

**Working title: A comparative analysis of South Korea's- and the EU's political system of climate policy governance**

Name: Bohyun Kim ([bohyun.kim@uni-due.de](mailto:bohyun.kim@uni-due.de))

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After the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, 193 Parties (192 countries plus the European Union) ratified the agreement and thus ought to legally take urgent climate action to reduce global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and stay below 1.5°C of global warming, regardless of their economic- and political status. Amongst all, the European Union and South Korea are the fastest jurisdictions around the world for legislating and implementing the global climate policies, such as carbon trading scheme and green taxonomy. Why did these two distinctive polities amongst others end up taking similar policy approaches at a similar tempo, despite their varied democratic systems and different history of domestic environmental politics?

Existing studies in climate policies and governance in the EU and South Korea have been conducted as if they were never comparable. The EU studies literature tends to emphasize the aspect of multi-level governance system of the EU as *sui generis* political entity. In this scholarly tradition, academic debates on EU policy including climate policy paid attention to identify the supranational characteristics of EU institutions. Particularly in the studies on EU climate policy, the European Commission has been described as 'policy entrepreneur' that coordinates related actors in different levels to push forward the EU's climate leadership on both international- and regional level. Some recent research argues that the growing authoritative power of the European Commission in the field must be monitored and further studied, but there has been only few research on 'how' the Commission builds up more power within the EU level of climate policymaking.

Meanwhile, studies in South Korea's climate politics tends to concentrate on the presidential interest in climate policy development. Started with former President Lee, Myung-bak's 'Green Growth' policy initiative in 2008, the climate policymaking structure has developed since then. However, how much of impact of this development of climate policy system and different stakeholders' influence have not been studied yet, while most of the studies concentrated on the presidential climate strategies. Some scholars tried to explain South Korea's climate politics led by president as a legacy of 'developmental state' tradition, the type of state in the developing world where the state coercively leads economic development as the top national agenda, with support from economic elites. This view however neglects the interaction of non-state actors in the field, and how the state maintains its powerful role in the governance system, either, just as the EU studies literature overlooks the increasing authority of the Commission. In short, even though there has been similarity of developing climate policy tools and outcomes from the two political entities, the existing academic narrative of each case fails to explain and understand this similarity in the recent development of their climate politics. Moreover, this academic tendency makes even difficult to conduct in-depth analyses of each case, while re-producing the same narrative over and over throughout similar research.

Against this backdrop, my research aims to tackle this scholarly limitation by bringing the two cases to study climate politics in different democratic systems, South Korea and the EU. It aims to identify internal factor(s) of each political mechanism that brought about the similar climate policy development. The research can provide new ideas and opportunities for scholars in the different study areas, systematically comparing the two cases to analyze them in a more synthetical way.

Keywords: Democracy and climate change, South Korea, EU, carbon-trading, green taxonomy