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The Hegemony of Global Politics: News Coverage of Climate Change in a Small Country

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ABSTRACT

Researching media coverage of climate change may shed light on the different configurations of global and domestic factors affecting journalism and politics. This article analyzes climate change coverage in Portugal from 2007 to 2014 in comparison with 14 other countries. It shows that the Portuguese press tends to reproduce the global political agenda on climate change, mainly focusing on international events associated with global political decision-making processes, instead of providing a domesticated coverage, as observed in other countries. National and local levels of action are thus obscured. The interplay between global and domestic factors—including characteristics of Portugal's press and politics, such as national political leaders' lack of mobilization and communication on climate change, media's deference to powerful sources, and reliance on international news feeds—creates the conditions for global politics to play an hegemonic role in media representations, which is likely to influence public engagement with climate change.

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Climate change; cross-national comparison; domestication in journalism; global news; global politics; media

Tackling climate change is both a major international challenge and a local challenge. The ways it is reported in the media offer hints at different configurations of global and domestic factors affecting journalism and climate policies. Political communication literature suggests that the media construct international events in ways that are relevant to domestic audiences and meaningful to their culture (Gurevitch, Levy, and Roeh 1991). The nation-state is taken as a framework (Schlesinger 1998), and media coverage of global issues tends to adopt domestic standpoints or framings. As already put by Schlesinger (1998), this perspective needs to be revised, and more recently Berglez (2008) has contended that the emergence of global journalism challenges this traditional national outlook on transnational issues. However, current research still provides evidence of domestication in the media coverage of international issues, including climate change (Eide and Ytterstad 2011; Kunelius and Eide 2012; Olausson 2014). Thus, further research is needed to understand how the interplay between global and domestic contexts translates into national reporting of climate change. As proposed by Kunelius and Eide (2012), the study of media framing of climate change can provide a more complex perspective on domestication in journalism by reflecting the dynamics of transnational journalism and powerful actors.

Accordingly, relations between political, journalistic, and other fields, as well as their interaction in global and national contexts, should be considered.

By focusing on the case of Portugal and comparing with 14 other countries involved in the international research project “Comparing Climate Change Policy Networks” (COMPON),¹ we explore the dynamics between global and domestic factors affecting media framing of climate change. We start by briefly analyzing the main factors affecting the fields of national climate politics and news production. After that, we present the theoretical background, and the method and empirical material used. The main findings are then described and discussed, including possible implications for public engagement with climate politics.

The Field of Climate Change Politics in Portugal

To understand Portugal’s climate change politics and its representation in the media, it is important to take into account the country’s recent political and economic history. Having been under an authoritarian regime for almost 50 years (1928–1974), Portugal reached the 1970s with a predominantly traditional rural society, a delayed and tentative industrialization, and high levels of illiteracy. The authoritarian regime had kept a hold on civic participation, while systematically censoring the media. In this context, the country’s engagement with environmental policies and culture was delayed.

Accession to the European Union (EU) (1986) was a top priority to nearly all political parties, and convergence with European development standards has been a major political goal. The country thereby gained an “external impulse” (Soromenho-Marques 1998) toward environmental protection.

The EU has been a frontrunner in climate change policy, and national political leaders have necessarily been committed to the implementation of European and national level climate policies. Portugal signed the Kyoto Protocol in 1998 (ratified in 2002). However, while most EU member countries pledged to start reducing their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions immediately, Portugal benefited from a kind of moratorium meant to compensate for its economic underdevelopment. It was authorized to increase its emissions by 27% (compared to 1990 levels) until 2012. Nevertheless, national emissions continued to rise, reaching 30–45% over the baseline year in 2005–2008. The implementation of the EU’s Emissions Trading System in 2005 was an important factor compelling Portugal to meet its Kyoto target. The government’s most important measures were an increase in wind power and a 40% increase in the energy efficiency of new buildings. Public discussion was limited, as were the government’s commitments, with the wind power sector being an exception. The economic slowdown, the closure of some industrial plants, and a remarkable increase in production of renewable energy² helped Portugal reach its Kyoto Protocol targets despite a continued strong reliance on road transport.

In spite of a lack of communication by policymakers and a lack of public involvement, climate change is socially perceived as a serious problem and consensually accepted as severe in public debates. Skeptical or critical voices are rare, and public opinion surveys show that the Portuguese tend to express high levels of concern (Schmidt and Delicado 2014).

National politics of climate change seem more an accommodation to global and European climate policy than a willing national design. This follows a national tradition

of seeking to be in accordance with the international order. Being a small, peripheral, and economically weak country, Portugal's positioning in the international system has been historically construed through alliances and informal agreements with greater powers (Telo 1997), which seem to have contributed to the development of a political culture of acquiescence with the international order as a secure way of seeking benefits. Consonance with the international order has also brought legitimacy to the national political system. Indeed, the focus on European integration has seen a wide political consensus as a strategy to domestically consolidate democracy and accelerate modernization (Teixeira 2012).

A Feeble Media System

Roughly until EU accession, the Portuguese press was largely characterized by weak organizational structures, multiple titles with tiny circulation, meager advertising revenue, and low levels of professionalization (Oliveira 1992). A long history of censorship followed by a period when nearly all media companies were nationalized resulted in a press generally perceived as lacking independence from institutional powers. As Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002, 183) point out, in Portugal, as in other southern European countries, “the press never developed as a cultural industry with a mass market sufficient to provide an independent economic base,” and this has encouraged the instrumentalization of news media by economic and political elites.

The crisis that began in 2008 strongly affected the traditionally economically fragile media industry: Advertising has decreased; newsrooms have been reduced to the smallest size possible; job insecurity among reporters has climbed; and newspaper circulation has declined (Lopes 2015). This context contributes to a lack of specialized reporters on climate change-related issues, which are complex subjects, with scientific, international relations, and economic dimensions. These circumstances suggest reporters may tend to rely on international wire/news services. As Antilla (2005) and Takahashi and Meisner (2012) note, these services can play an important role in climate change reporting. An unintended consequence of dependence on international news agencies can be the adoption of the perspectives of dominant international policy actors.

Media Constructions of Climate Change

News frames correspond to the main angles through which issues are (re)presented in the media. These frames have implications for the construction of social reality, as citizens can rely on media framing to interpret issues (Scheufele 1999). According to Chong and Druckman (2011, 239), framing is a “process by which citizens learn to construe and evaluate an issue by focusing on certain ‘frames’—i.e., certain features and implications of the issue—rather than others.” News frames offer hints for thinking and acting (Entman 2004; Lakoff 2010), from the individual to the policymaking level (although both mental representations and actions are of course also influenced by a wide range of other factors). Moreover, frames enable journalists to routinely organize information in accordance with persistent cognition/interpretation patterns and therefore become embedded in news production routines. They may be affected by factors that are internal or external to journalism, such as editorial policies, organizational routines, and news values, or the

interaction between journalists and political actors, elites, and other sources of influence (Shoemaker and Reese 1996; Gans 2003). Research on media coverage of climate change shows that complex relationships among scientists, policy actors, and the public affect journalists' choices regarding framing (Boykoff 2011).

In recent years several studies have offered cross-national comparisons of media constructions of climate change (e.g., Painter 2011; Kunelius and Eide 2012; Schmidt, Ivanova, and Schäfer 2013; Schäfer, Ivanova, and Schmidt 2014). Important differences between countries have been found; however, comparative analyses are sparse, made difficult by the diversity of research designs and methods used.

Some studies have analyzed global and domestic factors affecting media coverage of climate change. In their study of 19 countries, Kunelius and Eide (2012, 284) found evidence of some positions and values being shared transnationally by journalists expressing concern for climate, whereas the prominent role played by national politicians in news coverage indicated a "strong sense of political realism." The international scale of politics has shown to be prevalent in some countries: In Sweden, Olausson (2009, 426) referred to the "collective action frame of mitigation as a transnational responsibility," noting that the media emphasized global responsibility, with international summits getting a large share of coverage. Other studies, however, have identified multiple forms of domestication of climate change. In this sense, global events are "domesticated" through their presentation according to frameworks particular to each country (Clausen 2004). By adopting national standpoints, the media translate international issues into stories more meaningful to their audiences. In Norway, the press has acted as an important arena to reinforce national hegemony in interpreting climate politics, with the main national actors within the political field clearly prevailing (Eide and Ytterstad 2011). Similarly, Berglez, Höijer, and Olausson (2009), focusing on different media and periods than Olausson (2009), found that "nationalization" was an important "ideological horizon" in Sweden, meaning that the media represented responses to climate change as a national responsibility.

In Portugal, Carvalho (2011) and Carvalho and Pereira (2008) found a predominance of political topics in media discourse on climate change between 1992 and 2007. Political actors, especially international ones, had far and away the highest number of mentions in the Portuguese press. Other analyses carried out within the COMPON project show divergent tendencies: In Canada news coverage focused mainly on national government responsibility and policymaking (Stoddart, Haluza-DeLay, and Tindall 2016), and in South Korea the government was the most cited source (Yun et al. 2012), whereas in Greece governmental actors and political parties were not the dominant voices (Gkiouzepas and Botetzagias 2015).

Building on previous research, and benefiting from cross-national comparisons within the COMPON project, this study aims to evaluate the weight of the global and domestic levels in media framing of climate change. Considering both Portugal's interest in aligning with EU's climate policy and difficulties in implementing it, as well as the national media's dependence on official sources and international news services, we hypothesize that the Portuguese press focuses more on transnational politics than on a domestic standpoint emphasizing national responsibility. This would be in accordance with the relevance of European transnational politics for news frames on climate change found by Olausson (2009).

Methods and Materials

In order to ensure data compatibility between the COMPON project countries, each research team followed detailed guidelines for selecting, analyzing, and sharing data on content of newspaper articles. The definition of the categories used for coding was inductively based on academic literature (cf. Chong and Druckman 2011) and subsequently refined considering discussions and feedback from research teams. The analysis combined elements from framing research on media and on social movements. The former focuses on the analysis of frames in media coverage, while the latter allows for examining the socio-political actors' frames that the media reproduce (Scheufele 2004). This study draws on Snow and Benford's (2000) generic types of frames found in the literature on social movements (diagnostic, symptomatic, prognostic, motivational), adapted here to climate change. These can also be related to Entman's (2004) four framing functions: defining effects as problematic (which we refer to as consequences of climate change), identifying causes (or diagnostics of causes), conveying moral judgments (i.e., assessments that can motivate action, which we translate into motivations for either mitigation or adaptation), and endorsing remedies (proposed solutions and strategies to tackle climate change). Through coordinated analysis COMPON teams defined nine news frames. First, a diagnostic frame refers to the causes of climate change, identifying who or what is to blame. A symptomatic frame refers to consequences. Two prognostic frames (articulating proposed solutions for the problem and strategies to carry them out) concern mitigation, and a motivational frame asserts reasons for and against concern with climate change and action to mitigate it. Regarding adaptation to climate change, two prognostic frames were defined: The first centers on ways to adapt and the second focuses on policy measures for adaptation. A motivational frame related to adaptation includes reasons for and against adapting to climate change. Finally, a residual category is used for other frames present in the articles.

We also coded the most prominent topic of each news article according to six categories: ecology or meteorology; policymaking (at any level, including nongovernmental organizations); economic and energy interests; culture; science and technology; and civil society (activities among non-elite population, including protests). In order to better capture the specificity of national debates, content analysis also included the main issue covered and the policies debated in each article. After identifying and listing the issues and policies, categories were systematized. Articles were also coded regarding six geographical scales: local; subnational; national; foreign national (any other country); regional-multinational (at least two countries, including the EU); and worldwide (including the United Nations). In the analysis of the Portuguese case, we added two other variables: social actors cited (either quoted or mentioned) and their nationality (Portuguese or foreign). All actors' names and affiliations were registered and coded into the following categories: national government and central/regional administration; European institutions; international organizations; foreign governments; companies and economic agents; scientists and experts; nongovernmental organizations and associations; political parties; local authorities; media; celebrities; citizens (non-elite); and other.

Data were collected from three daily newspapers that represent the diversity of opinion in the country. Although Portuguese newspapers do not traditionally adopt overtly political positions, based on editorial positions and subtle choices of words on headlines, *Público*, the most read quality title, may be considered progressive, while the chosen popular newspaper, *Jornal*

de Notícias, may be considered more conservative. *Público* reaches elite decision makers and high-ranking professionals from various sectors, whereas *Jornal de Notícias*, being widely read, reaches larger segments of the population. The third daily, *Diário Económico*, is Portugal's largest economics/finance daily newspaper³ and targets an audience with significant decision-making power in terms of investment options and economic development.

At the first level of analysis, articles were selected by searching in the electronic archives of each newspaper from January, 1, 2001, to June, 30, 2014. After assaying the best keywords, we used “alterações climáticas” (climate change). The database was then cleaned, with only relevant articles being kept. At the second level of analysis, we focused on data since 2007, when climate change news coverage became more intense. Given the large amount of cases, a random sample of 25% of the articles published was selected. The sample was stratified by year and by newspaper. Due to the decreased number of articles published by *Diário Económico* from 2010 to 2014, instead of a sample, all articles were coded and subjected to content analysis. The final sample is composed of 545 articles: 261 from *Público*, 199 from *Jornal de Notícias*, and 85 from *Diário Económico*. Only one coder coded the entire corpus. In order to assess intercoder reliability, a second coder coded 15% of the articles, which were randomly selected. Agreement between both coders was tested using Krippendorff's alpha (Hayes and Krippendorff 2007) for the main variables.⁴

In the next sections, we report on and discuss the main results of our analysis. We also make comparisons between Portugal and other nations based on a data set created within COMPON for 15 countries, namely, Brazil, China, Germany, Greece, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, in 2007 and 2008.

Topics, Issues, and Policies: Prevalence of International Policymaking

Overall, from 2007 to 2014 policymaking was by far the most frequent topic in our sample (Figure 1). The following quote illustrates a news item with policymaking as main topic. The article focuses on the interplay between political actors at the 2008 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poznan:

Being divided, the European leadership in the international negotiations on a new global climate agreement is under a big question mark. However, the [Portuguese] Environment

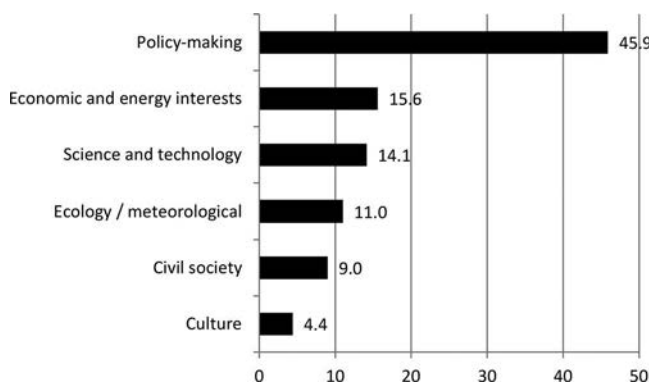


Figure 1. Topics of articles on climate change (% , 2007–2014).

Minister Francisco Nunes Correia has a different view and says that EU's divergences on the climate-energy package only reflect 'internal arrangements'. (*Público*, December 12, 2008)

Looking at global data from COMPON (Broadbent 2012), in 2007 and 2008, the Portuguese press put considerably more emphasis on policymaking (48.6% against 36.2%) and slightly more on science and technology (13.0% against 11.5%) than the average; in turn, it paid less attention to economic and energy interests (17.4% against 21.8%) and to ecology and meteorological frames (7.7% against 13.1%).

The weight of political topics in Portugal indicates that a large share of materials for news production on climate change came from official government sources. Factors such as the historical subordination of the media to the state, the economic fragility of the press industry, and increasing sophistication among professional sources' communication may have contributed to a strong presence of official sources in the media (Traquina 2004; Ribeiro 2009). News coverage may have also been influenced by the agenda-setting role of internationally prestigious newspapers. Kirilenko and Stepchenkova (2012) have observed that an influential newspaper such as the *New York Times* has increased its political coverage of climate change between 1995 and 2010. However, newspapers profiles also matter, as the economic newspaper (*Diário Económico*) featured economic and energy interests (45.9%) more often than policymaking (41.2%), whereas the main topic in both generalist dailies was policymaking (*Jornal de Notícias*—48.7%; *Público*—45.2%). Still, the weight of political topics in all three newspapers was higher than the average of the cases analyzed in COMPON, as mentioned above.

The main issue addressed in news articles was multilateral treaties on climate change (22.8%). European/national policies (9.9%) and scientific controversy (3.5%) represented smaller shares. Another facet of the dominant journalistic focus on policymaking is the reference to actual policies debated, found in 54.3% of all articles. Again, the most frequently mentioned policy matters concern the international level (topped by the need for a post-Kyoto agreement, 20.5%, and the settlement of goals for GHG emissions reduction, 17.1%). Cooperation with the countries most vulnerable to climate change—another multilateral debate—was also salient (7.9%). The other main policies covered had both international and national or regional/local slants: investment in clean energy technologies (10.6%), integrated measures of resource management/environmental protection (6.5%), and processes for meeting Kyoto Protocol goals (5.1%). The proportion of articles on investment in clean energy technologies reflects both the promotion of these technologies by the Portuguese government and the EU, and the inclusion in the analysis of an economic newspaper, which gives prominence to business opportunities. However, the fact that investment in renewable energy only represented 5.5% of the main issues addressed indicates that this topic was not often associated with climate change. These results show that climate change was most frequently defined as a political issue being tackled at the level of international relations.

News Frames: Privileging Mitigation Policies

In line with the idea that the international regime (which focuses on mitigation) drives climate change policies, the dominant news frame in the Portuguese press was policy measures to mitigate climate change. Among the articles, 41.3% featured this frame, while only

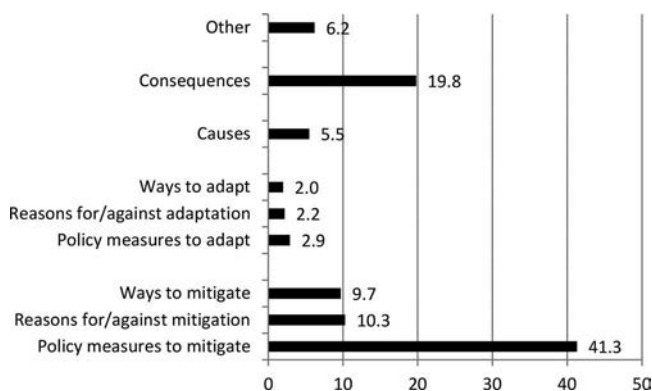


Figure 2. News frames on climate change articles (% , 2007–2014).

2.9% focused on policy measures to adapt to climate change (Figure 2). The sum of results for the three frames concerning mitigation (policy measures, ways to mitigate, and reasons for and against) corresponds to 61.3% of articles, while for adaptation frames it corresponds to 7.1% (policy measures, ways to adapt, and reasons for or against). The following quote is an example of a frame focusing on the prognosis presented in an OECD report that in order to mitigate climate change countries should have more ambitious policies:

The emission of greenhouse gases may be reduced in 70% if “more ambitious measures” are adopted by governments, concludes the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (*Jornal de Notícias*, November 25, 2011)

The second most frequent frame concerned consequences of climate change (19.8%).⁵ Hence, debate about symptoms of climate change gets much more attention than discussion of its causes (5.5%). This can reflect newspapers’ interest in highlighting matters that may draw wider audience attention: The potential risks and impacts of climate change allow for emotional discourses (Höijer 2010), alarmist linguistic repertoires (Ereaut and Segnit 2006), and dramatization (Boykoff and Boykoff 2007), all of which seem to have higher news value than the complex set of factors, rooted in social, economic, and political systems, contributing to climate change.

The prevalence of policy measures for mitigation indicates that the press complied with global actors’ interpretations of climate change, which are focused on international negotiations around mitigation policies. This suggests a structuring effect of the international regime in the Portuguese press.

Geographical Scales: Predominance of the Global Level

Newspapers analyzed mostly covered events or subjects at a worldwide (global) scale. The Portuguese nation came in second place as the geographical scale of reference, followed by the national scale of foreign countries and of two or more countries (regional–multinational, often regarding the EU). The local, or subnational, scale was nearly absent (Figure 3). The total amount of articles concerning Portugal specifically was only 21.5%. Again, considering the average of the 15 cases examined in the COMPON project between 2007 and 2008 (Broadbent 2012), the Portuguese press focused more often on a scale above

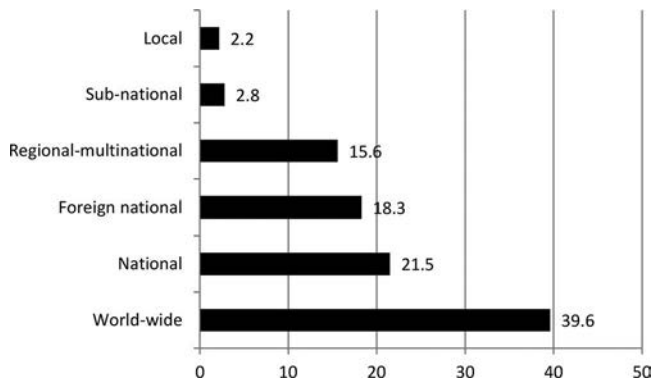


Figure 3. Geographical scale of articles on climate change (% , 2007–2014).

the national level (58.3% against 49.9%), and much less on subnational scales (6.4% against 11.1%). In fact, among the 15 countries, Portugal ranks second for news coverage of foreign events.

Geographical proximity has long been considered a basic news value (e.g., Ruigrok and Atteveldt 2007). However, around three-quarters of our article sample constructed climate change from an international geographic prism, in tune with the dominant policy arrangements of the climate regime. Although greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions originate in concrete spaces, political and media lenses obliterate those settings and disperse responsibility for climate change. Attention is diverted from local and national realities, though they are key to addressing the issue.

Social Actors: Foreign Leadership of the Media Agenda

The hegemony of the global political agenda becomes clearer if we consider the actors cited in newspapers as well as their nationality. As shown in Figure 4, altogether, the categories of international political actors (i.e., international organizations, European institutions, and foreign governments) corresponded to 48.2% of all mentions, while national government officials represented 31.7%. In consonance with the absence of local-scale coverage of

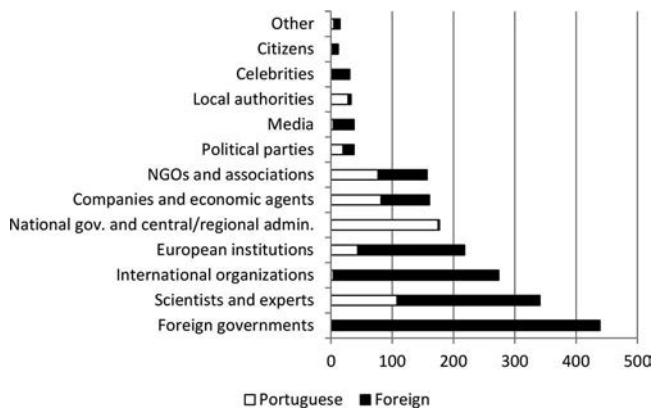


Figure 4. Number of times actors were cited in articles on climate change by nationality (2007–2014).

climate change issues, actors representing local authorities had only a residual voice in the news (1.7% of citations).

Considering the nationality of the actors cited, foreigners were strongly represented, as they corresponded to 71.5% of all citations. The prevalence of foreigners reached four-fifths of citations in the articles on policymaking. According to Archetti (2008, 474), national interest “shapes the range of sources quoted on newspapers,” in such a way that the newsworthiness of foreign sources is higher when the sources are closer to the interest of the newspaper’s country. The fact that the Portuguese press awards so much importance to foreign sources by actively selecting and presenting them as credible actors worthy of having voice may suggest a relatively stable understanding of international actors as being close to the country’s interest regarding climate change. If we look at the articles where foreign governments were cited, the topic of 73.8% was policymaking, the news frame of 68.0% concerned policy measures to mitigate climate change, and the major issue of 44.2% was multilateral treaties. In most cases (59.7%), those articles had a worldwide or regional–multinational geographical scale. Although these findings may reflect the availability of accessible news feeds from major news agencies (O’Neill et al. 2015), they also suggest consent regarding the legitimacy of a global perspective on climate change, impelled by the most powerful players and by international organizations. In a media system highly dependent on official sources, this also suggests that national politicians disregard the domestication of the agenda on climate change. Indeed, articles where representatives of the Portuguese government and central/regional administration were cited are in tune with the global agenda on climate change: 45.5% displayed the frame of mitigation policies (despite the small size and impact of the country in global mitigation efforts). Only 7.4% of those articles focused on adaptation policies. Furthermore, the two main issues covered in those articles were multilateral treaties (15.7%) and European/national policies on climate change (15.7%),⁶ whereas investment in renewable energies, which was a clear national goal, only came in third place (10.7%). Plus, although national officials were most often cited in articles focusing on the national scale (45.5%), they were nearly as much cited (41.3%) in articles with a worldwide or regional–multinational scale. These observations thus point to the opposite of the domesticated coverage of climate change found by Eide and Ytterstad (2011) in the Norwegian press, characterized by a prevalence of national sources, a focus on national interests and initiatives, and exclusion of other nations’ roles.

Discussion and Conclusions

This analysis of three Portuguese newspapers between 2007 and 2014 suggests that they tend to reproduce the global political agenda on climate change. Cross-national comparison indicates that this occurs more frequently than in nearly all other 14 country cases studied within the COMPON project. The main issues covered and frames used correspond to factors associated with international political decision-making processes, not to local actors or policies. Hence, climate change is mainly constructed as an issue concerning international organizations and politicians, not closely related to citizens or communities. In fact, although in some countries local or regional matters have become more visible in media analyses of climate change (Liu, Vedlitz, and Alston 2008; Brown et al. 2011), in Portugal they are nearly absent. Of the three most frequent policy debates in the news, two were located at the international level: the need for a post-Kyoto

agreement and the setting of goals to reduce GHG emissions. Only the third—investment in clean energy technologies—corresponded to an explicitly national goal—and flagship—of the Portuguese government; however, this was also a strong EU policy. These trends also resonate in the counts of actors cited in news articles. Foreign actors—especially political ones—represented 71.5% of the total. Our analysis has also shown that the press focused overwhelmingly on the mitigation of climate change and failed to debate much-needed adaptation plans. Paradoxically, however, there was little discussion of national factors such as mobility policies and energy efficiency; national and local-level responsibility was thus obscured. Conceivably these issues may have been discussed in the media, but not in articles with the keywords climate change. Importantly, and in any case, this means that no connections were made between major national/local causes of GHG emissions and the “global” problem of climate change.

The mobilization of foreign governments involved in the making of international events, debates, and global agreements concerning climate change mitigation spurred most media coverage. The fact that this trend is common to the three newspapers, despite their distinct profiles, suggests that structuring features of the political and media fields may be involved. Several factors internal to the media system may contribute to this: deference to governmental sources and to authority, organizational cultures (including journalistic prejudices about different social actors, such as NGOs), interaction between journalists and sources (trust, availability, ease of access), and availability of and reliance on international news feeds (as newspapers have increasingly limited resources and specialized reporters). Together with these circumstances, a set of political factors also seems determinant: support for European climate policies, within the framework of EU, and a political tradition of acquiescence with the international order, contrasting with a lack of mobilization toward communication with the public (with the exception of the topic of investment in renewable energy). A stronger engagement of national actors with climate change would translate into an increased availability of information sources, who could contribute more meaningfully to media reporting, thus favoring journalists’ use of more local frames. Altogether, these factors seem to contribute to ways of reporting climate change that correspond to the agenda of those with most power and legitimacy (Corbett 2015) in international global politics.

If the press systematically reproduces international political actors’ discourses the result is an apparent consensus regarding the appropriate level to tackle climate change, a consensus that expresses the dominance or hegemony of one worldview: one in which climate change is a global problem and from which concrete individuals and spaces are expelled. Even if this global hegemony is an unintended effect of the circumstances mentioned earlier, it is problematic because it may excuse inaction at the local and national levels (Roe 1994) and increase the distance between citizens and policy processes; in Chandler’s (2009, 544) words, “the shift towards the global is a retreat from social engagement and political struggle.” If “frames that employ more culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence” (Entman 2004, 6), the use of nonlocal frames in media coverage of climate change does not contribute to involving national publics and thus motivating them to participate in the discussion on how to tackle the problem. Moreover, as Schweizer, Davis, and Thompson (2013, 42) point out, “Climate change will resonate with diverse audiences when: (1) it is situated in cultural values and beliefs, (2) it is meaningful to that audience, and (3) it empowers specific action.” Research has also shown that

local impacts are key in communicating and promoting people's "sense of connection" with climate change (Nicholson-Cole 2005). As this study shows, the tendency in Portugal has been to look away from realities nearby. We suggest that a media coverage where global politics is hegemonic is likely to increase the perceived distance between citizens and climate change and deter public engagement with climate policy, which can weaken social acceptance of the action of policymakers at the domestic level. Arguably, however, this kind of coverage may also enhance public expectation of national governments' commitment at the international level and help policymakers' attempts to legitimize top-down implementation.

Notes

1. For further information, see <http://compon.org>.
2. Due to a strong investment in renewable energy production, in 2013 Portugal ranked sixth out of the 28 EU member-states, with a share of 25.7% of its gross final energy consumption coming from renewable energy sources (Eurostat 2015).
3. In 2010 *Jornal de Notícias* had an average circulation of 86,516, *Público* 35,122, and *Diário Económico* 16,095. Further data can be found at http://www.apct.pt/Analise_simples.php.
4. Coding results for the variables topics, frames, geographical scales, and actors cited (as this variable is composed of 14 variables, only the first actor cited was considered in the test) were respectively 0.7411, 0.7794, 0.7697, and 0.8673. Computations were performed with the SPSS macro KALPHA. Since it is recommended that coding results should exceed 0.80, conclusions regarding the first three variables should be considered with some caution.
5. This is due to the weight of generalist newspapers in the sample, since the economic one featured adaptation more often than consequences of climate change.
6. Due to the integration in the EU, European and national policies are often too enmeshed to be clearly dissociated.

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