

Localized Norms in Asia, Breeding Normative Contestation to Global Climate Change Regime

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Abstract Recent constructivism scholarship on norm diffusion dynamics has developed the notion of localization that local agent reconstructs foreign transnational norms to be fitted with extant regional norms and practices. This top-down normative localization underwent theoretical expansion by bottom-up feedback loop that existing regional norms and localized norms come to be in contestation with the transnational norms at the global level. Grounded on this norm diffusion dynamics, this research attempts to explicate a climate change institutional interaction between the UN-based climate change institutions and regional institution with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a local agent. Analytical result shows that the ASEAN played a local agent role in the global-regional interaction in climate change regime and that the localization and the feedback loop are divergent by the norms. This divergence provides both theoretical and policy implication.

1 Introduction

In climate change regime, regional organization has been spotlighted in terms of global-regional interface. The *European Union* (EU) has been in the vanguard of propagating global norms of the 1992 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) and the 1997 *Kyoto Protocol* (KP) by unfolding European climate change actions at the regional level. Besides, the EU has revealed its presence in the global negotiation table that shapes an appropriate climate change structure. Meanwhile, the Asian region has also watched sprouts of numerous region-wide climate change activities, brought about by regional organizations. However, such global-regional interface by the Asian regional organization as the EU has rarely been dealt with in literatures on climate change regime.

Grasping the global-regional interaction in Asia is a puzzler. At the moment, no single regional organization prevails in Asia. Several un-unified regional organizations coexist such as the *Association of Southeast Asian nations* (ASEAN) that spawned *ASEAN Regional Forum* (ARF) and *ASEAN plus Three* (APT) with ASEAN centrality, the *Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation* (APEC), and the *East Asia Summit* (EAS). Furthermore, each organization has established its own region-wide climate change institutions by way of initiatives, joint statements, and official declarations. Proliferation of these institutions adds complexity to the understanding of global-regional interface in Asia. Also, most of the institutions are non-legally binding informal institutions in the form of declarations, despite professed acknowledgement of or consistency with the norms of the legally-binding UN-based climate change institutions. This informality again baffles a clear delineation on the global-regional interaction. Accordingly, acknowledging de facto existence of regional institutions, this research attempts to shed light on the role of regional organization in the global-regional interface in climate change regime in Asia.

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For microscopic assessment on the global-Asian regional interface with a regional organization, this research borrows a localization theory of norm diffusion dynamics. Asian regional organizations have drawn critical acclaim for “localization” by reconstructing transnational norms on the basis of pre-existing regional norms, culture, and practices and producing localized norms (Acharya, 2009; 2004). This Asian reconciliation between the transnational norms and the pre-existing regional norms and practices is well exemplified in the terms of “ASEAN way”, “Asia-Pacific Way” (Acharya, 1997), and “norm brewery” (Katsumata, 2006). Recently, a linear top-down localization process is extended by a “feedback loop” that existing regional norms or localized norms come to be in contestation with the transnational norms at the global level (Prantl and Nakano, 2011). This top-down and bottom-up norm diffusion dynamics, triggered by the local agents, fits well the study on the interaction between the global and the Asian regional institutions in climate change regime.

Therefore, this research attempts to analyze how the regional organization in Asia plays a role in diffusing the transnational climate change norms, producing localized norms and practices on the basis of originally existing regional practices, and moving the localized outcomes to the global negotiation tables. By using multiple transnational norms of sectoral commitments by forestry, energy, and urban-planning, this study tries to put an addition to the norm diffusion dynamics literature. For analysis, the ASEAN is selected for empirical research. This article takes shapes in five parts. In the first place, the climate change actions of the regional organizations in Europe and Asia will be briefly explicated. What will follow is the clarification of theoretical ground of norm dynamics. Then, analytical frame is to be set. In the fourth place, the analysis on the role of the ASEAN with the norm dynamics will be made. The paper ends with conclusion with theoretical and policy implications.

2 Regional Organization in Global-Regional Interface

Appropriate actions and measures in response to climate change have been negotiated and diffused by the global institutions of the UNFCCC and the obligation-imposing KP. These UN-based climate change institutions invite a wide range of actors to represent their views, but a participating status of “any body or agency” is delimited to being as observers (UNFCCC, 1992; Article 7(6)), not as decision-makers in policy-making arena. Accordingly, it is not an exaggeration to label the UN-based institutions with state-centric governance. However, exceptional is ‘regional economic integration organization’, briefly regional organization, whose level of participation in the UN negotiation table is deep enough to sign, ratify, accept, and approve or accede to the instruments of the UNFCCC/KP on the conditionality that the organization comprises sovereign states with competence and authority (UNFCCC, 1992; Article 1(6)), from which a global-regional interface is formed.

The exemplary case of a tight interface is the EU, which has performed midwifery skills between global and regional initiatives. At the regional level, the EU initiated a region-wide action under the *Environment Directorate-General* of the European Commission that enforces legally-binding EU environmental law, and then established the *Directorate-General for Climate Action* (DG CLIMA¹) in 2010 to govern solely the regional climate change issues. The EU has accumulated its prestige as being a leader by such eloquent practices (Oberthür and Kelly, 2008) as the EU Emission Trading Scheme in 2005 and the independent EU-wide

¹ Source, from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/clima/mission/index_en.htm.

commitments of GHG emission reduction, renewable energy share increase, and energy efficiency increase by at least 20% by 2020 under the slogan of “20 20 20 by 2020” (EC, 2008). At the global level, the actorness² of the EU has been strongly high. In the UN-based institutions, the *European Commission* (EC), one of three pillars of the EU, was given an authority to sign the KP on an equal footing with the other individual EU member states (Groenleer and van Schaik, 2007). The EU presence³ is also witnessed in non-UN-based institutions such as G8, G20, the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, and International Energy Agency. Put differently, the EU has carried out an active part not only in regional diffusion and reinforcement of the global climate change initiatives but also in global policy-making on the basis of congruence and convergence of member states’ preferences (Groenleer and van Schaik, 2007).

Likewise, the Asian regional organizations have played a certain role in the profusion of region-wide climate change actions in response to the UNFCCC/KP. However, a different picture is drawn from that of the Europe whose regional governance is dominated by a sole integration organization. Asian region can be described as *shared layers of governance*, because there are multiple regional organizations with overlapping membership, functions, and geographical coverage. Each organization has set its own regional institutional arrangements for climate change actions. In case of the ASEAN, the ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on Joint Response to Climate Change was made in 2010. The APEC announced the Sydney APEC Leaders’ Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development in 2007. This was followed by the Fukui Declaration focusing on energy security in 2010. The EAS issued the Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security, and subsequently, the Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and the Environment made its official appearance in 2007. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation expressed the THIMPHU Statement on Climate Change in 2010. However, neither these institutional arrangements nor the Asian regional organizations grabbed much scholarly attention. Though the Asian institutional arrangements are the embodiment of regional climate change implications, the informal institutions with aspirational commitments cast analytical crevice in connection with the legally-binding global institutions. Also, none of the Asian regional organizations is given an official authority at the UN climate change negotiation table, so debating the actorness is at prematurity. However, acknowledging de facto existence of global-regional interface, though vague, this research intends to figure out how the global-Asian regional interaction is made. The node of Asian regional organizations is taken notice of in-between the institutions in two different scales and characteristics. One is the legally-binding UN-based global climate change institutions. The other is the informal regional institutions in Asia. The next section will explore the theoretical ground of institutional interaction.

3 Norm Diffusion Dynamics and Asia

The most generally accepted definition on institution is “rules of the game” comprising formal and informal rules that provide an institution-perceiving actor with both constraints and incentives. The choice made by the actor is a result of interplay between the institution and the opportunity-seeking actor (North, 1990). On this ground, international relation theories on institution diverge in the focusing aspect of institutional constituents.

² Actorness is assessed by four criteria of recognition of the EU as a party, formal and informal authority, cohesion of diverging values and goals, and autonomy.

³ Source, from http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/negotiations/index_en.htm.

In rational approaches, neo-realism sees the institution as a reflection of interests of hegemonic nation state⁴, so institutional leverage is much diluted (Mearsheimer, 1995). Neo-liberalist believes in the power of institutions equipped with formal constraints of legally-binding compliance rules and contract laws helping to reduce transaction cost, which leads to cooperation (Keohane, 1988). Meanwhile, constructivism that regards the institution as structural “cognitive entities” based on agent’s understanding mainly centers on informal constraints which are socially transmitted information such as norms, shared idea, culture, code of conducts, repeated practices (Wendt, 1992). Irrespective of different views on institutional aspects and clouts, commonly-threading logic is an interaction between agent and a single institution.

Discourses on multiple institutions then open a new theoretical dimension with recognition that institutional interaction is an important determinant to institutional effectiveness in the neo-liberalist circle (Young, 2002). Much focus moved from the agent-institution interaction to the development of institution-institution linkage logic. Studies on dyadic institutional interaction started from typology-making (Stokke, 2001) and moved to developing ‘causal mechanism’ that explains how a source institution influences a target institution (Gehring and Oberthür, 2009). Studies on systematic interaction among multiple institutions (Keohane and Victor, 2010; Biermann et al., 2009) just started and stayed at “typological stage” (Zelli, 2011). However, concomitant features in both dyadic and systematic institutional interaction studies are that the role of the agent does not come much to the fore⁵ and that both studies begin with an assumption that institutions are ontologically given separately. Despite ontological irrelevance, effectiveness hinges upon institutional interaction, so strategic “interplay management” is devised (Oberthür, 2009). These approaches face limitation in the studies on the role of regional organization in the interaction between the UN climate change institutions and ontologically *responsive institutions*⁶ at the regional level. Furthermore, two-scaled institutions in this study stand aloof in the continuum of hard-soft legality in nature. Accordingly, this research turns eyes to the constructivism whose focus is laid on informal constraints of institution, particularly norms. In constructivism, the norm is socially constructed “standard of appropriate behavior for agents with a given identity” by the understanding and interpretation of the agents (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Accordingly, the norm is not only stiff but also malleable by the agents involved in the interpretation on the appropriateness. Also, the existence and meaning of the norms are justified by the existence of interpreting agents, so the norms move by the movement of the agents across the institutions. This norm diffusion dynamics by the agent is where the global-regional interaction can begin in this research.

Norm diffusion dynamics is two-dimensional by the direction of norm movement. One is top-down diffusion path of transnational norms, and the other is bottom-up feedback. The scholarship of the former is said to have three waves in the classification of Acharya (2004). The first wave looked into diffusion of the transnational norm, deemed better than existing domestic norms, to targeted nations. Successful diffusion was argued to depend on the power of transnational norms of such as science policy and the teaching role of the international organization (Finnemore, 1993). However, this strand faced limitations in the explication of the divergent level of the norm diffusion among target nations. Thus, the second wave took note of what leads to the divergence of norm diffusion rate and what lies beneath is frictional normative contestation between existing

⁴ Mearsheimer (1995) explained the institution as ‘reflection of the distribution of power in the world’.

⁵ Though a logic of ‘macro (institution)-micro (actors)’ is included in the causal mechanism, what determines the institutional effectiveness is an interaction type (Gehring and Oberthür, 2009).

⁶ ‘Responsive institution’ is an institution whose ontological being is driven by the other institution.

domestic norms and new transnational norms (Finnemorre and Sikkink, 1998). Accordingly, emphasized was a “*degree of fit*” (Acharya, 2004) between transnational norms and existing domestic norms and practices or domestic political institutions (Checkle, 1999; Risse-Kappen, 1994). Then, a focus moved onto a *construction of fit* for a successful diffusion of transnational norms. Thus, domestic agents and construction methods came to the fore. For transnational norm entrepreneurs, access to and channeling with domestic agents in a decision-making position or with a power to form a winning coalition become important (Risse-Kappen, 1994; Klotz, 1995). Concerning the methods to construct the fit, “Issue-framing” is a way to insert the new transnational norms in a broader context of prevalently existing norms (Klotz, 1995), and “grafting” (Acharya, 2004) links the new transnational norms with the existing norms in a similar issue area (Price, 1997). The dynamic construction of fit by agent-channeling and issue-framing or grafting can be a deliberate job to minimize conflict prior to the occurrence of normative contestation. Acharya (2004) noted that this construction is not a “reconstruction” but a “reinterpretation or re-representation” of new transnational norms in a strict sense. Accordingly, the normative contestation between existing domestic norms and transnational norms is not settled. Furthermore, the discussion in the second wave is delimited in the domestic arena. As a step forward, the third wave sheds light on the reconstruction of transnational norms at the regional level. On the variation in the acceptance of transnational norms by the region, Acharya (2004) explicated that the embedded local beliefs and practices are in normative contestation with transnational norms. Thus, local agents reinterpret transnational norms on the basis of embedded local beliefs and practices and reconstruct the transnational norms to be fitted with extant regional priors. This reconstruction process is termed as “localization”, and the localized norms are the products of localization. By the localization, the normative contestation between transnational norms and existing regional norms is resolved.

The norm dynamics of localization, an active reconstruction of transnational norms by the regional agent with the prior cognitive norms and identities (Acharya, 2004), has a successful rendezvous with the Asian region which has its own regional history, norms, culture, and economic and political variation among nations (Acharya, 1997). This implies the global transnational norms are not diffused without the Asian region-variant filtering. As examples in the facet of norms, the European idea of ‘common security’ having four normative features was in contestation with three extant ASEAN norms⁷, so it was localized into ‘cooperative security’ by the acceptance of only two features⁸. Also, the post-Westphalian concept of ‘collective action’ with regard to human rights underwent localization in double steps. Firstly, collective action was localized into ‘flexible engagement’, but it was in great normative contestation with existing regional norms of non-interference. The localization went again and produced ‘enhanced interaction’ (Acharya, 2004). The discourses in line with localization in the Asian region are ‘ASEAN way’ and ‘Asia-Pacific Way’ (Acharya, 1997). In the facet of agent, regional organizations such as the ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum surge to the fore as not only taking localization process but also acting as the Asian region’s own “norm brewery” (Katsumata, 2006).

However, this does not mean that the transnational norms are always localized by the local agents in Asia (Capie, 2012). Scholarly focus on the latter, the bottom-up feedback of norm diffusion dynamics, is in relation with the case that existing regional norms or localized norms do not stay within regional boundary but

⁷ Three norms are i) ASEAN’s avoidance of military-security cooperation, ii) minimization of the role of external powers by Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (AOPFAN) framework, and iii) the ASEAN way epitomizing the preference for non-legally binding information institution (Acharya, 2004; p256).

⁸ Two accepted norm features are i) the principle of inclusiveness and ii) the rejection of deterrence-based security systems. Rejected are i) legalistic measures and ii) the link between domestic politics and regional security (Acharya, 2004; p257).

move up to the global level and influence the transnational norms. Prantl and Nakano (2011) compared how two different local agents localize the same transnational norm of ‘Responsibility to Protect (R2P)’. By a deliberate Chinese effort to reconstruct the transnational norm on the basis of the existing norms of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘non-intervention’ alongside the social influence, the transnational norm was strictly reinterpreted and localized in China. China brought a level change in normative discussion and a strengthened decision process⁹ in the application of the R2P as the localized R2P to the global negotiation table not only for a reconfirmation of the R2P but also an enmeshment with the localized R2P. However, in case of Japan, an existent local norm of ‘human security’ and the transnational norm of the R2P came to be in contestation. Because the Japanese government did not support the R2P and there was a lack of networks of R2P supporting agents at domestic level, so the localization did not occur. Existing norm of the Human Security was reemphasized by Japan both at the regional and at the global level, so the transnational norm of the R2P lost strength in a manner that the application area of the R2P came to be narrowed down and much reduced. Therefore, localization discourse was argued to be complemented by this feedback process (Prantl and Nakano, 2011). By this bottom-up feedback, cognizance on norm diffusion dynamics comes to be extended from unidirectional global-to-regional localization to interaction between global and regional level.

The bottom-up feedback loop of norm diffusion dynamics is at a nascent stage. This means the bottom-up feedback not only opens a new space for discourse but also awaits more empirical application and theoretical specification. The current explication on the bottom-up feedback (Prantl and Nakano, 2011) unfolded the feedback by the existing regional norms in case of localization failure in Japan and the localized norms in case of localization success in China. This logic arouses several points to be noteworthy. The first is that the delineated norm diffusion dynamics is between global and national level, though the regional norms are in use. Feedback loop framework discourse will garner more support from global-regional interaction with the local agents such as regional organizations and regional non-state actors as well as nation-state actors. Secondly, what awaits further development is why and when the existing regional norms and localized norms elevate to the global level and form a second round of normative contestation with the transnational norms, not just staying and being influential at the regional level. Along this line, to be noteworthy is a case selection. Both China and Japan have a great voice in the international arena. Particularly, China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and Japan is a frequently elected member. This leads us to think that feedback process between global and local level is also a black box having a certain mechanism, not just an automatic process. Comparison of localization and feedback process by using different multiple transnational norms with only one local agent can help us to understand the mechanism. Also, the use of multiple norms can eschew the bias arising from the use of “a single specific norm” (Legro, 1997). Thirdly, in the issue dimension, the norms of use in the localization and feedback discourse have relevance with human right, as most of in Asian localization studies are rather skewed toward security and human right issues. Application with other issues will make a fuller account of norm diffusion dynamics in Asian region.

The scholarly development of norm diffusion dynamics provides a new way to look at the global-regional interaction by the Asian regional organization in climate change regime in a manner that the regional organization as a local agent localizes transnational norms of the UN-based climate change institutions and then

⁹ The change of level where the normative discussion of the R2P is made from the UN Security Council to the General Assembly and the strengthened application process by approval of the Security Council and the consent of the host country concerned (Prantl and Nakano, 2011).

drives bottom-up feedback with localized norms to the initial transnational norms. On the basis of localization (Acharya, 2004) and feedback loop (Prantl and Nakano, 2011) discourse, particularly, by using the multiple number of norms, this research attempts to compare the norm diffusion dynamics by the norms and reveal what factors affect the divergence of norm diffusion dynamics and subsequently what makes the Asian regional organization as a local agent more active in the global-regional interaction. In order to test this hypothesis, elaboration of analytical frame such as the level, the scope, and the number of multiple norms is a pre-requisite. Particularly, the constructivism harboring norm diffusion dynamics discourse is still not free from critical viewpoints that research design, specification of key terms, and agency recuperation are insufficient (Checkel, 1995). Accordingly, in order to fill in the cracks of constructivism, the next section will set analytical design, specify key terms, and put the agency to the fore.

4 Analytical Frame

In order to explore the localization and the feedback loop, necessary is specification of the explanatory constituents of norm dynamics. The major constituents are the local agent and the norms. For a regional organization as a local agent, the ASEAN which has been utilized in the localization studies very featly is selected. The norms, defined as a “single standard of behaviors”, broadly refer to rules and practices. In relation with an institution, the institution is an interrelated “aggregation” of multiple norms (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Accordingly, the norms are building blocks of the institution, and the norms are embodied by the institution (Bernstein, 2002). For analysis, the norms are divided into transnational norms, regional norms, and localized norms. Definition of each term of use will follow Acharya (2004)’s and Prantl and Nakano (2011)’s, but further specification is needed for analytical application. Firstly, in climate change issue, transnational norms are what shape the global climate change institutions, and transnational norms of climate change are embodied in such institutions as the 1992 UNFCCC, the 1997 KP agreements, and the decisions of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC. Next, a selection of transnational norms by dimension and scope becomes seminal. Particularly, in order to compare the localization and feedback process, the norms need to be multiple in number and on a coequal foot in level. Also, the ability of the ASEAN to shape the global climate change structure in the international arena is not assured, so, in order to empirically test both localization and feedback process, the norms need to be specific and behavioral rather than fundamental. With all these concerns combined, this article decided to choose sectoral implementation and elaboration of policies and measures for carbon emission reduction as the transnational norms. Sectoral implementation and policy elaboration are indicated in the UN-based climate change institutions by cooperative actions and management in energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, waste management (*UNFCCC*, 1992; Article 4(1) (c) & (d)). However, not all the sectors can be covered, so scope limitation is necessary. In the KP, the energy sector is exteriorized into energy efficiency, renewable energy use, and distribution of energy. The forestry sector underwent concretization by sustainable forest management practices, afforestation, and reforestation. National and regional commitments by elaboration of policies and measures in the other sectors of sustainable agriculture management, transport, waste management, and spatial planning cannot be excluded (*KP*, 1998; Article 2 &10).

Here, the transport and the waste management sectors are grouped together with spatial planning. Accordingly, this article selected three transnational norms of sectoral commitments to forestry, energy, and urban planning.

Secondly, the existing regional norms are pre-existing local beliefs and practices. Though practices are a part of norms, this article will separately set prior regional practices apart from existing norms by exploring the existence of relevant internal organizations and activities before 1998, a year before which the most stringent measures to reduce GHG emission reduction at global level was agreed upon.

Thirdly, the localized norms are an outcome of normative contestation settlement between outside transnational norms and existent regional norms and practices through localization. Here, in this article, localized norms are set to be made during the period of 1998 to 2011. Asian regional organizations announced official joint statement or declarations for regional-level climate change action. Though these are made up of informal rules rather than legally-binding laws, they suffice to be institutions as “aggregation” of norms (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Accordingly, localized norms are to be extracted from the official documents such as the ASEAN Leaders’ Statement on Joint Response to Climate Change (ASEAN, 2010a), made during the afore-mentioned period in response to UN-based climate change institutions, because they presume to reflect what is collectively regarded as appropriate by regional member states. Localized practices are divided into two aspects of organization and activities. Organizational localization is to be judged by whether regional organization establishes a new internal organization in charge or expands the pre-existing organization as a behavioral change in response to transnational norms. Localization in the activities is also to be recognized by new or expansive initiatives. What will follow is an empirical test with the case of the ASEAN.

5 Climate Change Norm Diffusion Dynamics by the ASEAN

As previously framed, with the sectoral implementation and policy & measures elaboration of the UN-based climate change regime as transnational norms and practices, the localization and the feedback of the localized norms by the ASEAN will be explored in three sectoral commitments to the forestry, the energy, and the urban planning in order.

5.1 Forestry

Commitment to *forestry* sector, manifested in the 1992 UNFCCC (Article 4 (1) (c) & (d)), can be summarized into sustainable management of forestry for conservation and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gas. Commitment is more specified in the 1997 KP by the sinks from forestry activities of afforestation, reforestation and deforestation as the GHG emission mitigation actions by developed countries, belonging to Annex I parties (KP, 1998; Article 3 (3)). Then, a way for developing countries to participate in the mitigation action by reducing emissions from deforestation was suggested at Conference of Parties (COP) eleven by Papua New Guinea and Costa Rica (UNFCCC, 2005). This was a big stride forward in that mitigation action is committed by developing countries, and emphasis is not on carbon sinks but on carbon emission cutback. This action is a ‘compensated reduction’ from the standpoint of developing countries which will receive financial compensation for deforestation reduction (Paul, 2009). This was developed to ‘reducing

emissions from deforestation in developing countries (REDD)' mechanism in Bali Action Plan (*UNFCCC*, 2007; Decision 2/CP.13). What is agreed upon is an affirmation of voluntary efforts of developing countries against deforestation and forest degradation, but a range of actions, options, efforts, and supporting areas or methodological issues remained for more exploration (*UNFCCC*, 2007; Decision 2/CP.13-paragraph 7). With additional functions, REDD plus mechanism emerged (*UNFCCC*, 2009; paragraph 6 &8).

The forestry-related regional commitments within the ASEAN had been done on two tracks: an economic track and an environmental track. On an economic track, since the start of regional cooperation in forestry in 1973 (ASEAN secretariat, 2010), the ASEAN has built up a hierarchical internal organization, on the top of which lies the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) in the ASEAN Economic Community pillar, followed by the Senior Officials Meeting and then the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) below. The establishment of the AMAF is for the enhancement of regional food security by increasing the competitiveness of food, agricultural and forestry-related products. Though there was an understanding that the forestry has multi-dimensional commitments from environment, economic, and technological development aspects in the 1980s (ASEAN, 1981), regional commitments to the forestry was more skewed toward activities in relation with income increase and poverty alleviation with forestry products, so main regional cooperation is a facilitation of forestry-industrial investment and a standardization of forestry-related product (ASEAN, 1993). On an environmental track, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment dealt with forest fires, trans-boundary haze pollution, and sustainable forest management.

Commitments to forestry from the perspective of climate change began to dissolve into pre-existing practices on both tracks. On an environmental track. Particularly, in connection with the matter of trans-boundary haze, the ASEAN has developed a forestry-related ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative to reduce trans-boundary haze pollution as well as GHG emission (*ASEAN Secretariat*, 2005). The Blueprint for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (2009-2015) indicated the regional commitment to forestry in the pillars of environmental sustainability, climate change, and sustainable forest management, and the support for the REDD and REDD plus under the UN-based CDM efforts (*ASEAN*, 2007b; D.10.40.iv and D.11.41.iv). The most recent Joint Statement of the ASEAN affirmed its agreement on the REDD plus mechanism in the GHG emission reduction and sustainable development (*ASEAN*, 2010; paragraph 9). On an economic track, the consideration of climate change in the forestry sector imbued the regional forestry-related activities. Distinctive localized practices are development of Work Plan for Strengthening Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (2008-2015), an establishment of a Regional Framework for a Pan ASEAN Certification Initiative, ASEAN Criteria and Indicators for sustainable management of tropical forests, Mekong REDD Initiative and the Strategic Plan of Actions of the Heart of Borneo initiative (*ASEAN*, 2008; Key Considerations). Accordingly, the forestry-related transnational norms experienced localization on the ground of both environmental and economic sustainability.

However, on an economic track, localization of forestry commitments did not stop here. In response to the REDD mechanism from the Bali Action Plan, the ASEAN Regional Knowledge Network (ARKN) on Forests and Climate Change was established in 2008 on the basis of decision of the ASOF under the AMAF. The ARKN recommended developing a position paper and framed an ASEAN Common Position Paper on REDD. This Position Paper was adopted by the ASOF and submitted by Indonesia on behalf of ASEAN member states at the COP 14 of the UNFCCC held in December 2008 (*ASEAN secretariat*, 2010). In this

position paper, the ASEAN, defining itself as a ‘strong forestry block’ of developing countries, indicated its existing region-wide activities and expressed outwardly its position on methodological issues, policy approaches, positive incentives for REDD and the role of Annex I countries (ASEAN, 2008). Particularly, emphasizing the consideration on national circumstances and capacity, it was noted that the choices on methodologies in defining baseline or reference emission level and the policy approaches for a range of mitigation activities have to be left open. Regarding readiness of developing countries, positive incentives are to be diversified by fund-based approaches as well as market-based approach. Also, mentioned was a need of support from Annex I countries in the enhancement of the readiness of developing countries in capacity building, improvement of infrastructure, technology transfer, and exchange of knowledge and experiences for developing countries (ASEAN, 2008).

Then, within the ASEAN boundary, the AMAF devised the ASEAN Multi-Sectoral Framework on Climate Change to address cross-sectoral issues of agriculture and forestry alongside food security, and endorsed the framework in November 2009. In the same year, at the COP 15, REDD-plus came to the fore with additional activities¹⁰ (UNFCCC, 2009; paragraph 6 & 8). On this new mechanism, the draft “ASEAN Common Position Paper on REDD plus in Developing Countries” was prepared and submitted. The ASEAN actively expressed its view in a way that decisions between the BAP and the KP have to be balanced (ASEAN, 2010b; paragraph 1). While the equity principle was reiterated on the mitigation of GHG emission, consideration on the national circumstances on the REDD plus mechanism was reemphasized (ASEAN, 2010b; paragraph 2 & 3). Also, the ASEAN revealed its preference on the elements of the REDD plus modalities (ASEAN, 2010b; paragraph 6), and they were reflected into the *Cancun Agreement*, the result of the COP 16 to the UNFCCC held in Cancun in December 2010. To be specific, firstly, the common position of the ASEAN was that methodological approach needs to be flexible and phase-based, and the choice on the phase and the elements of the phase needs to be under national discretion. This is shown in the paragraph 71, 73 and 74 of the *Cancun Agreement* (UNFCCC, 2010). Secondly, the linkage with source needs to be fund-based, market-based, or combination of both on the basis of national circumstances. This is related with the development of one or more market-based mechanism (UNFCCC, 2010; paragraph 80) and of one or more non-market-based mechanisms at the 17th session of the COP (UNFCCC, 2010; paragraph 84). Thirdly, a balance was emphasized between actions of developing countries and support of developed countries by the ASEAN position paper, which has connection with the paragraph 76 (UNFCCC, 2010). Accordingly, the ASEAN as a regional agent internally converged regional stance on the transnational norms of the implementation elements of the REDD and the REDD plus, expressed its localized norms which are embodied in two ASEAN Position Papers at the global negotiation process, and generated a normative contestation, which was settled by the reflection of the ASEAN’s preference into the COP agreements.

5.2 Energy

Energy sectoral commitment was proffered in terms of technology development and transfer in *energy sector* in the first place (UNFCCC, 1992; Article 4 (1) (c)), then was more concretized into elaboration of policies and measures in energy efficiency, energy technology development, energy use, and energy infrastructure (KP, 1998; Article 2 paragraph 1(a)(i),(iv),(viii)). Afterwards, the energy sector is absorbed into and discussed under the

¹⁰ Plus activities are related with funding/investment for tropical forests, which store carbon, increase sequestration, create rain, moderate weather conditions and protect biodiversity rather than emission reduction (Paul, 2009).

technology transfer framework in Bali Action Plan, so energy sectoral notion has become rather blurred afterwards.

In the energy sector, the ASEAN had unfolded its own regional initiatives and activities under the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) since 1980. Like in the forestry sector, there exists an established organizational hierarchy. Under the AMEM sits the Senior Officials on Energy Meeting (SOME). Interesting is an array of many subsidiary cooperation organizations such as the ASEAN Centre for Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Sub-Sector Network, the Renewable Energy Sub-Sector Network, the Sub-Committee on Non-Conventional Energy Research, Regional Energy Policy and Planning Sub-Sector Network (Lidula et al., 2006). To be noteworthy is that these have relevance to the energy security. Since the oil crisis in the 1970s, the ASEAN has established a regional energy cooperative network for energy security. Distinctive are the formation of ASEAN Council on Petroleum in 1975 and the adoption of Emergency Petroleum Sharing Scheme in Circumstances of Shortage and Oversupply in 1977. What goes along this line are the energy infrastructure development efforts for regional economic integration, as indicated in the Hanoi Plan of Action¹¹ whose resolution was made at the 1998 ASEAN summit (Karki et al., 2005; Balce et al, 1999). On the basis of this, in 1999, the ASEAN Center for Energy (ACE) was established to integrate member countries' energy strategies, to provide expertise to member countries, and to share energy technology information¹². The ACE has steered the development of a five-year staged ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC) since 1999. The activities are mainly for regional energy security, rather than climate change actions.

In connection with the UN-based climate change institutions, initially the ASEAN did not make tangible region-wide efforts in energy sector, because it positioned itself well in getting benefitted from the KP Clean Development Mechanism projects in renewable energy and energy efficiency fields (Lidula et al., 2006). The ASEAN response to energy sectors in the climate change context came to be seen in 2007 by the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability with the commitments to the energy efficiency, energy technology development in cleaner use of fossil fuels, use of renewable and alternative energy sources, and energy infrastructure of open and competitive regional energy markets. These commitments were still in line with energy security frame. In the ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Joint Response to Climate Change, however, energy sectoral commitments are discussed under the frame of GHG emission reduction rather than the energy security by enhancing scientific collaboration in the industrial and domestic energy efficiency measures and renewable energy generation (ASEAN, 2010; paragraph 14 (c)). The most recent APAEC for 2010-2015 contains such program areas as coal and clean coal technology, renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation, and civilian nuclear energy, etc¹³. Within the APAEC, aspirational goals of regional energy intensity reduction at least 8% by 2015 with 2005 base year and regional renewable energy increase in the total power installed capacity by 2015 are pursued. Accordingly, in the energy sector, the localization by the ASEAN on the sectoral commitments is done on the basis of existing energy security practices. The diffusion of transnational norms of the UNFCCC/KP seems slow in energy sector in comparison with the forestry sector. Though energy sector has a close relation with technology mechanism of the UN-based climate change institutions, visible presence of the ASEAN is not witnessed in the global negotiation table.

¹¹ Hanoi Plan of Action is the first series of action plan that covers the period of 1999-2004 to realize the ASEAN Vision 2020.

¹² The ACE website (source: <http://aseanenergy.org/index.php/about/introduction>).

¹³ ASEAN Plan of Action on Energy Cooperation (APAEC) 2010-2015 (source: <http://www.aseansec.org/22675.pdf>).

5.3 Urban Planning

The urban planning in line with climate change started with the focus on transport and waste management sectors (UNFCCC, 1992; Article 4 (1) (c)). Then, the commitment of the parties is ranged from the elaboration of policies and measures for GHG and methane emission reduction in transport and waste management sectors (KP, 1998; Article 2 (1) (a) (vii) & (viii)) to the formulation of national and regional programme in transport, waste management, and spatial planning (KP, 1998; Article 10(b)(i)). Unlike the afore-mentioned sectors of the forestry and the energy, the sectors with relevance to urban-planning have received less attention at the UN-based climate change negotiation¹⁴.

With regard to urban planning, firstly, the ASEAN has operated the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment since 1981. Then, in response to World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, the ASEAN decided to set up a framework¹⁵ for “Environmentally Sustainable Cities” at Yangon Resolution on Sustainable Development (ASEAN, 2003). The concept of ‘environmentally sustainable cities’ was shaped on the basis of regional priors of the ASEAN Vision 2020 (ASEAN, 1997; A Community of Caring Societies) and the Hanoi Plan of Action (ASEAN, 1998; section VI), both of which pinpointed the importance of regional environmental protection and sustainable development promotion. With this regional conceptualization, distinctive efforts could have more definite shape by the establishment of the ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Sustainable Cities in 2003. This Working Group started the Regional Environmental Sustainability Cities Programme and the ASEAN Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Cities with focus on three environmental areas of air, water, and land. However, these activities were attributable to the commitments to the sustainable development, rather than the norm diffusion of the UNFCCC/KP.

Interesting is that the ASEAN activities along the line of climate change has been done in cooperation with the East Asian Summit (EAS). The EAS Environment Ministers Meeting (EMM) established the High Level Seminar on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (HLS ESC) on the basis of the Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and the Environment (2007) with recognition of urbanization as a prime issue for climate change actions in the EAS region. The major task of HLS ESC is the East Asian Model Cities initiative, under which the ASEAN ESC Model Cities Programme was framed and started in 2011 in linkage with the ASEAN Working Group on Environmental Sustainable Cities. Accordingly, in the urban planning sector, the ASEAN brewed new concept and organization under the context of sustainable development, but unfolded localized activities together with the other regional organization, the EAS, in response to climate change.

To summarize the application of norm diffusion dynamics to the global-regional interaction by the Asian regional organization, firstly, the ASEAN has already had existing regional norms and implemented region-wide practices in all three sectors, as seen in the column of pre-existing norms practices in the table 1. Secondly, the ASEAN diffused the transnational norms on the basis of the pre-existing norms and practices. The ASEAN forestry sector localized sectoral commitments to forestry in two separate tracks of environmental management and economic aspect of food security, and the energy sector combined the GHG reduction technology development and transfer with the existing energy security enhancing activities. In case of urban-planning, the ASEAN reacted in accordance with transnational norms of sustainable development, rather than

¹⁴ In the distinctive UN-based climate change negotiation results such as the Bali Action Plan, the Copenhagen Accord, and the Cancun Agreement, the sectors on waste management, transportation, and urban planning are not specified.

¹⁵ Framework for environmentally sustainable cities in ASEAN (source: <http://www.aseansec.org/framework.htm>).

Table 1 Norm Dynamics of the ASEAN

Appropriate Commitments	Pre-existing Norms and Practices <i>a</i>			Localization <i>b</i>			Feedback Loop <i>c</i>
	Existing Norms	Organization	Activities	Localized Norms	New Organization	Localized activities	Localized norms at the global level
Forestry	√	√	√	√	√√	√√	√
Energy	√	√	√	√	-	√√	-
Urban Planning	√	√	√	-	-	√√	-

Note: a. Judgment on the priors by the year 1998.

b. Localization to the transnational norms of the UN-based climate change institutions.

c. Expression of localized norms during the UN-based climate change Negotiation.

d. The cell with one check mark (√) indicates the existence, and two check marks (√√) the expansion.

the climate change agreements, from which it can be inferred, thirdly, that the level of localization is as divergent as seen in the localization column. In the fourth place, from the forestry sectoral norm dynamics, sectorally localized norms do not reside in the regional boundary but move to global negotiation level. The ASEAN converged member states' views on the emission reduction by developing countries in the forestry sector, and the localized norms embodied in the Position Papers are addressed for the global climate change negotiation and influence the development of global mechanisms of REDD and REDD plus. Fifthly, bottom-up feedback process is also divergent. Regional commitments to energy and urban planning are lively, but dynamic interaction by the bottom-up feedback at the global level was not made.

6 Conclusions

This article attempted to apply the norm diffusion dynamics of localization and feedback process to the global-regional climate change institutional interaction with the case of the ASEAN as a local agent. From the analysis, it was found that the ASEAN played a local agent role by localizing the transnational norms of the UN-based institutions, generating responsive institution with localized norms and practices, and propelling the localized norms to the global negotiation round. This means localized norms in Asia do not work just within a regional boundary but brew over normative contestation against the transnational norms. Particularly, this article compared the localization and feedback process by the usage of the multiple number of the transnational norms of sectoral commitments to forestry, energy, and urban planning. Comparative study reveals that the top-down localization level differs by the norms, and not all the localized norms undergo the bottom-up feedback process.

This result renders us theoretical and policy implications in both the localization and bottom-up feedback process. Divergent localizations by the norms lead us to importance of internal capability of the local agent not only to weave regional normative fabric but also to manage *normative routes*. For this, the ASEAN established the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC¹⁶) under the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment within Socio-Cultural Community. The AWGCC is tasked to operate a regional consultative platform, the ASEAN Climate Change Initiative (ACCI¹⁷). However, as seen in forestry sectoral commitments

¹⁶ The AWGCC was set up at the 11th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment on October 29, 2009, in Singapore.

¹⁷ The ACCI was endorsed at the ASEAN Summit in Singapore in November 2007, and the terms of reference of the ACCI was adopted at the 11th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in 2009 (source: <http://environment.asean.org/index.php?page=overview>).

that localization was done on both environment and economic tracks and the feedback loop was drawn through an economic track, it is questionable whether the AWGCC within the pillar of socio-cultural community to do a channeling role to orchestrate the climate change actions across relevant internal sectors within the ASEAN. Also, the ACCI “lacks the mandate” (Manila Bulletin, 2010) to enforce stringent climate change actions within the ASEAN. Accordingly, a new partnership, called the ASEAN for a Fair, Ambitious and Binding Global Climate Deal (A-FAB), was formed by external agents¹⁸ to deliver non-vague commitments¹⁹ with the legal obligation and to help the ASEAN to position as a regional block at the UNFCCC. Therefore, the AWGCC needs to act further the internal clearinghouse role in relation with the other internal organizations, regardless of sector, issue, function, etc. Also, as explicated in the Joint Statements of the ASEAN, enhancing the capacity of the AWGCC to converge member states’ views on climate change and form the ASEAN position for the UNFCCC is of consequence (ASEAN, 2010; paragraph 12 and 13). Lastly, as seen from the localization of urban-planning sector, sharing tasks among regional agents by linkage is another picture of regional normative fabric.

In the bottom-up feedback process, the value of transnational norms is revisited. Recent norm diffusion dynamics literature, particularly localization literature, has emphasized the importance of embedded existent norms, local agents, and local political structure. However, this study unravels that the forestry sectoral commitments developing into a separate REDD mechanism within the UN-based climate change regime watched the lively involvement from the ASEAN in the global normative construction. Conversely, the energy sectoral commitments did not have a separate ground, and the commitments to urban planning withered within the UN-based climate change regime, so the feedback loop by the ASEAN were not drawn. Accordingly, the extent to which the transnational norms can arouse and involve developing countries into a certain attractive behavioral setting seems seminal. Also, the transnational norm itself needs to generate a continuous *going value*. Secondly, the first implication leads us to the importance of an enabling environment where transnational norms allow a normative contestation with localized norms at the global level. Normative contestation occurs in the normative space. In the normative space, norms exist and if new norms enter the normative space, then new norms and existing norms collide. However, insertion of new norms into a normative space is neither automatic nor easy not only in the top-down process but also in the bottom-up process. In case of forestry commitments, the Parties to the UNFCCC were invited to submit view on the formation of REDD mechanism (UNFCCC, 2007; Decision 2/CP.13, paragraph 7(a)-(c) and 8), so Indonesia expressed its view on behalf of the ASEAN member countries. Accordingly, construction of an environment that enables a local agent to form a normative contestation with localized norms in a bottom-up feedback process is important. The third is in line with both the first and the second implications. That relates to demarcation of mechanisms. The UN-based climate change regime is replete with overlapping but not exhaustive mechanisms and frameworks. For example, the energy sectoral commitments have relevance with Kyoto flexible mechanism, technology mechanism, financial mechanism, capacity-development framework, etc. Though the ASEAN whose member states are mostly developing countries has great interest in the energy sectoral commitments from both energy security and climate change perspective, the regional focus in interaction with the UN-based climate change regime becomes scattered. This leads us to question whether we need to regard the forestry-sectoral mechanism as an exception

¹⁸ Greenpeace Southeast Asia and Oxfam (source: A-FAB website, <http://a-fab.org/about-a-fab/>).

¹⁹ Press release in 2010 (Source: A-FAB website, <http://a-fab.org/2011/08/25/group-calls-on-asean-to-move-beyond-vague-statements-on-climate-change/>).

or we can shape another energy-sectoral mechanism separately. Fourthly, what comes forward is a linkage between the UN-based climate change regime and the other relevant regimes. These sum up the importance of the design of the UN-based climate change institutions which are the aggregation of transnational norms.

Despite the afore-mentioned implications, this research is not without shortcomings. The ASEAN has enjoyed successful application of localization theory, so the utilization of the successful case is prone to case selection biases. In order to legitimate the afore-mentioned theoretical findings, application to the other regional organizations such as the APEC and the EAS seems to be in need. The application of norm diffusion dynamics to other Asian regional organizations with the same transnational norms of use in this study and the comparison among localization level will reveal not only the divergent localization and feedback among local agents by sector but also make us think of the way to form region-wide sector-by-sector linkage, as in the case of urban-planning linkage between the ASEAN and the EAS.

Furthermore, the application of norm diffusion dynamics into the climate change politics is a new attempt, because most of the localization-related literatures deal with fundamental norms on regional security and human right. Accordingly, this attempt cannot avoid critical eyes on the analytical frame. Firstly, to what extent the norms are classified as norms can come to the fore. The sectoral commitments which are not fundamental principles of the UNFCCC and the KP can be laid under the attack for indicating a certain behavioral specificity, the adaptation measures. However, the norms are not only what engenders a space for appropriateness discourse but also what guides actions of the relevant actors. Extracting the norms that reside somewhere in the down-to-earth level in the UN-based climate change institutions does not taint much the notion of the norms. Secondly, setting up sectoral commitments on forestry, energy, and urban-planning as three multiple transnational norms is also open to critical eyes for its discretionary criteria-framing by issue, scope, source, and number. Despite heavy critical potentials, this research revealed divergent norm diffusion dynamics by comparative studies with the usage of multiple transnational norms in climate change issue arena. Also, understanding the global-regional institutional interaction in Asian region and approaching the non-legally binding Asian regional institutions from the perspective of norm diffusion dynamics of the constructivism are a consolatory addition.

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