

## NON-STATE ACTORS IN CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION: CONTRIBUTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Bakht Yar Haider<sup>\*1</sup>, Saman Ferheen<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Syed Nouman Ali Shah<sup>3</sup>

<sup>\*1</sup>MPhil Student, School of International Relations, Minhaj University Lahore

<sup>2</sup>PhD Student, School of International Relations, Minhaj University Lahore

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, School of International Relations, Minhaj University Lahore

<sup>1</sup>bakhtchadhar@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>samanfarheen050@gmail.com, <sup>3</sup>noumanali.ir@mul.edu.pk

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15062974>

### Keywords

Climate change mitigation, non-state actors, global governance, corporate sustainability, international cooperation, climate governance.

### Article History

Received on 13 February 2025

Accepted on 13 March 2025

Published on 21 March 2025

Copyright @Author

Corresponding Author: \*

### Abstract

Climate change presents a global challenge that requires collective action beyond state-level efforts. This study examines the role of non-state actors (NSAs)—including NGOs, corporations, local governments, and civil society—in climate change mitigation. It explores their contributions, such as advocacy campaigns, technological innovations, corporate sustainability initiatives, and partnerships with governmental institutions, while also identifying the challenges they face, including the lack of legal frameworks, financial constraints, political resistance, and accountability issues. Applying Liberalism and Global Governance Theory, this research highlights how NSAs contribute to climate governance by promoting international cooperation and decentralized policy implementation. A qualitative research approach is employed, utilizing document analysis, case studies, and thematic evaluation to assess NSA-led initiatives like C40 Cities and The Climate Group, and their engagement in COP29 discussions. Findings suggest that while NSAs play a pivotal role in climate action, their effectiveness is often hindered by structural and institutional barriers. The study recommends enhancing NSA participation in policy-making, strengthening legal frameworks, and improving accountability mechanisms to maximize their impact. Addressing these challenges will ensure that NSAs continue to be key drivers of sustainable and inclusive climate action, working alongside state actors to achieve global environmental goals.

### INTRODUCTION

Climate change is one of the most urgent challenges of our time, demanding immediate and coordinated action at a global level. While governments and international organizations have traditionally taken the lead in addressing this crisis, non-state actors (NSAs) have emerged as key players in climate action. These include a diverse range of entities such as NGOs, private companies, local governments, civil society groups, academic institutions, and even individuals. Their growing involvement has become

essential in bridging the gap between high-level climate commitments and on-the-ground implementation.

Non-state actors contribute to climate change mitigation in various ways. NGOs often play the role of watchdogs, ensuring that governments and corporations remain accountable for their environmental commitments. Businesses are investing in sustainable technologies and eco-friendly practices to reduce their carbon footprints, while

local governments implement climate policies at the municipal level. These efforts, in many cases, complement or even surpass those of national governments, proving that climate action is not limited to official state actors.

The flexibility and adaptability of non-state actors make them particularly effective in tackling climate challenges. Unlike governments, which may be slowed down by bureaucracy and political hurdles, NSAs can quickly implement innovative solutions, form partnerships across different sectors, and mobilize resources. They also play a crucial role in shaping public awareness and influencing policy decisions through advocacy and grassroots movements. In places where government action is insufficient, NSAs often step in to fill the gaps, ensuring that climate initiatives continue to move forward.

This article explores the contributions and challenges faced by non-state actors in climate change mitigation. It examines how these entities help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote sustainable practices, and drive meaningful environmental change. At the same time, it highlights the obstacles that hinder their effectiveness, such as regulatory barriers, funding limitations, and issues of accountability. Understanding both the strengths and challenges of NSAs is crucial for enhancing their role in global climate governance and ensuring that they can continue making a meaningful impact.

To guide this discussion, the article focuses on three key questions:

- 1- What are the main contributions of non-state actors to climate change mitigation?
- 2- What challenges do they encounter in their efforts?
- 3- How can their role in global climate governance be strengthened for better outcomes?

By addressing these questions, this article aims to provide a deeper understanding of the vital role that non-state actors play in climate action. It also emphasizes the need for a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach that brings together both state and non-state actors to effectively combat climate change.

### Literature Review

The growing body of academic work on non-state actors (NSAs) in climate action underscores their pivotal role in addressing the global climate crisis. Scholars have explored various dimensions of NSA involvement, from their contributions to policy-making to their influence on local and international climate initiatives. According to (Bulkeley, 2014), NSAs have become indispensable in bridging the gap between global commitments and local implementation, particularly in areas where state actors face limitations. The literature highlights how NSAs foster innovation, increase accountability, and mobilize resources for effective climate governance (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015).

One of the key areas of research focuses on the role of NSAs in international climate agreements, particularly the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement explicitly acknowledges the contributions of NSAs, encouraging their active participation in achieving climate goals (Hale, 2016). Chan, van Asselt, (Hale, 2016) argue that NSAs were instrumental in shaping the agreement's framework by advocating for more ambitious targets and emphasizing the importance of transparency and inclusivity. Additionally, the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action was established to strengthen collaboration between state and non-state actors, further underscoring the critical role of NSAs in implementing the agreement's objectives (Newell, 2020).

The literature categorizes NSAs into several types based on their functions and areas of influence. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are among the most prominent NSAs, often acting as intermediaries between governments and local communities. NGOs such as Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) engage in advocacy, research, and grassroots mobilization to promote sustainable practices (Micheletti, M., & Stolle, D., 2012). These organizations also serve as watchdogs, holding governments and corporations accountable for their climate commitments (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021). Another critical type of NSA is the private sector, which plays a dual role in both contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and offering innovative solutions for mitigation. Corporations are increasingly adopting corporate

social responsibility (CSR) practices and investing in renewable energy technologies to align with global climate goals (Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W., 2018).

Local governments also constitute a significant category of NSAs, particularly in implementing climate policies at the municipal level. Cities such as Copenhagen and San Francisco have emerged as leaders in adopting sustainable urban planning and reducing carbon emissions (Bulkeley, 2014). These local governments often collaborate with international networks like C40 Cities to share best practices and scale up successful initiatives (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). Civil society organizations, including community-based groups and individual activists, further complement these efforts by fostering public awareness and advocating for systemic change. The youth-led climate movement, epitomized by Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future campaign, exemplifies how civil society can drive global attention to the urgency of climate action (Newell, 2020).

While the contributions of NSAs are widely acknowledged, the literature also points to challenges that hinder their effectiveness. These include limited financial resources, regulatory barriers, and issues of accountability and transparency (Hale, 2016). Moreover, the fragmented nature of NSA efforts sometimes leads to a lack of coordination, reducing their overall impact (Newell, 2020). Addressing these challenges requires greater collaboration between state and non-state actors, as well as enhanced mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating NSA contributions to climate governance (Chan, 2015).

### Theoretical Framework

The role of non-state actors (NSAs) in climate change mitigation can be analyzed through multiple theoretical perspectives in International Relations (IR). Given their increasing involvement in global climate governance, this article applies *Liberalism and Global Governance Theory* to understand their contributions and challenges. These theories provide a comprehensive lens to examine how NSAs influence climate policies, engage in decentralized governance, and promote international cooperation in addressing climate change.

Liberalism posits that international relations are not solely determined by states but also involve a variety

of actors, including international organizations, businesses, and civil society groups (Keohane, 1977). This perspective emphasizes the role of cooperation and multilateralism in addressing global challenges such as climate change. The Paris Agreement (2015) exemplifies this approach by recognizing NSAs as key stakeholders in climate governance, encouraging corporate sustainability, NGO advocacy, and local government initiatives (Falkner, 2016). Non-state actors contribute through public-private partnerships, policy lobbying, and technological innovations that support emission reductions (Bulkeley, 2014). The liberal framework explains how these actors operate within a global system that encourages collaboration rather than unilateral state action.

Global Governance Theory extends the liberalist view by recognizing that governance is no longer the sole domain of states but involves multiple actors working within a decentralized framework (Biermann, 2012). Climate governance is increasingly shaped by transnational networks such as C40 Cities, and The Climate Group, and their engagement in COP29 discussions, which bring together local governments, corporations, and civil society to implement climate policies. These networks demonstrate how NSAs contribute to governance through voluntary agreements, carbon reduction commitments, and sustainable business models. Unlike traditional state-centric governance, global governance structures rely on collaborative, flexible, and adaptive mechanisms to address climate challenges (Andonova, 2017). The effectiveness of NSAs in climate mitigation depends on how well they integrate into these frameworks while overcoming obstacles such as weak legal authority and funding constraints.

The integration of *Liberalism and Global Governance Theory* provides a well-rounded theoretical foundation for analyzing non-state actors in climate change mitigation. Liberalism highlights the cooperative nature of climate governance, while Global Governance Theory underscores the decentralized and multi-stakeholder nature of climate action. Together, these perspectives illustrate why non-state actors are essential in filling governance gaps, driving innovation, and ensuring long-term sustainability in the fight against climate change.

### Theoretical Framework & Governance Discussion – The Role of NSAs in Global Climate Policymaking

The participation of non-state actors (NSAs) in global climate governance has become increasingly significant, particularly within international policy forums such as the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)* and its annual *Conference of the Parties (COP)* meetings. Events like COP29 highlight how NSAs—including businesses, NGOs, local governments, and civil society organizations—contribute to shaping climate policy, advocating for ambitious targets, and implementing sustainability initiatives (IPCC., 2022). *Liberalism and Global Governance Theory* provide a useful lens for understanding the role of NSAs in these processes. Liberalism emphasizes international cooperation and the importance of multiple actors in addressing global issues. The *Paris Agreement*, a key outcome of past COP negotiations, is a prime example of how state and non-state actors collaborate to achieve climate goals. Global Governance Theory extends this perspective by recognizing that governance is no longer the sole responsibility of states but is instead shared among various stakeholders, including transnational networks such as *C40 Cities* and *The Climate Group* (UNFCCC., 2023).

COP29 serves as an important platform for integrating NSAs into formal climate policymaking. Businesses participating in initiatives such as *The Climate Group's RE100* are expected to advocate for stronger corporate sustainability commitments, while cities engaged in *C40 Cities* will push for more localized climate adaptation strategies. Furthermore, COP29 discussions on climate finance, regulatory frameworks, and monitoring mechanisms will directly impact NSA-led initiatives, further demonstrating their indispensable role in global governance (Jordan, 2018).

To fully leverage NSA contributions, governance structures must evolve to institutionalize their participation in climate negotiations, enhance their policy influence, and create mechanisms for accountability. Strengthening their representation in COP processes will ensure that climate governance is

more inclusive, dynamic, and responsive to the urgent need for climate action.

### Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach, using document analysis, case studies, and thematic evaluation to explore NSA contributions and challenges. Data sources include:

- **Peer-reviewed journal articles** and academic books on climate governance.
- Official reports from the **UNFCCC, IPCC, and World Resources Institute (WRI)**.
- Case studies on **C40 Cities, The Climate Group,** and corporate initiatives.

### Contributions of Non-State Actors

Non-state actors (NSAs) play a critical role in mitigating climate change through various initiatives and strategies that complement the efforts of state actors. Their contributions span advocacy and awareness campaigns, technological innovations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and partnerships with governments and intergovernmental organizations. These efforts not only address the root causes of climate change but also mobilize diverse stakeholders to drive sustainable change.

One of the most significant contributions of NSAs is their role in advocacy and awareness campaigns. NGOs, civil society organizations, and grassroots movements have been at the forefront of raising public awareness about climate change and its impacts. For instance, organizations like *Greenpeace* and *350.org* have launched global campaigns to reduce fossil fuel use and promote renewable energy adoption (Bulkeley, 2014). These campaigns often focus on influencing public opinion and pressuring governments and corporations to adopt more ambitious climate policies (Hale, 2016). Additionally, youth-led movements such as *Fridays for Future* have mobilized millions worldwide, demonstrating collective action's power in advocating for climate justice (Newell, 2020).

Technological innovations and the promotion of sustainable practices are other areas in which NSAs have made substantial contributions. Private corporations and academic institutions have invested heavily in research and development to create



cutting-edge technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Examples include advancements in renewable energy technologies, carbon capture and storage systems, and energy-efficient infrastructure (Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W., 2018). These innovations not only help mitigate climate change but also provide scalable solutions that can be adopted globally. Companies like *Tesla*, for instance, have revolutionized the electric vehicle market, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and promoting clean energy transitions (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives further highlight the role of NSAs in climate change mitigation. Many corporations have integrated sustainability into their business models, committing to reducing their carbon footprints and adopting environmentally friendly practices. For example, multinational corporations such as *Unilever* and *IKEA* have pledged to achieve net-zero emissions by implementing sustainable supply chain practices and investing in renewable energy projects (Micheletti, M., & Stolle, D., 2012). CSR initiatives also include collaborations with NGOs and local communities to promote reforestation, water conservation, and waste reduction efforts (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015).

Partnerships with governments and intergovernmental organizations represent another critical contribution of NSAs. By collaborating with state actors, NSAs help design and implement policies that align with international climate goals. The *Marrakech Partnership* for Global Climate Action, established under the Paris Agreement, is an example of how NSAs and governments can work together to enhance climate action (Hale, 2016). Local governments, as key NSAs, also play a vital role in implementing national climate policies at the municipal level. Cities like Amsterdam and Seoul have adopted ambitious climate plans that align with global targets, showcasing the potential of local-state partnerships (Bulkeley, 2014).

In summary, the contributions of non-state actors to climate change mitigation are multifaceted and indispensable. Through advocacy, technological innovations, CSR initiatives, and partnerships with governments, NSAs address critical gaps in global climate governance. Their efforts not only

complement the actions of state actors but also inspire more inclusive and participatory approaches to tackling the climate crisis. Recognizing and enhancing the role of NSAs in climate governance is essential for achieving a sustainable and equitable future (Kuyper, 2018).

#### **Challenges Faced by Non-State Actors**

Non-state actors (NSAs) have emerged as pivotal players in climate change mitigation, yet their efforts are often hindered by a range of challenges. These obstacles, including the lack of legal frameworks, funding and resource limitations, political and social barriers, and issues of accountability and transparency, significantly affect their ability to contribute effectively to global climate governance.

One of the primary challenges faced by NSAs is the lack of comprehensive legal frameworks that define their roles and responsibilities. While international agreements like the Paris Agreement acknowledge the contributions of NSAs, they do not provide binding obligations or clear mandates for their participation (Hale, 2016). This ambiguity often results in a fragmented approach to climate action, with NSAs operating in silos rather than as part of a coordinated global effort (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). Additionally, the absence of legal frameworks limits the ability of NSAs to hold state actors accountable for their climate commitments, further complicating the governance landscape (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021).

Funding and resource limitations represent another significant barrier for NSAs. Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations rely on external funding, which is often inconsistent and inadequate (Newell, 2020). This lack of financial stability hampers their ability to scale up initiatives or invest in long-term projects. Furthermore, competition for limited resources among NSAs can lead to inefficiencies and duplication of efforts (Bulkeley, 2014). For private sector actors, the high upfront costs of developing and implementing sustainable technologies often deter investment, despite the potential for long-term benefits (Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W., 2018).

Political and social barriers also pose significant challenges to NSAs. In many regions, political resistance to climate action undermines the efforts of NSAs. Governments may view NSAs as competitors

or threats, particularly when their advocacy challenges state policies or highlights governmental shortcomings (Hale, 2016). Social barriers, including cultural resistance and lack of public awareness, further complicate the work of NSAs. For instance, community-based initiatives may face opposition if they conflict with traditional practices or fail to align with local priorities (Micheletti, M., & Stolle, D., 2012). These barriers often require NSAs to invest additional resources in building trust and fostering community engagement, which can delay project implementation.

Issues of accountability and transparency are another critical challenge for NSAs. While NSAs play an essential role in climate governance, their operations are not always subject to the same scrutiny as those of state actors (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021). This lack of oversight can lead to questions about the legitimacy and effectiveness of their initiatives. For example, some corporations use sustainability initiatives as a form of greenwashing, exaggerating their contributions to climate action to enhance their public image (Newell, 2020). Addressing these issues requires the establishment of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that NSA contributions are both transparent and impactful (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). In conclusion, while non-state actors are vital to global climate mitigation efforts, they face numerous challenges that limit their effectiveness. Addressing these obstacles requires collaborative efforts among NSAs, state actors, and international organizations to develop legal frameworks, ensure adequate funding, overcome political and social barriers, and enhance accountability and transparency. By tackling these challenges, NSAs can maximize their potential to drive meaningful and sustainable climate action.

### Case Studies

The involvement of non-state actors (NSAs) in climate change mitigation is exemplified by numerous successful initiatives that demonstrate their potential to drive meaningful action. Case studies of NSA-led projects, such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and The Climate Group, COP29, as well as corporate efforts in renewable energy transitions, highlight the significant

contributions of these actors in addressing the global climate crisis.

### C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group

The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group is a prime example of NSA-led climate action. Established in 2005, C40 connects 97 of the world's largest cities, representing over 700 million people and a quarter of the global economy. These cities collaborate to share knowledge, implement sustainable practices, and develop policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Bulkeley, 2014). Through initiatives like the *Deadline 2020* program, C40 has helped cities create tailored climate action plans aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement (Hale, 2016). For instance, Copenhagen has implemented strategies to become carbon neutral by 2025, leveraging renewable energy sources, energy-efficient buildings, and sustainable urban planning (Newell, 2020). Such achievements underscore the role of local governments in scaling up climate solutions and fostering global collaboration (Green, 2021).

### The Climate Group

Another noteworthy example is The Climate Group, an international NGO that partners with businesses and governments to accelerate climate action. The Climate Group's *RE100* initiative, launched in 2014, brings together major corporations committed to sourcing 100% of their electricity from renewable energy (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). Companies like Google, IKEA, and Apple have joined this initiative, collectively driving significant investments in renewable energy infrastructure. By promoting renewable energy transitions, The Climate Group demonstrates how NSAs can mobilize corporate resources and influence market trends to align with global climate goals (Hale, 2016). This initiative has also encouraged the adoption of similar commitments across industries, amplifying its impact on reducing carbon footprints.

### COP29 and NSA Involvement

COP29 (Conference of the Parties 29) is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the future of climate governance, particularly by enhancing the

participation of non-state actors (NSAs). Previous COP events have provided a platform for businesses, NGOs, and local governments to contribute to global climate discussions. Initiatives such as The Climate Group's RE100 and C40 Cities have leveraged COP summits to secure commitments from governments and corporations, demonstrating the increasing influence of NSAs in climate action.

At COP29, discussions will focus on policy implementation, climate finance, and accountability frameworks, all of which directly impact NSA-led initiatives. The event is expected to encourage more public-private partnerships, increase financial support for sustainable projects, and introduce stricter monitoring mechanisms to track corporate and municipal climate commitments. By participating in COP29, NSAs will have the opportunity to shape policies, advocate for stronger climate regulations, and contribute to the implementation of international climate agreements.

#### Corporate Efforts in Renewable Energy Transitions

Private sector contributions to climate action are increasingly evident through corporate efforts to reduce carbon footprints. Multinational corporations are adopting renewable energy solutions and enhancing energy efficiency to meet sustainability targets. For example, Tesla's innovations in electric vehicles and battery technologies have revolutionized the transportation sector, reducing dependency on fossil fuels (Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W., 2018). Similarly, Unilever has implemented comprehensive sustainability strategies, including transitioning to renewable energy in its operations and promoting eco-friendly consumer products (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021). These corporate efforts not only contribute to global emission reductions but also set benchmarks for other organizations to follow.

#### Impact and Lessons Learned

The successes of C40 Cities, The Climate Group, COP29, and corporate-led initiatives highlight the transformative potential of NSAs in climate governance. These examples demonstrate that collaboration, innovation, and commitment are critical to achieving meaningful climate action. However, the scalability and replicability of these

initiatives often depend on overcoming challenges such as resource limitations, policy barriers, and the need for stronger accountability mechanisms (Newell, 2020). By addressing these issues, NSAs can further enhance their contributions to global climate solutions.

#### Policy Recommendations

Non-state actors (NSAs) are critical to the success of global climate governance, yet their potential remains underutilized due to various institutional and systemic challenges. To fully harness their contributions, it is essential to enhance their participation in policy-making, strengthen legal frameworks supporting their roles, and address accountability mechanisms to ensure transparency and effectiveness.

#### Enhancing NSA Participation in Policy-Making

Incorporating NSAs more effectively into policy-making processes can significantly bolster climate action. NSAs, including NGOs, private corporations, and local governments, bring unique perspectives, resources, and expertise to climate governance. However, their involvement in decision-making remains inconsistent across different jurisdictions and international platforms (Hale, 2016). To address this, governments and intergovernmental organizations should establish formal mechanisms that enable NSAs to contribute to policy formulation and implementation. For example, platforms like the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action under the Paris Agreement provide a model for integrating NSAs into global discussions (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). Expanding similar initiatives at national and regional levels can enhance the inclusivity and effectiveness of climate policies.

#### Strengthening Legal Frameworks to Support NSAs

The lack of robust legal frameworks often limits the ability of NSAs to operate effectively. Clear legal definitions and mandates are essential to ensure that NSAs can participate meaningfully in climate governance without facing undue political or bureaucratic constraints (Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K., 2021). Governments should develop comprehensive legal provisions that recognize the roles of NSAs, facilitate their access to resources, and

provide protection against potential political interference. For instance, legislation that incentivizes corporate sustainability initiatives, such as tax benefits for renewable energy investments, can encourage greater private sector engagement in climate action (Newell, 2020). Furthermore, international agreements should explicitly outline the responsibilities and expectations of NSAs to enhance their accountability and integration into global climate strategies.

#### **Integrating NSAs into COP Frameworks**

To maximize the impact of NSAs, future COP conferences should formally integrate them into global climate governance. COP29 presents an opportunity to enhance the role of NSAs by providing them with greater representation in decision-making processes and ensuring that their contributions are recognized in climate policies (Forum, 2023).

One of the key policy recommendations is to establish dedicated NSA participation mechanisms within COP summits, ensuring that businesses, NGOs, and local governments can actively shape global climate strategies ((UNEP), 2023). Additionally, COP29 should introduce improved funding opportunities and policy incentives to support NSA-led sustainability initiatives. Strengthening accountability measures through transparent reporting and monitoring frameworks can further enhance the NSA's credibility and effectiveness in climate governance (Institute, 2022). By embedding NSAs more deeply into the COP framework, governments and international organizations can ensure a more inclusive and effective approach to addressing climate change.

#### **Addressing Accountability Mechanisms**

Accountability and transparency are critical to the credibility and effectiveness of NSA-led initiatives. While NSAs often champion innovative and impactful climate solutions, their activities are not always subject to rigorous oversight (Hale, 2016). To address this, governments and international organizations should establish standardized monitoring and evaluation frameworks that apply to NSA-led projects. These frameworks should include performance metrics, regular reporting requirements, and third-party audits to assess the impact and

integrity of NSA contributions (Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O., 2015). Additionally, fostering collaborations between NSAs and academic institutions can enhance data collection and analysis, further improving the transparency of their operations.

Incorporating accountability mechanisms also helps address concerns related to greenwashing, where corporations exaggerate their environmental commitments for reputational benefits (Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W., 2018). By requiring transparent disclosures of sustainability practices and outcomes, stakeholders can better assess the legitimacy of corporate claims and hold entities accountable for their commitments.

#### **Conclusion**

Non-state actors (NSAs) have become essential players in the fight against climate change. This article has explored their significant contributions, the challenges they face, and the steps needed to enhance their role in global climate governance. By summarizing key findings, envisioning the future of NSAs, and considering ways to overcome existing barriers, this conclusion reinforces their growing importance in addressing the climate crisis.

NSAs have proven to be influential in driving climate action through advocacy, technological innovations, corporate sustainability initiatives, and partnerships with governments. Initiatives such as C40 Cities and The Climate Group's RE100 program demonstrate how local governments and businesses can lead the way in reducing emissions and promoting sustainable practices. However, despite their successes, NSAs continue to face significant challenges, including the absence of strong legal frameworks, financial constraints, political resistance, and concerns about accountability. Addressing these issues is critical to ensuring that NSAs can maximize their impact in global climate governance.

As the urgency of climate change intensifies, the role of NSAs is expected to expand. Their ability to innovate and implement climate solutions at various levels—whether through renewable energy projects, sustainable urban planning, or grassroots activism—positions them as crucial agents of change. The increasing focus on collaborative partnerships across



sectors further strengthens their ability to influence climate policies and actions on a global scale. To fully unlock their potential, NSAs must be formally integrated into both global and national climate strategies. Providing them with a stronger voice in policy-making, as seen in initiatives like the Marrakech Partnership, will help amplify their contributions. Additionally, advancements in technology and data-driven solutions will play a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness and transparency of NSA-led initiatives.

For NSAs to continue driving meaningful climate action, a collective effort is required from all stakeholders. Governments and international organizations must prioritize policies that recognize and support NSA participation. Ensuring access to adequate funding and capacity-building programs will empower NSAs to expand their efforts, particularly in areas where resources are limited. Strengthening accountability mechanisms—such as transparent reporting and independent evaluations—will help build trust in NSA-led initiatives and prevent issues like greenwashing.

The future of climate governance depends on how effectively NSAs can navigate challenges and seize emerging opportunities. By leveraging their strengths, NSAs can continue to shape a more sustainable and resilient future. Achieving lasting climate solutions will require close collaboration between NSAs, governments, businesses, and communities, backed by strong policies and institutional support. Only through collective action can we create a more equitable and sustainable world for future generations.

## REFERENCES

- (UNEP), U. N. (2023). The impact of COP negotiations on global climate action. Retrieved from <https://www.unep.org>.
- Andonova, L. B. (2017). *Governance entrepreneurs: International organizations and the rise of global public-private partnerships*. Cambridge University Press.
- Biermann, F. &. (2012). *Global environmental governance reconsidered*. MIT Press.
- Bulkeley, H. E. (2014). *Non-state actors in climate governance: From Copenhagen to Paris and beyond*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chan, S. v. (2015). *Reinvigorating international climate governance: A regional perspective*. World Resources Institute.
- Falkner, R. (2016). The Paris Agreement and the new logic of international climate politics. *International Affairs*, 92(5), 1107-1125.
- Forum, W. E. (2023). COP29: What to expect and why it matters. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org>.
- Galvan, D., & Leal Filho, W. (2018). *Corporate social responsibility in climate change mitigation: A global outlook*. Springer.
- Green, J. F. (2021). *Corporate sustainability in a changing climate*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hale, T. (2016). All hands on deck: The Paris Agreement and non-state climate action. *Global Environmental Politics*, 16(3), 12-22.
- Institute, W. R. (2022). COP26 to COP29: The evolving role of non-state actors in climate governance. Retrieved from <https://www.wri.org>.
- IPCC. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*. Retrieved from [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch).
- Jordan, A. H. (2018). *Governing Climate Change: Polycentricity in Action?* Cambridge University Press.
- Keohane, R. O. (1977). *Power and interdependence: World politics in transition*. Little, Brown.
- Koenig-Archibugi, M., & Macdonald, K. (2021). *Accountability in transnational climate governance: The role of non-state actors*. Routledge.
- Kuyper, J. W.-O. (2018). Non-state actors in hybrid global climate governance: Justice, legitimacy, and effectiveness. *Review of International Studies*, 44(1), 211-237.
- Micheletti, M., & Stolle, D. (2012). *Civil society and sustainable development: The role of non-state actors*. Oxford University Press.
- Newell, P. (2020). *The politics of green transformations*. Routledge.
- Pattberg, P., & Widerberg, O. (2015). Transnational multistakeholder partnerships in climate governance. *Environmental Politics*, 24(5), 761-782.
- UNFCCC. (2023). *COP29 Climate Policy Framework*. COP29 Climate Policy Framework.