-maker and

---

<sup>5</sup> Environmental Assessment and Review in Sub-Saharan Africa, Jean-Roger Mercier Post-UNCED Series, TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, Building Blocks for AFRICA 2025 Paper No. 7 21118 September 1995 Environmentally Sustainable Development Division \* Africa Technical Department (AFTES)

<sup>6</sup> The WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

policy-taker relationship type. “Despite the movement for democratization across the developing world, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have been continuing to bypass parliaments, a trend that is at odds with donor insistence on ‘good governance.’<sup>7</sup> Besides, discursive power, researchers in policy studies, planning and related disciplines such as political science and public administration, environmental studies, conflict studies and science and technology studies found, plays a role in the dynamics of in- and exclusion in policymaking and policy implementation (Fischer & Forester, 1993; Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 2000). For the concept of power, here, Joseph Nye Jr definition gives reference. Joseph Nye Jr defines soft power in his seminal work ‘The Means to Success in World Politics’, as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments” or to be more concise, “soft power is attractive power” (Nye Jr, 2004). It was a prominent contribution by Joseph Nye Jr to the conceptual analysis of power to have introduced a dichotomous definition based on whether it operates through coercion/payment or through attraction. He introduced this dichotomy in the conceptual definition of power by distinguishing between “hard power” and “soft power”. Approaching it from the resources perspective, power, Joseph Nye Jr puts it, means a process in the form of ability to achieve, through a transformation strategy, desired results. And, power from this perspective, he posits, has three different facets. This approach to power by Nye echoes the conceptual approach by Dahl (1957) in terms of influence, authority, and control. Dahl, though pointing out the strangeness of the concept “power” in English, as being fuzzy rather than clear-cut as concepts of influence and control, has, nonetheless, built on it, contending that lack of clarity can provide possibilities for alternative paths and methods in research and contribute to policy analyses (Dahl, 1957). Power, this scholar advances, is a type of relationship between actors such as people, states, groups, and governments, and it is the ability to persuade a person to do something that they are not inclined to do. This first facet, which may be referred to as coercive power (Kelley & Thibaut 1978; Weber, 1968) or the control over another's outcomes, is the ability of someone to force someone to do what he or she wants against his or her will. This kind of power may be dubbed “hard power”. “Hard power” refers to the ability to make the opposite party do things they wouldn't normally do using threats, and rewards (Keohane & Nye, 1998). The second one refers to the ability of someone to direct the preference strategies of others by setting an agenda -whether those being directed are aware of it or not. And, the third one is the ability to influence the beliefs, preferences, and perspectives of others without them realizing it. The second and third facets of power, Nye (2011) holds, contribute to soft power, that is, the ability to achieve favored outcomes (Canyurt, 2025).

With the foundational components being able to be expressed as attraction, persuasion, and agenda-setting, soft power is the ability to shape the preferences of others (Nye, 2011). Soft power, as a conceptual tool, is not something granted, but should emanate from some sources. This skill can rely on the appeal of a culture, and ideology or the ability to manipulate it (Nye, 1990). Soft power of a country, Joseph Nye Jr (2004) asserts, is generated by three primary resources: culture, political values, and foreign policies. Culture refers both to high culture (i.e. literature, art, and education) and to popular culture, which is mostly addressed to mass entertainment. Political values refer to domestic values and policies of a country or ideology. The third source of soft power, according to Nye Jr, is the foreign policy of a country, which can generate attraction, if perceived as legitimate by other countries (Canyurt, 2025).

“The World Bank is a major source of finance for developing countries and the IMF has a crucial function in “signaling” which countries receive more funding from both official and private sources. These roles confer incredible power to these two institutions that have spread their wings well beyond their original mandates”<sup>8</sup> International financial institutions (IFIs) are not countries, but they do have policies embedded in their requirements. These requirements draw upon certain norms and practices

---

<sup>7</sup> International Financial Institutions (IFIs)– The major barrier to change in the aid system. Ahmed Swapan Mahmud Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE)

<sup>8</sup> International Financial Institutions (IFIs)– The major barrier to change in the aid system Ahmed Swapan Mahmud Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE). The Reality of Aid Asia Pacific Network

valued and advocated by the bank member countries, so that they became standards. And, various safeguards relate, one way or the other, to human rights. "The relationship between human rights and the environment is considered by IOs or UN agencies whose principal objective is not the protection of human rights usually in terms of a specific human right or aspect of human existence".<sup>9</sup> These rights are clustered as: right to healthy environment, right to an adequate standard of living (poverty, environment and development), right to food, right to water, right to health, cultural rights, access to information, public participation. The safeguard policies of the international financial institutions (IFIs), it may be inferred from the conditionality attached to them, operate as a vehicle for disseminating, through policy compliance by borrowing countries, policy objectives set out and advocated by these agencies, providing them, thereby, an edge for getting involved, though indirectly, in the policy making process of countries. For instance, abiding by agency policies might require, under some requirements, joining some international treaties and implementing some Good International Industry Practices (GIIPs), which might entail implementing, as relevant, some policy and institutional reforms. International financial institutions (IFIs), by so doing, are wielding soft power, "get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye Jr, 2004). Arise, then, against this contextual background the following questions: (i) Recommending borrowing countries to implement policy reforms makes IFIs funding agencies or policy players? (ii) If so, how do they play this role? (iii) How do borrowing countries respond to this changing role? (iv) Are these responses country-specific or do they exhibit some cross-country common traits?

## ***II/-State-Of-The Art Research***

Soft power as a concept, Özdemir (2008) referring to Nye's suggestion contends, is a well-established tool for explaining power in international politics from the perspective of international policy analysis and international relations theories. And, looking in literature on international policy analysis and international relations, some theories gained prominence as most basic approaches of the discipline: realism, constructivism, and liberalism<sup>10</sup>.

### **Realism**

Power, for Morgenthau (1962), one of the major representatives of the realist school, means that a person has control over other people's ideas and actions. Realism, which depicts international relations as a power struggle between self-interested states (Walt, 1998), views power as the ability of states to make others do things they would not otherwise do, using their material resources (Barnett & Duvall, 2005), and state capacities are a crucial source for being able to influence the behaviors of other states (Ari, 2018). Power, in realism, is the ability to deter other states from taking some actions or doing some things (Özdemir, 2008). Power is, so to speak, about creating an impression for the sake of deterrence. In both domestic and foreign policy, realist theory advocates advance, policymakers have developed three main behavioral models: maintaining power, increasing power, and demonstrating power (Morgenthau, 1948). Morgenthau's summary of the realist approach to power in six principles, while focusing on material power and interests, also addresses non-material elements such as ideology, ethics, and moral values. It may, therefore, be said that realism attributes some importance to these abstract values that underlie soft power. While some argue that the concept of soft power contradicts the realist view of power (Gallarotti

<sup>9</sup> The Intersection of Human Rights and Environmental Issues: A review of institutional developments at the international level DR ADRIANA FABRA. Joint UNEP-OHCHR Expert Seminar on Human Rights and the Environment 14-16 January 2002 Geneva BACKGROUND PAPER No. 3 Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente

<sup>10</sup> SOFT POWER FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORIES Asst. Prof. Dilek CANYURT (Ph.D.)

& Al Filali, 2014), Nye contends that the soft power concept is not incompatible with realism (Nye, 2011), which, by the way, not only considers power as a relevant topic, but also gives it centrality in international relations (Baldwin, 2016). Some scholars, approaching power as a conceptual tool, evaluate soft power as a sub-branch of realism named "realistic soft power". Come, for instance, under this sub-branch Alexander Sergunin and Leonid Karabeshkin's study on Russia's soft power.

### **Constructivism**

Constructivism holds that the important aspect of international relations is not material but social, for international system, its advocates argue, is a man-made formation consisting of ideas, not material forces (Jackson & Sorensen, 2022). And, the concept of soft power is not alien to constructivist approach (Gallarotti & Al Filali, 2014). With its assertion that normative and ideational frameworks are equally impactful as physical structures, the constructivist approach may be justifiably associated with the notion of soft power. Non-material structures, its advocates hold, determine the identities of actors, and these identities determine interests and, therefore, interest-based actions. And, as actors' actions are interest-based, explaining international political phenomena requires, therefore, understanding how actors' interests are determined. There is, within constructivism, a two-way reciprocal action, for scholars within this framework claim that actors and structures mutually construct each other (Reus-Smit, 2013). Focusing its understanding on identities and interests, which it describes as dependent variables affected by mutual interactions, constructivism claims that states are constructed through interactions that occur in historical processes (Wendt, 2013). Power is viewed by state, within this framework, in terms of the interests they determine from the perspective of their own perceptions, intentions, ideas, and opinions (Özdemir, 2008). And, this interaction takes place within the context of what may be dubbed "constructivist soft power", it is possible to say that countries can create new interests and identities by cooperating with countries that are attractive to them.

### **Neoliberalism**

Soft power neoliberalism, also known as institutional liberalism, it is worth noting, builds on the same core arguments as classical liberalism, with the key difference between them being that while the former emphasizes an international system composed of a network of international regimes and entities rather than a central state, the latter focuses directly on the state (Bozdağlıoğlu & Özen, 2004). Some researchers associate, not surprisingly so, the concept of soft power theoretically with liberal theory and, especially, with the perspective of "neo-liberal institutionalism" (Gomichon, 2013). And, this connection is premised on the structure of the liberal approach, which values individual freedoms, human rights, and democracy, and prioritizes cooperation between states and effectiveness of transnational actors that are accepted by neo-liberals (Burchill, 2014).

But, in spite of existing overlapping, in this context, between soft power resources and a liberal democratic peace approach, the concept of soft power cannot, some scholars argue, be fully evaluated within the liberal framework, and this for the paradoxes concealed within the concept of soft power. Existence of such countervailing instances, where soft power sources lead to hard power, even threatening peace by causing negative perceptions between countries or casting a shadow over peace, negating this evaluation, is, this argument continues, if anything, an illustration of one such paradox.

It is, meanwhile, a distinctive feature of liberal perspective to overcome this paradoxical outcome by incorporating this shortcoming, so that the soft power sources are enriched, with the result of peaceful implications on international relations (Canyurt, 2025). In the context of all power sources ultimately creating a soft power effect, being lumped together with soft power rather than just its sources, this concept takes on different positions within each paradigm, and may, therefore, be considered a tool within liberalism or neoliberalism. Conceptually framed this way, within the framework of the liberal paradigm, and producing such an effect, soft power can be dubbed "liberalistic soft power". The concept of soft

power remains a popular one among scholars interested in analyzing international relations at the national level (Brannagan & Giulianotti, 2018). The theoretical approach to analyzing the role of international financial institutions (IFIs) in policies of nations is neo-liberalism, and, so for a number of reasons. One of these reasons is that the soft power approach to international relations, as based on complex and interdependent world, falls in line with the assumption underlying the liberal and neo-liberal paradigm (Kearn, 2011). Another reason is that neo-liberals emphasize the advantages of multilateralism over unilateralism as a source of influence (Gallarotti & Al Filali, 2014). A third reason, not the least relevant, is that neo-liberalism focuses on the functions of international organizations (Gomichon, 2013), and international financial institutions (IFIs), being considered multilateral organizations, may be amenable to this theoretical analysis. “The neoliberal agenda that emerged was to become a familiar set of policies labeled the “Washington consensus” by economist John Williamson” (Krever, 2011).

### Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Our theoretical and conceptual framework draws upon the neoliberal approach to power and the discourse theory. It draws upon the neoliberal theory, as the structure of the liberal approach values individual freedoms, human rights, and democracy, and prioritizes cooperation between states and effectiveness of transnational actors (Burchill, 2014). And, it draws upon the discourse theory, as it focuses on language as a structure much more than on the agency of actors or organizations in the production and reproduction of language.

Soft power, from the neoliberal perspective, emanates from its values; individual freedoms, human rights, and democracy, and its prioritizing cooperation between states and effectiveness of transnational actors. The focal points of liberalism are freedom, cooperation, peace, and progress (Jackson & Sorensen, 2022). These values underlie solutions to environmental and social risks and impacts of projects, as framed in environmental and social framework (ESF), and referred to as requirements, safeguards or standards by IFIs. International financial institutions (IFIs) may, therefore, be said to wield soft power. Meanwhile, the neoliberal perspective on soft power, while pointing to the source of this power, does not resolve the question as to how this power, in a given context, operates; its *modus operandi*. And, this is where the discourse approach comes to the rescue of neoliberal perspective on soft power. This approach affords a framework within which interconnections between ideas, concepts and actors play themselves out in their power dynamics. “Discourse is here defined as an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to phenomena”, and “a discourse coalition is basically a group of actors who share a social construct” (Hajer, 1993). Defining a discourse coalition as the ensemble of a set of story lines, the actors that utter these story lines, and the practices that conform to these story lines, all organized around a discourse, this approach suggests that once a new discourse is formulated, it will produce story lines on specific problems, employing the conceptual machinery of the new discourse. Politics is, this suggestion implies, a process in which different actors from various backgrounds form specific coalitions around specific story lines. “Story lines are the medium through which actors try to impose their view of the reality on others, suggest certain social positions and practices, and criticize alternative social arrangements” (Hajer 1993). Dominant discourses make some frames resonate better and more powerful. In communication studies, while most framing happens subconsciously, framing can thus be used as a strategy to reach communicational, commercial or political goals (Benford & Snow, 2000). Frames are never neutral and can be powerful, they can influence public opinion and policy making – and sort reality effects (Entman, 1993).

Discursive scholars consider discourse as a social practice, in other words, it is through structures in our language that taboos are created, biases are mobilized and dominant ideas get institutionalized (Hajer, 1995). As such, discourse as a linguistic structure disciplines common-sense norms, which is especially relevant in politics and policymaking, such as punishment, health care, sexuality (in Foucault’s work), environment (Hajer, 1995), energy controversies (Metze & Dodge, 2016) and migration (van



Ostaijen, 2016, 2020). Scholars in discourse theory focus on language as a structure much more than on the agency of actors or organizations in the production and reproduction of language. In that focus, there is some agency in the formation of discursive networks of actors, around floating or empty signifiers (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), around storylines (Hajer, 1995) or boundary objects (Metze & Dodge, 2016). “Language is recognized as a medium, a system of signification through which actors not simply describe but create the world. Language has the capacity to make politics, to create signs and symbols that can shift power-balances and that can impact on institutions and policy-making” (Hajer, 1993).

Being at the vanguard of development research, these IFIs built a discourse coalition, with their policy requirements as story lines, environmental and social experts as actors, environmental and social impact assessment as practice, and sustainable development as discourse. These experts, uttering the environmental and social sustainability discourse, gain leverage for shaping the preference strategies of borrowing countries by setting the agenda as well as influencing their preferences, beliefs, and strategies as far as environmental as social sustainability of projects is concerned. It is, therefore, the central assumption of this paper that international financial institutions (IFIs) use investment financing with the attached conditionality regarding environmental and social sustainability of projects to persuade borrowing countries to pursue development practices consistent with sustainable development.

### ***III/-Research Design***

The research design of this paper is qualitative-interpretative. The most immediately visible characteristic of interpretive methods is that interpretive researchers, Fischer, Miller & Sidney, 2007 point out, do not feel the need to transform words into numbers for analysis. They rather stick close, say these scholars, to the character of the data they are encountering: as policy-relevant actors deliberate through words, whether written or oral (or, for that matter, nonverbal), researchers use those words as their data in seeing meanings and sources of meanings. “These methods are word-based, from data “collection” instruments to data analysis tools to research report formats and contents” (Fischer, Miller & Sidney, 2007).

### **Method**

The paper uses desk-based research. And, the approach to addressing its research question rests on documentary analysis, which consists in collecting and retrieving, in academic and scholarly literature concerned with IFIs’ interventions in loan-recipient countries, documents relevant to sustainable development. “Analysis and data generation are not so clearly separable—analysis begins, in fact, with the very design of the research project, and fieldwork, deskwork, and text work (the “writing up”) are intertwined” (Fischer, Miller & Sidney, 2007). The retrieved documents are subject to content analysis. Document analysis, lends itself to frame analysis or value-critical analysis (see, e.g., Linder 1995; Schmidt 2000, 2006; Schon & Rein 1994; Swaffield 1998; see also Luker, 1984). The paper resorts, to this end, to the discourse coalition approach to policy analysis. Though new story lines can become a popular way of conceptualizing the world, Hajer 1993 points out, they do not translate straightforward into a dominant discourse in a given political realm. For a discourse coalition to be said to dominate a given political realm, Hajer 1993 advances, tow conditions should be fulfilled. First, it dominates the discursive space; that is, central actors are persuaded by, or forced to accept, the rhetorical power of a new discourse (condition of discourse structuration). And, second, this is reflected in the institutional practices of that political domain; that is, the actual policy process is conducted according to the idea of a given discourse (condition of discourse institutionalization). “The discourse coalition approach thus has three advantages: (1) it analyzes strategic action in the context of specific socio-historical discourses and institutional practices and provides the conceptual tools to analyze controversies over individual issues; (2) it takes the explanation beyond mere reference to interests, analyzing how interests are played out in

the context of specific discourses and organizational practice; and (3) it illuminates how different actors and organizational practices help to reproduce or fight a given bias without necessarily orchestrating or coordinating their actions or without necessarily sharing deep values”(Hajer,1993).

### Data, Sources and Collection

“Methods of generating data are threefold: observing, interviewing, reading. Interpretive research typically draws on one or more of these three. The third source of interpretive data is documents of various kinds, depending on the research topic. These can be legislative records, bills and their marked-up drafts, notes on meetings, personal diaries, daily calendars, agency memos, annual reports, correspondence, and so on” (Fischer, F., Miller, G.J., & Sidney, M. S, 2007) Data, here, are: the environmental and social policies of IFIs, the practice of screening and scoping project for their potential risks and impacts, the practice of environmental and social assessment, and environmental and social management framework(ESMF) of loan-recipient countries. Data sources are, therefore, environmental and social frameworks (ESFs), environmental and social impact assessment templates, involuntary resettlement procedures and templates of IFIs, environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) reports, and resettlement plans, of loan-recipient countries. To collect these documents, the paper uses internet access to IFIs platforms, country libraries, projects platforms, and, then, retrieves documents related to projects with environmental and social assessment requirements.

## IV/-Results and Discussion

### Results

The data collected provide us with an overview of the requirements of the IFIs relating to environmental and social sustainability of projects as well as laws, regulations, policies, and systems that are relevant to the risks and impacts of the project of IFIs’ loan-recipient countries.

#### *Requirements of the IFIs relating to environmental and social sustainability*

Each IFI has an environmental and social framework (ESF) of its own, setting out it’s overarching environmental and social policy, with its mandatory requirements in relation to the projects it supports through funding. And, these requirements are in the following tables.

Table 1: Requirements by International Financial Corporation (IFC)

---

Performance Standard 1: assessment and management of environmental and Social risks and Impacts
Performance Standard 2: labor and working Conditions
Performance Standard 3: resource efficiency and Pollution Prevention
Performance Standard 4: Community Health, Safety, and Security
Performance Standard 5: land acquisition and Involuntary resettlement
Performance Standard 6: biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable management of living natural resources
Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples
Performance Standard 8: Cultural Heritage

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of International Financial Corporation (IFC)

**Table 2: Requirements by International Development Association (IDA)**

---

Environmental and Social Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
Environmental and Social Standard 2: Labor and Working Conditions
Environmental and Social Standard 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management
Environmental and Social Standard 4: Community Health and Safety
Environmental and Social Standard 5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement
Environmental and Social Standard 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources
Environmental and Social Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities
Environmental and Social Standard 8: Cultural Heritage
Environmental and Social Standard 9: Financial Intermediaries
Environmental and Social Standard 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of World Bank

**Table 3: Requirements by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)**

---

Environmental and Social Performance Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 2: Labor and Working Conditions
Environmental and Social Standard 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 4: Community Health and Safety
Environmental and Social Standard 5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 8: Cultural Heritage
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 9: Financial Intermediaries
Environmental and Social Performance Standard 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

**Table 4: Requirements by Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

---

Environmental and Social Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
Environmental and Social Standard 2: Labor and Working Conditions
Environmental and Social Standard 3: Resource Conservation and Pollution Prevention
Environmental and Social Standard 4: Health, Safety and Security
Environmental and Social Standard 5: Land Acquisition and Land Use Restriction
Environmental and Social Standard 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resources Management
Environmental and Social Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples
Environmental and Social Standard 8: Cultural Heritage
Environmental and Social Standard 9: Climate Change
Environmental and Social Standard 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

**Table 5: Requirements by African Development Bank (AfDB)**

---

Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 1 (OS1): Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 2 (OS2): Labour and Working Conditions
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 3 (OS3): Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 4 (OS4): Community Health, Safety and Security
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 5 (OS5): Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Access to Land and Land use, and Involuntary Resettlement
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 6(OS6): Habitat and Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 7 (OS7): Vulnerable Groups
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 8 (OS8): Cultural Heritage
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 9 (OS9): Financial Intermediaries
Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 10 (OS10): Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of the African Development Bank (AfDB)

**Table 6: Requirements by European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)**

---

Environmental and Social Requirement 1: Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts
Environmental and Social Requirement 2: Labour and working conditions
Environmental and Social Requirement 3: Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and control
Environmental and Social Requirement 4: Health, safety and security
Environmental and Social Requirements5: Land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement
Environmental and Social Requirement 6: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources
Environmental and Social Requirement 7: Indigenous Peoples
Environmental and Social Requirement 8: Cultural heritage
Environmental and Social Requirement 9: Financial intermediaries
Environmental and Social Requirement 10: Stakeholder engagement

---

Source: Environmental and Social Framework of EBRD

The requirements of IFIs have more in common than they exhibit differences. On looking at these requirements referred to as standards (ADB, IDA, IDB, IFC), safeguards (AfDB), and requirements (EBRD), they all are, it appears, solutions to issues of environmental and social sustainability of projects, as framed by the dominant discourse of sustainable development. These solutions are framed as: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts; Labor and Working Conditions; Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention; Community Health; Safety and Security; Land acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement; Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources; Indigenous People; Cultural Heritage; Gender Equality; Stakeholder engagement and Information Disclosure.

### *The Environmental and Social Frameworks (ESFs) of Borrowing Countries*

Borrowing countries' frameworks are described as the elements of a country's laws, regulations, policies, and systems that are relevant to the risks and impacts of the project (World Bank, 2016). The World Bank safeguards were widely considered thought-leading, comprehensive, and stringent and they formed the basis of many other organizations' policies (Park, 2010) although controversy over the negative environmental impacts of Bank funded projects remained (Rich, 2013; Sommer, Shandra, & Restivo, 2017). The environmental and social frameworks (ESFs) of borrowing countries, specifically of Sab-Saharan Africa countries, are, by comparison with that of IFIs' frameworks, not consolidated in a single document. The actual assessment of the environmental and social frameworks (ESF) of the

borrowing country by the bank, through its environmental and social due diligence, focuses on the environmental and social management framework (ESMF) of the borrowing country. The purpose of establishing an ESMF is to identify, assess, manage, and monitor the environmental and social risks and impacts of projects. And, an ESMF comprises, inter alia, the following elements: environmental and social policy, environmental and social procedures, organizational capacity and competency, and monitoring and reporting.

The country's laws, regulations, policies, and systems that are relevant to the risks and impacts of projects, are developed and established, in part, in response to IFIs' requirements to take appropriate measures and actions to address shortcomings identified, as a result of the environmental and social due diligence of IFIs, or the environmental and social assessment impacts (ESIA), and the resettlement frameworks (RF) or livelihood restoration plan (LRP) validating decision. It is, therefore, by reading through the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA), and resettlement frameworks (RF) or livelihood restoration plan (LRP) of these countries that one can access to their environmental and social frameworks.

## Discussion

This paper purports, in concerning itself with this agency by the IFIs, as was already mentioned, to contribute to highlight (i) the pathways through which their influence takes place, (ii) the ways borrowing countries respond to this influence by the funding agency, and (iii) whether these responses are country-specific or exhibit some common traits.

### *1) The pathways through which IFIs' influence takes place*

"All IFIs have aimed at mainstreaming environmental issues in their country assistance strategies, sectoral- and policy-lending operations, and analytic activities"<sup>11</sup>. International financial Institutions' power relies on their ability to manipulate policies embedded in their requirements. And, this power goes hand in gloves with their discourse coalition building. And, the World Bank had a program to this end. "To better respond to these new conditions and to make up for the shortcomings of the procedure, the overarching goal of the team in charge of environmental review in the Africa Region will be to maximize its contribution to sustainable development in the field in SSA. The main objectives include: Increased information flows among the various stakeholders; Improved quality of environmental assessments and of monitoring in the field; More proactivity in promoting environmentally sustainable development"<sup>12</sup>. IFIs' interventions in projects' identification and development comprises, as was already mentioned in this paper, such practices as: project screening and scoping for potential risks and impacts, assessing the environment and social management framework (ESMF), validating environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA), and commissioning technical assistance for capacity building, wherever and whenever relevant. These practices are engaged in by such actors as bank environment department staff, hired environmental experts and social experts. These actors utter such storylines as framed under environmental and social requirements and environmental and social risks and impacts these requirements are supposed to address. Their practice is environmental and social impact assessment, and the discourse shared by this coalition is sustainable development. The discursive space in development is dominated by sustainability, and environmental experts as well as social expert within IFIs and those commissioned for

---

<sup>11</sup> Leveraging through the International Financial Institutions, GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT International Monetary Fund

<sup>12</sup> Environmental Assessment and Review in Sub-Saharan Africa, Jean-Roger Mercier, Post-UNCED Series TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA Building Blocks for AFRICA 2025 Paper No. 7 21118 September 1995 Environmentally Sustainable Development Division \*Africa Technical Department (AFTES)

short term missions, as central actors, use the rhetorical power of sustainable development. Discourse space is a conceptual framework for how a discourse is structured, representing the knowledge, context, and mental space shared by speakers or writers and their audience, “a discourse space as a cognitive and pragmatic context generated by knowledge (propositions) contained in a discourse” (Plotnikova, 2019). “More than any other development actor, the Bank can provide the theoretical legitimacy and financial clout to shape mainstream development discourse” (Krever, 2011). So, the requirements for hired environmental and social experts to, be knowledgeable about the IFIs safeguards and, have experience in environmental and social assessment, and involuntary resettlement, means to accept and, be familiar with the dominant discourse: sustainable development. “Among the international financial institutions created in the post-war period, the Bank has claimed a specialization in promoting development. Its size, above all, places it in a unique position within the constellation of development actors and allows it to exert both significant intellectual and financial clout to shape mainstream development discourse” (Krever, 2011).

Assessing the environmental and social management framework (ESMF) of the borrowing country, as part of the bank environmental and social due diligence, may enable to identify weaknesses requiring strengthening, through technical assistance. Technical assistance is the process of providing specialized support to solve a problem, build capacity, or offer guidance. Beneficiaries of technical assistance are, to this end, provided with skills and competences necessary to make up for some gaps and weaknesses in their ESMF. Environmental and social experts are, as part of central actors in the discourse coalition, enlisted to teach trainees, employing the conceptual machinery of the new discourse. Trainees are, then, among other things, persuaded by technical assistants to accept the rhetorical power of a new discourse. And, they are coached to conduct the policy process according to sustainable development. These technical assistants provide guidance on formulating policies and setting up institutions relevant to the identification, assessment, management and monitoring of the environmental and social risks and impacts of projects.

## *(II) The ways borrowing countries respond to this influence by the IFIs*

The World Bank policy instruments have influenced other international institutions and states which have introduced some of their features into their own legal order<sup>13</sup>. All loan-recipient countries developed and established, with the assistance of the IFIs, their own environmental and social frameworks (ESF), often drawn upon that of the International Development Association (IDA). “In addition to its financial leverage, the Bank is able to influence development thinking through its perceived legitimacy as a fount of development wisdom reflecting leading technical research. Political elites frequently cite Bank research in support of policy choices” (Krever, 2011). Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is worth noting, formulated policies, set up institutions, and passed laws relevant to the identification, assessment, management, and monitoring of environmental and social risks and impacts of projects. And, these policies and institutions came about in response to the IFIs’ conditionality attached to loans for projects eligible for financing. “Moreover, the size of the Bank’s lending program—billions of dollars each year—allows it to exert significant influence on the terms upon which borrowing countries gain access to capital and the policies within those countries” (Krever, 2011). Looking at the legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks of these countries, their content, it appears, are made when the countries were negotiating with IFIs funding for some projects. “The Bank’s due diligence responsibilities will include, as appropriate: (a) reviewing the information provided by the Borrower relating to the environmental and social risks and impacts of projects, and requesting additional and relevant information where there are gaps that prevent the Bank from completing its due diligence; and (b) providing guidance to assist the Borrower in developing appropriate measures consistent with the mitigation hierarchy to address

---

<sup>13</sup> Some observations Regarding Environmental Covenants and conditionalities in the World Bank lending Activities Mohammed Abdelwahab Bekhechi Max Planck UNYB 3 (1999).

environmental and social risks and impacts in accordance with the ESSs<sup>14</sup>. This trend may, for instance, be illustrated by the appearance, in the environmental and social frameworks (ESFs) of the loan-recipient countries, concomitantly with loan reception from IFIs, of, among other things, legislation relevant to resettlement, along with institutional framework, eligibility, and valuation of and compensation for losses. Environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) is institutionalized in IFIs' loan-recipient countries, since projects are, as part of their development and implementation, currently subject, irrespective of their funding sources, to environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA). So, also is preparing Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), Resettlement Framework (RF), Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP), wherever and whenever relevant. Besides, the application of the environmental and social safeguards to projects, whether funding is secured domestically or internationally, has become routine in Sub-Saharan Africa. To wrap it in a nut shell, development discourse, in Sub-Saharan Africa borrowing countries, was structured by the dominant discourse of sustainability, with the resulting institutionalization of sustainable development practice.

*(III) Are these responses country-specific or do they exhibit some common traits?*

“The requirement for World Bank co-financed projects to go through environmental assessments has not been a major impediment on the borrower's side; the results from the latest borrower survey conducted by the Bank in 1995 shows that even African Government representatives believe that (a) environmental issues are of high priority in their countries and (b) the World Bank should do more to help countries deal with these issues.”<sup>15</sup> Observing the emerging trend in environmental and social sustainability approach to projects' development and implementation in borrowing countries, and specifically, in Sub-Saharan Africa countries, there seems to be similarities in the response of loan-recipient countries to IFIs requirements, even though, some slightly noticeable nuances might appear here and there. “There has also been a growing emphasis on harmonization and alignment of safeguard policies and country systems”<sup>16</sup>. Harmonization took place across countries to the extent that, for instance, the template of any given environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA), even though it exhibits some agency-specific or some country-specific layout as far as structure is concerned, has the same headlines and contains the same relevant information. “In 2005, as a part of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, donors and partner countries agreed to foster the better integration of social and environmental considerations into country strategies and programs”<sup>17</sup>. As regards resettlement, nuances, if any, may be reflected in, inter alia, compensation and assistance eligibility criteria, and types and levels of compensation. Depending on legal and regulatory elements, for instance, some project-affected persons (PAPs) may have differentiated entitlements, or undifferentiated entitlements. Illegal as well as legal settlers in a land may, for instance, be considered entitled to the same level of compensation for say loss of livelihood or access to resources upon which their subsistence depends. Sub-Saharan Africa countries, by and large, developed environmental and social frameworks akin to those of IFIs, and for most of them, to that of the International Development Association (IDA).

---

<sup>14</sup> The WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

<sup>15</sup> Environmental Assessment and Review in Sub-Saharan Africa, Jean-Roger Mercier, Post-UNCED Series TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA Building Blocks for AFRICA 2025 Paper No. 7 21118 September 1995 Environmentally Sustainable Development Division \* Africa Technical Department (AFTES)

<sup>16</sup> Leveraging through the International Financial Institutions, GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT International Monetary Fund.

<sup>17</sup> Leveraging through the International Financial Institutions, GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT International Monetary Fund.

## Conclusion

International financial institutions (IFIs) developed and introduced, as environmental issues emerged decades ago, conditionality relating to sustainable development, a concept framed in the discourse space by their discourse coalition. Conditionality attached to loans-abiding by some environmental and social safeguards considered fundamental and essential to sustainable development-operates as a vehicle for disseminating IFIs' policy objectives. Environmental and social due diligence by bank staff to screen and scope projects for potential risks and impacts, commissioning technical assistance, and validating environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) of projects, provides IFIs with venues for subtly accessing to the public policy arena of countries applying for loans with them, where they become policy players. The World Bank was able, with the leverage of the resources it commands, to make its frame of development resonate better and more powerful in the development space so as to become the dominant discourse, creating a spillover effect. With the other IFIs following suite, sustainable development became the only game in town. Being at the vanguard of development research, these IFIs built a discourse coalition, with their policy requirements as story lines, environmental and social experts as actors, environmental and social assessment as practice, and sustainable development as discourse. And, using their dominant discourse in development space, these institutions influence policies and institutions of borrowing countries. These international financial institutions, by uttering sustainable development discourse, gain leverage for shaping the preference strategies by setting the agenda of borrowing countries as well as influencing the preferences, beliefs, and strategies of these countries as far as environmental as social sustainability of projects is concerned. The effects of this influence is that countries that applied for, and received, loans from these IFIs adopted the same discourse, as may be evidenced by the development and institutionalization of their own environmental and social frameworks that draw upon that of loan-granting IFIs. Not only is the environmental and social sustainability mainstream discourse in project development and implementation practice in Sub-Saharan Africa countries, but screening and scoping projects for their potential for risks and impacts, and assessing environmental and social risks and impacts of these projects is established as standard practice as well.

## References

- African Development Bank Group's Integrated Safeguards System 2023, African Development Bank Group
- Anderson, A.B. 1975 *Policy Experiments: Selected Analytic Issues* Sage Journals
- Apthorpe, R. & Gasper, D. *Arguing Development Policy - Frames And Discourses*, eds. London
- Ar1, T. (2018) *International Relations Theories: Conflict, Hegemony, Cooperation*, 9th Edition, Bursa: Current
- Baldwin, D. A. (2016) *"Power and International Relations: A Conceptual Approach"*, Princeton University Press.
- Barnett, M., & Duvall, R. (2005) "Power in International Politics", *International Organization*, 59: 39
- Bekhechi, M.A. (1999) Some observations Regarding Environmental Covenants and conditionalities in the World Bank lending Activities Max Planck UNYB 3



- Benford & Snow (2000) Framing processes and social movement: An Overview and Assessment Annual Review of Sociology · August 2000 DOI: 10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.611
- Brannagan, P. M., & Giulianotti, R. (2018) "The soft power–soft disempowerment nexus: the case of Qatar", *International Affairs*, 94(5): 1139–1157.
- Bozdağlıoğlu, Y., & Özen, Ç. (2004). *Liberalizmden neoliberalizme güç olgusu ve sistemik bağımlılık*. Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi, 1(4), 75-76.
- Bunich, G.A. et al. (2019) *Regional Development Banks: Theory And Practice*, Russian University of Economics, Stremyanni Lane, 36, Moscow, 117997, Russia.
- Burchill, S. (2014) "*Liberalism*", Burchill et al. (eds.) *Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorileri*, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları.
- Cottiero, C. & Schneider, C. J. (2025) *International Financial Institutions and the Promotion of Autocratic Resilience*
- Dahl, A. R. (1957)"The Concept of Power", *Behavioral Science*, 2(3): 201-215.
- Durnová, A. P., & Weible, C. M. (2020). Tempest in a teapot? Toward new collaborations between mainstream policy process studies and interpretive policy studies. *Policy Sciences*, 53, 571–588. <https://www.doi.org/10.1007/s11077-020-09387-y>
- Durnová, A. (2022). Making interpretive policy analysis critical and societally relevant: Emotions, ethnography and language. *Policy and Politics*, 50(1), 43–58. <https://www.doi.org/10.1332/030557321X16129850569011>.
- Douglas, M. (1966) *Purity and Danger And analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo* Routledge Taylor & Francis Group London & New York
- Entman, R. M. (1993) "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." *Journal of Communication* 43 (4): 51–58.
- Environmental and social framework: Setting environmental and social standards for investment project financing. World Bank. (2016).
- Environmental and social framework September 2024 Revised Draft Asian Development Bank
- Environmental and Social Policy October 2024, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- Fabra, A. (2002) *The Intersection of Human Rights and Environmental Issues: A review of institutional developments at the international level*. Joint UNEP-OHCHR Expert Seminar on Human Rights and the Environment 14-16 January 2002 Geneva BACKGROUND PAPER No. 3 Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente
- Fedorova, T.V.& Khlyzova, N.Y. (2025) *Methodological genesis of the concept «Soft power» in the system of global regionalism*
- Fischer, F., & Forester, J. (1993). *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.



- Fischer, F., Miller, G.J., & Sidney, M. S. (2007) *Handbook of Public Policy Analysis Theory, Politics, and Methods* CRC Press Taylor & Francis Group, Boca Raton London New York
- Foucault, M., (1984) *Discipline and Punish*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Forester, J., (1993) Learning from Practice Stories - The priority of practical judgement. Pp.186-209 in Fischer & Forester (eds.).
- Gallarotti, G., & Al Filali, I. (2014) "The Soft Power of Saudi Arabia", *International Studies*, 49(3):
- Gilboa, E. (2008) Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*
- Gomichon, M. (2013) "Joseph Nye on Soft Power", <https://www.e-ir.info/2013/03/08/joseph-nye-onsoft-power/> (09.10.2023).
- Guillaumont, P., Boussichas, M., & Dsouza, A. (2003) The Evolution of Aid Conditionality: A Review of the Literature of the Last Twenty Years WORKING PAPER SEPTEMBER 2023
- Hajer, M. (1993) *Discourse coalition and the institutionalization of practice*
- Hajer, M. A. (1995) *The Politics of Environmental Discourse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hajer, M. (1995) *The politics of environmental discourse: Ecological modernization and the regulation of acid rain*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Hajer, M.A., (2005) Rebuilding ground zero. The politics of performance. *Planning theory & practice*, 6(4), pp.445-464
- Himberg, H. (2015) Comparative review of multilateral development bank safeguard systems Main Report and Annexes
- IFC Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability Effective January 1, 2012 International Finance Corporation World Bank
- IIC Environmental and social sustainability Policy, Inter-American Investment Corporation, Effective September 1, 2013
- Jackson, R. Sorensen, G. (2022) *Introduction to International Relations, Theories and Approaches* Fifth edition Oxford Press
- Kanyurt, D. (2025) Soft power from international relations theories *Journal of management and economic research* Cilt/Volume: 23 Sayı/Issue: 1 Mart/March 2025 ss. /pp. 196-212 D. Canyurt, <http://dx.doi.org/10.11611/yead.1365339>
- Kearn, J. D. (2011) "The Hard Truths About Soft Power", *Journal of Political Power*, 4(1): 65–85. Doi: 10.1080/2158379X.2011.556869.
- Kelley, H. H., & Thibaut, J. (1978). *Interpersonal relations: A theory of interdependence*. New York: Wiley.

- Keohane, R. O., & Jr., J. S. (1998) "Power and Interdependence in the Information Age", *Foreign Affairs*, 77(5): 81-94.
- Krever T. (2011) The Legal Turn in Late Development Theory: The Rule of Law and the World Bank's Development Model *Harvard International Law Journal* / Vol. 52, NUMBER 1, WINTER 2011
- Kudrat-E-Khuda (2020) The Interrelationship Between Environment and Human Rights: An Overview on Legal Context *Bhutan Journal of Research & Development*
- Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* London: Verso, 1985
- Leiteritz, R.J. (2001) Sovereignty, developing countries and international financial institutions: a Reply to David Williams *Review of International Studies* (2001), 27, 435–440 Copyright © British International Studies Association
- Linder, S. (1995) "Contending Discourses in the Electric and Magnetic Fields Controversy." *Policy Sciences* 28: 209–30.
- Luker, K. (1984) *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mahmood R. M. (2025). Power in International Relations: Insights from Realist and Liberal Theories. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 21 (8), 27
- Mahmud, A.S. International Financial Institutions (IFIs)– The major barrier to change in the aid system Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE). The Reality of Aid Asia Pacific Network
- Masango, R.(2001) Public participation in policy-making and implementation with specific reference to the Port Elizabeth municipality URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/10500/18142>
- Metze, T. & Dodge, G. (2016) *Dynamic Discourse Coalitions on hydro-fracking in Europe and the United States Environmental Communication* Routledge Taylor & Francis Group
- Mercier J.R. (1995) Environmental Assessment and Review in Sub-Saharan Africa Post-UNCED Series Towards environmentally sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa, Building Blocks for AFRICA, 2025 Paper No. 7 21118 September 1995 Environmentally Sustainable Development Division \* Africa Technical Department (AFTES
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1962) *Politics among nations*. New York: Chicago Press.
- Morley, J. et al. (2020) Implications of the World Bank's environmental and social framework for biodiversity Conservation Letters. 2021;14:e12759. <https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12759>
- Naushathali, A. H. International Financial Institutions, Sustainability, and Accountability
- Ney, S. (2013) *Resolving Messy Problems: Handling Conflicts in Environmental, Transport Health and Ageing Policy*. London: Routledge.
- Nye, J. S. (1990) "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy* (80): 153-171.
- Nye, J. S. (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*", New York: Public Affairs

- Nye, J. (2011) *"The Future of Power"*, New York: Public Affairs.
- Othman, R. (2024) *The Power of International Financial Institutions: An Analysis of World Bank and IMF Policies* Arab American University, Email: rose.othman@aaup.edu
- Özdemir, H. (2008) "Power in International Relations: A Multidimensional Assessment", Ankara University SBF Journal
- Park, S. (2010). The World Bank's global safeguard policy norm? In S. Park & A. Vetterlein (Eds.), *Owning Development: Creating Policy Norms in the IMF and the World Bank* (pp. 181–203).
- Plotnikova, S.N. (2019) *Discourse Spaces: a Systemic Approach* Journal of Siberian Federal University. *Humanities & Social Sciences* 1 (2019) 106-116
- Radwan, T. (2020) *The impact and influence of the international financial institutions on the Middle East & North Africa* Edited by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Regional Project Tunis, Tunisia 2020
- Rich, B. (2013). *Foreclosing the future, the World Bank and the politics of environmental destruction*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Reus-Smit, C. (2013) "Constructivism", in Burchill et al. (eds.) *Theories of International Relations*, Istanbul: Küre Publications.
- Schmidt, R.S. (2000) *Language Policy and Identity Politics in the United States*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Schmidt, R.S. (2006) "Value-Critical Policy Analysis: The Case of Language Policy in the United States." In *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*, ed. Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, ch. 17. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Schon, D.A. and Rein, M. (1994) *Frame Reflection: Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies*. New York: Basic Books.
- Stichelmanns, B.T. (2016) *How international financial institutions and donors influence economic policies in developing countries* September 2016 A Eurodad discussion paper
- Sommer, J. M., Shandra, J. M., & Restivo, M. (2017) The World Bank, contradictory lending, and forests: A cross-national analysis of organized hypocrisy. *International Sociology*, 32(6), 707–730.
- Swaffield, S. (1998) "Contextual Meanings in Policy Discourse: A Case Study of Language Use Concerning Resource Policy in the New Zealand High Country." *Policy Sciences* 31: 199–224.
- van Hulst, M. (2012) "Storytelling, a Model of and a Model for Planning." *Planning Theory* 11 (3): 299–318.
- van Hulst, M., & Yanow; D. (2016) "From policy 'frames' to 'framing': Theorizing a More Dynamic, Political Approach." *The American Review of Public Administration* 46 (1): 92–112
- van Hulst et al. (2024) *Discourse, framing and narrative: three ways of doing critical, interpretive policy analysis*, *Critical Policy Studies* Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

- van Ostaijen, M. (2016) "Between Migration and Mobility Discourses." *Critical Policy Studies* 11 (2): 166–190.
- Van der Waldt, G. (2002) E-Governance: Where do we stand and what are the challenges? *Administratio Publica*, 11(2).]
- Van Ostaijen; M. (2020) [Legitimizing intra-European movement discourses: understanding mobility and migration](#) *Comparative European Politics* 18 (1), 1-20
- Wagenaar, H. (2011) *Meaning in Action*. London: ME Sharpe.
- Walt, S. M. (1998) "International Relations: One World, Many Theories", *Foreign Policy* (110): 29–46.
- Weber, M. (1968) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, New York: Bedminster Press.
- Wendt, A. (2013) *The Formation of a Collective Identity and the International State*", in J. Spykman et al. (eds.) *Key Texts in International Relations*, Istanbul: International Relations Library.
- Yanow, D. (1993) The communication of policy meanings: Implementation as interpretation and text. *Policy Sciences*, 26(1), 41–61. <https://www.doi.org/10.1007/BF01006496>
- Yanow, D. (2000) *Interpretive Policy Analysis*. London: Sage.
- Yanow, D. (2014) *Interpretive analysis and comparative research*. In I. Engeli and C. Rothmayr, (eds.), *Comparative policy studies: Conceptual and methodological challenges*. Palgrave Macmillan UK. pp. 131-159.
- Wade, R. H. (1997) Greening the bank: The struggle over the environment. In D. Kapur, J. P. Lewis, & R. C. Webb (Eds.), *The World Bank: Its first half century—perspectives* (Vol. 2, pp. 1970–1995). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).