

The Survival of Focal Organizations

Unpacking Response Strategies of Existing International Organizations
to New International Organizations

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Executive summary

Most often extant research on the creation of new international organizations (IOs) seeks to explain the origins and process of institutional creation itself and how features of the new IO line up with those of existing IOs (e.g. Jupille et al., 2013; Liao, 2015). My research takes these findings one step further by focusing on the struggles of existing focal IOs as new IOs enter the same regime complex and potentially establish additional focal points. IO focality comprises an IO's ability to set standards for governing a global issue and its role of being the central resource provider in the regime complex. In an institutional environment characterized by regime complexity, the existing focal IO takes on an important role. Its leadership is decisive in setting the tone for handling new institutional challengers. It could stoke up competition with the new IO or pursue a more amicable path. Numerous examples of more cooperative and competitive response strategies appear across myriad contexts, for instance in international migration governance, but also in development finance or global energy governance. Consequently, my research question is: Why do existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways?

Conceptually speaking, this research provides a new angle for studying inter-institutional interactions and IO developments as it shines light on existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IO entries in the regime complex. It connects to three strands of international relations literature, namely on IO behavior, regime complexity and inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. An IO response strategy embodies a reflected answer of an existing IO in reaction to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. IO entry either takes place in the form of IO creation, or happens inadvertently as a new IO that was constituted to tackle a separate issue, now also addresses the global issue that forms the center of the regime complex. In this thesis I create a typology of IO response strategies along the dimensions of their competitiveness and their mode. While cooperative IO response strategies signal existing IOs' willingness to accommodate features of new IOs, competitive IO response strategies intend to weaken new IOs' chances of becoming new focal points in the regime complex. The mode dimension captures whether existing IOs change their rhetoric or whether they also change their practices, policies and institutional structures. The IO response strategies identified along these two dimensions constitute Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction.

This investigation of IO response strategies makes substantial theoretical and empirical contributions to better comprehend IO survival strategies and the causes and effects of inter-institutional conflict and cooperation. Theoretically speaking, I combine regime analysis and institutionalist approaches to build a theory of IO bureaucracy. The central premise of my novel

theoretical framework of IO response strategies is based on the mechanism of status threat. It embodies my general argument that strong threats to the focal status of existing IOs provoke more competitive response strategies. The two key variables which assess the degree of focal status threat entail the type of challenge posed to existing IOs' focality by new IO entries and institutional design similarities. The theoretical focus on IO-IO interactions deviates from conventional analyses of IO-state interactions when studying changes in IO behavior. Empirically speaking, this research captures different types of IO response strategies by existing focal IOs across a broad array of regime complexes, IOs and issue areas. To gain a holistic understanding of IO response strategies, the empirical investigation is designed to cover a large range of cases as well as to benefit from empirical depth. The first empirical chapter entails QCA analysis that covers a sample of 12 cases across 11 different issue areas. Given the grand universe of cases which covers all responses of existing IOs to new IO entries, the sampled cases are selected from a representative dataset on inter-institutional relations. The central outcome of QCA analysis identifies causal configurations of necessary and sufficient conditions that explain the presence of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In the second empirical chapter, I conduct a structured, focused comparison of IO response strategies by the World Bank, International Energy Agency, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and International Whaling Commission. They are chosen from the sample because each case entails counter-institutionalization and exhibits variance in the key explanatory variables. My findings yield that the motivation of new IO entries and existing IOs' focal strength impact the mode of IO response strategies. In turn, the mode of IO response strategies is imperative for an IO's survival as a focal actor as it expresses existing IOs' abilities and willingness to make concessions when faced by a potentially existential threat.

Essentially, the empirical evidence supports the mechanism of status threat and substantiates my general argument that strong threats to existing IOs' focality incite competitive IO response strategies. Hence, this dissertation connects IO response strategies with research on institutional overlap and inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. It detects first general trends in IO response strategies, untangles the relevant configurations of conditions leading to them and so forms a deeper understanding of the observed relations between existing focal and new IOs. These findings show that IOs take the reins in managing inter-institutional relations once the turmoil among states following a new IO entry has passed. They also have practical implications for the design of new IOs and give reason for optimism that the current global governance system is more sturdy than simple narratives of the order in crisis might make us believe.

Zusammenfassung

In der Forschung zur Gründung neuer internationaler Organisationen (IO) wird meist versucht die Ursprünge und den Prozess der institutionellen Gründung selbst zu erklären und wie sich die Merkmale der neuen IO mit denen der bestehenden IO decken (z.B. Jupille et al., 2013; Liao, 2015). Diese Dissertation geht noch einen Schritt weiter, indem sie sich auf die Bemühungen bestehender fokaler IOs konzentriert, wenn neue IOs in denselben Regimekomplex eintreten und womöglich zusätzliche fokale Akteure schaffen. Die Fokalität einer IO umfasst ihre Fähigkeit Standards für die Regelung eines globalen Problems zu setzen sowie ihre Rolle als zentraler Ressourcenanbieter im Regimekomplex. In einem institutionellen Umfeld, welches durch Regimekomplexität gekennzeichnet ist, nimmt die bestehende fokale IO eine wichtige Führungsrolle ein, indem sie über den Umgang mit neuen institutionellen Herausforderern entscheidet. Sie kann den Wettbewerb mit der neuen IO anheizen oder einen entgegenkommenderen Weg einschlagen. Zahlreiche Beispiele für kooperative und konkurrierende Antwortstrategien entstehen in den unterschiedlichsten Kontexten, etwa in der internationalen Migrationspolitik, aber auch in der Entwicklungsfinanzierung oder der globalen Energiepolitik. Meine Forschungsfrage lautet daher: Warum antworten bestehende fokale IOs auf neue IOs zuweilen auf freundliche oder mitunter auf tendenziell feindliche Weise?

Aus konzeptioneller Sicht bietet diese Forschung einen neuen Blickwinkel für die Untersuchung interinstitutioneller Interaktionen und IO-Entwicklungen, da sie die Antwortstrategien bestehender fokaler IOs auf den Eintritt einer neuen IO in den Regimekomplex beleuchtet. Sie knüpft an drei Literatursträngen zu internationalen Beziehungen an, nämlich an das Verhalten von IOs, die Regimekomplexität sowie die interinstitutionelle Zusammenarbeit und Konflikte. Die IO-Antwortstrategie verkörpert eine reflektierte Antwort einer bestehenden IO als Reaktion auf den Eintritt einer neuen IO in den Regimekomplex. Der Eintritt einer IO in den Regimekomplex erfolgt entweder in Form der Gründung einer IO oder unbeabsichtigt. Hierzu kommt es, wenn eine neue IO, die zur Lösung eines anderen Problems gegründet wurde, sich nun auch mit dem globalen Problem befasst, dass das Zentrum des Regimekomplexes bildet. In dieser Arbeit erstelle ich eine Typologie der IO-Antwortstrategien entlang der Dimensionen ihrer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit und ihres Modus. Während kooperative IO-Antwortstrategien die Bereitschaft bestehender IOs signalisieren, Eigenschaften neuer IOs zu übernehmen, zielen kompetitive IO-Antwortstrategien darauf ab die Chancen neuer IOs zu schwächen und neue fokale Akteure im Regimekomplex zu werden. Die Dimension des Modus erfasst, ob bestehende IOs ihre Rhetorik ändern oder ob sie auch ihre Praktiken, Politiken und institutionellen Strukturen anpassen. Die entlang dieser beiden

Dimensionen ermittelten IO-Antwortstrategien sind *Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation* und *Obstruction*.

Diese Untersuchung der IO-Antwortstrategien leistet einen wesentlichen theoretischen und empirischen Beitrag zum besseren Verständnis der Überlebensstrategien von IOs sowie der Ursachen und Auswirkungen von interinstitutionellen Konflikten und Kooperationen. Der theoretische Aspekt dieser Arbeit kombiniert die Regimeanalyse und institutionalistische Ansätze, um eine Theorie der IO-Bürokratie zu entwickeln. Die zentrale Prämisse meines neuartigen theoretischen Rahmens für IO-Antwortstrategien basiert auf dem Mechanismus der Statusbedrohung. Er verkörpert mein allgemeines Argument, dass starke Bedrohungen des fokalen Status bestehender IOs kompetitivere Antwortstrategien hervorrufen. Die beiden wichtigsten erklärenden Variablen, die den Grad der Bedrohung des fokalen Status erfassen, sind die Art der Herausforderung, die neue IOs für die Fokalität bestehender IOs darstellen, und Ähnlichkeiten im institutionellen Design. Der theoretische Schwerpunkt liegt auf den Interaktionen zwischen IOs und weicht bei der Untersuchung von Veränderungen im Verhalten von IOs von den herkömmlichen Analysen der Interaktionen zwischen IOs und Staaten ab. Empirisch gesehen werden in dieser Untersuchung verschiedene Arten von IO-Antwortstrategien bestehender fokaler IOs in einem breiten Spektrum von Regimekomplexen, IOs und Themengebieten erfasst. Um ein ganzheitliches Verständnis von IO-Antwortstrategien zu erlangen, ist die empirische Untersuchung so angelegt, dass sie ein breites Spektrum von Fällen abdeckt und von der empirischen Tiefe profitiert. Das erste empirische Kapitel umfasst eine QCA-Analyse, die eine Stichprobe von 12 Fällen aus 11 verschiedenen Themengebieten abdeckt. In Anbetracht der großen Grundgesamtheit von Fällen, die alle Reaktionen bestehender IOs auf neue IO-Beiträge umfasst, wurden die ausgewählten Fälle aus einem repräsentativen Datensatz über interinstitutionelle Beziehungen ausgewählt. Als zentrales Ergebnis der QCA-Analyse werden kausale Konfigurationen notwendiger und hinreichender Bedingungen identifiziert, die das Vorhandensein von kooperativen und kompetitiven IO-Antwortstrategien erklären. Im zweiten empirischen Kapitel führe ich einen strukturierten und gezielten Vergleich der IO-Antwortstrategien der Weltbank, der Internationalen Energieagentur, des Hohen Kommissars der Vereinten Nationen für Flüchtlinge sowie der Internationalen Walfangkommission durch. Sie wurden aus der Stichprobe ausgewählt, weil jeder Fall *counter-institutionalization* und eine Varianz in den beiden erklärenden Variablen aufweist. Die Empirie zeigt auf, dass die Motivation neuer IOs für den Eintritt in den Regimekomplex und die fokale Stärke bestehender IOs die Art und Weise der Antwortstrategien von IOs beeinflussen. Der Modus der IO-Antwortstrategien wiederum ist für das Überleben einer IO als fokaler Akteur von entscheidender Bedeutung, da er die Fähigkeiten und die Bereitschaft

bestehender IOs zu Zugeständnissen angesichts einer potenziell existenziellen Bedrohung zum Ausdruck bringt.

Im Wesentlichen unterstützen die empirischen Belege den Mechanismus der Statusbedrohung und untermauern mein allgemeines Argument, dass starke Bedrohungen der Fokalität bestehender IOs kompetitive IO-Antwortstrategien hervorrufen. Diese Dissertation verbindet IO-Antwortstrategien mit der Forschung über institutionelle Überschneidungen und interinstitutionelle Zusammenarbeit und Konflikte. Sie deckt erste allgemeine Trends in den Antwortstrategien von IOs auf, entschlüsselt die relevanten Bedingungskonfigurationen, die zu jenen führen, und schafft so ein tieferes Verständnis der beobachteten Beziehungen zwischen bestehenden fokalen und neuen IOs. Diese Erkenntnisse zeigen, dass IOs bei der Verwaltung interinstitutioneller Beziehungen handeln, sobald die unmittelbaren zwischenstaatlichen Turbulenzen nach dem Eintritt einer neuen IO vorüber sind. Zudem haben sie praktische Auswirkungen auf die Gestaltung neuer IOs und geben Anlass zu Optimismus, dass das derzeitige Global-Governance-System stabiler ist, als einfache Narrative der Ordnung in der Krise glaubhaft machen.

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List of Abbreviations

AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ccNSO	Country Code Names Supporting Organisation
ccTLD	Country-Code-Top-Level Domains
CI	counter-institutionalization
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMI	Chiang Mai Initiative
DKR	Danish krone
DTC	developing and transition country
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
ERA	European Railway Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
G7	The Group of Seven
G20	The Group of Twenty
GAC	Governmental Advisory Committee of ICANN
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	gross domestic product
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IC Dataset	Interface Conflicts 1.0 Dataset
ICRW	International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling
IDA	International Development Association
IDP	internally displaced person
IEA	International Energy Agency
IGO	intergovernmental organization
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
INTERPOL	The International Criminal Police Organization
IO	international organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	intellectual property
IR	international relations
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IWC	International Whaling Commission
MDB	multilateral development bank
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAMMCO	North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission
NGO	non-governmental organization
OBOR	One Belt One Road initiative

OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSAIC	Overlapping Spheres of Authority and Interface Conflicts in the Global Order
PCSP	Permanent Commission of the South Pacific
PCT	Patent Cooperation Treaty
QCA	qualitative comparative analysis
RIAB	Renewable Industry Advisory Board
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
US	United States
USD	US dollars
WEO	World Energy Outlook
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

Changes in the external environment can make or break international organizations.

The benefits and drawbacks of rising institutional densities have preoccupied a significant share of international relations (IR) scholars during the last two decades. Novel concepts of cross-institutional interplay and constructs such as regime complexity have been established to capture the intricacies of partially overlapping and nonhierarchical institutions whose governance activities converge in a particular issue-area (Raustiala & Victor, 2004, p. 279). For sure, present research has already made big steps to attain conceptual clarity and investigate the sources and ramifications of institutional overlap. Nevertheless, the impact of the emergence of new international organizations (IOs) on existing IOs' focality,¹ their capture of a central position as a governance leader within the regime complex, is not well understood. Existing research has raised the question whether the effects of institutional overlap may lead to more fragmentation and ultimately create conflict (Benvenisti & Downs, 2007; Morse & Keohane, 2014) or foster cooperation and even lead to division of labor among IOs (Faude, 2015; Faude & Fuss, 2020a). However, existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IOs entering the same regime complex has not been systematically studied, as existing research focuses on individual case studies (e.g. Betts, 2013; Van de Graaf, 2012b). Building on existing research, this dissertation adopts a novel analytical approach to assess general trends in existing focal IOs' response strategies based on a new angle for studying inter-institutional relations and IO developments as it shines light on existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IO entries in the regime complex. My dissertation research untangles the relevant configurations of conditions leading up to different IO response strategies and so forms a deeper understanding of the observed relations between existing focal and new IOs. It demonstrates that the stronger existing IOs' focality is threatened by new IOs, the more competitive existing IOs' response strategies will be.

¹ IO focality refers to an existing IO's central position as a governance leader in the regime complex. Focal IOs possess the ability to set governance standards and function as the main resource provider for governing a global issue. See chapter 4.3.1. for a more detailed elaboration on IO focality.

IR research has largely circumvented systematic investigations into the reactions of existing IOs² to institutional proliferation in their external environment. Especially the responses of existing IOs occupying focal positions have not only far-reaching implications for the development of the regime complex at large, but also more immediate consequences on how a global issue is governed. Hence, I focus on the potential challenges existing focal IOs may face as new IOs enter the regime complex and how they respond to them. I focus in particular on the nature of new IOs as drivers of existing IOs' response strategies. For instance, do new IOs possess the capacities to reproduce or transform global hierarchies? Do they have the propensity to complement or compete with existing IOs' governance approaches? In other words, do existing IOs face spoilers, supporters or shirkers in the external environment (Schweller, 2011)? Despite a rising number of IOs, the answers to these questions are largely outstanding. Taking into account the possibility that existing focal IOs could be replaced (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Verdier, 2021) or die (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020b; Gray, 2018) when new IOs enter regime complexes, it is crucial to understand how existing IOs prevent themselves from becoming insignificant.

The global energy transition and the increasing shift from fossil-fuel based to renewable energy sources set the stage for one of the most prominent examples of a shift in a regime complex. The International Energy Agency's (IEA) struggle to remain a prominent actor in the global energy regime complex exemplifies how serious institutional proliferation can be for the existing IO. After becoming a focal point in the governance of oil and fossil fuel-based energy supplies in 1974 (Florini, 2011), the IEA's role as a central guarantor of global energy security has remained largely unrivaled until the creation of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in 2009. IRENA's exclusive focus on the promotion of renewable energy sources exposes the IEA's focus on oil and fossil fuels: IRENA's realistic potential to adopt a central governance role in the global energy regime complex poses an existential challenge to the IEA's focal role in the regime complex. Thus upon IRENA's creation, the IEA is "facing a potential crisis" and so finds itself "in a fight for its survival [...] and security" (Downie, 2020, p. 1). Therefore, the IEA understands IRENA as a "real competitor" (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, pp. 308–309). This forces "the [IEA to] adapt to remain a relevant and effective body for policy coordination" (Colgan, 2009, p. 3) and "to shift its thinking and the way it addresses renewable energy within its larger energy policy work" (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 470). As part of its response, IEA for instance opens a new department for renewable energies following IRENA's creation (Downie, 2020, p. 4). In essence, the IEA's adaptive strategic response to IRENA is induced by the latter threatening IEA's longstanding

² The term *existing IO* refers to the international organization that is potentially challenged by the creation of a new IO or the entry of a new IO to the regime complex in which the existing IO operates.

focality as a central provider of global energy security. Given that IOs' continued focal status is dependent on its environment, "the strategies an IO employs will often be a direct response to changes in the international environment" (Downie, 2020, p. 1). The IEA's response to IRENA's operational launch in 2009 is no singularity. Much more is to be discovered about the effects of institutional proliferation, and how they are handled by existing focal IOs.

On a more abstract level, the question emerges how existing IOs respond to new IOs in their field and which further consequences this has for the development of the entire regime complex. The literatures on institutional development and the development of regime complexity already scrape the surface of enquiries into IO response strategies (Abatecola, 2012; Aggarwal, 1998; Alter, 2022; Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Bakir & Gunduz, 2017; Gómez-Mera et al., 2020). They show just how widespread IO response strategies already are across different issue areas. Besides the global energy regime complex, relevant examples covered by the literature are found in human-rights based contexts and development finance. For instance, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) dramatically expands its policy scope and makes rhetorical distinctions between refugees and migrants to maintain its focal role in the expanding global refugee regime complex vis-à-vis the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which newly enters the UN system in 2016 (Betts, 2013; Moretti, 2021). In contrast, the World Bank largely seems to remain unshaken by the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1160). While the comparative study of existing IOs' response strategies continues to be a blind spot in academic research so far, present investigations into the developments of single IOs already indicate that each IO response strategy is as distinct as the case itself. This dissertation brings both approaches together to fill this research gap. First, I establish the distinction between cooperative and competitive expressions of IO response strategies. Second, I expand extant research on institutional proliferation and the development of regime complexity conceiving IO response strategies as being embedded in the institutional context. Third, I focus on the role of IOs that occupy focal positions in the regime complex.

These examples and the existing literature provide key insights on the different types of IO response strategies which serve as a starting point for my research. My first observation is that some IO response strategies are more competitive than others. My second observation is that some response strategies incite changes to IOs' structures or behaviors while others mainly involve rhetorical struggles, such as voicing their discontent with a new IO's way of governing a global issue. IO response strategies which exhibit behavioral alterations for example feature shifts in existing IOs' overall policy orientations following new IO entries to the regime complex. For

instance UNHCR's policy scope expansion resulted from being forced "to think and engage beyond the boundaries of the [refugee] regime or risk being sidelined" in an increasingly competitive institutional environment (Betts, 2013, p. 76). My third observation implicates that IO response strategies can be directly targeted at new IOs – for example in terms of direct confrontation and joint projects – or be rather contained in existing IOs' own structural or rhetorical confines – for example by accommodating some of the new IO's policy or governance features. The preliminary observations allow a categorization of response strategies along dimensions such as the willingness to cooperate shown towards new IOs and the extent of policy or structural transformations taking place within existing IOs. The subsequent question is when existing IOs' response strategies are geared towards fostering inter-institutional cooperation and when they are geared towards inciting inter-institutional conflict with new IOs. Consequently, this dissertation project examines the following research question:

Why do existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways?

The main goal of this research is to explain different types of IO response strategies – including their competitiveness – based on pertinent empirical observations. It further adds conceptual and theoretical value by systematically uncovering the ways that existing IOs respond to new IOs across a broad range of issue areas. The universe of cases is accordingly massive because it entails all instances in which focal IOs respond to new IOs entering the same regime complex. The universe of cases is massive since it entails all instances in which focal IOs respond to new IOs entering the same regime complex in the period following the Second World War. However, given the need for detailed information on how IOs engage in strategic responses, my sample covers 12 cases across 11 issue areas between 1948 and 2016. Of these cases, I have only encountered secondary literature on six cases which largely appears in the context of IO response strategies. Detailed information on my sample of cases is collected based on existing datasets that account for inter-institutional relations across various issue areas, and covering existing focal IOs as well as new IOs that enter the respective regime complex. The resulting sample is highly suitable for the method of qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) which makes logical sense of a medium-N sample of cases (between 10 and 50 cases) (Ragin, 1987). To also gain a deeper understanding of the circumstances in which existing focal IOs engage in rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies, I selected four cases that represent different types of IO response strategies for a structured, focused comparison.

In the remainder of this introductory chapter, I give an overview of the most relevant concepts for this dissertation research based on three relevant strands of literature. The first literature strand

concerns the function and nature of IOs as international actors that engage in IO response strategies in partial autonomy of their member states. The second literature strand shines light on regime complexity as the external environment in which existing and new IOs operate before I then examine the functions of IO response strategies in relation to inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. I conclude with the main argument and contributions, followed by previews of subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

1.1. State of the art

Existing IR research looks at single IO developments, but does not provide a common framework for conducting a systematic empirical analysis of IO response strategies. Extant research only striates aspects of IO response strategies as it deals with institutional proliferation (Raustiala, 2013), the rise of regime complexity (Alter & Raustiala, 2018) and IO survival strategies (Abatecola, 2012; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020b) in separate research endeavors. Besides explaining the process of IO creation itself (Jupille et al., 2013; Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014; Van de Graaf, 2013a), prevailing studies mainly pay attention to institutional constraints as well as the origins and consequences of institutional overlap (Brosig, 2011; Busch, 2007; Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Haftel & Lenz, 2021; Hofmann, 2019). Further, explanations of states' bargaining approaches (e.g. Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014) and of setting institutional precedents (Busch, 2007) are mostly regarded from the challenger's perspective. I turn this research focus around by arguing that IO response strategies embody a major instrument for existing IOs to survive as focal actors³ when faced by new IOs in the regime complex.

My research particularly touches upon three strands of literature that already (implicitly) address several aspects of how IOs respond to new actors in their external environment. Within the broader IR literature, I speak to the research on international organizations, regime complexity, and the consequences of institutional overlap for inter-institutional relations (with a focus on cooperation and conflict).

The first strand of research examines the nature of IOs and how they function. It combines regime theory and the institutionalist approach to form a holistic account of IO response strategies. It further elucidates IOs' relations with their member states and sheds light on their agency (Abbott & Snidal, 1998; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010). State support is essential for an IO's functioning. But

³ See section 1.1.1. below for a definition of IO focality and existing focal IOs.

my research centers around the question to what extent existing IOs – represented by their secretariat, if available – act for themselves to hold their ground towards new IOs that can potentially challenge their focal position. At the same time, this perspective yields specific insights into how existing IOs respond to very specific, external challenges such as new IO entries to the regime complex. Therefore, my research contributes fine-grained knowledge on IO behavior amid institutional proliferation.

The second strand of literature places IOs within the broader institutional context. It paints a picture of regime complexity in which IOs operate in a deeply interwoven system of IOs from different regimes that address a common global issue (Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Faude & Gehring, 2017; Raustiala & Victor, 2004).⁴ Though the literature is rooted in the conjecture that regime complexes are nonhierarchical, my research builds on newer developments stipulating that pockets of hierarchy exist (Zürn, 2018a, p. 54). This newer perspective shows that single focal IOs have the capacity to alter the standards by which a global issue is governed. Since my analytical focus rests on IO response strategies as means to defend existing IOs' focal positions in the regime complex, it makes a substantial contribution concerning how the institutional status quo is preserved or changes in regime complexes. In a similar way, my research specifically investigates how the (normative) governance standards in regime complexes develop based on the level of challenge that new IOs pose to existing focal IOs. Hence, my research contributes a new analytical perspective for studying the developments of regime complexes as well as the standards for governing a global issue.

The third strand of research pays closer attention to institutional overlap, fragmentation and inter-institutional cooperation and conflict (Biermann et al., 2009; Hofmann, 2019; Zürn & Faude, 2013). A stigma still permeates IR research that equates institutional proliferation all too soon with sources of friction and contestation in global governance (Clarke, 2019). This is especially prominent in debates surrounding the prospects of emerging powers (Chin, 2010, 2015; Cooper & Flesmes, 2013; Kruck & Zangl, 2019; Schweller, 2011; Stephen, 2014, 2017; Stephen & Zürn, 2014). Yet conventional wisdom has evolved beyond the notion that institutional fragmentation necessarily impedes inter-institutional cooperation (Faude & Parizek, 2021; Keohane, 1983). In the current state of research it is well received that fragmentation induced by IO proliferation can also lead to greater collaboration among IOs in terms of division of labor (Faude, 2015; Gehring & Faude, 2014), pooling and information sharing (Clark, 2021). Overall, this strand of research builds the foundation for explaining why IO response strategies are

⁴ The distinctive feature between a regime and a regime complex is that a regime complex consists of several regimes. For example, the global refugee regime complex consists of the migration regime, human rights regime, refugee regime and the regime of internally displaced persons (Betts, 2009a, p. 55).

sometimes more cooperative and other times more competitive vis-à-vis the new IO. It further connects IO response strategies with institutional overlap and inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. Consequently, my research highlights general trends in IO response strategies, which contributes a very nuanced understanding of their impact on inter-institutional relations.

Taken together, the current level of knowledge on the nature and functions of IOs, regime complexity and inter-institutional relations provide valuable components for attaining a comprehensive understanding of IO response strategies. In the remainder of this Introduction, I now delve deeper into each strand of relevant research before outlining my main argument and contributions, as well as giving overviews of each chapter.

1.1.1. The nature and function of IOs in current research

Naturally, IOs are at the center of any actor-centered research of their response strategies. The key questions for apprehending IO actorness concern whether IOs are significant entities and if they are, whether they are structures or agents (or both). Depending on the theoretical lens through which IOs are regarded, their functions and abilities differ. At one end scholars such as Samuel P. Huntington (1973) argue that IOs are relatively insignificant. At the other end, where scholars consider IOs to be significant actors, more moderate conceptions prevail. For instance the constructivist camp focuses on the construction of meaning, identities and the creation of common (constitutive) norms that proscribe, prohibit or forbid various actions (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001; Katzenstein, 1996; Risse, 2002; Wendt, 1999). Constructivists further distinguish between regulative norms and constitutive norms (compare also Duffield, 2007, p. 6; Ruggie, 1998).⁵ Additional theoretical perspectives range from largely rationalist camps emphasizing cost-benefit calculations and efficiency concerns⁶ (Haas, 1958; Shepsle, 2008; Weingast & Marshall, 1988) to functionalist views that IOs are relevant in world politics as arenas and as members of transnational coalitions that render national governments obsolete (Klabbers, 2014; Mitrany, 1933, 1948).⁷

⁵ According to John Ruggie (1998) regulative rules “are intended to have causal effects – getting people to approximate the speed limit, for example” and constitutive rules “define the set of practices that make up a particular class of consciously organized social activity – that is to say, they specify *what counts as* that activity” (p. 871).

⁶ The rational institutionalist approach mainly focuses on sets of formal rules. It is valuable for studying issue-specific cooperation among states (Barkin, 2006, p. 51). However, rationalist approaches largely neglect the constitutive rules and normative components of IOs.

⁷ Central questions that capture the field of IR studies pertain to the relation between IOs and their member states (Bradley & Kelley, 2008; Graham & Serdaru, 2020; Martín Martínez, 1996; Pollack, 2007; Vaubel, 2006), the degree of an IO’s agency and autonomy (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999; Bauer & Ege, 2016; Hooghe et al., 2017a; Hooghe &

My perception of IOs largely coincides with rational institutionalist accounts. It contends that IOs allow for a centralization of activities and lend stable organizational structures that support international cooperation (compare Abbott & Snidal, 1998). Moreover, rational institutionalist accounts recognize IOs' capabilities to function as independent and neutral actors on the world stage. Subsequent research developed these perceptions further. It has taken a turn from a state-centric ontology to a focus of IOs as autonomous actors that nonetheless act based on member state preferences (Ellis, 2010).⁸ As such, IOs are both structures and agents.

In the simplest terms, an IO is a collective actor. IOs are “the principal vehicles for producing public goods beyond the national state” (Hooghe & Marks, 2015, p. 306). They are further specified as “associations of actors, typically states. IOs have membership criteria, and membership may entail privileges (as well as costs)” (Martin & Simmons, 2013, p. 4). To investigate why existing IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly⁹ ways and other times in more adversarial ways, my research focuses on formal IOs that possess actor qualities. These IOs constitute formal organizations for collective decision making that consist of member states, are based on a formal written contract and have a distinct budget and outputs. Since they comprise a normative element (an ontological dimension) and an organizational element (a functional dimension), international institutions such as IOs are seen as more than just structures created by states to organize themselves (Kratochwil & Ruggie, 1986).

The term *existing IO* describes an IO that already existed before the new IO enters the picture. While many different IOs can address the same global issue, several focal IOs may exist in regime complexes. Yet not every existing IO is a focal IO. I conceive of a focal IO as an international organization that serves as the focal point for coordinating collective action in the respective regime complex and is able to effectively discharge its core mission (compare Van de Graaf, 2012b). Actors may also bestow epistemic authority on focal IOs in which it is not their specialized knowledge and moral understanding per se that grants them this type of authority, but the existing focal IO's¹⁰ “quality of reputation that is decisive” (Zürn, 2018a, p. 86). In the issue areas of international food

Marks, 2015; Lall, 2017) and different notions of IO authority (Hooghe et al., 2017a; Hurd, 1999; Krisch, 2017; Zürn, 2017, 2018a).

⁸ For an account of the bureaucratic autonomy of IO secretariats, see Bauer & Ege (2016).

⁹ I do not equate friendliness with inter-institutional cooperation. Whereas friendliness encompasses an attitude that is featured by one IO (namely the existing focal IO in this dissertation), two actors are needed to foster inter-institutional cooperation (which namely occurs between existing focal and new IOs in this dissertation research).

¹⁰ My use of the term existing focal IO in the singular version does not exclude the possibility that more than one focal IO may exist in a regime complex.

aid, international labor, global energy and international whaling, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the IEA and the International Whaling Commission (IWC) are all considered to be focal IOs, respectively. They function as the main standard setters and resource providers in governing a global issue. Since existing IOs' reputation is decisive for their focal positions, new IOs' potential to endanger the eminence of existing IOs may have far reaching consequences for the entire regime complex. Therefore, examining the inter-institutional relations between existing and new IOs adds new theoretical depth to the study of existing IOs which function simultaneously as focal actors within the same regime complex.

A *new IO* is defined as an IO that enters the regime complex either through institutional creation or by addressing the central global issue of the respective regime complex. A new IO's creation is driven by (a group of) actors' dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo set by the existing focal IO (Jupille et al., 2013). The creation of a new IO not only signals that a group of states with considerable resources questions the existing IO's viability, but also signifies that the existing focal IO was unable to accommodate the demands of the dissatisfied states to the extent that would have prevented the new IO's creation in the first place. This may erode the existing focal IO's reputation and status in the regime complex. Though not all instances of IO entries to a regime complex are necessarily instances of contested multilateralism (Morse & Keohane, 2014) or counter-institutionalization (CI) (Zürn, 2018a), I suppose that existing IOs act similar to IOs that face competitive regime creation.

In the latter case, IO entry happens inadvertently as a new IO that was constituted to tackle a separate issue, now also addresses the global issue that forms the center of the regime complex. For example, the WTO's focus on global food aid led to its entry to the regime complex for global food security. When the Agreement on Agriculture entered into force in 1995 the WTO formally addressed global food distribution from a market-oriented perspective. It was not the intention behind WTO's creation that it becomes a new IO in the regime complex for food security. In fact the WTO's purpose to "ensure that trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible" (WTO, 2021, p. 1) is quite distinct from the FAO's focus to "defeat hunger" (FAO, 2021). It is the WTO's thematic focus on market-oriented objectives to strengthen global food supply that catapulted the WTO as a new IO into the regime complex for food security (Margulis, 2013). Since the WTO is an institutional heavyweight in terms of its economic and standard-setting powers in international trade, it earnestly challenged the FAO's efforts to provide global food aid with its focus on commercially driven food distributions (Margulis, 2010, p. 6).

The interaction between IOs is different from IO-state interactions: The development of one IO always affects the development of another IO (Oberthür & Gehring, 2006). As Malte Brosig (2011) finds, “any form of interaction between IOs can be seen as infringing upon [...] the purpose (materially or normatively) for which they have been designed” (p. 148). Though I perceive of member states as fixed parts of IOs, my research follows the rationalist notion that IOs and their secretariats enjoy some partial autonomy. I stipulate that each IO possesses substantial leeway in determining its own actions, shaping its own response strategies and handling relations with other actors in its external environment. Consequently, I assume that existing IOs in some way always respond to a grave institutional challenge, such as new IO entries to the regime complex, as part of its effort to maintain their focality in the greater external environment in which they operate.

1.1.2. Regime complexity: the external environment in which IOs operate

The study of IOs has progressed from studying single IOs as separate, independent entities to viewing IOs as entities embedded in an interwoven web of IOs, states, corporations and a diversity of non-state actors (Tallberg et al., 2013, 2014). Kal Raustiala and David Victor (2004) have opened a new way of thinking about IR and the interplay between international regimes by observing that regime complexes develop their own dynamics to address global issues which no single IO could address on its own. In their seminal article, they define a regime complex as “an array of partially overlapping and nonhierarchical institutions governing a particular issue-area” (Raustiala & Victor, 2004, p. 279). Two features notably characterize regime complexes: legal incoherence among international regimes (Orsini et al., 2013) and the absence of a single authority. As academic interest in regime complexity is growing (e.g. Alter & Meunier, 2009; Keohane & Victor, 2011; Oberthür & Stokke, 2011), IR scholars largely agree that IOs operate in a dense and challenging international environment characterized by complex interdependence. However, existing IOs may still enjoy some degree of moral authority and operate within pockets of hierarchy (Zürn, 2018a).

Regime complexity further pronounces that a new style of global bargaining between overlapping and nested institutions is created in which norms and interests are amplified (Alter & Meunier, 2009; Betts, 2009a). Given that IOs serve distributive interests (Snidal, 1996), they are also responsive to distributional changes in their external environment. When actor dynamics change, the institutional status quo and overall dynamics of the regime complex can also change. Such situations are of fundamental interest for my investigation of IO response strategies because they

expose how IOs respond to reformed actor constellations and overall engage in such highly political processes of managing changes in their external environment.

Rather than assuming that an IO continually evolves on its own, my dissertation research shows how a single IO behaves and evolves within a regime complex. The peculiarity is that despite offering the existing IO various options on how to remain in a focal position, “[r]egime complexity inevitably increases the number of possible focal points around which rules and expectations converge; by definition, however, focal points should be rare” (Drezner, 2009, p. 66). The question arises under what circumstances existing IOs defend their focal position incessantly or make room for new IOs to also uptake focal positions in the regime complex. For instance, they could accept new focal points, assert their own focal positions at all costs or find a compromise solution for sharing focality with the new IOs in some way. How single IOs manage the uncertainties created by institutional overlap also affects the cohesion of the entire regime complex. Therefore, IO response strategies give greater insights into how existing IOs handle changed institutional configurations in regime complexes.

Existing focal IOs play a considerable role in preserving or changing incumbent standards for governing a global issue. As the main standard setters and resource providers for governing a global issue, existing focal IOs possess the capacities to influence the ways in which a global issue is governed. Hence, the actions of existing focal IOs have far-reaching consequences for the entire regime complex. For example, UNHCR’s competitive response to IOM’s entry to the UN system in 2016 has heated up existent competitive inter-institutional dynamics in the global refugee regime complex. In response to IOM’s growing governance leadership in the migration regime, UNHCR demonstrates its prevalence as a focal actor by widening its protection mandate to also include matters of the migration regime. For UNHCR and its response strategy to IOM’s entry in the UN system, “the existence of overlapping institutions means that UNHCR now operates in a more competitive institutional environment” (Betts, 2013, p. 75). In addition, my explanation of variances in IO response strategies embodies valuable extensions to current research endeavors which still debate whether regime complexity leads to more cooperation (Keohane & Victor, 2011; Lesage & Van de Graaf, 2013) or increases conflict between IOs (Alter & Meunier, 2009; Raustiala & Victor, 2004) – albeit more recent research has uncovered the prevalence of cooperative dynamics among IOs (e.g. Fuß et al., 2021; Pratt, 2018). Studying IO response strategies allows to understand their impact on inter-institutional relations and the effect on regime complexes’ entire stability.

1.1.3. The role of IO response strategies: managing institutional overlap

My conceptual contribution to extant literature on inter-institutional cooperation and conflict lies in the identification and classification of IO response strategies. IO response strategies shed light on the ways that single IOs interact with each other at the same international level of governance and with the broader institutional environment they are operating in. It hence helps to alleviate the need “to gain a better understanding about the synergistic, cooperative, or conflictive inter-institutional relationships that may result from [transnational institutional] interplay” (Elsässer et al., 2022, p. 385). Hence, new perspectives and mechanisms of inter-institutional interactions are needed (Elsässer et al., 2022; Gehring & Oberthür, 2009). In the remainder of this section, I first define IO response strategies before I then relate their function to the management of institutional overlap, the presence of inter-institutional cooperation and conflict as well as the overall development of the regime complex.

Overall IO response strategies establish a more fine-grained understanding of existing IOs and how they actively shape inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. I define an IO response strategy as a reflected answer of an existing IO in reaction to a new IO’s entry to the regime complex. Unlike a more immediate and *ad hoc* reaction, a response strategy suggests that the responding actor has reflected on the implications of a new IO’s entry to the regime complex, has considered the consequences of its own response for the respective governance field, and come up with a purposeful and reasoned response strategy. Hence, the response should have been given some consideration, be formally communicated (for example in official speeches or IO documents) and can further be observed within five years following the new IO’s entry to the regime complex. IO response strategies include signaling one’s willingness to engage in activities such as establishing a cooperation agreement or even changing the existing IO’s normative framework or institutional structures. Furthermore, I choose the term response over terms such as change, adaptation or evolution because responses connote a more active and controlled reaction by the respondent. In contrast to a deliberate response strategy which in this dissertation project is assessed within five years following the new IO’s entry to the regime complex, change, adaptation and evolution denote more gradual and long-term processes of institutional change that may also develop unintentionally during the natural course of an IO’s lifelong development (compare DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Hence, in my research I focus on the deliberate response strategies by existing IOs. The use of a rather encompassing term (response strategy) as the subject of this dissertation research leaves

room for the identification of different or additional types of responses which I cannot yet anticipate and might encounter as part of my empirical analysis.

My hunch is that the shape of existing IOs' response strategies is geared to the regulative and institutional traits in which existing and new IOs share similarities and exhibit differences. Institutional overlap grants insights into the similarities and differences of existing and new IOs. For example, IOs may either promote the same policies and perform similar tasks, share the same membership or also overlap in a combination of other factors (compare Faude & Fuss, 2020b). Does the new IO take on a new substantive policy focus? Or does the new IO largely duplicate the existing IO's governance means? The properties of institutional overlap and consequent uncertainties need to be ascertained to understand why existing IOs respond to new IO entries in a specific way. Institutional overlap arises "if the mandates of two or more separately established international institutions intersect on a *de facto* basis" (cited from Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 271; Hofmann, 2011). The primary focus in relevant literature has been on how states navigate institutional overlap through politics of cooperation (Alter & Raustiala, 2018).¹¹ Cross-institutional strategizing such as issue linkage, forum-shopping (Hofmann, 2019) and chessboard politics (Alter & Meunier, 2009) may both undermine (Benvenisti & Downs, 2007; Drezner, 2013) or stabilize (Gehring & Faude, 2014) cooperation. The current state of research finds that

[t]he emergence of overlap can spur organizations both to compete and to seek cooperation. [...] We do not know yet, however, when overlap leads to cooperation and when to rivalry (Biermann & Koops, 2017, p. 17).

IO response strategies set the tone for the extent of inter-institutional cooperation or competition between existing and new IOs. Faced by new IOs that address the same global issue, existing IOs are initially confronted with the question of how they should behave towards these new actors in the regime complex. Should they attempt to make new friends or head down a more confrontative path? IO response strategies thus take place when it is still pending whether the existing and new IOs seek to reap the largest benefits from cooperation, compete over finite resources or simply co-exist (see Panke & Stapel, 2021b).

Knowing the shape of IO response strategies is further crucial for interpreting the overall direction in which the regime complex develops. IO response strategies solidify relations with the new IO

¹¹ For instance, a most recent study finds that acts of pooling stipulate trends towards more inter-institutional cooperation (Clark, 2021).

as they compose immediate reactions to the presence of fragmentation¹² which ensues from institutional proliferation in the external environment. On one hand it has been demonstrated that fragmentation does not necessarily impede inter-institutional cooperation (Kreuder-Sonnen & Zürn, 2020). Nowadays fragmentation even characterizes the global governance architecture (Biermann et al., 2009). On the other hand skepticism developed over time of the liberal belief that IOs continually foster cooperation among states and reduce the risk of militarized disputes (Hafner-Burton & Montgomery, 2006). Terms such as challenged institutions (Betts, 2013), contentious politics (McAdam et al., 1996), contested multilateralism (Kreuder-Sonnen & Zangl, 2016; Morse & Keohane, 2014) and contested world order (Stephen & Zürn, 2014) are featured as integral parts of discussions on how the greater institutional environment is evolving. My dissertation research advances these contemporary discussions by providing new insights into distinct drivers and pathways of institutional interplay.

A novelty of my research is that it considers the implications of institutional proliferation from the vantage point of challenges posed to the existing IO's focality in the regime complex. Unless the existing IO is close to dying (see Gray, 2018), member states are not likely to willingly give up an organization's focal position in which they also invest financial and other (non-)material resources. Thus, it is highly unlikely that existing focal IOs stay oblivious to new IOs that potentially challenge their focality. For example, the IEA's Executive Director Nobuo Tanaka "acknowledged that the agency 'risked losing relevance'" if it did not adjust to some of the challenges and demands for renewable energies posed by IRENA (Downie, 2020, p. 4). In situations when the governance spheres of existing and new IOs overlap, IO response strategies can mitigate any upheaval that has been levied by new IO entries to the regime complex. Thus, IO response strategies are indispensable tools for ensuring existing IOs' continued focality.

For the purposes of this dissertation research, I conceive of IO response strategies as possible conflict management tools which respond to fragmentation that follows from new IO entries to the regime complex.¹³ Therefore, the ways in which existing IOs respond has implications for how existing focal IOs positions themselves vis-à-vis new IOs in the regime complex and maintain or even enhance their focality.

¹² Several definitions of fragmentation exist in relevant literatures; "As a concept, fragmentation is used to describe the antithesis of integration both within and across a wide range of organizational forms" (Graham, 2013, p. 370). Fragmentation encompasses a relational concept which can be expressed in different degrees (Biermann et al., 2009). In political terms fragmentation can be identified by regulatory overlap among institutions (see Holzscheiter, 2017).

¹³ For now, I presume that it does not make a crucial difference for the ensuing type of IO response strategy whether new IOs enter the regime complex via institutional creation or enter the regime complex unintentionally.

1.2. Main argument and contribution

This dissertation examines whether stronger threats to existing IOs' focality provoke more competitive response strategies. In order to theoretically develop and then test this argument empirically, this dissertation research demonstrates the importance of existing focal IOs' response strategies when new IOs emerge in their regime and the implications of these strategies for their own survival. It develops a typology of existing focal IOs' response strategies, advances a new theoretical perspective highlighting the importance of such strategies and empirically tests the argument on a broad range of cases. It explains how and why existing IOs respond to new IOs. Moreover, it has important implications for debates on regime complexity in international relations because it highlights the essential role of the focal IOs' response strategies and explains when and why focal IOs choose different types of strategies.

My dissertation makes conceptual, theoretical and empirical contributions. First, my dissertation research makes a conceptual contribution as it focuses on how existing IOs respond to new IOs that enter the regime complex. Therefore, it goes beyond the conventional analytical focus on how new IOs adapt to the existing system (Aggarwal, 1998; Overland & Reischl, 2018; Stephen, 2020). It distinguishes between four distinct IO response strategies that are either cooperative (Admission and Accommodation) or competitive (Delegitimation and Obstruction). These strategies are characterized by their level of competitiveness as well as their rhetorical or behavioral mode. Cooperative IO response strategies tolerate or even take on the new IO's governance approach and overall policy focus. They can be rhetorical (Admission) or behavioral (Accommodation). The rhetorical and behavioral mode of IO response strategies indicates how existing IOs change their practices, policies or institutional structures upon new IO entries to the regime complex. Competitive IO response strategies entail actions which seek to prevent or limit new IOs' governance influence in the regime complex. These strategies are also either rhetorical (Delegitimation) or behavioral (Obstruction). Crucially, the four IO response strategies are not mutually exclusive, and many IOs combine different strategies when responding to the entry of new IOs in their regime complex.

Second, my dissertation research makes a theoretical contribution by advancing new perspectives on inter-institutional interactions. To explain the presence of different types of IO response strategies I develop a theoretical framework of IO response strategies which connects the type of challenge posed to existing IOs' focality to the observed IO response strategies. The general assumption for the existence of IO response strategies is that focal IOs do not want to lose their focal position in the regime complex. Underlying this theoretical framework is the mechanism of

status threat which contends that existing focal IO response strategies are identity-based and issued in line with the existing IO's status as a focal actor in the regime complex. Surprisingly, the role of focal IOs remains undertheorized. So far, research on challenges to IO status has been mostly constrained to research on great powers and emerging states (Duque, 2018; Larson & Shevchenko, 2010; Wohlforth et al., 2018). I notably diverge from this research as I focus on the ways in which incumbent actors, namely existing focal IOs, respond to status threats levied by new IOs.

The study of focal IOs is substantively important in two ways. On one hand focal IOs embody the governance leaders in a regime complex and form the natural reference point for new IOs (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019). Hence, they have significant leeway in steering the overall development of the regime complex. The study of existing IOs' focal positions and their friendly or hostile relations towards new IOs pays particular attention to the normative coherence within a regime complex. On the other hand, focal IOs are established institutions that are not immune to contestation by new actors, but nevertheless tend to remain central actors in regime complexes. Hence, they can give valuable insights into IO survival strategies and the perseverance of moral authorities within an anarchical web of institutions that address a common global issue. Though multiple IOs may take up focal positions in a regime complex, I go beyond existing debates by showing that existing IOs' response strategies are driven by their reluctance to give up their role as focal actors in the regime complex. I disentangle the nature of inter-institutional relations and institutional overlap. Both in terms of the extent to which new IOs enhance or undermine existing IOs' normative frameworks and resource provision for governing a global issue, as well as overlapping institutional structures of the existing and new IOs. I argue that the type of challenge posed to existing focal IOs by new IOs is a significant factor that drives the normative development of regime complexes. For example, without IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex, we cannot understand why the IEA shifted its substantive focus to renewable energy sources so promptly.

Third, my dissertation makes an important empirical contribution through the breadth and depth of the analyzed empirical materials. I test the argument that existing IOs respond to the challenges posed to their focality based on all selected cases of focal IOs' response strategies to new regime complex entrants from 1948 to 2016. This sample size far exceeds the sample size of conventional studies of IO entries, which are often focused on a single case (Betts, 2013; Van de Graaf, 2012b). Due to the breadth of cases, the dissertation can highlight general trends in IO response strategies. A descriptive overview of the 12 cases demonstrates: cooperative and competitive IO response strategies are rather evenly distributed across the sampled cases (in chapter 4.2.). Further, I demonstrate that counter-institutionalization as a form of new IOs' entry to the regime complex

plays an important role in explaining IO response strategies. This finding supports extant literature highlighting the propensities of inter-institutional coordination (Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Gehring & Faude, 2013).

The dissertation has two important implications for debates on regime complexity in international relations: it highlights focal IOs' importance for the development of regime complexes and explains why focal IOs choose these response strategies. One implication features that focal IOs' selected strategies have a substantial impact on the development of the regime complex. Scholars typically assume that institutional proliferation leads to more fragmented institutional environments (Fioretos & Heldt, 2019; Raustiala, 2013). Instead, I show that competition can, in some cases, enhance the coherence and development of regime complexes. Whether such enhancements materialize depends on the strategies of focal IOs. Focal IOs enjoy partial autonomy from their member states and their response strategies differ. IO response strategies may be competitive or cooperative and rhetorical or behavioral modes. Thereby, this dissertation goes beyond paying attention to new IOs' adjustments to existent institutional structures and account for the role of focal IOs which have been largely disregarded in extant IR literature.

Another implication is that the choice of response strategies is driven by the type of challenge new IOs pose to focal IOs. Extant research on regime complexity often focuses on IOs as rational actors motivated by cost-benefit calculations (Haas, 1958; Shepsle, 2008). Accordingly, I argue that existing IOs act in ways that maximize their abilities to set governance standards while simultaneously keeping potential reputation losses to a minimum in maintaining their focal position in the regime complex. I extend upon this literature by also accounting for the normative dimensions of inter-institutional interactions between existing focal and new IOs. I recognize IOs as actors that can make decisions partly independent of their member states and have their own identity within the greater external environment. The actions of existing focal IOs rest on an identity-based logic of action. In other words, IOs also care about their identity and reputation in the regime complex. Existing IOs' focality is based on their role as central norm setters and resource providers in the regime complex. Hence, substantive challenges to existing IOs' focal positions arise when new IOs credibly undermine existing focal IOs' normative frameworks and resources provided for governing a global issue. IO response strategies are hence more likely to be friendly when new IOs expand existing IOs' focality. However, when new IOs credibly undermine existing IOs' normative frameworks,¹⁴ I contend that competitive IO response strategies are more

¹⁴ The normative framework for governing a global issue holds the regime complex together and underpins inter-institutional relations.

likely observable. Therefore, existing IOs' response strategies relate to the type of challenge which new IOs pose to existing IOs' roles as focal actors in the regime complex.

1.3. Chapter previews

This dissertation research employs qualitative methods and splits the larger explanation of IO response strategies into four smaller building blocks (see Table 1). Each building block embodies the major conceptual, theoretical and empirical goals of the dissertation: conceptualizing different IO response strategies (in chapter 2), deriving a theoretical framework of IO response strategies (in chapter 3), developing a reliable research design and empirically investigating real-world cases (in chapters 4 and 5) and conducting in-depth case studies to find out more about each type of IO response strategy (in chapter 6). Each paragraph presents a condensed version of the relevant building blocks including its substantive contribution for answering my research question why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IO entries in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways. It also displays summaries of the main theoretical and empirical takeaways (as displayed in Table 1 below). Taken together these building blocks form a systematic empirical analysis and culminate in an encompassing explanation of IO response strategies by existing focal IOs to new IO entries in the regime complex.

Chapter 2 identifies four types of IO response strategies using the deductive methodological approach: Accommodation, Admission, Delegitimation and Obstruction. The dimensions of the competitiveness and mode of IO response strategies sustain my typology. Each dimension makes binary distinctions. The competitiveness dimension distinguishes between cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In turn, the mode dimension discerns between rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies. Accommodation and Admission exhibit two types of cooperative IO response strategies. In short, a cooperative IO response strategy conveys a willingness to initiate dialogue or information sharing and potentially even signals the willingness to pool resources with the new IO. Delegitimation and Obstruction represent two types of competitive IO response strategies. Competitive IO response strategies seek to prevent or limit new IOs' governance influence in the regime complex. Hence, existing IOs seek to contain or even supplant the new IOs' (potential) focal positions in the regime complex. The second dimension identifies the rhetorical or behavioral mode of IO response strategies. It approximates the depth of IO response strategies as it distinguishes between changes in existing IOs' rhetoric and more profound, behavioral changes to existing IOs' policies, practices or institutional structures. The

Chapter 1: Introduction

Building blocks	Aim	Methodology	Contribution
Conceptualizing IO response strategies (in chapter 2)	Identifying different IO response strategies	Deduction	Deriving four different types of IO response strategies – a phenomenon that has been largely omitted in IR research
Theoretical explanation of IO response strategies (in chapter 3)	Investigating the key conditions for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies	Deduction; Explaining IO response strategies based on the new IO's type of challenge to the existing IO's focality and institutional design similarities	Developing a theoretical framework of IO response strategies that explains how existing IOs manage uncertainties arising from institutional overlap and handle challenges to their focality
Research design and operationalization (in chapter 4); Empirical analysis of IO response strategies (in chapter 5)	Identifying sufficient and necessary conditions for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies	QCA analysis of 12 selected cases	Moving beyond single case studies to observe empirical trends in cooperative and competitive IO response strategies
Testing explanations using comparative case studies (in chapter 6)	Testing the validity of the mechanism of status threat and theoretical framework	Structured, focused comparison of cases which shines light on the motivation for new IO entries and the mode (behavioral or rhetorical) of IO response strategies	Obtaining insights into the validity and generalizability of the mechanism of status threat, and the role of the mode for ensuring an existing IO's survival as a focal actor in the regime complex

Table 1: Four building blocks for studying IO response strategies

central benefit of the descriptive typology is that patterns of behavior are identified in a systematic manner. While I do not allege that the identified types of IO response strategies are mutually exclusive or fully exhaustive, I still purport that they add value to political science research in the following ways: Considering existing IO's responses as response strategies creates a bridge between IO behavior and IOs' identities as focal actors within the larger institutional environment in which they operate. Therefore, my dissertation reaches beyond simple behavioral comparisons by also accounting for an IOs' behavior in light of their identities as focal actors in the regime complex. Since existing focal IOs serve as a reference point for new IOs in the regime complex, existing IOs' response strategies set the tone for the future path of inter-institutional relations – at the very least between the existing and respective new IOs.

Chapter 3 derives two key variables that are theoretically relevant for explaining the observed variance in IO response strategies. I argue that the identified IO response strategies (in chapter 2) represent a more profound way in which existing IOs sustain their focality in the regime complex. I ascertain that an existing focal IOs' behavior is impelled by an identity-based logic of action. Subsequently, the theoretical framework contributes to alleviating “the need to develop more

nuanced theories of institutional overlap” (Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021, p. 31). The theoretical framework highlights different types of challenges posed by the new IO to the existing IO’s focality. Whereas the type of challenge posed to existing IOs’ focality encompasses differences in the normative frameworks and new IOs’ relative budget size compared to existing IOs’ total budgets, institutional design similarities compare existing and new IOs’ institutional structures. Together, these key variables yield a first explanation of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. To that end explanations are multicausal; Different configurations of these key variables lead to cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. The theoretical framework rests on the assumption that existing IOs seek to survive as focal actors in the regime complex. I further control for the (un)intentional entry of new IOs to the regime complex and the extent of membership overlap between existing focal and new IOs. The chapter concludes by outlining alternative explanations of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies pertaining to the institutional density, distinctions between general purpose and task-specific IOs and geopolitical alliances among the leading IO member states. It further outlines an alternative theoretical approach which concerns state aspirations. Within the scope of this dissertation research, these central explanatory variables combined with the observed cooperative and competitive IO response strategies enable new insights into existing IOs’ strengths as focal actors in the regime complex.

Chapter 4 outlines the research design and operationalization of the key concepts. My dissertation research is designed to conceptualize, derive explanations and validate the proposed explanations of four different IO response strategies. I follow a qualitative methodology featuring QCA analysis and comparative case studies. A set of 12 relevant cases is selected based on the information provided in the Interface Conflicts 1.0 dataset (Zürn et al., 2021) which features information on inter-institutional relations and conflict management. The cases for the structured, focused comparison (in chapter 6) are selected based on the QCA results in the first part of the empirical analysis (in chapter 5). My data sources throughout this dissertation include all formal records which document existing IOs’ response strategies and the surroundings in which they occur (compare Table 1). Since informal communication is hard to obtain and demands other methodological approaches such as interviews and questionnaires (Johnson et al., 1994), archival material (Kleine, 2013) or IT-based methods (Fischbach et al., 2009), I focus on formal accounts of events, structures and communications. The data sources consist of official documents that are publicly available. Primary sources include official IO documents that are issued by the respective existing and new IOs themselves. Secondary sources include documents such as academic articles, newspapers, reports by think tanks or other institutions. An IO’s official rhetoric and communication are mapped using documents such as press releases, communiqués, speeches by

IO officials and member state representatives. The IO's structural characteristics are inferred from IO mandates, the IO's organizational structures (such as departments and working groups), decision-making procedures and rules pertaining to the allocation of power among member states in terms of IO funding rules and member states' financial contributions. Information on the IO's normative framework is obtained from primary sources including IO mandates, treaties and policy documents such as reports and position papers. These data sources also form the empirical foundation for the cross-case comparisons in chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 features the first part of the empirical analysis. In this chapter I establish a descriptive overview of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies across 12 cases. However, my empirical analysis does not reside at the descriptive level. Going one step further, I conduct a QCA analysis that utilizes information on the type of challenge posed to an existing IO's focality, as well as institutional design similarities to identify the relevant configuration of conditions that lead to either cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. The empirical result yields that a challenge of the existing IO's resource dimension of focality constitutes a necessary condition for cooperative IO response strategies. The two sufficient conditions leading to cooperative IO response strategies feature (i) the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and the absence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality, and (ii) the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and the presence of institutional distinction. Regarding competitive IO response strategies, no necessary condition exists. However, the QCA results lead to three sufficient conditions for competitive IO response strategies: (i) the absence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and presence of a challenge to the norm dimension of focality, (ii) the absence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and presence of institutional emulation, and (iii) the presence of institutional emulation and presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality and presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality. In the empirical analysis I also examine empirical trends in the alternative explanations and the alternative theoretical approach. Regarding alternative explanations, the extent of membership overlap is distributed relatively evenly across the sampled cases, while a preponderance of cases of counter-institutionalization is discernible. Regarding the alternative theoretical approach, the empirical evidence ascertains that the intentionality of new IO entries to the regime complex possibly correlate with the competitiveness of IO response strategies and should consequently embody one of the focus points of the comparative case studies in chapter 6.

Chapter 6 features four comparative case studies which delve deeper into new IOs' motivations to enter the regime complex via acts of CI and explore possible explanations for rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies. I conduct a structured, focused comparison in which each case is oriented around finding answers to specific questions that reflect the research objective, and is accordingly focused because it narrows in on specific aspects of the cases (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 67). The aim of each case is to determine new IOs' motivations to enter the regime complex and how the mode of IO response strategies impacts existing IOs' survival as focal actors in the regime complex. The four cases are chosen because they exhibit different motivations for new IO entries to the regime complex. Each case also features either Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation or Obstruction as IO response strategies.

The first case study focuses on the World Bank's response strategy of Admission to the AIIB's creation. Though there exists much talk about the AIIB's challenge to the World Bank's operations in the regime complex of development finance, my empirical observations do not show that the World Bank actively competes with the AIIB. On the contrary, the AIIB copies nearly the entire normative framework and governance features of the World Bank. Thus, institutional emulation is very high. Even before the AIIB became operational, World Bank president Jim Yong Kim made a large point in welcoming the new Asian-led development bank. This case shows that the World Bank's strong focality in the development finance regime complex and the AIIB's genuine function as a resource enhancer are enough to secure the World Bank's survival as a focal actor via the cooperative response strategy of Admission.

In the second case study, the IEA's cooperative response strategy to IRENA exemplifies Accommodation. The IEA and IRENA's pursuit of the same governance goal plays an important part in the IEA's response strategy. I contend that the governance objective to achieve global energy security unites IEA and IRENA's actions in fighting for more secure energy supplies. This case shows that IEA's response strategy of Accommodation is directed at IRENA's motivation to challenge the incumbent governance approach. It also supports my central finding that cooperative response strategies prevail amid resource competition because the existing focal and new IOs share the same governance goal.

The third case study centers on UNHCR's response to IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016. It specifically outlines the IO response strategy of Obstruction. UNHCR is arguably threatened by IOM's entry to the UN system because the IOM consciously adopts a different normative approach for the management of refugee and migration movements. Therefore, the IOM poses a challenge to UNHCR's norm dimension of focality. This case shows that the new IO's status- and norm-driven motivation for entering the regime complex incites competitive and

behavioral response strategies because it directly contends the existing IO's status as a focal actor in the regime complex.

In the fourth and final case study, the IWC's response strategy to the creation of NAMMCO entails Delegitimation. Whereas IWC and NAMMCO disagree regarding the permissibility of commercial whaling activities, they pursue the same governance goal of protecting whale populations. Given IWC's institutional deadlock, its hands are tied from engaging in behavioral response strategies. Thus, IWC's response strategy is rhetorical and seeks to discredit NAMMCO's political vision. This case shows that issue-specific challenges to the existing IO's focality likely coincide with rhetorical IO response strategies.

In summary, this dissertation research provides a new angle for studying inter-institutional interactions and IO developments as it shines light on existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IO entries in the regime complex. Given that I specifically focus on the response strategies of existing IOs occupying a focal position in the regime complex, this dissertation research explains how credible threats to an existing IO's focal status induce different types of IO response strategies to maintain their position as *prima inter pares* among the IOs in the regime complex. Furthermore, this investigation into IO response strategies makes substantial theoretical and empirical contributions to better comprehending IO survival strategies and the causes and effects of inter-institutional conflict and cooperation.

Chapter 2: Unpacking IO response strategies

My dissertation is based on the conjecture that IO response strategies do not just happen, but consist of deliberate institutional changes that are geared towards ensuring the existing IO's survival as the main focal actor in the regime complex. Whereas recent literature has started to enhance understandings of IO survival strategies and institutional robustness (Dijkstra et al., 2022; Dijkstra & Debre, 2022; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020b, 2020a; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Verdier, 2021; Gray, 2018), the concept of IO response strategies remains largely buried within this strand of research. I start to dig into the concept of IO response strategies in a deductive manner, which is rooted in the literature on the nature of IOs and how they function (Bakir & Gunduz, 2017; Barnett & Coleman, 2005; Margulis, 2021; Vetterlein, 2007), including the literature on IO survival, and first comprehensive accounts of how institutional changes transpire from events that happen outside of the IO in question (Lipsky, 2017). Systematic investigations into the different types of responses by existing IOs are still exceptional (see Hirschmann, 2020) and often focus on single cases (compare Betts, 2013; Downie, 2020). There still exists considerable room for maneuver to detect new empirical patterns of existing IO response strategies in this up and coming strand of IR research. Furthermore, the systematic empirical identification of IO response strategies offers a fresh perspective on the survival efforts of single IOs.

Little is known regarding the different ways in which existing IOs seek to maintain their focal position. What do existing focal IOs' response strategies really look like? Do they alienate new IOs? Do they attempt to cooperate with potential competitors? Since the answers are not specified in international rules or treaties, there exists no conspicuous way of conceptualizing IO response strategies. Some IO response strategies may be long in the making (for example creating a new department) or take place shortly after the new IO comes to life (such as signing a Memorandum of Understanding or shaping a platform for cooperation). In this chapter I take the first systematic steps towards building a conceptual foundation which distinguishes between different types of IO response strategies.

The conceptualization of IO response strategies provides the empirical foundation to later explain why existing IOs sometimes respond to new IOs entering the regime complex in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways. I assemble the concept of IO response strategies step-by-step. First, I discuss how IO response strategies relate to new IO entries to the regime complex and the possible absence of IO response strategies. Second, I derive four criteria for empirically

identifying IO response strategies. Third, I describe the two dimensions of IO response strategies in terms of their competitiveness (their scope) and mode (their depth). Chapter 2 then concludes with the conceptual cornerstone of this research: a descriptive typology of four IO response strategies along these two dimensions. Throughout this dissertation research, IO response strategies are not just identified and ordered into a typology, but also continue to be refined during all stages of the research process.

2.1. How existing IOs' response strategies relate to the new IO

To capture the different ways that existing IOs deliberately respond to new IOs, it is crucial to show that new IO entries prompt some responsiveness in existing IOs. As such, IO response strategies ought to be observable within the first five years after the new IO enters the regime complex. They should also address the new IO in some way. Doing so helps to reduce false positives. It evades mistaking *ad hoc* reactions or purely path-dependent IO change for IO response strategies. Generally speaking, existing IO changes that are simultaneously IO response strategies relate to the new IO in terms of timing and content.¹⁵

What sets IO response strategies apart from other forms of institutional change is that the point in time at which the existing IO responds is contingent on a new IO entering the regime complex. The act of responding entails “say[ing] or do[ing] something as a reaction to something that has been said or done” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). At the most fundamental level, the responding actor (the existing IO) reacts to the event in question (the new IO’s entry to the regime complex) in its own way. Since the existing IO already operates in the regime complex before the new IO enters the picture, chances are high that the ‘existing IO *before* the new IO’s entry to the regime complex’ differs from the ‘existing IO *after* the new IO has entered the regime complex’. Determining the extent that the existing IO differs before and after the new IO has entered the regime complex embodies one of the main goals of this dissertation. A sequence of events should be observable. For example, the IEA’s structural expansions occur around the same time that IRENA is established in 2009.¹⁶ Timing is important for the empirical identification of IO response strategies because IO response strategies (and potentially ensuing IO changes) are brought forth by a very specific type of exogenous event.

¹⁵ My understanding of how IO response strategies *relate* to the new IO is distinct from conventional understandings of inter-institutional relations in terms of governance coherence and inter-institutional conflict and cooperation (Faude & Fuss, 2020b).

¹⁶ See Appendix V for more detailed information.

When IO response strategies are present, content-wise they invariably feature some more or less direct form of reference to the new IO. A statement such as “*the new IO* is a great friend to us” issued right after the new IO’s entry to the regime complex counts as an IO response strategy because it changes the existing IO’s rhetoric to include the new IO and directly conveys a friendly stance towards it. Hence, the observed changes in existing IO rhetoric relate to the new IO in terms of their content and timing. In another example, the FAO rhetorically links trade law to international food aid upon the WTO’s entry to the regime complex of food security (Margulis, 2017). Albeit trade liberalization was of very little concern to the FAO prior to WTO’s entry to the regime complex, the FAO declares: “Agricultural trade and trade liberalization can unlock the potential of the food and agriculture sector to stimulate economic growth and promote food security” (FAO, 2005). Hence, changes in FAO rhetoric exhibit a clear reference to the WTO’s emphasis on free trade (Farsund et al., 2015). As this example shows, the new IO’s entry to the regime complex has induced a new rhetoric which eventually became a common part of FAO speech acts.

Besides changes in IO rhetoric which relate to new IO entries, additional forms and shapes of IO response strategies remain relatively arcane. In seldom cases IO response strategies could also entail drastic forms of IO change that may indicate a critical juncture (Capoccia, 2016) or punctuated equilibrium (Krasner, 1984).¹⁷ They represent paradigmatic, nonincremental change which “involves new policies that represent a sharp break from how policies were developed, conceived, and implemented in the past but are still rooted in the same general concerns and problems” (Howlett, 2019, pp. 9–10). Though research on IO developments shows that such events are based on rare contingencies (Kreuder-Sonnen & Tantow, 2022, p. 4), they nevertheless epitomize substantive changes to existing IO practices. One prominent example consists of UNHCR’s vast policy scope expansion upon IOM’s creation and later entry into the UN system (Betts, 2009b, 2013).

Overall, the illustrated IO changes demonstrate significant variance in the grandeur of response strategies that relate to a new IO’s entry to the regime complex. They ostensibly range from slight modifications in the existing IO’s rhetoric to considerable changes in its practices and institutional

¹⁷ Punctuated equilibrium change is traditionally understood as being triggered by an international crisis such as a nuclear explosion or a natural disaster that unfolds rapidly. Examples of critical junctures include the IOM’s expansion into the field of humanitarian assistance following the 1990-1991 Gulf War (Kreuder-Sonnen & Tantow, 2022), the creation of new institutions following the Great Depression in the 1970s (Blyth, 2002, 2007) and changes in macroeconomic policy following economic crises in America in 1979-1981, in Sweden in 1990-1992 (Hogan & Doyle, 2007) and in Mexico in 1982 (Hogan, 2019).

structures. The aim of conceptualizing IO response strategies is to figure out which types of response strategies crystallize out of these observed IO changes. Furthermore, the possibility of ignoring or disregarding the new IO deserves more attention before I begin to shape a typology of IO response strategies.

2.2. Disregarding the new IO

Critics may argue that not all situations in which a new IO enters the regime complex necessarily threaten the existing IO's role as a focal actor. Though IO response strategies precisely embody a response to a threat, could it also be the case that the existing IO purposefully disregards a new IO's entry to the regime complex? Before an existing IO deliberately responds to a new IO's entry, it faces the choice of whether to respond to the new IO in the first place. Assuming that the existing focal IO responds to a new IO's entry to the regime complex in some way, it might cooperate, challenge or turn a blind eye to the new IO. Inspired by research that deals with policy inaction and an IO's inertia, the conscious decision to disregard a new IO constitutes a strategic behavior (Bach & Wegrich, 2019; Hirschmann, 2020, p. 78).

While it can be a deliberate strategy to ignore new IOs, the empirical difficulty is to demonstrate that ignoring the new IO embodies a deliberate action by existing IOs. From an empirical perspective, an existing IO disregards the new IO when existing IO changes – such as altering their rhetoric or policies – are absent following a new IO's entry to the regime complex. However, it is utmost difficult to demonstrate that the absence of existing IO changes are indeed related to the new IO's entry to the regime complex – and do not just feature a non-response. Given that this research adopts an external perspective for studying IO behavior, I rely on indicators such as the existing IO making direct reference to the new IO to be able to identify IO response strategies. Only when the existing IO substantiates its actions with reference to expanding or protecting its focal position following a new IO's entry to the regime complex can I be sure that the observed IO actions are part of a strategy to protect the existing IO's focality. Given that no such justification will be part of acts of disregarding the new IO or absent IO response strategies, I cannot be certain that they constitute part of a wider strategy of protecting the existing IO's focality in the regime complex. Overall, too many empirical doubts persist to reliably identify this type of response strategy.

A closer inspection of relevant cases reveals the difficulty of identifying acts of disregarding the new IO. One possible way of dealing with this observational difficulty is to consider the broader context in which acts of disregarding may take place. The WTO's dismissal of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the IWC's indifference to the WTO highlight such possible situations. Whereas WTO and UNCLOS¹⁸ governance spheres overlap in the protection and trade of marine resources (such as in the Swordfish (WTO DS193) or Shrimp-Turtle WTO disputes (WTO DS58)), "WTO agreements do not directly address law of the sea matters, and the potential for either conflict of inter-development in either direction is [...] small" (Boyle, 2005, p. 581). Only in 1999 did the WTO Secretariat issue a report titled "Trade and Environment" (Nordström & Vaughan, 1999). Though it dedicates one entire section to the issue of overfishing, the report was criticized as being "too timid and not addressing the real link between trade liberalization and environmental degradation" (Myers, 2005, p. 67). Despite public outcry (Greenpeace, 2007), the WTO continues to disdain UNCLOS' role in the environmental protection of marine environments.¹⁹

A different yet similar case encompasses the IWC's disregard of the WTO's entry to the international whaling regime complex in 1995. The IWC and WTO's competencies overlap in setting catch limits for the trade of fish and the trade in fishing equipment. The IWC already acted as a focal IO in matters of international whaling about 40 years prior to the WTO's creation. Japan and Norway suggested that issues of trade in whale meat exceed the IWC's competencies and should be addressed by the WTO instead. Whereas the IWC exhibits extensive cooperation with UN bodies and engages with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (the IWC created a resolution with CITES in 1998), it lacks attempts of working together with independent international legal bodies such as the WTO (Gillespie, 2002). Since the IWC and WTO are clearly linked by their competencies to address the trade in whale meat, I reckon that the IWC's lack of initiative constitutes an IO response strategy of deliberately refusing to engage with the new IO. As these examples show, instances in which the existing focal IO largely disregards the new IO also exist.

As convincing as these examples may sound that the existing focal IOs turn a blind eye to the new IOs, these IO reactions do not satisfy my identification criteria that the exiting IO's response strategy relates to the new IO in question (compare chapter 2.3. below). Since neither WTO nor

¹⁸ Although UNCLOS was adopted in 1982, it only became effective on November 16, 1994 (see UN, 1998); This is around the same time that the WTO was established on January 1, 1995.

¹⁹ I take note that strictly speaking UNCLOS is an international convention (and thus an international institution) but not an IO.

IWC directly refer to UNCLOS and WTO in the above-mentioned examples, I cannot be completely confident that they indeed feature the response strategy of disregarding these new IOs. Since acts of disregarding new IOs do not entirely fulfill my research objective and would require deeper conceptual and empirical explorations, I set these cases aside for now. The value of this dissertation research consists of revealing the ways in which the existing IO changes following a new IO's entry to the regime complex. As such, my research even allows to move beyond the conceptualization of different types of IO response strategies and to investigate the impact of IO response strategies on shaping more congenial or adversarial institutional environments. Therefore, the remainder of this dissertation centers on the identification and explanation of different types of IO response strategies that change the existing IO's rhetoric, practices or institutional structures.

2.3. Empirical identification of IO response strategies

Comprehensive research has paved the path for identifying institutional overlap and a plethora of strategies for handling the accompanying uncertainties, as well as their consequences (Alter & Meunier, 2006; Busch, 2007; Faude & Fuss, 2020b). This section shows that new IO entries can be anticipated by the existing focal IO and then summarizes relevant criteria for identifying IO response strategies. The focus on IO response strategies ensures that the object of interest is homogenous across cases. Following the rather encompassing definition of an IO response strategy as a reflected answer of an existing IO in reaction to a new IO's entry to the regime complex, the identification criteria are fittingly capacious. They epitomize signposts which are derived from existing literature on IO survival strategies and pertinent empirical observations but at the same time leave sufficient room for capturing diverse expressions of IO response strategies.

While a new IO's entry to the regime complex may be undesired, it is still anticipated by the existing IO (Jupille et al., 2013). In conceptual terms the creation of a new IO follows a phyletic gradual type of change that occurs in the regime complex (Gerschewski, 2021). This type of change is initiated by an exogenous event and happens gradually over time.²⁰ Oftentimes the existing IO may even be directly involved in the creation of the new IO by providing counsel on the mandates and structures as well as shares its experiences with the IO creator states.²¹ For example Natalie Lichtenstein, a senior official of the World Bank, acted as Chief Counsel in the AIIB's founding

²⁰ Conversely, Mahoney and Thelen (2010) observe that sudden changes in the external environment are possible when old institutions are abruptly displaced by new institutions.

²¹ Whereas I acknowledge the role of states as part of an alternative theoretical approach (see chapter 3.3.), the focus of this dissertation lies on the behavior of existing focal IOs as actors that enjoy partial autonomy from states.

process and used the World Bank's mandates as a template for designing the AIIB's mandates (Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Lichtenstein, 2018), the SCO's mandates are closely modeled after the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) mandates (Ambrosio, 2008) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO)²² is brought to life as a UN specialized agency by UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions (Bartholomeusz, 2009; Blanco-Bazán, 2004). Therefore, it is conceivable that the formation of an IO response strategy starts to develop in parallel to the new IO's creation or entry to the regime complex.

Even before the AIIB became operational in 2016, the World Bank granted technical and advisory support to help strengthen the AIIB's governance platform (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019) and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim proclaimed in a meeting with AIIB President-designate Jin Liqun, "I look forward to further strengthening our existing strong relationship and identifying specific areas of future cooperation, including co-financing opportunities" (World Bank, 2015b). The World Bank President's repeatedly voiced intentions to cooperate with the AIIB shows that the World Bank's response strategy is not of an *ad hoc* nature (Fleming, 2016; Kim, 2015, 2017; World Bank, 2015a, 2015b). Ergo existing IOs have the opportunity to prepare pertinent response strategies even before the new IO becomes operational. Consequently, I consider the analytical starting point for the identification of IO response strategies as the year preceding the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

From a theoretical perspective, IO response strategies do not have a clear end point. Just as institutions continually evolve and change, IO response strategies comprise ongoing interactive processes between the existing focal and respective new IOs. In accordance with Malte Brosig's (2011) observation that the "influence over outcomes can be expected to dwindle as overlap progresses" (p. 148), I suppose that the strength and frequency of IO response strategies recede over time. For reasons of time and resource constraints, I specifically focus on IO response strategies that take place within five years following the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

In summary, IO response strategies are identified using the following criteria:

- i) The existing IO occupies a focal position in the regime complex and addresses the same global issue as the respective new IO,
- ii) The existing IO's response strategy relates to the new IO in question,

²² It was originally created as the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization in 1948 and renamed into the International Maritime Organization in 1982 (see also IMO, 2019a).

- iii) The existing IO's response strategy is issued in a timely manner following the new IO's entry to the regime complex (or at the earliest takes place in the year prior to the new IO's entry to the regime complex), and
- iv) The IO response strategy takes place within five years following the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

Once these identification criteria are fulfilled, the question remains how the IO response strategy manifests on the ground. One staunch theme throughout existing research on inter-institutional relations, which is also central to my first empirical observations of IO response strategies (in chapter 1), is the degree of competitiveness that permeates the relations between existing focal and new IOs (Daßler, 2022; Downie, 2022; Lipsy, 2015, 2017). Consequently, the competitiveness forms the first dimension of IO response strategies because it offers insights into the scope of rivalry between the respective existing and new IOs. Besides their scope, I also note that IO response strategies differ in how profoundly they alter the existing IO's rhetoric or political makeup. Contemporary research establishes a fruitful connection between rhetorical and practical ways as responses to existential challenges (Dijkstra et al., 2022; Hirschmann, 2020). Corresponding to these studies of IO survival strategies, I make similar distinctions between spoken and behavioral actions in my initial observations of IO response strategies. Hence, the second dimension captures their depth – which I label as the mode of IO response strategies. Chapters 2.4. and 2.5. now elaborate on each dimension before uniting them in a typology of IO response strategies.

2.4. Competitiveness of IO response strategies

Institutional proliferation has narrowed the space for existing IOs to govern a global issue. It also increases the potential that new actors arise who are willing and able to assume a focal position in the regime complex. The fragmentation of power, or governance authority for that matter, was initially perceived as a negative trait and a catalyst for fragility and conflict, which could even precipitate the collapse of a regime (Drezner, 2009). In such a competitive environment the existing focal IO takes on an important role. Its leadership is decisive in setting the tone of how the status quo handles new institutional challengers. It could stoke up competition with the new IO or head down a more amicable path. Recent research has shown that both of these avenues are possible. It has started to question the assumption that each new actor spurs inter-institutional fragility by pointing to possibilities of burden sharing through division of labor (Faude, 2015; Gehring &

Faude, 2014) or other forms of inter-institutional cooperation (Clark, 2021) that can also ensure an IO's survival (Dijkstra et al., 2022).

Given that existing IOs respond rationally to changed external circumstances, the competitiveness of IO response strategies presents a plausible indication whether the existing IO's focality is threatened by the new IO. Based on the notion that cooperation and conflict constitute the central structural dimension of inter-institutional relations (Biermann, 2011; Biermann & Koops, 2017), I contend that IO response strategies are likely distinguishable by their competitiveness. This stipulation also finds support in my preliminary empirical observations that some IO response strategies are less friendly than others (see description of the empirical puzzle in chapter 1). Furthermore, the competitiveness dimension directly relates the existing focal IO's response strategy to the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

Though cooperative and competitive IO response strategies are often described in antagonistic ways, they are not mutually exclusive.²³ Depending on which level and types of interactions one considers, an IO might send mixed signals. For instance, WIPO offers technical assistance to developing countries in meeting the requirements set out by the WTO's TRIPS agreement, yet WIPO and WTO often clash over the stringency in enforcing the protection of intellectual property rights (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014). Nonetheless, I conceive of IO response strategies as reflected answers to new IO entries and stipulate that a general trend towards more cooperative or competitive IO response strategies will be observable. I concur the argument of Michael Lipson (2017) and contend that IO response strategies set the paths for (i) enhancing effectiveness to better accomplish shared goals among IOs, attempting to end existing disputes and expanding extant cooperation between the respective IOs, or (ii) amplifying prevalent contentions and dysfunctional effects in the institutionalization of inter-institutional relations. As such, IO response strategies also play vital parts in determining the trajectories of inter-institutional relations.

Cooperative IO response strategies:

Basic conceptions of cooperation feature mutual adjustments or adaptations of some form that do not contradict each other (Gehring & Faude, 2014; Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1162; Kreuder-Sonnen & Zürn, 2020). Accordingly, cooperative IO response strategies demonstrate the existing

²³ Recognizing the biases and risks associated with making binary distinctions in the social world, my qualitative research approach leaves enough room to discuss nuances and provide more flesh to the binary distinctions of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies.

IO's willingness to accommodate the new IO's preferences, resource demands and/or policy positions in their interaction. Possible prerequisites are functional overlaps (Gehring & Faude, 2014), substantive issue linkages (Johnson & Urpelainen, 2012) and shared policy or regulatory goals (Margulis, 2021), which have all been shown to facilitate cooperation. I stipulate that the existing IO's aspiration of engaging in cooperative IO response strategies is to heighten the governance effectiveness between IOs that pursue a common governance goal and to reduce transaction costs for governing a global issue.

Observable implications of cooperative IO response strategies feature IO behavior which receives of the new IO in a welcoming manner. For instance, the existing IO may incorporate some governance approaches promoted by the new IO in its own policies or rhetoric, acknowledge the new IO's added value for governing a global issue or recognize the potential for establishing fruitful cooperation in the future. The outcomes of cooperative response strategies can encompass the formalization of friendly relations through means such as cooperation agreements, memoranda of understanding or formal platforms for exchange.²⁴ Other cooperative response strategies demonstrate a willingness to initiate dialogue, engage in (in)formal processes of information sharing or potentially even pool resources with the new IO (Clark, 2021). Overall, these scenarios outline a first account of possible cooperative IO response strategies – which is by no means an exhaustive account.

Though cooperative IO response strategies are in themselves concordant, inter-institutional cooperation does not guarantee that boundless harmony persists among IOs (Gehring & Faude, 2014). One telling example is the IEA's willingness to sign a letter of intent with IRENA to publish a Joint Global Renewable Energy Policies and Measures Database that shares renewable energy statistics data and methods (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015).²⁵ Despite the existence of a joint database, IRENA's presence in the global energy regime complex “directly challenges the IEA's

²⁴ Though I refer to joint databases as an existing IO's cooperative response strategy, it would be more accurate to say that I refer to the existing IO's willingness to establish a joint database with the new IO. After all, the willingness to establish cooperation originates from the existing IO, while the realization of inter-institutional cooperation involves at least two actors. Nonetheless, for reasons of simplicity I refer to joint IO initiatives (e.g. a joint database) in describing cooperative IO response strategies, which more accurately refer to the existing focal IO's willingness to engage in certain actions.

²⁵ Similarly, the OSCE's Secretary General has agreed to launch a series of joint workshops and initiatives with the SCO in 2004 (de Haas, 2007). Further examples include the agreement signed between WIPO and WTO in 1995, continuous consultations between the UN and IMO to avoid any unnecessary institutional overlaps (Blanco-Bazán, 2004) and frequent information sharing between UNHCR and IOM to better utilize complementary overlaps for making the work of both IOs more efficient (Betts, 2013).

substantive focus on fossil fuel and nuclear based energy systems” (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 278).²⁶ Therefore, cooperative IO response strategies are conceptualized separately from inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. To ascertain the extent of inter-institutional cooperation and conflict, more cumulative information on the overall context is needed in which the existing focal IO interacts with the new IO.

This conceptualization of cooperative IO response strategies has provided a better understanding of their characteristics and empirical manifestations. Hence, it yields some reference points for the later identification of cooperative IO response strategies in the sampled cases. Cooperative IO response strategies embody a crucial part of this research because institutional adjustments and mutual recognition feature one of the likely ways in which existing IOs may seek to maintain their focality in the regime complex.

Competitive IO response strategies:

Environments characterized by regime complexity provide incentives for rival political actors to engage in forum shopping, regime shifting or other forms of contestation (Hafner-Burton, 2009; Morse & Keohane, 2014). Competitive IO response strategies seek to maintain the existing IO’s focality without paying due regard to the new IO’s purpose or ambitions. In short, they intend to weaken a new IO’s focality or reduce its chances of establishing a new focal point in the regime complex. Competitive IO response strategies hence showcase an adversarial demeanor towards the new IO. In some cases, competitive IO response strategies may even ignite or sustain rivalries between the existing focal and new IOs.

The conception of inter-institutional competition is based on the logic that “two secretariats engag[e] in a zerosum game, struggling over turf, members, resources or policy influence” (Margulis, 2021, p. 875). Beyond the contestation over material resources (Downie, 2022, p. 366), it is also possible that an existing IO responds competitively to a new IO which enjoys a prominent status in the regime complex. The external environment of regime complexity is prone to spur such contestations because it increases the number of IOs that could possibly occupy a focal position in the regime complex (compare Betts, 2013, p. 76). In accordance, competitive IO response strategies seek to reduce the new IO’s influence on the development of regime complexity. For

²⁶ They feature the SCO’s participation in seminars on preventing and combatting terrorism hosted by the OSCE in September 2002, a workshop on terrorism and human rights in September 2003 in The Hague and a co-organized Regional Workshop on Implementation of Universal Anti-Terrorism Instruments in April 5-7, 2005.

instance, they may question the new IO's expertise or its general ability to govern a global issue (for example in 1999 ITU's Secretary General accused ICANN of hypocrisy (Kleinwächter, 2004, p. 239)). Inciting forum shifts to regain "lost" focality is also an option (Gómez-Mera, 2016). The objective is to supplant the new IO's eminent status in the regime complex. For example, UNHCR's response strategies to the IOM are predominantly competitive as UNHCR seeks to subsume the policy space of IOM by steadily integrating international migration matters into the global refugee regime complex (Betts, 2009b, 2013). Thus, actions such as policy scope expansion constitute possible expressions of competitive IO response strategies.

Recent research has also yielded that one strategy to demarcate an IO's governance expertise entails setting boundaries amid facing competitive pressures (Betts, 2013; Holzscheiter, 2017; Kranke, 2020). In the 1960s, following the Torrey Canyon incident, IMO was described as a 'rich mans' club' and thus rhetorically separated from other UN bodies that addressed international maritime issues. Moreover, the UN prevented the transfer of public law matters to IMO at the 1969 Third Conference on the Law of the Sea which decided on how international law should deal with oil tankers following the Torrey Canyon oil spill disaster (Blanco-Bazán, 2004). The UN attempts to diminish IMO's role in the international maritime regime by limiting its responsibilities and competencies. In this example, UN's competitive response strategies arguably serve to protect its focality by ensuring that the new IO does not gain substantive prominence in the governance field. Even if it 'just' discredits the new IO, as in the case of IWC's response to NAMMCO (Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013), the existing focal IO invariably reacts to the new IO. I thus find empirical support for my claim that an existing focal IO will always respond in some way to a new IO which challenges its focality in the regime complex. Hence, it is essential to distinguish between different types and dimensions of IO response strategies.

2.5. The Mode of IO response strategies

As the second dimension, the mode accounts for how strongly the existing focal IO pursues a response strategy. To be more precise, it grants insights into the depth of IO response strategies and so complements the first dimension because it reveals how seriously an existing IO takes the new IO's challenge to its own focality. The depth of IO response strategies distinguishes how profoundly the response strategy affects the IO's institutional layers. For instance, IO response strategies that alter the ways in which an IO functions and the political content it produces arguably contain more political weight as compared to response strategies that only affect an IO's rhetoric.

Hence, the mode of IO response strategies captures the ways in which an existing IO responds and how profoundly they affect an IO's content composition and operational makeup. Does the existing IO alter its departmental structure in response to a new IO's entry to the regime complex? Does it establish new platforms to engage in inter-institutional cooperation? Or does the existing IO simply welcome or even denounce a new IO's entry as part of its official speech acts? The most general distinction is made between the use of words and deeds (compare also Breuning, 1995): I distinguish the depth of IO response strategies by their mode. For example, the UN responds to IMO's creation in terms of verbally denouncing IMO's political endeavors while at the same time setting clear political boundaries to the IMO. As presented by this brief example, rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies do not necessarily have to co-vary. Clearly, IOs take great care in shaping their relations with other IOs (Dijkstra, 2017, p. 2).

In some cases, existing focal IOs also undergo institutional changes when they respond to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. In other cases, the key backbone of IOs, namely their structures, practices and rhetoric, remain unchanged.²⁷ In turn, combinations of different modes of IO changes are possible. For example, the reflection of China's rising economic weight in the World Bank's vote allocations "is more rhetoric than reality" (Vestergaard & Wade, 2015, p. 7); The existing focal IO's structural and policy compositions remain principally unchanged while it predominantly alters its rhetoric to recognize the new IO. Untangling the mode of IO response strategies captures new inter-institutional dynamics such as changes in IO rhetoric, which are often overlooked by conventional accounts of IO change (Bakir & Gunduz, 2017). However, in other cases WIPO for instance responds to WTO's creation as it formally upholds inter-institutional coordination concerning legal and technical assistance to WTO members that are developing countries in the realm of intellectual property rights (Hrbatá, 2010, p. 8). In this case the existing focal IO engages in a response strategy that has profound operational implications because WIPO considerably accommodates WTO and even alters its practices accordingly.

Rhetorical and behavioral response strategies further resemble IO survival strategies as they address pressures created by new demands in the institutional environment. They represent the means for resisting existential threats (Dijkstra et al., 2022, p. 4), fending off contestation (Heinkelmann-Wild & Jankauskas, 2020) and ascertaining legitimacy (Tallberg & Zürn, 2019, p. 588). Since IOs are interlinked in regime complexes, changes in rhetoric, structures or other institutional modifications

²⁷ I derive these analytical points of interest based on the components of an IO's constitutive dimension which consist of its membership compositions, the allocation of decision-making powers, the IO's mission, the centralization of tasks and the scope of issues covered (Koremenos et al., 2001).

(such as changes in IO access for transnational actors or state powers (Tallberg et al., 2014)) have larger repercussions for the institutional compatibility among the existing focal and other IOs (Aggarwal, 1998). Considering that institutional modifications are steered by existing IOs, the strength of IO response strategies provides a new angle for studying the ways in which existing focal IOs adjust to potential institutional competitors amid deepening regime complexity.

Rhetorical IO response strategies:

The use of words is captured by the existing IO's rhetoric which encompasses "the art of speaking or writing effectively" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). A rhetorical IO response strategy is defined as a reflected answer in form of existing IO rhetoric in reaction to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. While "the focus is on speech as a response to a particular situation" (Martin, 2020, p. 13), this focus differs from a discourse analytic approach guided by discourse theory (compare Pantzerhielm et al., 2020). For the purposes of my dissertation research, an IO's rhetoric encompasses all written and spoken forms of communication that do not involve changes in the existing IO's practices, policies or structural makeup. An IO's official rhetoric and communication is mapped using documents such as press releases, communiqués, policy briefs, letters, interviews and speeches by IO officials and member state representatives.

Rhetorical IO response strategies can be emitted in both cooperative or competitive manners. For instance, in two separate cases the OSCE and WHO rhetorically emphasize their relative competitive advantages in solving the respective global issues of international security and global health provision. Yet OSCE's dialogue efforts are directed at denouncing SCO's governance approaches (Ambrosio, 2008), while WHO emphasizes its central role to engage in cooperative orchestration efforts with the WTO concerning international standard setting for the global trade in medicines (Hanrieder, 2009, 2015b). Other forms of cooperative and competitive rhetorical response strategies may express the intent to cooperate or strategies of naming and shaming, respectively. Voicing the intent to cooperate does not mean that cooperation between two IOs actually takes place. It just signals that the existing focal IO is willing to cooperate with the new IO. Likewise, offers to create pooling arrangements comprise a rhetorical IO response strategy. As soon as the existing and new IOs actually pool their resources or establish a formal cooperation agreement, the IO response strategy counts as a behavioral response strategy. Until the proclaimed actions turn into concrete behavior, they are considered as being rhetorical.

Though rhetorical IO response strategies may carry significant representational costs, I contend that they induce less substantial changes to the existing IO's overall functioning as compared to behavioral IO response strategies – at least in terms of the facility with which changes in IO rhetoric can be modified or repealed. In this regard I contend that the effects of rhetorical IO response strategies are comparatively more shoal than behavioral IO response strategies. This conceptual characteristic of rhetorical IO response strategies is exemplified by the IMF's response to the creation of the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) in 2000. In its response strategy, the IMF addresses the bilateral currency swap arrangements between the national central banks of most ASEAN member states that were established due to Asian countries' dissatisfaction with the IMF's harsh conditionality on bailouts following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-1998. The IMF more often acknowledges the negative impact of its programmes for developing countries (Güven, 2017), recognized failures in handling the Asian financial crisis (West, 2017) and repeatedly emphasized how its work affects Asian countries. Since the IMF directly refers to CMI as a chance for “enhanced regional cooperation” (IMF, 2000b), this rhetorical change represents a rhetorical IO response strategy. For instance, IMF's acting Managing Director John Lipsky (2006) made explicit reference to Asian states when outlining planned IMF reforms. Yet overall, the IMF demonstrated “resistance to major reform [and o]n balance, [...] adaptation [...] remains partial and insufficient” (Güven, 2017, p. 1151). Considering alternative response options such as adapting lending policies to sincerely satisfy Asian demands, the IMF has reportedly chosen a change in IO rhetoric as the more tenuous form of IO response strategy.

Given that rhetorical IO response strategies only scrape the surface of an IO's institutional makeup and involve fewer material costs as compared to behavioral IO response strategies, they present more benign forms of IO change. When imagining the existing IO in terms of a multi-layered object akin to an onion, rhetorical IO response strategies comprise the first line of defense in deflecting institutional newcomers from potentially taking over its focal position. Therefore, I reason that IO response strategies which entail policy or structural changes of the existing focal IO reach more deeply into the existing IO's institutional layers and contain much more political weight in terms of the profoundness of their consequences for the IO's institutional functioning and the ways in which the regime complex develops.

Behavioral IO response strategies:

Considering the diplomatic nature of official IO rhetoric, a complementary account of IO response strategies is needed to grasp the extent to which the existing IO is willing to either accommodate

or repudiate the new IO in the regime complex. Therefore, it is imperative to also consider the behavioral actions taken by the existing focal IO as part of its response strategy. Behavioral IO response strategies are defined as a reflected answer in form of changes to the existing IO's practices, policies and/or institutional structures in reaction to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. Such actions refer to the degree that IO response strategies incur formal political or institutional changes to the existing focal IO.²⁸ Inherently, an existing IO's ability to engage with behavioral IO response strategies also depends on how flexible the existing IO generally is in making formal adjustments to its rules and structures. I elaborate on the three main criteria of behavioral IO response strategies below.

First, behavioral IO response strategies must be formalized. Thus, they sustain sufficient political weight to impact the development of a regime complex and heighten the replicability of my research findings.²⁹ Thus, behavioral IO response strategies comprise formal changes that are observable in policy documents, cooperation agreements, IO mandates and formal organizational structures such as an IO's department structures. Other forms of behavioral IO response strategies – such as creating new working groups that share overlapping governance goals with the new IO – are already part of existing research but have not yet been explicitly identified as IO response strategies.

Second, behavioral IO response strategies are marked by changes in IO practices, policies and structures. While IO *practices* entail policy functions such as policy formulation, decision making, implementation, monitoring and enforcement (Tallberg et al., 2014), *policies* refer to the subjects and problems that policymakers pay special attention to and try to find solutions or alternatives (Kingdon, 2011). *Institutional structures* encompass the existing IO's "common organizational structures" which further specify the terms of interaction among states (Abbott & Snidal, 1998, p. 10). These expressions of behavioral IO response strategies are not mutually exclusive, considering that "IO reforms often involve changes to several design features simultaneously" (Sommerer et al., 2021, p. 3). For example, IEA's response strategies to IRENA's creation in 2009 illustrate how formal changes in the existing IO's practices coincide with policy changes and changes in its institutional structures. In response to IRENA's exclusive focus on the promotion of renewable energies, IEA has widened its policy portfolio (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015) and created a new department for renewable energies – sending an important signal that the IEA takes the issue of

²⁸ Strictly speaking the existing IO's regulatory framework already changes with the addition or change of a single rule.

²⁹ Whereas IO practices and structures are not always formalized, including informal (member state) practices in the empirical analysis would reach beyond the scope of this dissertation research.

renewable energies very seriously (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015; Downie, 2020). What is more, why does the IEA’s response to IRENA encompass changes in IO policies and institutional structures while other IO response strategies entail only one specific form of behavioral IO change? Questions remain when certain IO changes take place, and why.

Third, behavioral IO response strategies can lean towards fostering more cooperative or competitive relations with the new IO. On one hand the existing IO may change its practices or structures in ways that accommodate parts of the new IO’s governance norms. On the other hand, the existing IO might expand its own policies or structures in ways that aim to limit the new IO’s governance space in the regime complex. For example, UNHCR’s behavioral response strategy of policy scope expansion upon IOM’s entry to the UN system has “limited the scope for institutional collaboration” (Betts, 2009b, pp. 161–162). In the most pronounced cases the existing IO’s response strategies have far-reaching consequences for the normative status quo and affect how new IOs generally address global issues in the regime complex.

2.6. Typology of IO response strategies

The two dimensions of the competitiveness and mode structure my typology of IO response strategies. Carefully crafted typologies make “sophisticated contributions to addressing multidimensionality” (Collier et al., 2012, pp. 221–222). They offer a useful analytical tool for better comprehending the commonalities and differences between the different ways in which existing focal IOs defend their position in the regime complex. Recognizing that “categories have consequences” as they attribute some qualifications to some categories while demarcating others (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 59), I build a typology to make conceptual sense of and refine the properties of different IO response strategies. The typology resides at the partial ordinal level as each dimension is partitioned to display cooperative or competitive, as well as rhetorical or behavioral IO response strategies.

		Mode of IO response strategy	
		Rhetorical IO response strategy	Behavioral IO response strategy
Competitiveness of IO response strategy	Cooperative IO response strategy	Admission	Accommodation
	Competitive IO response strategy	Delegitimation	Obstruction

Table 2: Typology of IO response strategies

Table 2 places the following IO response strategies along the competitiveness and mode dimensions: Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction. Every IO response strategy exhibits a distinct combination of the two dimensions described in the previous section. In the final part of this conceptualization chapter, I first describe both types of cooperative IO response strategies (Admission and Accommodation) before I then elaborate on the competitive IO response strategies (Delegitimation and Obstruction).

2.6.1. Admission

IO response strategy	Characteristics of IO response strategy
Admission (recognition, respect)	The existing IO acknowledges and shows respect for the new IO; Cooperation attempts are visible.

Previous literature has found that institutional proliferation does not automatically undermine the coherence of the external environment (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1178). Admission describes a situation in which the existing focal IO purposely shapes friendly relations with the new IO. It is a form of cooperative IO response strategies which occur when the existing IO alters its rhetoric to present the new IO in an amenable light. The existing IO acknowledges the new IO in its rhetoric and overwhelmingly accepts its governance approach and recognizes its presence as a full-fledged actor in the regime complex. Yet the existing IO does not go out of its way to accommodate or confront the new IO. Hence, the existing focal IO leaves enough room for the new IO to build up its reputation in the regime complex, while simultaneously maintaining its own focality. The result is the co-existence of existing focal and new (focal) IOs in a regime complex.

Empirically, Admission is observable when the existing focal IO consents to a new IO's presence in the regime complex and displays a welcoming attitude towards it. The existing IO continues its everyday operations, but recognizes some added value in joining forces with the new IO on occasion to more effectively govern a global issue. For instance, the existing IO may profit from the new IO's longstanding expertise in a certain topic or benefit from added material resources for governing a global issue. Meanwhile the existing IO bestows the new IO enough space to establish itself as an independent actor in the regime complex. Admission further signifies an acceptance with little to no compromise. The existing IO does not necessarily have to be convinced of the

new IO's views. Irrespectively, it treats the new IO with respect. Modest attempts at cooperation may be visible such as offering to establish cooperation agreements and showing a willingness to pool information or resources. In this regard the existing IO can reap greater benefits by cooperating with the new IO as opposed to governing alone. Empirically, different forms of IO response strategies can arise such as a division of labor between the existing and new IO, joint programs and initiatives or other forms of information sharing (such as joint databases). For example, consistent with previous observations that the World Bank is reluctant to adjust its vote shares to reflect the changing economic powers of its members (Vestergaard & Wade, 2013, 2015), the World Bank makes an effort to reach out to the AIIB without substantively changing its own practices or structures (e.g. vote share adjustments) in China's favor. The World Bank further incorporates the AIIB as a major partner for co-financed development projects by engaging it in a cooperative financing structure which already existed in the World Bank's repertoire before its creation. As such, it represents the IO response strategy of Admission.

Admission may also produce the ancillary effect of norm reinforcement.³⁰ In the previously described case, the World Bank arguably renders its norms more robust as "all major political actors adhere to the same understanding of the norms and/or practices and perceive these norms as congruent with their own" (Hoffman, 2004, p. 10). In accordance, AIIB's continued emphasis on environmental and social standards in turn reinforce the World Bank's own norms and focality in the field of development finance (Fioretos & Heldt, 2019; Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019).

To summarize, in situations of Admission, the existing IO recognizes some benefits of working together with the new IO and displays welcoming gestures towards it. Yet the existing focal IO does not compromise its own actions or vision in fostering friendly relations with the new IO. The existing focal IO respects the new IO's governance space and allows it to establish itself as an independent actor in the regime complex.

³⁰ Reinforcement occurs when "[s]ocial practices and structures reinforce each other if the identities for which they recommend appropriate behavior are intertwined and both domestic party in power and/or the international identities (in the making) share the same understanding of the substantive and procedural norms in question" (Hoffman, 2004, p. 10).

2.6.2. Accommodation

IO response strategy	Characteristics of IO response strategy
Accommodation (adaptation, revision)	The existing IO makes a political compromise as it accommodates some aspects of the new IO's governance approach in its own practices, policies and/or institutional structures.

In contrast to Admission, the existing IO is willing to accommodate features of the new IO, such as its policy focus, which paves the way for inter-institutional cooperation. Accommodation is classified as a behavioral IO response strategy because it elicits changes in the existing IO's policies, practices and/or institutional structures. Hence, it may showcase acts of IO reform and institutional adaptation to the new IO. IO reform is defined as “various intentional actions taken by governing bodies, on one or several occasions, to change the formal rules, procedures and mechanisms of the organizations over which they have authority” (Nay, 2011, p. 690).³¹ Hence, IO reforms mainly epitomize institutionalized IO changes that appear in formal IO documents, official speech acts, and an IO's formal policy-orientation.

The empirical peculiarity of Accommodation is that the existing IO makes relatively costly changes to the ways it functions and the political stance it advances. It engages in Accommodation as part of a strategy to solidify friendly relations with the new IO by conceding to the new IO's advantageous attributes and incorporating them into its own practices, policies and/or institutional structures. The depth by which existing focal IOs engage in cooperative and behavioral IO changes becomes apparent in the following two examples. In the first example, the IEA alters its policy scope and structures to incorporate renewable energies into its own institutional architecture. Whereas the IEA still remains loyal to its focus on promoting oil and fossil fuels as global energy sources, it nevertheless incorporates renewable energies as a new approach for securing global energy supplies. It is no coincidence that “in parallel to the creation of IRENA, the IEA began taking a greater interest in RE [renewable energies]” (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013, p. 11). In

³¹ To be exact, this is the definition of management reforms. Other types of IO reforms may include administrative reforms that may be driven by external demands and pay attention to the bureaucratic capacities (Knill, 2001). According to Olivier Nay (2011) IO reforms may also happen without necessarily changing internal practices (March & Olsen, 1989) or resisting external pressures. Extant research oftentimes explains IO reform based on preference divergencies between the IO and its member states using the principal-agent model (compare Hanrieder, 2015a; Nielson & Tierney, 2003). Prominent cases of IO reform for example consist of regulatory reforms to treat developing countries more fairly in the areas of international trade and intellectual property rights (Dreyling, 2019; Kur, 2011), procedural (vote) reforms in international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF to accommodate China's growing economic powers (Vestergaard & Wade, 2015), organizational management reforms in UNAIDS, other public administrative reforms across the UN system (Bauer, 2007; Nay, 2011) and even EU treaty reforms (Beach, 2004).

September 2008, one year before IRENA entered the global energy regime complex, the IEA created a new renewable energy division with nine full-time analysts (Van de Graaf, 2013a).

The second example epitomizes that one empirical sign for Accommodation is a change in the existing IO's political or normative orientation. For example, after WTO started to address intellectual property (IP) rights from an economic perspective, WIPO has filled the gaps in IP governance that are not covered by the WTO such as rapidly changing technologies (Watal, 2005). Furthermore, WIPO has even "restructured its norm development processes to enable it to respond expeditiously to new issues through the adoption of soft law instruments" (Dinwoodie & Dreyfuss, 2009, p. 1193). Evidently, WIPO has accommodated its overall outlook on IP rights protection in response to WTO addressing the global issue from a different perspective.

To summarize, the IO response strategy of Accommodation features substantive behavioral changes in the existing focal IO's policies, practices and/or institutional structures with the purpose of accommodating (part of) the new IO's governance approach and ultimately strengthening its focality in the regime complex.

2.6.3. Delegitimation

IO response strategy	Characteristics of IO response strategy
Delegitimation (demarcation, isolation)	The existing IO proclaims boundaries to strengthen its own focality as it demarcates its governance space.

Demarcating one's territory not only entails a strategic approach to strengthen one's standing within a community, but also contains the growth of further institutional competition (compare also Kranke, 2020). In the context of my dissertation research, it is possible that existing focal IOs seek to survive vis-à-vis a new IO by purposefully delegitimizing the relevance of this new institutional actor. Therefore, the central aim of Delegitimation is to undermine the new IO's legitimacy and to bolster its own. Delegitimation is classified as a competitive and rhetorical IO response strategy. It does not directly constrain the new IO's focality, but seeks to discredit its credibility as a focal actor in the regime complex. Hence, the existing focal IO sets boundary limitations on the new IO's governance abilities and simultaneously emphasizes – or demarcates – its own sphere of governance in the regime complex. Yet Delegitimation does not necessarily need

to end in inter-institutional conflict. It can also freeze inter-institutional relations in the sense that the existing IO seeks to isolate the new IO in the regime complex.

Several ways are conceivable in which the existing IO may draw clear distinctions to the new IO: The existing IO can attempt to discredit the new IO by referring to its lack of expertise relative to the existing IO's own vast experience and expertise acquired over time, it could delegitimize the new IO on grounds of lacking (non-)material resources, unrepresentative or economically weak member states, or discredit the new IO's technical expertise. These attempts have in common that they are directed at questioning the new IO's extant focality or its potential to establish itself as a focal actor in the regime complex.

The following example substantiates how changes in IO rhetoric can create increasingly competitive inter-institutional relations between the existing focal and new IOs. IWC's rhetoric strongly emphasizes environmental arguments. Given that IWC itself is institutionally deadlocked, it is unable to moderate its position on whaling. Instead, it strengthens its defense of whales orally. Its rhetoric changes to increasingly highlight environmental and moral concerns and more strongly defend IWC's position of zero-catch quotas. Alexander Gillespie (2002) observes that the IWC "has been suspicious of NAMMCO and reticent to establish any kind of working relationship with it" (p. 23). Furthermore, "the antiwhaling nations and groups involved in the IWC process have attempted to transform their side of the debate back into one of management expertise and utility by articulating why estimates of whale populations are not sufficient to justify a return to whaling" (Caron, 1995, p. 166). The IWC uses its longstanding expertise in the field of whale conservation to reproach NAMMCO's support for sustainable commercial whaling. Hence, the observed change in IWC rhetoric intends to discredit NAMMCO's governance approach. In this way, a change towards a more competitive IWC rhetoric likely puts the existing and new IO on a confrontative trajectory of inter-institutional relations.

To summarize, Delegitimation features a competitive and rhetorical response strategy which seeks to discredit or isolate a new institutional actor in the larger external environment. Thus, the main attribute of Delegitimation is that it questions the new IO's legitimacy and credibility as a potential focal actor in the regime complex.

2.6.4. Obstruction

IO response strategy	Characteristics of IO response strategy
Obstruction (repression, confinement)	The existing IO attempts to minimize the new IO's governance space. It questions the new IO's credibility, seeks to restrain its governance activities and seizes opportunities to take control of policy issues that are not covered by the new IO.

In regime complexes that lack formal hierarchies among IOs, “some organizations will compete to be the focal actor in a given policy domain, especially if new organizations threaten their role as the dominant actor” (Downie, 2022, p. 369). The recent rise in institutional proliferation exacerbates this trend. My research offers a principal conceptualization of what an existing IO's response strategy to such struggles over status may look like. In such situations I stipulate that the existing IO's fears over losing some of its focality stimulate vigorous response strategies to impair the new IO's potential role as a meaningful focal actor. When competition is especially fierce, the existing focal IO likely induces changes in its policies, practices or structures to confine the new IO's focality or hinder it from expanding.

Obstruction goes one step further than Delegation because the existing focal IO is willing to alter its own institutional confines in order to compromise the new IO's focality. Hence, the existing IO might alter its policy scope to take control over issues that are traditionally addressed by the new IO. Direct competition such as turf battles ensues. In another scenario, the existing IO seizes opportunities to expand its focality into policy areas which are not covered by the new IO. Overall, Obstruction features a competitive type of response strategy which has great potential to further stoke up inter-institutional contestation among the IOs involved.

A situation which fits the aforesaid criteria for the presence of Obstruction is the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) competitive and behavioral response strategy to the creation of ICANN in 1998. As the only IO that deals with the technical aspects of telecommunication and is anchored in international law, the ITU emphasizes its role as the focal actor in the internet governance regime complex through provocative and insistent response strategies. For example, following the ICANN/Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) meetings in Montreal in June 2003, ITU had strong reservations on the GAC recommendations and dissociated itself from ccNSO³² bylaws “because the proposed bylaws may be inconsistent with fundamental principles

³² ccNSO is an abbreviation for Country Code Names Supporting Organization.

such as national sovereignty, freedom of commercial actors, non-binding recommendations, and consensus decision-making” (Kleinwächter, 2004, p. 245). Furthermore, ITU did not participate in this ICANN/GAC meeting. ITU’s response strategy of Obstruction is anchored in the fear of losing its *de facto* monopoly governance control over international telecommunications to ICANN’s self-regulation and self-governance approach (Antonova, 2014). As the preceding example already indicated, inter-institutional competition between ITU and ICANN boiled up in the early 2000s. In 2003 the ITU’s rhetorical criticism of ICANN transformed into behavioral response strategies. First, ITU demarcated its focal strength and governance scope in the regime complex: “In the [ccTLD]³³ workshop [in March 2003], ITU offered its services to take over more responsibility in internet governance by presenting itself as ... *unique in being a partnership between governments and industry for information and communication technology*” (Kleinwächter, 2004, p. 243 emphasis in original). Then, the ITU acts to take over policy issues that were previously addressed by ICANN. It even kicked ICANN president Paul Twomey out of a meeting at ITU’s PrepCom3bis and PrepCom3bis+. The existing IO’s attempt to limit ICANN’s governance space is not constrained to political realms but also plays out in terms of physical altercations.

To summarize, Obstruction is conceptualized as a highly confrontative IO response strategy. Its distinguishing property is that it alters the existing IO’s own practices, policies or institutional structures, as well as directly targets the new IO’s governance approach to restrain the new IO’s contingent growth into a meaningful focal actor. Altogether, the four types of IO response strategies outlined above shape a new perspective on the distinct ways in which existing focal IOs handle institutional newcomers in the regime complex.

Overall, this chapter extricates four types of IO response strategies from the observed behavior of existing focal IOs following a new IO’s entry to the regime complex. I build a typology of IO response strategies along the dimensions of their competitiveness and rhetorical and behavioral modes. The IO response strategies, namely Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction, exhibit different observable forms of IO change as reflected answers to new IO entries to the regime complex. They establish the foundation for classifying observed IO behavior and for deducing more general trends of IO response strategies in subsequent stages of this dissertation project.

³³ ccTLD is an abbreviation for Country-Code-Top-Level-Domains.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework of IO response strategies

Having established that the types of IO response strategies can vary by their competitiveness and mode (see chapter 2), the question arises why an existing IO engages in one type of IO response strategy and not another. I hence return to the original empirical puzzle but now conjecture possible reasons when existing focal IOs respond by adapting to new IOs and when they stoke competition or even attempt to restrain the new IO altogether. To put it in more concrete terms, why does UNHCR for example engage in vast policy scope expansion in an effort to obstruct IOM's influence over refugee and migration matters, while WHO forges closer ties to WTO to ensure that its interests are represented in the global trade agenda? By all accounts, empirical investigations pertaining to how a new IO adapts to an existing focal IO only tell one part of the story (Overland & Reischl, 2018; Stephen, 2020; Zeitz, 2021). The other part of the story is told by existing IOs' response strategies which may lead to sustained changes in the greater institutional environment. Extant IR research which studies inter-institutional relations from the existing focal IO's perspective is the exception. However, in such rare studies that exist, the authors for example

point out that the coherence of regime complexes depends not only on the creation and design of new institutions, but also on how extant institutions react to newcomers (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1163).

My theory of IO bureaucracy feeds into a theoretical framework of IO response strategies. It recognizes IOs as supranational organs that are partially autonomous from their member states. Hence, IO bureaucracies enjoy enough leeway to engage in response strategies on their own terms. The subsequent theoretical framework is distinguishable from existing explanations because it features a relational approach and accounts for the substantive meanings that a new IO's entry may have for the existing IO's focality. As social scientific research objects, IO response strategies certainly cannot be reduced to single explanations such as policy area characteristics (Lipsy, 2017) or path dependencies (Mahoney & Thelen, 2010). As Robert Keohane (1984) articulates, “[f]ragments of political behavior become comprehensible when viewed as part of a larger mosaic” (p. 56). Hence, theory building is needed to begin understanding the meaning behind IO response strategies for the existing IO's survival as a focal actor in the regime complex.

As shown in chapter 1, it greatly matters whether existing focal IOs respond to new IOs in friendly or hostile ways – not only for the IOs themselves, but also for the prospects of inter-institutional relations. Given that the competitiveness of IO response strategies also impacts the general direction in which the regime complex develops, it is worth to first deduce a theoretical framework

of IO response strategies that particularly focuses on cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. As two cases in point, the OSCE's critique of the SCO has widened existing geopolitical splits in international security governance, and WIPO's welcoming reception of the WTO has produced synergistic interactions between international trade and intellectual property rights regimes (Zuo, 2017, p. 17). Hence, my focus on existing focal IOs' response strategies contributes a new and creative understanding of IO development which seamlessly integrates into existing research on inter-institutional interactions.

My main argument that stronger challenges to the existing IO's focality are met by more competitive IO response strategies is anchored in literatures of the institutional design of IOs, their developments and status concerns in international relations (Dijkstra, 2017; Larson & Shevchenko, 2010; Tallberg et al., 2014). As it would stretch beyond my empirical and analytical capacities to speculate about the existing IO's intentions behind the observed response strategies, I can only reason about the purpose of IO response strategies from an objective standpoint.³⁴ I hence adopt an external perspective for explaining observed variances in IO response strategies. In theory every focal IO possesses every IO response strategy option (to respond in terms of Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation or Obstruction) at any time during their life cycle. New IOs can be newly created (Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021) or enter the regime complex inadvertently as a new IO that was constituted to tackle a separate issue, now also addresses the global issue that forms the center of the regime complex. I further identify two key explanatory variables which relate new IO entries in the regime complex to the observed IO response strategies via the mechanism of status threat.

The next section outlines my main assumption that existing IOs are reluctant to cede their focality to other IOs in the regime complex. It places the existing IO's identity as a focal actor at the center of my theoretical explanation and gives meaning to IO response strategies based on an identity-based logic of action. Then, this chapter presents a theoretical framework of IO response strategies which is theoretically rooted in parts of regime analysis and institutionalist approaches. Building on the specified mechanism of status threat, the theoretical framework devises a theoretical link between the new IO's entry, the degree of status threat posed to the existing IO's focality and observed cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. The two key explanatory variables for the competitiveness of IO response strategies entail (i) the new IO's type of challenge to the existing IO's focality and (ii) institutional design similarities between the existing focal and new IO.

³⁴ As Jörg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratochwil (2009) also note, "The personal realm or private mind of others is ultimately inaccessible, and thus we always have to attribute motives and meaning" (p. 704).

The chapter concludes by outlining relevant scope conditions, alternative explanations and depicting an alternative theoretical approach for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies based on state aspirations.

3.1. Main assumption: Reluctance to give up focality

The main assumption which underpins the theoretical framework and upholds my explanations of IO response strategies stipulates that existing IOs are reluctant to give up focality. Focality awards the existing IO a position of *prima inter pares*. Since being first among equals awards IOs a privileged status that is also sought after by other IOs, existing IOs are keen to retain their focality. If the existing IO would not care about its focal position in the regime complex, there would be no need to react to new IOs; New IOs might just as well replace existing IOs. Yet reality demonstrates the contrary: Research has repeatedly shown that “the elimination of existing institutions is rare and often opposed by [...] IO bureaucrats with vested interests” (Pratt, 2018, p. 567). IOs clearly seek to survive and resist obsolescence (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Niskanen, 1971).

In essence, this section places the existing IO’s identity as a focal actor at the center of my theoretical explanation. The role of an existing IO’s status³⁵ in the regime complex is often disregarded by extant research, which mainly bases explanations on the similarities in institutional designs and institutional overlaps (e.g. Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021). In other words,

[c]ontemporary scholars [...] readily attribute an escalation of a conflict to an escalation of risks or to an increased interest in the contested material resources, instead of looking for additional incentives rooted in an actor’s identity needs (Wolf, 2011, pp. 132–133).

My main assumption specifies that once an IO attains a focal position, it retaliates against being replaced by a new IO as the main norm setter and resource provider in the regime complex. In any event, it is by no means a given that the new IO outright challenges the existing IO’s focality upon its entry to the regime complex. Though scenarios of IO replacement are theoretically possible (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Verdier, 2021), it is not empirically observed in my cases of new IO entries to the regime complex thus far. However, in cases of outright challenges to the existing IO’s focality, IO response strategies obtain a whole new meaning. In this scenario they come close to

³⁵ In international relations, status is defined as “standing or rank in a status community. Its three critical attributes - it is positional, perceptual, and social - combine to make any actor’s status position a function of the higher-order, collective beliefs of a given community of actors” (Renshon, 2017, p. 33).

functioning as a sort of survival strategy for the existing focal IO. Given that scenarios in which the existing IO willingly cedes its focality to the new IO are not very realistic, I approach each case with the assumption that the existing focal IO seeks to survive as a focal actor in the regime complex.

The identity-based logic of action helps to make sense of what at times seems like stoic or path-dependent IO behavior. For instance, focal actors succumb to the role expectations of setting normative governance standards, taking on a coordinative role which ensures that all relevant organizations work in a target-oriented fashion. They also provide the central forum for deliberations. This suggests on one hand that existing IOs are aware of being the central node for governing a global issue and, on the other hand, that they occupy a position which is also sought after by new IOs in the regime complex. When responding to external challenges that threaten the existing IO's focal status, some strategic considerations are integral for maintaining focality. The identity-based logic of action hence implies that an existing IO strategically assesses potential threats to its focality based on its own identity as a focal actor.

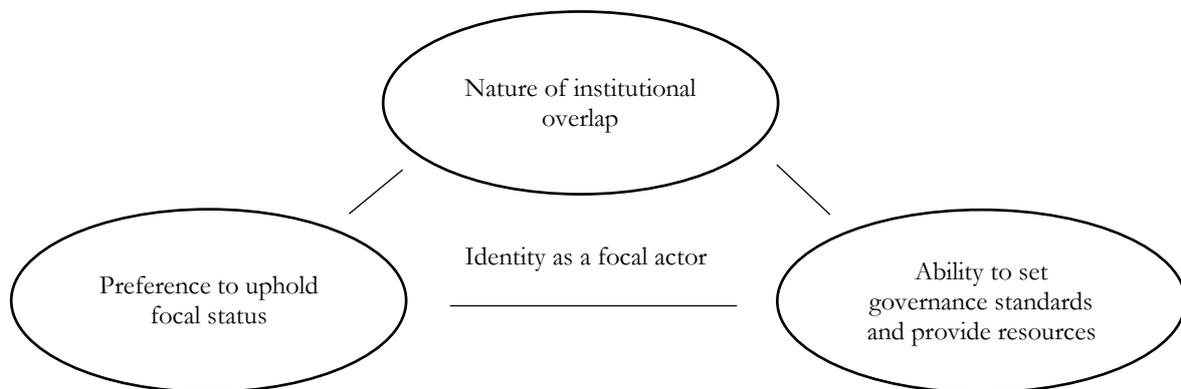


Figure 1: Identity-based logic of action

Figure 1 displays three main components which could potentially threaten the existing IO's identity as a focal actor and correspondingly hamper its ability to govern the respective global issue. According to the identity-based logic of action, changes in these three components are fundamental for triggering response strategies by existing focal IOs. They comprise the external circumstances (nature of institutional overlap), internal preferences (to uphold focal status) and the ability to fulfill the functions enabled by its focal position (to set governance standards and be the central resource provider). Together, these components give meaning to the existing IO's response strategies because they form the existing IO's identity as a focal actor. Therefore, the identity-based logic of

action helps to answer the question why we would expect existing focal IOs to respond to new IOs in the first place.

To summarize, this research is rooted in identity-based explanations of IO behavior. It emphasizes that the central driving force behind IO response strategies can be attributed to the existing IO's identity as a focal actor in the regime complex. Further, this identity-based logic of action constitutes a prerequisite for establishing the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, which is developed in chapter 3.2. below.

3.2. Building a theoretical framework

The theoretical framework provides plausible explanations for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. It is constructed around the notion that existing IOs seek to survive as focal actors in the regime complex and that IO response strategies are rooted in the existing IO's identity as a focal actor. However, to fully understand IO response strategies, it is essential to “assess the complex channels of interaction across different levels, their institutional design as well as the variety of resources exchanged” (Biermann & Koops, 2017, p. 4). The following sections suggest a theoretical framework which combines a focus on institutional design similarities and substantive challenges posed to the existing IO's focality. It thus offers a first, novel step into the previously covert theoretical world of IO response strategies.

3.2.1. Theoretical foundations

The theoretical framework combines regime theory with institutionalist approaches³⁶ as they most accurately describe my account of how IOs function.³⁷ Regime analysis perceives of IOs as single entities operating in a larger institutional environment – within a regime.³⁸ The most widely accepted definition by Stephen Krasner (1982) defines regimes “as sets of implicit or explicit

³⁶ For a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the ‘three new institutionalisms’ (historical institutionalism, sociological institutionalism and rational choice institutionalism) see Hall & Taylor (1996).

³⁷ An alternative theoretical approach comprises the principal-agent framework derived from microeconomic theory to explain the interrelations of member state and IO interests. While it has valuable theoretical qualities, the principal-agent model falls short of explaining how existing IOs respond autonomously to changes in their external environment.

³⁸ When different, separate regimes collectively address a common global issue, I also speak of regime complexity (Raustiala & Victor, 2004), which is further elaborated in chapter 1.1.2.

principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (p. 186). Examples include the international trade regime, the international regime for environmental protection or the maritime security regime. Elements that are used in the relatively broad definition of regimes – namely an actor's rational self-interest, structural power relations, social customs, behaviors, epistemological practices, and specialized knowledge – also determine the confines under which individual IOs respond to new IOs that address the same global issue. It is vital to be cognizant of the greater external context because what happens in one regime, for example in the international trade regime, might also affect the rules and expectations set in other regimes, such as the development regime. The strength of regime theory is that it encompasses different theoretical understandings of agent-structure relations and is a flexible approach that can be adjusted to different situations (Meiches & Hopkins, 2012). Regimes may have regulative effects (states accept and abide by certain rules such as those set out in international treaties) and constitutive effects (the general norms that are promoted by an IO) on state behavior (Kratochwil & Ruggie, 1986). Institutions and regimes will persist because states are interested in benefitting from cooperation rather than experiencing relative losses. A weakness of regime theory is that it does not look at what happens inside IOs (compare Abbott & Snidal, 1998). Thus, I complement regime theory with elements of the institutionalist approach to account for possible state influence on IO-IO interactions.

The institutionalist perspective enables a partial opening of the IO black box. By also considering what happens within the IO, I account for the role that member states play in stimulating IO response strategies. However, perceiving IOs solely as institutional structures or as puppets of member states would underestimate their abilities. Though IOs are foremost committed to their own survival as institutions and guard some degree of autonomy (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999; Keohane, 1988; Snidal, 1996), from an institutionalist perspective IOs are only capable of making strategic choices which are supported by their member states. After all, if member states stop supporting the IO in terms of financial or resource contributions, the IO dies. My research pays special attention *inter alia* to the balance between voting powers and financial contributions to the IO, while also considering rule flexibilities and power distributions among member states. As global issues become more complex, the institutionalist structures and functions of IOs also expand. Conversely, the way an IO is set up gives insights into how it acts (Barkin, 2006).

While the institutionalist approach is needed to account for the constraints posed by the IO's internal functioning, regime theory offers a complementary perspective as it places IO actions in a much broader perspective. These macro-perspectives are mutually compatible (Keohane, 2002)

and are integrated into one coherent theoretical approach for the purpose of this dissertation research.

3.2.2. A theoretical framework of IO response strategies

Changes in the external environment can both be “identity challenging *and* identity enhancing” for the incumbent (Kammerlander et al., 2018, p. 1125). Similarly, inter-institutional competition can be about mandates, resources and focality (Margulis, 2021). Does the new IO impede the existing IO’s governance abilities by establishing a counter-regime with conflicting rules and norms? Or does the new IO strengthen the existing IO’s focality by enhancing its resources? Depending on the context and situation, various kinds and degrees of uncertainty (such as large transaction and sovereignty costs, long time horizons, potential gains, a high degree of asymmetry among actors, large distributional differences) can catalyze competition among IOs that affect the existing IO’s own development and the evolvement of the institutional environment at large (Hofmann, 2011; Jupille et al., 2013, p. 50). Analytically, I examine in which areas the existing and new IOs reinforce each other’s governance efforts and in which areas the new IO diverts from the status quo.

The mechanism of status threat establishes a link between challenges to the existing IO’s focality and IO response strategies. I conceive of the mechanism as part of the “theoretical building blocks” (Leuridan, 2012, p. 397) which are assembled in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies. First and foremost the mechanism of status threat comprises a valuable analytical tool for establishing “generalizations about recurring processes” (Mayntz, 2009). It builds on the identity-based logic of action and identifies more overarching trends which help to make sense of observed behaviors by IOs that face very different bargaining contexts (Lipsy, 2017), geopolitical alignments (Clark, 2021; Van de Graaf, 2012b) and propensity for competition (Loescher, 2001; Zeitz, 2021) across issue areas. The mechanism further differs from the ensuing hypotheses, which are more precise as they specify the circumstances in which cooperative or competitive IO response strategies are more likely observable. According to the mechanism of status threat, IO response strategies are based on how a new IO’s entry affects the existing IO’s focal status in the regime complex. Moreover, the mechanism of status threat underpins the central premise of my novel theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

Following the mechanism of status threat, I contend that the existing IO engages in different types of IO response strategies depending on how the new IO touches upon the existing IO's focality. The framework concerns the level of IO-IO interactions. After all,

If IOs are not passive in the face of objectionable decisions by their member states [...], it is logical to expect that they are also not indifferent to objectionable decisions taken in other parts of the regime complex (Margulis, 2021, p. 875).

The theoretical framework of IO response strategies (in Figure 2) focuses on the degree of competition posed to the existing IO's focal status as the main explanation for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. First, a new IO enters the regime complex and addresses the same global issue as the existing focal IO. Then, the degree of focal competition is assessed by two central variables: 'The type of challenge'³⁹ posed to the existing IO's focality and institutional design similarities. While the challenge to the existing IO's focality focuses on its ability to fulfill the functions enabled by its focal position (to set governance standards and be the central resource provider), institutional design similarities assesses the new IO's conformity to the institutional status quo.

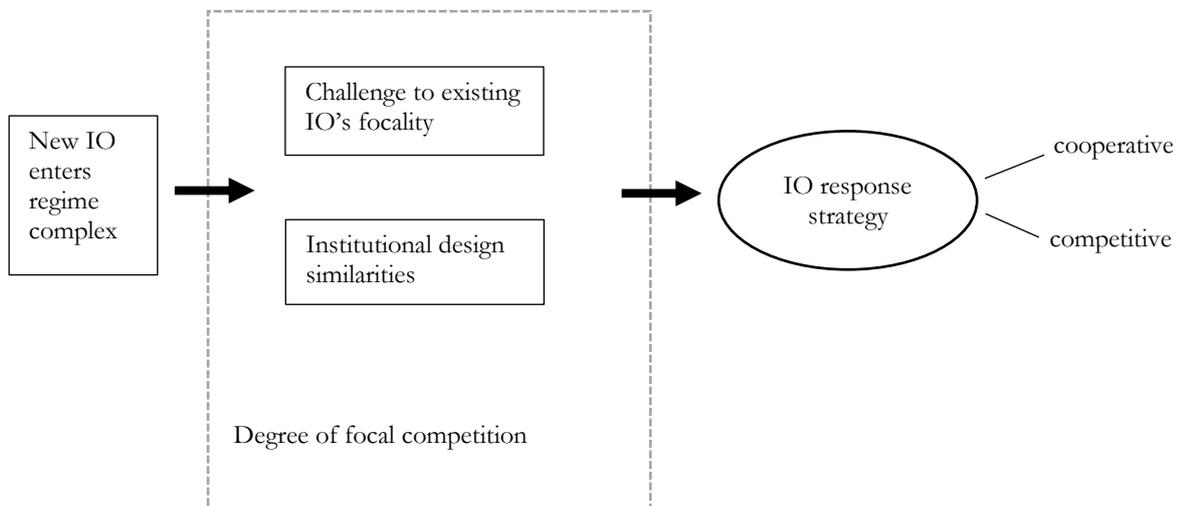


Figure 2: Theoretical framework of IO response strategies

I further explore each key variable for explaining IO response strategies and their manifestations in the sections below. Two main hypotheses are developed from the key explanatory variables that provide explanations for the observed competitiveness of IO response strategies. I therefore

³⁹ I use the term *challenge* simply because it comes closest to describing the new IO's potential to take over the existing IO's focal position in the regime complex. I do not suppose that every new IO automatically challenges the existing IO's focality in the regime complex.

contend that the new IO's entry to the regime complex, the degree of focal competition and the existing IO's response strategy can be allocated in a timely sequence. Chapter 5 later identifies the sufficient and necessary configurations of the two key variables that are relevant for the presence of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies.

By no means do I suppose that the theoretical framework of IO response strategies is all-encompassing. Rather, it simplifies reality and shines light on previously understudied dynamics between existing focal and new IOs. Irrespective of whether the new IO becomes a focal actor alongside the existing IO, a new IO's entry does not automatically lead to an existing IO's loss in focality. For instance, a specialized agency that is constructed to enhance the existing IO's governance effectiveness may pose no significant challenge to its focality – one example being the creation of the IMO, which has a “consultative character” and is responsible for supporting the UN in harmonizing international shipping legislation and drafting international treaties (Blanco-Bazán, 2004, pp. 261–262). Yet such cases are rare occurrences in my dissertation research. The following sections now elaborate on the key variables and their manifestations which incite different degrees of competition to the existing IO's focality.

3.2.3. Challenges to existing IO's focality

As the first key variable of my theoretical framework, challenges to the existing IO's focality which inhibit its abilities to set governance standards and be a central resource provider in the regime complex affect the competitiveness of IO response strategies. Challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality highlight the identity and status of existing focal IOs as normative standard setters in a regime complex. Challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality comprehend existing focal IOs as critical actors that cannot be excluded from addressing an international cooperation problem due to their vast possession of material resources which are required for governing the global issue (Barrett, 2007). Thus far, IO status has mostly been studied in the context of rising powers and great power competition (Duque, 2018; Larson & Shevchenko, 2010; Wohlforth et al., 2018; Wolf, 2011) and has rarely been applied to moral authorities and focal IOs. For instance, research on emerging powers argues that institutional changes come about when rising powers can credibly undermine the institution and make credible threats to this effect (Zangl et al., 2016). Similar trends are also observable in my empirical cases. For example, the IEA directly responds to the threat of IRENA's potential to replace it as a focal IO in the regime complex, WHO has forged closer ties with WTO to ensure that its interests are represented as WTO

becomes a central player in the distribution of medicines and ITU identifies itself as the main authority holder in internet governance. As these instances show, specific challenges to the existing IO's focality have repercussions for the type of observed IO response strategies.

New IOs which are capable of setting normative governance standards and possess substantial financial resources arguably have the greatest potential to become additional focal points in the regime complex. Given that status competition is most substantial among peer communities (Renshon, 2017), it is possible that a new IO simultaneously challenges the existing IO's normative framework and resource provision for governing a global issue as they are not mutually exclusive. The following paragraphs elucidate the plausible consequences of challenges posed to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality for the competitiveness of IO response strategies.

Challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality touch upon the core function of focal IOs to set the normative standards for governing a global issue. They indicate to what extent the new IO conforms to the existing IO's set of ideas or beliefs which are characteristic of its approach to solving the global issue at hand. They entail struggles over the normative fit between the existing and new IOs' policy orientation. They further shine light on the social acceptance of the existing IO's leadership as a norm setter in the regime complex. For example, does the new IO's policy orientation complement or challenge the existing IO's normative framework.⁴⁰

The existing IO's focality hinges on the social acceptance of its focal position by other actors in the regime complex (Duque, 2018).⁴¹ Depending on the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality, the existing IO's response strategy may be directed at ensuring norm maintenance or prevailing in norm struggles with the new IO. Accordingly, contestation of the existing IO's norm dimension of focality may have norm strengthening or norm weakening effects on the existing IO (Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013).⁴² Therefore, I contend that a new IO's recognition of the existing IO's normative framework feeds back to the existing IO's strength as a focal actor in the regime complex. It is conceivable that new IOs “may creatively redefine their relative status by (i) reevaluating the meaning of a negative characteristic, or (ii) finding a new dimension in which [they

⁴⁰ I conceive of a normative framework as a compilation of normative governance standards that are specified by an IO to govern a certain global issue.

⁴¹ Similar dynamics are captured by the concepts of liquid authority (Krisch, 2017) and other reflexive conceptualizations of authority and legitimacy (Zürn, 2017). Regime complexity offers “a situation in which a policy space is populated by more than one relevant actor but these actors acknowledge the superiority of one organization. In this scenario, an IO can still be focal because other actors in the field accept the governance features of the focal IO, aim to cooperate with it, and try to learn from the focal IO's expertise” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1166).

⁴² International norms literature is torn between a picture of norm stability and continual norm contestation, as well as features discussions of the normativity of norms in political theory (e.g. Jubb, 2019; Winston, 2018). However, this branch of norm research goes beyond the scope of the purposes of my dissertation.

are] superior” (Larson & Shevchenko, 2010, p. 191). In response, the existing focal IO can either accept the new IO’s modifications or disregard them.

On one hand new IOs can represent opportunities to enhance and expand the existing IO’s normative framework; New IOs may embody elongations of the existing IO’s focality as they adopt the same norms to govern the global issue. For example, Jonas Tallberg et al.’s (2017) research on norm adoption shows that new IOs likely accept the normative standards of existing IOs if they originate from within the same issue area (e.g. AIIB’s entry to the development finance regime complex). The more similar the new IO’s norms are to those of the extant normative framework, the more they strengthen the existing IO’s role as a norm setter in the regime complex. On the other hand, norm collisions can undermine the existing IO’s focality because they inhibit its role as a normative standard setter. The decisive feature is whether new IOs produce similar outcomes (Stephen, 2020), share similar understandings of the political, economic or cultural values that their policies promote (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999) and view the same political rights and obligations as legitimate (Ruggie, 1982, p. 380).

The compatibility between the existing and new IOs’ overarching policies and norms plays a decisive part for cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. If the policy scopes and preferences are largely similar between the existing and new IOs, “preference homogeneity diminished distributional issues and [makes] it comparatively easy to reach compromise” (Jupille et al., 2013, p. 68). Complementarities not only help to predict institutional stability (see Deeg, 2007), but also reinforce existing IO norms that are similar to its own. If the norms promoted by the existing and new IOs are compatible (in the sense that they do not contradict each other), the new IO is arguably more accepting of the existing IO as a focal actor. Moreover, a significant degree of institutional adaptation is to be expected among IOs with broad mandates that extend over several functions and issue areas (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020b). In consequence, the existing IO’s response strategy is likely cooperative.

A competitive IO response strategy such as Delegitimation or Obstruction may entail attempts by the existing IO to subsume the new IO through policy scope expansion. One example entails UNHCR’s vast policy scope expansion in response to the IOM’s divergent normative framework which limits humanitarian protection and features more of an economic approach to migration (Pécoud, 2020). Once the existing focal IO’s normative framework is contested by the new IO, the existing IO’s focality in the regime complex is weakened. In such situations the existing IO can attempt to maintain its focality in the regime complex by engaging in response strategies that

strengthen existing norms or adapt existing norms to those norms promoted by the new IO. For example, UNHCR sought to usurp IOM's approach to migration into its own normative framework in order to remain a key actor in global migration governance. Thus, the normative divergence between the existing and new IO should be one of the main determinants to explain the competitiveness of IO response strategies.

As challenges to the norm dimension of focality show, it is not guaranteed that focal IOs will always remain “uncontested leaders” (Abbott et al., 2015, p. 24) in the regime complex. By implication, a new IO that does not accept existent normative standards likely contests the existing IO's focality in the regime complex. If the new IO challenges the existing IO's normative framework, the existing IO should be more likely to respond competitively. Therefore, I contend that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality likely coincide with competitive IO response strategies.

Sub-hypothesis (Ha): Challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality coincide with competitive IO response strategies.

The existing IO's resource dimension of focality shifts the focus on IOs' material capacities. More specifically, it assesses the distribution of financial resources among the existing focal and new IOs. The resource dimension addresses a different, yet equally important aspect of focality: The provision of financial resources for governing a global issue. As Malte Brosig (2011) has observed,

an IO's importance increasingly depends on its ability to mobilise resources through interaction with other organisations with comparable problem-solving instruments, and with which it shares (or competes over) policy goals and values (p. 149).

By definition, existing focal IOs possess a large amount of resources, which are distributed asymmetrically across the regime complex. The comparatively large amounts of resources enable the focal IO to steer the overall development of the regime complex in its favor as other IOs are dependent on its material capabilities. Since member state resources are limited, existing and new IOs are prone to compete over scarce resources when their governance goals overlap. Hence, existing IOs need to maintain their relevance in the regime complex and continue to be worth member states' material support – otherwise the IO dies. Therefore, the resource dimension of focality features an important indicator for delineating when the existing IO's focality is undermined by the new IO. It thus comprises a crucial part of the key explanations for cooperative

and competitive IO response strategies shown in the theoretical framework (see Figure 2 above). IO response strategies are important in this regard because they set the initial tone of inter-institutional relations once a new IO has entered the regime complex. It is thinkable that the existing IO seeks to prevent the new IO from establishing itself as another focal IO and thus responds competitively.

If the new IO can provide a comparable amount of financial resources, it has the potential to become an additional focal IO in the regime complex and potentially weaken the existing IO's focal position. For example, the IOM's budget is only 1.8% of the size of UNHCR's budget at the time when IOM becomes part of the UN system (compare Appendix V). As such, IOM likely does not have the financial means to act as a main resource provider in the regime complex. In another example, WTO's budget amounts to a staggering 2.861% of WIPO's budget at the time of its entry to the regime complex of intellectual property rights in 1995 (compare Appendix V). Consequently, the comparison of budget sizes identifies the WTO as a much more prominent challenger of WIPO's focality compared to IOM's very limited capacities to pose a credible alternative to UNHCR's focal position – at least in terms of financial resource provision. Though I recognize that a large budget size is not the only prerequisite to replace the existing IO as a focal actor, the decisive point is that a new IO with a relatively large budget size has the capacities to pose a credible challenge to the existing IO's focality. Thus, this key explanatory variable accounts for the new IO's propensity to credibly challenge the existing IO's focality in terms of being a central resource provider in the regime complex. Yet given that most new IOs entering the regime complex presumably cannot directly compete with the existing focal IO's budget size, existing IOs might not regard them as credible competitors which could undermine their role as central resource providers in the regime complex. Hence, the potential of new IOs to establish a new focal point – at least from the perspective of resource provisions – is limited. In a more realistic scenario, new IOs which possess a large amount of resources rather support the existing IO's governance efforts by expanding the available resources. These conjectures lead to expect that challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality likely coincide with cooperative IO response strategies.

Sub-hypothesis (Hb): Challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality coincide with cooperative IO response strategies.

In summary, a closer look at the first key variable of the theoretical framework shows how the competitiveness of IO response strategies may coincide with different challenges posed to the existing IO's norm or resource dimensions of focality. In line with the mechanism of status threat,

sub-hypotheses Ha and Hb implicate that a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality arguably represents a higher level of status threat as compared to a challenge posed to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality.

3.2.4. Institutional design similarities

Institutional design similarities constitute a second key variable for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Most importantly it indicates the new IO's conformity to the institutional status quo: "While institutional creation may be a rare event, design choices remain of pivotal importance, particularly since institutions are strongly path dependent" (Dijkstra, 2017, p. 100). It is further proclaimed that "the coherence of regime complexes [in part] depends [on the] design of new institutions" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1163). Even so, my reflections on the implications of institutional design similarities deviate from conventional considerations of design compatibilities from state-centric perspectives (Koremenos et al., 2001; Tallberg et al., 2014). As shown by the theoretical framework, the competitiveness of IO response strategies is based on considerations to what extent the new IO threatens the existing IO's status as a focal actor in the regime complex. Prevailing perspectives likely recognize that it is wise to copy institutional structures because adopting time-tested structures can reduce costs and ensures that member states benefit accordingly. However, the novelty of my dissertation research comprises that the theory of IO bureaucracy is explained by the mechanism of status threat. In sticking to this identity-based research approach, I pose the question to what extent institutional design similarities amplify or imperil the existing IO's focality. Therefore, I assess the implications of institutional design similarities for the competitiveness of IO response strategies in reference to the degree of status threat which a new IO poses to the existing focal IO.

Only recently has increasing attention been paid to institutional design similarities as the object of study. For example, it has been shown that institutional design convergence is a common feature among overlapping IOs (Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021, p. 4). Institutional design similarities refer to institutional structures such as the presence of an IO secretariat, dispute settlement body and voting rules (see operationalization in chapter 4.3.3. for more details). This section now pays closer attention to two manifestations of institutional design similarities: Institutional distinction and institutional emulation.⁴³ I elaborate on each manifestation and their impacts on the

⁴³ I utilize the terms institutional distinction and institutional emulation because I consider the institutional structures which are specifically reproduced in the new IO, and not just similar. These terms more accurately describe the

competitiveness of IO response strategies below. I first focus on institutional distinction before moving on to related discussions concerning institutional emulation.

In situations of institutional distinction, a new IO's institutional structures predominantly differ from the existing IO's institutional structures. The new IO expresses its own way of functioning. By implication, the new IO's institutional design is not oriented along incumbent institutional structures of the existing focal IO. Instead, the new IO's institutional design is individually crafted to fit its organizational needs and to enhance its governance effectiveness. In this sense the new IO disentangles itself from the existing focal IO's institutional structures. If the new IO's institutional design is distinct from the existing focal IO, it is much more plausible that the new IO follows the ambition to just change specific structural features and overall respects the existing IO's focal position in the regime complex. It follows that institutional distinction facilitates cooperative dynamics between the existing focal and new IOs. Hence, I contend that institutional distinction paves the way for friendly inter-institutional interactions.

A significant example of institutional distinction is the creation of the CMI in 2000 which is set up to differ from IMF's funding regulations and voting rules. Moreover, CMI's lending model is distinctly free of rigid political conditionalities. It embodies the opposite of IMF's lending practice which "remains inextricably wedded to the hierarchical business model of conditional lending" and is based on joint decision-making processes administered by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) +3 member states⁴⁴ (Güven, 2017, p. 1165). Viewed from a broader regime perspective, the CMI customizes its institutional structures to establish a regional financial safety net that directly benefits ASEAN member states. From the start, CMI seeks to be its own organization that can function independent of the IMF and aides states which experience short-term liquidity problems (Loewen, 2014). CMI does not strive to become a focal organization. In turn, the IMF extends a helping hand to CMI, should CMI require more financial resources that are part of its credit line. As well, the IMF more readily acknowledges its own wrongdoings in handling the Asian financial crisis (West, 2017). In a second example of institutional distinction, IRENA's institutional design conspicuously contrasts the IEA's vertical decision-making structures as it exhibits highly decentralized decision-making and an inclusive membership (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013). IRENA's institutional structures hence reflect the vision which inspired its

duplication of institutional structures such as IO secretariats, as opposed to more encompassing terms such as institutional differences and similarities which also capture "the extent to which institutions in a regime complex vary in the functions they perform" (Henning & Pratt, 2020, p. 10).

⁴⁴ ASEAN member states, the People's Republic of China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

creation in the first place: to function as a standalone institution that operates independent of the existing focal IO, “sustain[s] an independent and emission-free supply of energy for mankind [and fulfills] a subsidiary function” (Scheer, 2001). The IEA responds by incorporating a focus on renewable energy sources in its own institutional structures by creating a new department for renewable energies. Together, the theoretical reflections and these empirical anecdotes initially support that institutional distinction induces little to no threat to the existing IO’s focal status in the regime complex. Therefore, if the new IO is institutionally distinct from the existing focal IO, I would expect cooperative IO response strategies to ensue by the existing focal IO.

Seeing that institutional design similarities may pose a potential status threat to the existing focal IO, institutional design similarities give new meaning to the existing IO’s response strategies. The preceding discussions on different manifestations of institutional design similarities and their effects on the competitiveness of IO response strategies lead to the following sub-hypothesis:

Sub-hypothesis (Hc): Institutional distinction coincides with cooperative IO response strategies.

Institutional emulation takes place if the same institutional structures are present in both the existing and new IO. At the IO-IO level of interaction institutional emulation may even reinforce contestation among the existing focal and new IO. Domain conflicts (Biermann & Koops, 2017, p. 7), also known as turf battles, as well as unnecessary (Esu & Sindico, 2016, p. 1) or inefficient (Kellerman, 2019, p. 107) emulation may ensue. This section outlines why an existing focal IO may recognize institutional emulation as a threat to its own focality. A new IO which copies the existing IO’s structures could herald possible IO replacement.⁴⁵ This assertion hinges on the assumption that if states would desire to make single changes to the existing IO’s structures and these were accepted by the incumbent, I would witness a change in the existing IO’s institutional structures. Instead, however, the new IO exhibits nearly the same institutional structures which are part of the existing focal IO. But what does this mean for the existing IO’s focality? One feasible reason is that the desire for different institutional structures does not lie at the core of the new IO’s existence. If it were truly about achieving institutional changes, the new IO would be prone to exhibit diverse institutional structures. Therefore, institutional emulation does not just express some dissatisfaction with single structural features of the existing IO, but signals that the creation of a

⁴⁵ IO replacement occurs when the successor organization “assumes all or part of [the existing IO’s] functions, assets, and liabilities” (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni & Verdier, 2021, p. 5).

new IO is necessary to achieve what could not be attained in the existing IO: a strive for more recognition and governance influence in the regime complex.

One prime example of institutional emulation is the AIIB's staggeringly similar institutional structures which mirror the centralization of the World Bank's decision-making structures and voting rules, as well as IO funding rules. At first sight, one clear motivation for AIIB's creation rests in China's previous dissatisfaction with inadequate adjustments of the World Bank's institutional structures. As such, "AIIB is essentially a copy of the World Bank [...] and is a response [to] China[s] lack of weight in the existing institutions" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1176; Lichtenstein, 2018). But what does this mean for the existing focal IO? From the incumbent perspective fears of IO replacement arise. Regarding the AIIB's larger role in the development finance regime complex and its counter-hegemonic potential, AIIB's institutional emulation sends the signal that this new IO is "working within the system and respecting its rules to enhance its position and authority" (Ikenberry & Lim, 2017, p. 11).

In another example of institutional emulation, NAMMCO's creation is *inter alia* initiated by "the problematic structure of the IWC [in which] the most troublesome problem with the IWC is its lack of enforcement capacities" due to institutional deadlock (Anable, 1993, p. 644). In this case NAMMCO has an institutional advantage because unlike IWC it does not face institutional deadlock. Given that NAMMCO's institutional structures exhibit a real advantage over IWC's operational capacities, NAMMCO could have the potential to rival IWC's focal position in the regime complex. Since the new IO is designed in reference to the institutional status quo, its similar institutional structure signals that it can govern the global issue just as well as the existing focal IO.

These examples exhibit reasoning why the existing IO might not be fond of new IOs that emulate their institutional structures. Whereas one might stipulate that new IOs just follow path dependencies and automatically take on the institutional structures of the existing IO (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1179), I nevertheless show that the presence of institutional emulation presents a valuable explanation for the existing focal IO's likely disposition towards competitive response strategies. Therefore, I contend that the prospects of IO replacement can substantially threaten an existing IO's focal status in the regime complex. Under such circumstances I expect the existing focal IO to respond competitively to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. In other words, I suppose that institutional emulation likely coincides with competitive IO response strategies.

Sub-hypothesis (Hd): Institutional emulation coincides with competitive IO response strategies.

In summary, both sub-hypotheses (Hc and Hd) give a general direction to the interactions between the two key explanatory variables of the theoretical framework and the observed competitiveness of IO response strategies. In line with the mechanism of status threat, they reveal different ways in which the new IO may enhance or impede the existing IO's status as a focal actor in the regime complex.

Of course, different combinations of these key variables are present in the empirical world. Subsequently, it is possible that institutional emulation subsists, but that the existing and new IOs nevertheless promote different normative frameworks for governing a global issue. One example entails the SCO's "rejection of Western democratic norms" and promotion of authoritarian norms to ensure security in Central Asia (Ambrosio, 2008, p. 1322), all the while the OSCE and SCO share the same types of decision-making structures, secretariats, dispute settlement bodies, IO funding rules and voting rules (see Appendix I). Reverse situations are also observable: The WTO and FAO are institutionally distinct but promote the same set of norms and possess financial budgets that are of relatively equal sizes.⁴⁶ In yet another scenario the IMO neither challenges the UN's normative framework nor financial resources for governing international maritime affairs. While I contend that the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality and institutional design similarities carry explanatory powers for the competitiveness of IO response strategies, both key variables are formed independently and do not determine each other.

Overall, the sub-hypotheses indicate that comparatively low levels of focal challenge ensue when the new IO challenges the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and exhibits institutional distinction. In these cases it is probable that cooperative IO response strategies are observed. On the flipside, high levels of focal challenge arise in situations when the existing IO's norm dimension of focality is challenged and the new IO emulates its institutional design. A closer look at each key variable of the theoretical framework thus substantiates my general argument that strong threats to the focal status of existing IOs provoke more competitive response strategies.

⁴⁶ This insight is based on my own calculations according to which the WTO's budget is 10.68% the size of the FAO budget (see Appendix V).

When combining the expectations formulated for either cooperative or competitive IO response strategies for each key variable of the theoretical framework, the first hypothesis is as follows:

First main hypothesis (H1): Challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality combined with institutional distinction exhibit a low status threat and coincide with cooperative IO response strategies.

Second main hypothesis (H2): Challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality combined with institutional emulation exhibit a high degree of status threat and coincide with competitive IO response strategies.

In summary, this section goes beyond establishing a theoretical framework based on a theory of IO bureaucracy and the mechanism of status threat. It further generates testable hypotheses that combine the expected effects for each manifestation of the key variables. They voice expectations for the competitiveness of IO response strategies according to the level of challenge which is arguably posed to the existing IO's focality.

3.2.5. Scope conditions

As my goal is to detect patterns of IO response strategies covering a large empirical scope, I only use few scope conditions. Scope conditions “constitute the bounds *within* which a specific causal relationship is expected to be hold” (Rohlfing, 2012, p. 144). A tradeoff exists between making precise claims based on strict scope conditions at the cost of reducing external validity, or only applying few scope conditions and obtaining high external validity. I limit the number of scope conditions as I seek to generalize the theoretical framework to a very broad set of cases.

The overall scope of this dissertation research is limited to situations in which an existing focal IO responds to a new IO entering the regime complex. In such situations the new IO addresses the same global issue as the respective existing focal IO. Overall, my theoretical mechanism and subsequent empirical findings only apply to instances involving the identified IO response strategies described in chapter 2.3. If an existing IO's actions do not relate to the new IO entering the regime complex, I do not consider them as IO response strategies. Moreover, the theoretical framework of IO response strategies only speaks to those cases in which the new IO at least has

the potential to take on a focal position in the regime complex.⁴⁷ For example, this research is confined to situations in which the existing IO expands its policy scope in response to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. The absence of existing IO expansion that can be traced to a new IO's entry to the regime complex would also fall within the scope of this dissertation research, while situations in which the regime complex itself expands without reference to a new IO lie outside this research scope.⁴⁸ IO response strategies that fall within the identified research scope can contribute valuable knowledge pertaining to how an IO survives as a focal actor and navigates institutional overlap amidst growing competition in the regime complex (see also Betts, 2013; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2021).

Cases in which a new IO's mandate precludes its role as a focal actor from inception also lie outside the scope covered by the theoretical framework of IO response strategies. For example, it is highly unlikely that the European Railway Agency (ERA) challenges the European Commission's focality in the issue area of EU transportation. From the outset the agency's tasks are confined to acting as the European authority under the 4th Railway Package which was in turn adopted by the European Parliament and Council (see also EU, 2018). These types of cases pertaining to specialized agencies mainly concern agencies which are established by the UN and EU. Given the substantial scope of issues which are covered by general purpose organizations such as the EU and UN, they naturally obtain focal positions in a number of regime complexes. It is highly unlikely that a specialized agency credibly challenges their focality. Hence, situations such as the European Commission's response to ERA fall outside of the scope of this dissertation research. Since the existing IO played a central role in the new IO's creation, its response strategies would likely miss my central premise that IO response strategies are geared towards ensuring an existing IO's status as a *prima inter pares* focal actor in the regime complex. Therefore, the theoretical framework of IO response strategies only speaks to cases in which the new IO exhibits some degree of focal competition to the existing IO's focality. Therefore, existing IOs' response strategies to new IOs are not random, but fall within a distinguished scope and follow distinct sequences that ultimately explain the observed variance in cooperative and competitive IO response strategies.

⁴⁷ See chapter 4.2. for more details on case selection.

⁴⁸ Additional reasons for IO expansion include IO expansion as a part of an IO's pathological development (having flexible mandates to adjust quickly to new challenges), expansion of IO membership due to global power shifts, expansion of informal governance arrangements within the regime complex and with the new IO in the form of orchestration and delegation (Abbott et al., 2015, 2016; Pratt, 2018), and expansion in response to an international crisis (Kreuder-Sonnen & Tantow, 2022).

3.2.6. Alternative explanations

Arguably a plethora of alternative explanations exist for the observed IO response strategies. It is conceivable that institutional density in the external environment (Lipsky, 2017) or other components that are not captured by my theoretical framework precipitate IO response strategies. Power ambitions, efficiency concerns and status aspirations are also plausible explanations for parallel institution building (Stephen, 2020). Additional explanations for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies might entail institutional densities in the external environment, the general purpose or task-specific orientation of the existing focal IO and the geopolitical alignment between leading IO member states.

Institutional density:

In an increasingly complex world, IOs are not only challenged by changing power distributions among member states, but also by institutional proliferation in their external environment; “a focus on the historical development of regime complexes reveals that both the design and behavior of new institutions are also shaped by extant institutions. Hence, the coherence of regime complexes cannot be understood without reference to the institutional environment” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1162). Especially new IOs’ entries to regime complexes impact focal IOs as they seek to survive as focal actors in the regime complex while the external environment evolves around them.

The question remains to what extent increased institutional density expands or inhibits the existing IO’s focality in the regime complex. Given that every IO response strategy is highly context-specific, existing focal IOs are arguably especially sensitive to new IOs entering the regime complex. Moreover, in his impressive research on institutional change Phillip Lipsky (2017) finds, one implication is “that a monopolistic institution may be vulnerable if an alternative can be proposed that replicates comparable functions along with some important, universal advantage lacking in the existing institution” (p. 286). Thus, the greater the institutional density, the less sensitive the existing IO should arguably be towards a new IO entering the regime complex— as opposed to a situation in which only few IOs are part of the regime complex.

General purpose or task-specific IOs:

By their very definition general purpose IOs feature a broad mandate and develop the ability to strongly shape preferences over time. In contrast task-specific IOs tend to vary less in their structures and undergo little institutional change over time (Lenz et al., 2014, p. 13). Given that

general purpose IOs address a broad number of issues, chances are high that a new IO addresses the same global issue. Nevertheless, flexible governance structures and a low specialization render it likely that the existing IO survives as a focal actor in the regime complex. Task-specific IOs have a strong expertise that is hard to compete with. However, they are also less flexible as they often contain rigid, specialized institutional structures. Accordingly, one would expect that an existing task-specific IO which is unreceptive to changes in its external environment would seek to set boundaries on its own sphere of competencies (Downie, 2022; Holzscheiter, 2017; Kranke, 2020). A general purpose IO that is more flexible and receptive to changes in the external environment may simply tolerate the new IO or even actively seek to establish some form of cooperation (Biermann et al., 2009; Gehring & Faude, 2014). Therefore, an alternative explanation for the competitiveness of IO response strategies might be rooted in the institutional makeup of the existing IO itself.

Geopolitical alliances of leading member states:

Power considerations are omnipresent in international institution building (Heinzel, 2021). While geopolitically⁴⁹ allied states are not immune to conflict, contemporary research underscores that “IOs are more likely to pool resources when their leading stakeholders are geopolitically aligned” (Clark, 2021, p. 1). Present research likewise contends that geopolitical affinities among IOs’ leading member states also present an underlying mechanism for design convergence (Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021). However, assessing the ramifications of geopolitical alliances and rivalries for inter-institutional coordination and conflict has just begun to be featured as a central topic in IR literature.

Since IOs cannot act completely independent of their member states, potential geopolitical rivalries offer a viable explanation for existing IOs’ response strategies. The primary example of a leading member state is the US which exerts institutional control over the IMF, WTO, World Bank and many other IOs (Drezner, 2007; Stone, 2011). Further, China controls the AIIB (Ella, 2021, p. 1024) and also has a large say in the SCO. Struggles over power, prestige and resources may push disadvantaged member states to resort to competition and conflict in order to relieve them of these frustrations (Larson & Shevchenko, 2010). Just as discrepancies in relative power lead to international conflict, I contend that discrepancies in geopolitical preferences between the leading member states of two IOs may also open a path of hostile interactions.

⁴⁹ In this research context my understanding of geopolitics is not limited to physical spaces or territories but represents alliances between states that share political and economic as well as geographical cordiality.

More specifically, IOs are especially prone to reflect the attitudes and interests of their most powerful members (Keohane & Nye, 1974). I stipulate that the existing IO responds differently if the new IO is mainly governed by geopolitical allies as opposed to geopolitical rivals. Furthermore, the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality does not rest on the absolute loss of power, but the relative power loss which the existing focal IO experiences when a new IO enters the regime complex: "By establishing a roughly symmetrical power distribution between challengers and defenders, [the great power creating the new IO] also prevents the latter from simply imposing their will on the former and from ignoring their demands" (Faude & Parizek, 2021, p. 8). As one consequence, equal status between the existing focal and new IOs may strengthen or stabilize the regime complex at large. In this sense a new IO led by allied or rival member states could expand or hamper the existing IO's prospects of surviving as a focal actor in the regime complex, respectively.

In summary, these contingencies showcase plausible alternative explanations for IO response strategies. Notwithstanding, I still suppose that the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality as well as institutional design similarities provide the most valid and convincing explanations for the cooperative IO response strategies of Accommodation and Admission, and the competitive IO response strategies of Delegitimation and Obstruction. However, these alternative explanations are not forgotten as they are operationalized in Appendix II, described in Appendix III and featured as part of the case descriptions in Appendix V.

3.3. Alternate theoretical approach: The aspiration of states

Whereas I have specified in chapter 3.2.2. that my main theoretical focus lies on explaining variance in IO response strategies at the IO-IO level of interaction, it is inevitable that "the preferences of IOs and states can and will diverge" (Downie, 2020, p. 2). Overall, my theory of IO bureaucracy pays particular attention to the threats posed to an existing IO's focality and theorizes how the IO will respond accordingly. However, this theoretical approach neglects alternate perspectives that also carry some theoretical relevance for explaining IO response strategies. Given that states play an especially prominent role in the creation of new IOs (compare Strand et al., 2016; Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014), state-based approaches should account for the motives of states to either protect or hamper the existing IO's focality following a new IO's entry to the regime complex. In this regard the aspirations of states may have substantive effects on the degree of focal competition

with the existing IO. This alternative viewpoint is worth exploring a bit further because it tells a part of the story that has hitherto been factored out of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies and will likely come to surface as relevant parts in the empirical analysis. Nonetheless, I wish to clarify that this theoretical exploration merely provides an alternative account to the theoretical framework. The theory of IO bureaucracy presented in chapter 3.2. remains the main explanation for IO response strategies in this dissertation research.⁵⁰

Institutional overlap shows how two IOs vary in terms of their mandates, resources and memberships (Gillespie, 2002; Hofmann, 2011, p. 103). Given that two defining elements of institutional overlap – namely overlapping mandates and resources – already form key variables of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, overlap in the existing focal and new IOs' memberships could provide a novel, state-centered rationale for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Further, it is theoretically pertinent whether institutional overlap is intentionally created by acts of CI or stems from an IO's inadvertent entry to a regime complex. Taking into account the presence of overlapping memberships and intended IO entries enhances the theoretical credibility and internal validity of my research.⁵¹ The remainder of this section elaborates on these two manifestations of an alternative, state-based theoretical approach.

Overlapping IO memberships:

Overlapping memberships⁵² establish new opportunities for states to engage in cross-institutional strategizing such as strategic inconsistency, forum shopping or regime shifting (Alter & Meunier, 2009). The most pertinent implication of overlapping IO memberships is a rise in forum shopping whereby states select an institutional forum that best serves their interests (Alter & Meunier, 2006; Busch, 2007; Pratt, 2020, p. 6).

A relatively large membership overlap could predispose inter-institutional competition between the existing focal and new IO. When states are members of multiple IOs, they have many reasons to defend their focal position, but also face many opportunities they can pursue (Boehmer et al., 2004). Given that states can pursue their governance goals in either the existing focal or new IO, their support arguably depends on which IO can best realize their goals and aspirations. As such,

⁵⁰ This state-based theoretical approach is also distinct from the alternative explanations outlined in chapter 3.2.6. as it entails much more theoretical depth; It outlines an alternative central focus of the theoretical framework instead of presenting alternative explanations that could substitute or enhance the key explanatory variables (the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality or institutional design similarities) which are key parts of the theoretical framework.

⁵¹ See Appendix IV for a descriptive overview of the state-based approach.

⁵² An IO membership refers to all formal IO member states.

a new IO's entry to the regime complex does not always represent a desired circumstance to focal IOs that risk losing member states to new IOs – and potentially resulting in membership withdrawals that could lead to a reduction in states' financial support for existing focal IOs. In drastic cases a new IO's entry could hence entail a risk of delegitimizing the existing focal IO (Tallberg & Zürn, 2019). As one implied outcome of large overlapping memberships, contentious inter-institutional dynamics among IOs may have destabilizing effects on the larger regime complex. Therefore, membership overlap entails significant explanatory potential for this alternative theoretical approach. While it is not featured as a central component of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, I still keep a close eye on membership overlaps because they could influence the competitiveness of the observed IO response strategies.

In contrast, a relatively small membership overlap speaks for the propensity of inter-institutional cooperation because states only have little opportunities to engage in forum shopping and cross-institutional strategizing between IOs. On one hand little membership overlap could indicate that the aspirations of the existing IO's member states cannot be met in the new IO. In more simple language, member states of the existing focal IO do not care much about the new IO's entry to the regime complex. On the other hand, states may remain with the existing IO as they also “have incentives to prevent inconsistent rules” (Pratt, 2018, p. 566) or inefficient duplication of efforts. Given that it is much easier for states to pursue their governance goals when the rule sets of different IOs do not contradict one another, it is rational for states to support the institutional status quo and so maintain a set of rules that are as coherent as possible. Therefore, a relatively small membership overlap at speaks to a scenario of strengthening the existing IO's focality.

In summary, a closer look at the implications of overlapping memberships yields that states are concerned with realizing their aspirations in the most efficient way possible and preventing inconsistent rules among IOs. At large, they are concerned with either protecting or diminishing the existing IO's focality in the regime complex. This theoretical perspective provides an alternative account to the theoretical framework of IO response strategies which centers around the existing IO's imminent loss of status.

Intended IO entries:

Whether the new IO purposefully enters the regime complex to undermine the existing IO's focality may have substantive effects on the competitiveness of the existing IO's response strategies. The processes of institutional creation and IO entry are largely driven by states, but do

not have to be – see also the study of Tana Johnson and Johannes Urpeläinen (2014). Extant research shows that intentionally created overlap also leads to inter-institutional coordination (Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Gehring & Faude, 2013).

Instances in which the new IO is purposefully created to contest the institutional status quo are also known as contested multilateralism (Morse & Keohane, 2014) and counter-institutionalization (Zürn, 2018a). While contested multilateralism is defined by challenges to specific “rules, practices, or missions of existing multilateral institutions” (Morse & Keohane, 2014, p. 385), CI captures the dissatisfaction with an international authority (Zürn, 2018a, p. 254). It thus comes closer to capturing a new IO’s potential dissatisfaction with the existing IO’s focality. It “refers to attempts to build and/or utilize other international institutions in order to change the institutional status quo – alternative institutions are brought into play, new ones are created, coalitions are formalized, and existing institutions are contested” (Zürn, 2018a, p. 255). I hence capture acts of CI as opposed to contested multilateralism in my dissertation research. It stands to reason that instances of CI likely lead to competitive IO response strategies because the new IO’s entry to the regime complex is ultimately driven by states’ dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo.

Yet not all instances of institutional creation are necessarily instances of CI and contend the existing IO’s focality. One exception might be the intentional entry of specialized agencies that have been created by the existing focal IO (such as a specialized agency of the European Union (EU) or UN). Overall, the situation looks different for cases which are not clear instances of CI. For all non-CI cases, additional contextual information is needed to explain an existing focal IO’s cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. Therefore, the intention of new IO entries to the regime complex should be accounted for in the empirical analysis. It ensures that the explanation for cooperative or competitive IO response strategies presented in the theoretical framework are not in fact driven by the new IO’s (un)intentional entry to the regime complex.

In summary, this alternative theoretical approach shines a new light on the possible impact that the aspirations of states could have on the competitiveness of an existing focal IO’s response strategies. Since the aspirations of states to either support or diminish an existing IO’s focality really depend on the situation and context under which a new IO enters a regime complex – and to what extent states were involved in it – a much more precise investigation of state aspirations is needed to assess the validity of this alternative theoretical approach. While this dissertation focuses on IO-IO interactions, member states should not be entirely erased from explanations how the existing IO positions itself in response to a new IO’s entry to the regime complex.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Operationalization

The aim of a meaningful research design is to set up the research in a way that answers the research question why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times in adversarial ways as reliable and veritable as possible. After having defined new IO entries (in chapter 1), created a typology of IO response strategies (in chapter 2) and developed a theoretical framework for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies (in chapter 3), I now focus on the methodology, case selection, operationalization and data sources of the phenomena that are of central importance to this research endeavor in general, and the theoretical framework in particular.

4.1. Methodology

I set up a y-centered research design that seeks to identify what circumstances lead to the IO response strategies of Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction. While the theoretical starting point of this research is a new IO's entry to the regime complex, the analytical starting point is the existing focal IO's first response to the new IO because existing IOs have the possibility to prepare pertinent response strategies even before the new IO becomes operational (compare chapter 2.3.). The focus on IO response strategies as the unit of analysis further grants insights into how single IOs respond to a new IO as a potential focal competitor in the regime complex. Recall that focal IOs are conceptualized as critical actors that cannot be excluded from addressing an international cooperation problem (see chapter 1.1.1.). They either possess some vital capabilities for addressing the global issue or their exclusion may produce such high negative externalities to the cooperating states that they simply cannot afford to exclude them in addressing the global issue (Barrett, 2007; Rabitz, 2018).

Since answering my research question requires a simultaneously broad and detailed understanding of the variance in IO response strategies, the qualitative methodology is best suited for this dissertation research.⁵³ It covers a variety of approaches, a relatively low number of cases and seeks to attain an in-depth comprehension of the object under study (King et al., 1994, p. 4). In this dissertation project I utilize a combination of qualitative methods to establish a valid and holistic

⁵³ The tradeoff between studying a breadth of cases (akin to quantitative research methods) or conducting in-depth case studies (as in qualitative research methods) is very prominent in debates over social science research methods (Gerring, 2012; Goertz & Mahoney, 2012; King et al., 1994; Mahoney, 2010; Taylor, 2005).

account of the circumstances under which existing focal IOs engage in certain response strategies. The first part of the empirical analysis (in chapter 5) features a mixture of descriptive insights and QCA analysis. Following a descriptive overview of IO response strategies, I further extend current knowledge on inter-institutional relations featured in the Interface Conflicts 1.0 Dataset (Zürn et al., 2021) to detect sets of necessary and sufficient conditions that lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies using QCA analysis. The method of QCA makes logical sense of a medium number of cases (between 10 and 50 cases). As regards content, QCA is most meaningful because it emphasizes equifinality. In other words it indicates that “different (combinations of) a small number of factors can be associated with the same outcome; or in causal terms, that we often expect to find different (sets of) causes giving rise to the same effect” (Grofman & Schneider, 2009, p. 666). Therefore, I cannot exclude the possibility that other combinations of conditions may lead to the same outcome. In effect monocausality is not an objective of the Boolean logic of thinking. As Charles C. Ragin (2008) points out, s

Case-oriented researchers, however, are not so enamored of parsimony and prefer causal explanations that resonate with what is known about the cases themselves. [...] The search for causally relevant commonalities shared by a set of cases with the same outcome is often the very first analytic move in case-oriented inquiry (pp. 148-149).

The second part of the empirical analysis (in chapter 6) entails the comparative case study method of structured, focused comparison. This method is structured because each case is oriented around finding answers to specific questions that reflect the research objective, and accordingly focused because it narrows in on specific aspects of the cases (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 67). The aim of each case is to find out what the new IO’s motivation is for entering the regime complex and how the mode of IO response strategies impact an existing IO’s survival as a focal actor in the regime complex. The case studies complement QCA findings which are reliant on the key explanatory variables featured in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies and mainly focus on the first dimension of IO response strategies – their competitiveness. The second part of the empirical analysis is supplementary because it enables a more flexible research approach that is also open to discovering new explanatory factors. An additional commonality across cases, which is specific to this case study analysis, is that each case features new IO entries based on counter-institutionalization. Overall, the second part of the empirical analysis provides a more profound understanding of the context in which specific types of IO response strategies are observed (each case represents one type of IO response strategy). Therefore, both parts of the empirical analysis complement each other and allow to capture features such as co-existence as part of case study

analysis (compare Panke & Stapel, 2021b). They yield an encompassing account of the conditions that explain different types of IO response strategies.

This dissertation research entails the deductive mode of inference. Deduction is defined as “drawing logical consequences from premises” (Yu, 1994, p. 18). Hence, I logically deduce an actor’s behavior according to premises that are already known. Deductive reasoning is especially valuable in the formation of new concepts, themes and categories to build a general explanatory framework. I rely on insights from established literature that comes closest to the concept of IO response strategies such as the literature on IO creation and inter-institutional relations (e.g. Alter & Meunier, 2009; Jupille et al., 2013). I draw on this IR literature to orient myself theoretically and then move into the empirical realm to fully comprehend the observed IO response strategies.

The unit of analysis comprises the formal response strategies of existing focal IOs. Analytically speaking, a focus on existing focal IOs’ response strategies ensures that the object of interest is homogenous across all cases. From a theoretical perspective, “formal rules and norms make for stronger focal points and generate greater path-dependent effects than their informal counterparts” (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020b, p. 5). In accordance, my research is designed to capture the formal response strategies of existing focal IOs because they generate effects which impact the external environment beyond their own confines. Since I assume that existing IOs are reluctant to give up focality (compare chapter 3.1.), IO response strategies build the foundation for discerning observable trends in existing IOs’ attempts to survive as focal actors across different external circumstances and issue areas.

Possible pitfalls and alternative methodologies:

One intricacy that arises in the generation of social scientific knowledge rests on the ways in which the researcher understands and explains the social world. For instance, biases may potentially skew the empirical results. Bias may emanate from small sample sizes, a lack of heterogeneity among the respective empirical cases and limited temporal variation in key parameters. I minimize these biases by ensuring an appropriate sample size and ample variety in the surrounding conditions. My sample is almost double the size of conventional sample sizes (e.g. Betts, 2013; Downie, 2020), features heterogeneous conditions because the sample stretches across 11 regime complexes and features a temporal variation of new IOs entering regime complexes between 1948 and 2016 (see Appendix V).

Next to the researcher's cognitive limitations, I acknowledge further shortcomings of my research design such as missing counterfactuals and possible alternative methodologies. A first grave pitfall would be to attribute a wrong motive or meaning to an observed IO response strategy.⁵⁴ One way of evading wrongful inferences is to engage in counterfactual reasoning. Counterfactual reasoning helps to avoid the misattribution of IO motives by showing that the general argument either sustains or loses its convincement against conceivable alternative motives. The best conjecture of a counterfactual situation is to assume that the existing IO would continue its path-dependent development in the absence of a new IO entering the regime complex. However, given the myriad of diverse institutional and contextual factors that continuously impact an IO's development it is infeasible to establish a convincing counterfactual situation and compare the existing IO's response strategy to how the existing IO would have developed in the absence of the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

Another pitfall might entail adopting the positivity bias. Since I am the same person who institutes the concept of IO response strategies and then probes their existence in the empirical world, I reckon that my interpretation of empirical observations is prone to exhibit a bias towards identifying something as an IO response strategy just because I seek to show the empirical validity of my new concept. Being knowledgeable of this bias comprises a first step towards minimizing flawed knowledge generation.

Considering the broad range of available qualitative approaches, the historical approach or expert interviews could pose as viable alternatives to the chosen QCA analysis and comparative case studies. A first suggestion is to pursue a historical analysis of IO response strategies. The advantage of historical approaches is that they can reconstruct the formation of IO response strategies based on gradual IO transformations (Hanrieder, 2015a; Mahoney, 2000; Mahoney & Thelen, 2010). Yet such reconstructions can only be achieved through meticulous attention to detail. While this methodological approach could enable pioneering insights into the circumstances surrounding IO response strategies, it is very time and resource intensive and would hence limit the sample to very few cases. Furthermore, it is not guaranteed that the necessary information is contained in the archival material, especially concerning more contemporary cases. Hence, the historical approach is not well suited for making conclusive comparisons across a considerable number of cases. I infer

⁵⁴ I already establish operationalization criteria to minimize discrepancies between the researcher's observations and interpretations. Compare chapter 2.3. for the operationalization of IO response strategies and chapter 4.3. for the operationalization of the key variables featured in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

that QCA analysis presents a more suited qualitative methodology for detecting general trends in cooperative and competitive IO response strategies across multiple cases and issue areas.

The second suggestion is to conduct expert interviews. Expert interviews would have the benefit of enabling profound insights into the IO 'black box'. They would adopt an internal perspective for explaining IO response strategies and possibly reveal new details on the rationale for IO behavior. However, given that my theory on IO bureaucracy focuses on the IO-IO level of interactions, expert interviews would mismatch my research objective of explaining IO response strategies from an external perspective. Additional limitations are finding the right interview partner. Given that IO response strategies are not explicitly determined by a single department or person, it is difficult to identify responsible stakeholders. Since IO response strategies are not a topic that is openly discussed in a general assembly or specialized working groups, they are likely concluded off records and behind closed doors. Though these qualitative methodologies would pose great alternatives in theory, they face considerable limitations in respect to cross-case analysis and the availability of information sources. I examine the conditions leading up to IO response strategies using QCA analysis and comparative case studies because they enable an external perspective and allow to attain my research objective. They combine macro- and micro-levels of analysis which focus on how the existing focal IO develops as part of a larger regime complex. They further assess developments impelled by the IO itself including changes in its internal structures. More specifically, "the combination of a systematic or macro perspective with a case-oriented approach is particularly suited for rigorous analysis of the [...] effects of specific incidents of institutional interaction" (Oberthür & Stokke, 2011, p. 43). The main advantage of examining IO response strategies using QCA methodology and comparative case studies is that it allows to capture the profundity of IO response strategies while still reserving room for the inspection of more general trends and the development of meaningful explanations for IO response strategies.

In summary, the qualitative methodology and deductive research design is most effective for investigating existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IO entries in the regime complex. Moreover, the combination of QCA analysis and comparative case studies is designed to make a strong empirical contribution. I still leave room for reflections on the intersubjective nature of social phenomena and the act of knowledge generation itself.

4.2. Case selection

One core strength of my dissertation is that the empirical analysis not only identifies different configurations of conditions which lead to existing focal IOs' response strategies, but that this empirical analysis spans well beyond the confines of a single issue area. The selected cases represent existing focal IOs' response strategies in various regime complexes. They range *inter alia* from international maritime governance, international trade and global migration to the regime complex for food security, global energy governance and development finance.⁵⁵

The universe of cases for this dissertation research encompasses every situation in which an existing focal IO responds to a new IO's entry to the regime complex. Thus, each case must feature (i) an existing IO which provides a focal point in a regime complex, and (ii) a new IO's entry to the regime complex. A new IO's entry can entail the creation of a new IO or happen inadvertently as a new IO that was constituted to tackle a separate issue, now also addresses the global issue that forms the center of the regime complex. Instead of building a completely new dataset,⁵⁶ I augment existing datasets which feature a relational approach to IO interactions. I further avoid selecting cases on the dependent variable as this may bias results and has a high potential of leading to faulty answers (Geddes, 1990, p. 149).

Existing datasets increasingly focus on the population of IOs in the international system (Pevehouse et al., 2020), IO independence from member states, institutional designs and policy competencies (Haftel, 2013; Haftel & Thompson, 2006; Koremenos, 2016; Panke et al., 2020), as well as IO authority, performance and informality (Hooghe et al., 2017b; Lall, 2017; Vabulas & Snidal, 2021; Zürn et al., 2021). However, these datasets predominantly focus on single IO features. Other datasets come closer to my dissertation research as they feature the causes, nature and consequences of institutional overlap: They capture the impact of institutional overlap on institutional design similarities (Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021), examine institutional deference as a way of managing jurisdictional overlap (Pratt, 2018) and capture the overall extent of complexity in global governance (Haftel & Lenz, 2021). From the outset I set aside datasets which focus on regional organizations and informal intergovernmental organizations (e.g. Panke & Stapel, 2018; Vabulas & Snidal, 2021).⁵⁷ Three datasets that resemble the objectives of my dissertation

⁵⁵ See Appendix V for a detailed overview of the selected cases.

⁵⁶ The construction of a novel dataset which entails information on all IO response strategies to a new IO's entry to the regime complex clearly exceeds the time and resource constraints of this dissertation research.

⁵⁷ Furthermore, Tyler Pratt (2018) captures institutional deference which constitutes just one particular way of managing institutional overlap. Similarly, Hooghe et al. (2017a) establish a measure of IO authority, which still neglects the role of institutional overlap and refrains from viewing IO behavior in relation to each other.

research are shown in Table 3 below. They feature institutional overlap, focus on IOs and present implications for how single IOs behave amid deepening regime complexity.

Dataset	Cases	Contribution
Haftel, Y., & Lenz, T. (2021). Measuring Institutional Overlap in Global Governance	76 most authoritative intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) since the Second World War	To assess the growth of institutional overlap, which is driven by an interaction between membership and policy scope expansion
Reinsberg, B., & Westerwinter, O. (2021). Fragmentation or Convergence? Institutional Overlap in Global Governance and the Design of Intergovernmental Organizations.	Institutional design and governance functions of 534 IGOs	To show that overlap among IOs strongly correlates with institutional design similarities
Zürn et al. (2021). Interface Conflicts 1.0 Dataset.	78 interface conflicts (a type of norm collision between actors)	To determine how IOs manage a special type of norm collision (interface conflicts)

Table 3: Overview of datasets featuring a relational approach to studying IOs

I choose the IC Dataset (Zürn et al., 2021) as the foundation for my empirical analysis of IO response strategies because it specifically focuses on how actors handle positional differences with respect to international norms promoted by international authorities. This focus on the normative relations between IOs is essential to my conception of focal IOs which express their focality by setting the normative standards for governing a global issue. The IC Dataset distinguishes itself from other datasets because it conveys pertinent information of how actors manage regime complexity (Fuß et al., 2021). Considering the options shown in Table 3, the IC Dataset most closely represents the phenomenon of IO response strategies. Therefore, I select the cases for my empirical analysis from a population of 78 attempts of managing interface conflicts.

I select cases from the IC Dataset by following the purposeful sampling strategy. Purposeful sampling “is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources” (Palinkas et al., 2015, p. 534; Patton, 2002). Hence, I ensure that certain conditions are included in all cases and the sample is informationally representative (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 250): The existing IO occupies a focal position in the regime complex, a new IO enters the regime complex and each case features IO-IO interactions at the horizontal level. This selection process reduces selection bias because it

gathers cases from the IC Dataset, the majority of which have been selected based on what comes closest to resembling a random sampling strategy (Fuß et al., 2021, pp. 11, 15).⁵⁸ To circumvent different biases inherent in existing datasets (such as a possible bias towards norm collisions which are the unit of analysis in the IC Dataset) I supplement existing data on my variables of interest with relevant self-collected data. For example, I add a measure for membership overlap that captures the share of new IO members which overlap with the existing IO's membership at the time of the new IO's entry to the regime complex.

The selected sample of cases is displayed in Table 4 below. It features 12 cases which are derived from the IC Dataset and cover 11 issue areas (Zürn et al., 2021). Albeit a medium-N sample constrains the generalizability of empirical findings, the sample is nonetheless representative of the wider array of global issues and regime complexes.⁵⁹ Though inspired by the IC Dataset,⁶⁰ the selected cases are independent, represent diverse global issues and IOs in the international system and exceed the customary sample size of two or three cases in prevailing comparative research designs (e.g. Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Fioretos & Heldt, 2019; Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2015).

Some general observations are already apparent across cases. In some cases, the new IO contends for the most suitable governance approach. In this regard IRENA promotes renewable energies that are not expressly part of IEA's focus on oil and fossil fuels for securing global energy supplies, the IOM advances a management-based approach to migration that contrasts extant humanitarian approaches promoted by UNHCR, and the SCO's authoritarian understanding of international security starkly contrasts with OSCE's democratic approach. In other cases, new IO entries of the AIIB, NAMMCO and CMI draw attention to more regional needs. While the AIIB and CMI specifically focus on infrastructure development and currency swap arrangements in Asia, NAMMCO seeks to give way to commercial whaling activities in the North Atlantic Ocean. Their governance focus is much narrower than those of the World Bank, IMF and IWC as the existing focal IOs, respectively. In yet another set of cases existing focal and new IOs interact due to

⁵⁸ For more detailed information of the research project *Overlapping Spheres of Authority and Interface Conflicts in the Global Order* (OSAIC), see <https://www.osaic.eu>.

⁵⁹ I have identified a total of 14 regime complexes based on secondary sources: refugee regime complex, international maritime regime complex (including international whaling regime complex), global energy regime complex, global environmental regime complex, development finance regime complex, regime complex for food security, international security regime complex, internet governance regime complex, global health regime complex, human rights regime complex, international regime complex for the Arctic, maritime piracy regime complex, regime complex for plant genetic resources, global trade and intellectual property rights regime complex.

⁶⁰ The World Bank-AIIB and IMF-CMI cases are not directly evident in the IC Dataset. I found these cases while conducting research as an expert coder of the IC Dataset. Since both cases lack an interface conflict, they were not included in the IC Dataset but are still highly relevant for research on IO response strategies.

Existing focal IO	New IO	Global issue	IO response strategy
World Bank	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	Development finance	Admission (Offering co-financed development projects, acknowledges AIIB)
International Energy Agency (IEA)	International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)	Global energy provision	Accommodation (New department on renewable energy, IEA systematically underestimates wind power potential)
UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Global refugee and migration movements	Obstruction (policy scope expansion to draw a clear distinction to IOM)
International Whaling Commission (IWC)	North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)	International whaling	Delegitimation (Rhetoric more strongly emphasizes environmental arguments that support anti-commercial whaling positions)
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	World Trade Organization (WTO)	Global food security	Admission (Offering technical support, trade liberalization more prominent in FAO discourse)
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)	Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)	International security	Delegitimation (OSCE emphasizes state sovereignty)
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)	WTO	Intellectual property rights	Accommodation (WIPO restructures norm development to support issues not covered by WTO such as rapidly changing technologies)
UN	International Maritime Organization (IMO)	International maritime governance	Obstruction (Maritime powers pressure IMO to remain a technical organization)
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI)	Development finance	Admission (IMF acknowledges negative impacts of its programs for developing countries)
World Health Organization (WHO)	WTO	International health, international trade	Admission (WHO has forged closer ties to WTO to ensure that its interests are represented in the global trade agenda)
International Labor Organization (ILO)	WTO	International labor rights	Accommodation (ILO incorporates the significance of core labor standards in its operations – as expressed by the ILO Social Declaration)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)	Internet governance	Obstruction (ITU criticizes ICANN for being hypocritical and increasingly presents itself as the main authority holder in internet governance)

Table 4: Overview of 12 selected cases

institutional proliferation and the growing complexity of global issues. Such encounters stem from increasing complexities in the global trade of food supplies (FAO-WTO), the growing relevance

of intellectual property rights in global trade (WIPO-WTO), the global trade in medicines (WHO-WTO), growing labor standards in international trade (ILO-WTO) and the regulation of domain names in global internet governance (ITU-ICANN). It is remarkable that nearly all cases feature new IOs that have the potential to take up a focal position in the regime complex. By setting the initial tone for the trajectories of inter-institutional relations, IO response strategies further enable a deeper understanding of the ways in which existing focal IOs manage the presence of new IOs that compete with the overall governance approach, adopt a constricted governance focus or enter the regime complex due to the increasing complexity of global issues.

But what are some of the main reasons for excluding the remaining 66 cases contained in the IC Dataset from my sample of cases? A first substantive reason is that the IC Dataset also includes informal institutions and single member states as the main actors. Hence, they are not subject to the same assumptions about IO behavior (compare chapters 2 and 3). Examples include cases in which normative standards for governing climate change are set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.⁶¹

A second category of cases that are excluded from the sample feature new IOs that are specialized agencies (with one exception). It is improbable that an existing IO, which has played a key part in establishing a novel specialized agency, conceives of this new IO as a challenge to its own focality. Though specialized agencies are legally, organizationally and financially autonomous, their purpose is to provide expertise and support the existing IO's governance effectiveness in a certain issue area. As such, specialized agencies likely enhance, rather than challenge, the existing IO's focality. Indeed, an existing IO's close involvement in the creation of new IOs can substantially enhance its own power to fix meanings and articulate relevant actors for addressing a global issue (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 710). Therefore, new IOs such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) are not included in my sample of cases. The only exception is the case of the UN's response strategy to the IMO. The IMO was created out of dissatisfaction with the UN's deficient focus on maritime safety issues, but both IOs soon clashed over the permissible amount of CO2 emissions from ships. The IMO poses a special case as it moved away from being a purely technical organization towards acquiring more political powers. The IMO's entry to the regime complex has evidently created substantial contention with the existing focal IO (Blanco-Bazán, 2004). Consequently, the UN's response strategy to IMO is quite meaningful as it renders new insights into the development of regime complexes.

⁶¹ Compare cases RESPONSES_23-25 of the IC Dataset.

A third, related category of excluded cases consists of existing general purpose IOs that are omnipresent in regime complexes. After all, specialized agencies such as ICAO tend to rely on deference to large, general purpose organizations, such as the UN, to achieve their governance objectives (Pratt, 2018, p. 575). As this relation already represents a “cooperative bargain between IO member states over the acceptance of regulatory authority” (Pratt, 2018, p. 579), it is highly unlikely that the new IO challenges the existing IO’s focality. The same logic also applies to other encompassing general purpose IOs such as the EU. Therefore, the cases shown in Table 4 mainly encompass task-specific organizations.

Whereas the selected cases enable to distinguish trends that span across cases, the generalizability of my empirical analysis should be treated with caution. Despite covering a wide range of cases in my sample, the sample itself is selected on an existent dataset. Given that the IC Dataset already presents a subgroup of the entire population of cases, it cannot be certain that the results of this dissertation research also apply for cases in all other regime complexes and issue areas. This critical reflection on the generalizability of my empirical findings is not to say that the cases are not generalizable at all. Rather, it should caution the reader to carefully consider the implications when interpreting these results in a broader range of empirical cases.

In summary, I select 12 cases based on the IC Dataset to fulfill the objectives of my dissertation research. These cases present the most appropriate data for examining why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways, and other times in more adversarial ways. The cases are not only independent of each other, but further portray a wide range of issue areas, different dynamics between existing focal and new IOs and cover a time period of 68 years. They are selected based on reliable criteria and pave the way for obtaining novel insights into inter-institutional relations and IO response strategies.

4.3. Operationalization

The following sections reveal how I empirically capture the key components of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies (see chapter 3.2.). The operationalization of IO response strategies has already been outlined by the identification criteria in chapter 2.3. The identification of IO response strategies has already been detailed at the beginning of this dissertation because they constitute the main objects of study. Chapter 2.3. not only develops a definition of IO response strategies, but already identifies criteria for their empirical identification (on pages 30-31

to be exact). As central components of my theoretical framework, the following sections specify the operationalization of IO focality, Institutional design similarities and two types of challenge to the existing IO's focality.

4.3.1. IO focality

Within regime complexes focal IOs have a structuring function and more than one focal IO can exist at the same time (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019).⁶² An IO's focality "defines the extent to which IOs are the single and uncontested focal actor in an international policy space" (Abbott et al., 2015, p. 24). A focal IO sets the institutional status quo in a densely institutionalized environment and functions as the default institutional alternative to new IOs entering the regime complex (Abbott & Faude, 2020; Jupille et al., 2013). Some IOs fulfill more of a leadership role compared to others. For example, the World Bank is recognized as the formal leader of the international development finance regime complex (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019). By comparison the same cannot be said about the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the Inter-American Development Bank. But how can I systematically capture such apparent differences in IO focality? I contend that an existing IO's focality can be captured through its roles as a norm setter and central resource provider in the regime complex. These expressions of IO focality can be captured by any one – or combination of – the empirical features presented below.

A first expression of IO focality features the existing IO's moral authority in the regime complex. Moral authorities claim to be upholding universal values, issue moral imperatives and act in the interest of the international community (Babb & Chorev, 2016; Barnett & Finnemore, 2004). The existing focal IO's role as a norm setter in the regime complex is operationalized in the following ways:

- An IO's focal position is (sometimes implicitly) contained in its formal-legal mandates (as is the case for the World Bank (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019)), or
- Other IOs in the regime complex recognize the existing IO's continual role as a focal actor because it is the first IO to address a global issue (for example the IWC in the realms of

⁶² For example, Tyler Pratt (2018) identifies different prominent focal points based on patterns of deference. In addition, "[e]ven personal characteristics of IGO leaders may contribute to focality" (Abbott et al., 2015, p. 24). Conversely, some scholars argue that the era of the focal IO is already over because the institutional environment has become increasingly fragmented (see Fioretos & Heldt, 2019).

international whaling (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014, p. 815)) and so establishes path dependence, or

- The existing IO possesses such large expertise that other IOs simply cannot compete with its special competencies (as is the case of IRENA in the renewable energy regime complex (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 170)).

A second expression of an existing IO's focality is its role as a central provider of material resources for governing a global issue. Focal IOs are conceptualized as critical actors that either possess some vital capabilities for addressing the global issue, or their exclusion may produce such high negative externalities to the cooperating states that they simply cannot afford to exclude them in governing the global issue (Barrett, 2007; Rabitz, 2018). The asymmetrical distribution of resources in the existing IO's favor make actor coalitions depend on focal IOs for cooperation (Snidal, 1985). For example, the "broader scope of lending, accompanied by rapid growth in financial resources and personnel, further empowered the [World Bank ...] and thus increased its focality" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1170).

- IO focality is operationalized by the asymmetric distribution of material resources in the IO's favor. I follow Barrett (2007) in that the focal IO provides goods that are both non-excludable and non-rivalrous, as well as (non-)excludable club goods for the realization of pareto superior solutions to an international cooperation problem.

In summary, I distinguish between two empirical expressions of IO focality which are assessed in relation to the other actors in the regime complex. The first expression is empirically captured by the existing IO's role as normative standard setter for governing the global issue, which is widely recognized by other actors in the regime complex. A second expression of IO focality pertains to the existing IO's possession of vast material resources for governing the global issue in the regime complex.

4.3.2. Challenges to existing IO's focality

The theoretical framework specifies challenges to the existing IO's focality as one of the key variables for explaining the competitiveness of IO response strategies. Challenges to the existing

IO's focality are empirically assessed by challenges posed to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality, respectively.

Norm dimension of focality:

Empirically, the existing IO's norm dimension of focality is challenged when the new IO questions the existing focal IO's normative framework and/or governance standards for a global issue. The normative framework is operationalized by all norms and rules that are part of formal IO documents (e.g. formal IO mandates and policy documents). For example, IOM's promotion of a management-based approach to governing global migration movements poses a challenge to UNHCR's norm dimension of focality because it directly contests its humanitarian approach for handling global refugee and migration movements. The similarities in governance norms between the existing focal and new IOs are based on a content analysis of formal IO documents such as IO mandates and other policy documents.

Resource dimension of focality:

I operationalize the resource dimension of focality by the financial contributions of IO member states at the time of the new IO's entry to the regime complex. Unlike other indicators for an IO's material resources, the information on relative budget sizes is publicly available and directly comparable across IOs. Hence, it offers a reliable indicator for assessing how (a)symmetrically IOs' disposable resources are distributed among the existing and new IOs. My operationalization entails that a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality is present if the new IO's total budget is at least 10% of the size of the existing focal IO's total budget. Since the proportional budget sizes are assessed for the year of the new IO's entry to the regime complex, having a budget which amounts to 10% of the existing focal IO's total budget is very large considering that a new IO may have just been created at the time it enters the regime complex.

In summary, the norm and resource dimensions of focality entail challenges to the existing IO's normative framework and its role as a central resource provider in the regime complex, respectively. While the former is assessed in terms of the coherence of the existing focal and new IOs' normative frameworks, the latter is assessed in terms of their relative budget sizes.

4.3.3. Institutional design similarities

Institutional design similarities comprise the resemblances of an existing focal and new IO's institutional structures. Yet sharing a single common feature with the existing IO's institutional design does not suffice to classify a new IO's institutional structure as institutional emulation. Institutional design similarities are empirically assessed using five criteria: the centralization of decision-making structures, the presence of an IO secretariat, the presence of formal dispute settlement bodies, similarities in IO funding rules, and the similarities in voting rules:

- *Centralization of decision-making structures:* This criterium assesses the main decision-making bodies (e.g. decisions being reached in the general assembly or in executive committees) and whether decisions are legally binding.
- *IO secretariat:* This category assesses the presence or absence of an IO secretariat. The IO secretariat makes up the organization's executive body. An IO secretariat is present when an IO body exists which is tasked with steering the overall direction of the IO's development and is thus central to its operations. The IO secretariat is absent when these requirements are not fulfilled.
- *Dispute settlement body:* The existence of a formal dispute settlement body. Examples include the well-known dispute settlement body of the WTO.
- *IO funding:* The specification of IO funding rules that determine member states' financial contributions (e.g. the allocation of quotas or voluntary contributions).
- *Voting rules:* The procedure of how central decisions are made. For example, whether formal decisions are reached by consensus, by majority rule or by two-thirds majority.

The manifestation of institutional design similarities are assessed by a total of five criteria outlined above. I observe institutional emulation when at least three out of the five criteria match between the existing focal and new IO. Institutional distinction is observed when less than three of these five criteria match between the existing focal and new IO.

In summary, institutional design similarities reflect the congruence of the new IO's decision-making procedures, presence of an IO secretariat and dispute settlement body, as well as

regulations on IO funding and voting rules with the existing focal IO. Depending on the number of these institutional similarities, either institutional emulation or institutional distinction transpires.

4.4. Data sources

This dissertation research particularly focuses on a highly political endeavor of handling situations in which a new IO enters the regime complex under different institutional constraints and across different issue areas. Since existing IOs respond to new IOs in various ways, it is highly unlikely that single indicators could capture IO response strategies and their surrounding environment in a large-N fashion. Therefore, qualitative data sources are much more suitable for studying the meaning behind existing focal IOs' response strategies to a new IO's entry to the regime complex.

The empirical analysis of IO response strategies is based on medium-N data featuring 12 IO response strategies. It uniquely combines my knowledge obtained as an expert coder of the Interface Conflicts 1.0 Dataset (IC Dataset) with extant IR research on related topics and relevant information obtained directly from the IOs themselves. At its core, the QCA analysis identifies the sufficient and necessary conditions under which the key explanatory variables of the theoretical framework – namely institutional design similarities and the type of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality – lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Therefore, the empirical analysis requires detailed information on each relevant component which is present in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

The data sources which help to decipher the presence of IO response strategies and manifestations of the key explanatory variables in the theoretical framework are as follows:

- *IO response strategies*: Relevant information on IO response strategies is found in both secondary and primary data sources. As secondary sources existing research provides a good initial starting point for more targeted and deeper research on the respective IO response strategy. Primary sources such as speeches of IO officials confirm and/or offer more specific details into actor behaviors and IO response strategies. The collected information is then evaluated according to the definitions of Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction (compare chapter 2).
- *Type of challenge to existing IO's norm dimension of focality*: Primary sources offer the most valid information on the existing IO's normative standards for governing a global issue. Information on IOs' overall vision, mission and the general governance approaches is

gathered from a variety of international policy documents, IO mandates, press releases and other material provided on official IO websites.

- *Challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality:* I gather information on an IO's budget size from the IO's annual financial report. For greater comparability, I convert all budget sizes into US dollars.⁶³ The new IO's relative budget size compared to the existing IO's budget is based on my own calculations.⁶⁴
- *Institutional distinction and emulation:* Information on the centralization of decision-making, IO funding and voting rules as well as the presence of an IO secretariat or formal dispute settlement body is obtained directly from information of the IO itself, as can be found on IO websites.

Last but not least, I combine this publicly available information with additional secondary sources to embed IO response strategies into their greater contexts. For example, contextual information such as the level of institutional density is gained from academic literature describing the respective regime complex. Yet my data sources also feature secondary literature that is based on expert interviews (e.g. Clark, 2021; Kellerman, 2019; Kranke, 2022).

In summary, this chapter has shown how qualitative methodologies, a deductive approach and pragmatic operationalization of key concepts combine to answer my research question why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways. The research is designed to identify the configurations of conditions which lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies using QCA analysis. Then, comparative case studies enable an in-depth investigation into the mode of IO response strategies and how existing IOs survive as focal actors in the regime complex. I select 12 cases based on the IC Dataset and assess the meaningfulness of possible explanations using primary and secondary data sources. Whereas the operationalization criteria for IO response strategies are already outlined in chapter 2.3., this chapter has operationalized the key variables of the theoretical framework. Though each key variable is individually operationalized, its explanatory potential can only be assessed when it is regarded in relation to the respective new IO.

⁶³ I use this currency converter tool: <https://fxtop.com/en/historical-currency-converter.php?A=4732000&C1=CHF&C2=USD&DD=01&MM=01&YYYY=1993&B=1&P=&I=1&btnOK=Go%21>.

⁶⁴ To make such calculations, I use this percentage calculation tool: <https://www.blitzresults.com/en/percentage-calculator/>.

Chapter 5: Empirical analysis of IO response strategies

The main contribution of this dissertation is to provide a first empirical account of IO response strategies. It brings me one step closer to explaining the presence of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In a first attempt to bridge this gap in extant research, the QCA analysis untangles the combinations of sufficient and necessary conditions which lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In essence it shines light on existing IOs' concrete efforts to maintain their focal roles as governance standard setters and as the main resource providers in the regime complex.

This chapter first proceeds with a descriptive overview of the variance in Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction that is observed in the medium-N sample. Secondly, I conduct a QCA analysis to identify the configurations of conditions which lead to the observed outcomes. The common units of analysis – namely IO response strategies – ensure comparability across the 12 selected cases. Third, I further examine the explanatory powers of the alternative explanations and the alternative state-based approach identified in chapters 3.2.6. and 3.3., respectively.

5.1. Descriptive overview of IO response strategies

This section offers a first empirical account of how competitively existing focal IOs indeed respond to new IOs. It shows whether the four types of IO response strategies derived from the literature on inter-institutional relations and IO development (Aggarwal, 1998; Downie, 2022; Rowan, 2021) are commonly utilized by existing IOs for ensuring their survival as focal actors in the regime complex. Assuming that IO response strategies are observable whenever a new IO's entry to the regime complex threatens an existing IO's identity as a focal actor (compare mechanism of status threat in chapter 3.2.2.), the description of IO response strategies reveals precisely how existing IOs seek to survive as focal actors in the regime complex. This information lays the groundwork for subsequent investigations into possible correlations between the degree of focal competition among existing and new IOs, and the competitiveness of IO response strategies. First, I summarize the observed shares of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies in the sampled cases. Then, I provide a descriptive overview of the frequency by which Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction appear in the real world. The purpose of this descriptive overview

is to apprehend general trends in the competitiveness of IO response strategies that span across diverse cases.

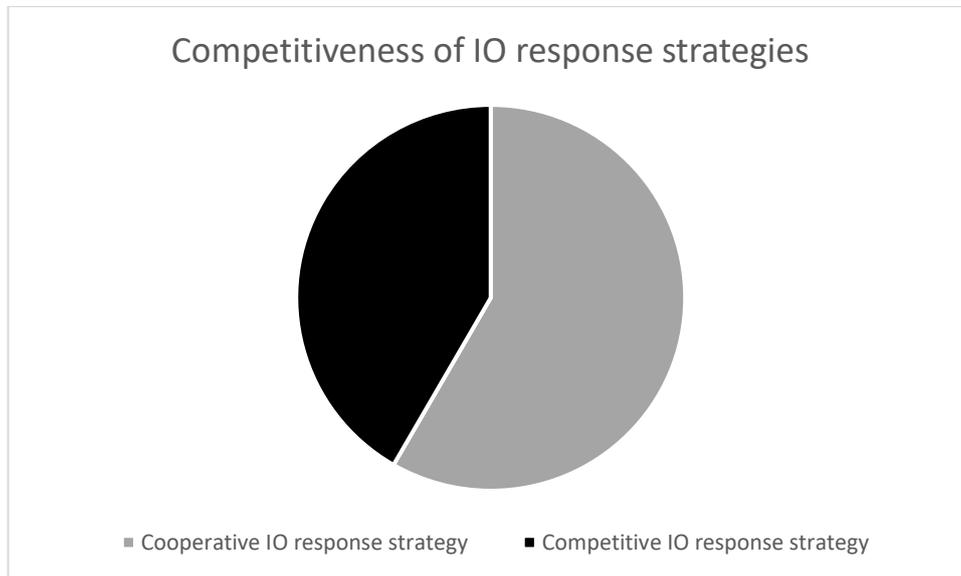


Figure 3: Observed shares of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies

(Source: own data)

As shown in Figure 3, cooperative IO response strategies are in total more frequently observed than competitive IO response strategies. Accommodation and Admission comprise 58.4% of all observed IO response strategies while Delegitimation and Obstruction comprise 41.6% of the observed IO response strategies. This finding supports extant research in which a “clear overall preponderance of co-operative over non-cooperative conflict management” is also observed (Fuß et al., 2021, p. 19). Moreover, contemporary research stipulates that focal IOs profit from path-dependent developments of regime complexes and possess an inherent interest to cooperate and potentially orchestrate the new IO “to minimize uncertainty by promoting similarity and coherence” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1163). The prevalence of cooperative IO response strategies supports these findings. Hence, the preliminary evidence posits that existing focal IOs are inclined to cooperate with new IOs that enter the regime complex.

Taking a closer look at the frequency of single types of IO response strategies in Table 5 below, the four types of IO response strategies are rather evenly distributed across a variety of different IOs and regime complexes. The most frequently observed IO response strategy, Admission, occurs in 33% of the sampled cases. Given their even distribution, it becomes all the more interesting to determine the paths which lead to each response strategy. For instance, do the cooperative and competitive IO response strategies mainly map onto two paths or do several different paths lead

IO response strategy	Frequency of IO response strategy	Cases (existing IO – new IO)
Admission	observed four times	World Bank – AIIB case FAO – WTO case IMF – CMI case WHO – WTO case
Accommodation	observed three times	IEA – IRENA case WIPO – WTO case ILO – WTO case
Delegitimation	observed two times	IWC – NAMMCO case OSCE – SCO case
Obstruction	observed three times	UNHCR – IOM case UN – IMO case ITU – ICANN case

Table 5: Observed frequencies of IO response strategies

to either cooperative or competitive IO response strategies? While the theoretical framework of IO response strategies and the QCA analysis combine to delineate these distinct paths, some initial correlations can already be inferred from the observed frequencies of IO response strategies displayed in Table 5.

At the risk of overemphasizing correlations between certain environmental characteristics and the competitiveness of IO response strategies, it is highly interesting that the highest frequency of cooperative IO response strategies occurs in the context of international trade matters: Four out of seven cooperative IO response strategies are observed following the WTO's entry to the regime complex (see Table 5 above). Concerning the international trade environment in general, "The global trade regime complex became so synergetic that it evolved into an international regime of its own right" (Orsini et al., 2013, p. 32). In fact, most IOs largely follow the WTO's liberal trade policies (see also Bronckers, 2001). Hence, these observations point to a possible correlation between the overarching coherence in the international trade regime and the presence of cooperative IO response strategies. Similarly, other external environments which feature cooperative IO response strategies demonstrate more general transformations across IOs. One example entails the general development of the global energy regime complex which develops away from fuel-based energy sources towards renewable energy sources. In this case it can be argued that the IEA responds to IRENA's entry by openly embracing these changes in its surroundings (Colgan, 2009; Downie, 2020). Albeit these observations do not preclude the absence of inter-

institutional contestation, the descriptive overview indicates that cooperative IO response strategies largely appear in the context of ostensibly coherent institutional environments.

In contrast competitive IO response strategies span cases that appear in the regime complexes of global refugee governance, internet governance, international whaling and international security (compare Table 5). It is noteworthy that these regime complexes are predominantly characterized as “competitive environment[s]” (Betts, 2013, p. 74), with “conflicting definitions, expectations, and experiences” (Antonova, 2014, p. 121), “deep ideological divisions” (Schiffman, 2004, p. 374) and “competing ideas, norms and values [which lead to] a complete polarization between [IO] members” (Lewis, 2012, p. 1219). Though it would be too presumptuous to determine an existing correlation, a disposition can be observed that competitive IO response strategies mainly appear in contested institutional environments.

In summary, the descriptive overview of IO response strategies already shows that new insights can be gained from the inter-institutional interactions between existing and new IOs. According to these first empirical observations, existing focal IOs are generally inclined to respond to new IOs in cooperative ways. Further, the coherence of the institutional environment possibly affects – or even correlates with – the existing IO’s engagement in cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. Hence, the descriptive overview offers a promising start for explaining the observed competitiveness of IO response strategies.

5.2. Observed paths to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies

Just as an existing IO’s response strategy is inspired by a combination of factors, it evidently makes little sense to reduce the explanation for an existing IO’s response strategy to a single explanatory factor. Such parsimonious explanations would risk oversimplification. What’s more, a new IO is prone to contest several parts of an existing IO. A prominent example is IRENA’s contestation of IEA’s global energy provisions. Germany not only voiced its dissatisfaction with the IEA’s ways of ensuring global energy security by promoting oil and fossil fuels, but also with its exclusive membership, hierarchical structure and unwillingness to modernize its policies to fit with the developments and times of renewable energies (Van de Graaf, 2012b, 2013a). This begs the question in what ways the observed IO response strategies can be linked with (combinations of) challenges posed to the existing IO’s focality. And what role do institutional design similarities play in forming cooperative or competitive IO response strategies? The ambition of my empirical

analysis is to explain which configurations of relevant conditions lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies.

In chapter 3 I have identified that challenges to the existing IO's focality and institutional design similarities form the key theoretical components for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Seeing that my sample covers 12 cases across 11 issue areas, it is highly suitable for the method of QCA. The QCA analysis further allows to deduce necessary and sufficient conditions based on formal logic (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012b, p. 104). Necessary conditions "must be present for a certain outcome to occur", and a condition is sufficient "if by itself it can produce a certain outcome" (Ragin, 1987, p. 99). The logical minimization process of Boolean algebra then ascertains the most parsimonious solution(s) for a certain outcome. When two Boolean expressions share the same outcome, but differ in only one causal condition, this condition can be dropped and the two expressions are combined to one Boolean expression (Ragin, 1987, p. 93).

Given that my empirical analysis centers around categorical variables, I use a crisp set which is specifically designed to handle binary measures. A condition is coded as 0 when it is absent, and as 1 when it is present (see Appendix I for a detailed overview of the coding of institutional design similarities). QCA analysis allows to collate my theoretical expectations with empirical realities. QCA analysis thus allows to test for my main hypotheses that (i) challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality combined with institutional distinction coincide with cooperative IO response strategies (H1) and (ii) that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality combined with institutional emulation coincide with competitive IO response strategies (H2).

The following empirical analysis moves beyond qualitative investigations into the characteristics and consequences of institutional overlap because it particularly focuses on the conditions which shape cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In this sense, QCA offers a constructive tool to learn how the mechanism of status threat plays out amid growing regime complexity.

5.2.1. Paths to cooperative IO response strategies

In this section I analyze which logical combinations of conditions lead to cooperative IO response strategies based on QCA methodology. Given that set relations are asymmetric, "insights on the causal role of a condition are of only limited use for the causal role of its absence, and the

explanation of the occurrence of an outcome does not necessarily help us much in explaining its non-occurrence” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012a, p. 81). The presence and absence of the outcome must be analyzed separately. One cannot simply say that the reverse (absence or presence) of the conditions leading to cooperative IO response strategies automatically lead to competitive IO response strategies. There may be qualitatively different implications for the absence of a condition (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012b, p. 112). For instance, the absence of institutional emulation could also imply the presence of mimetic isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), institutional embeddedness or indeed institutional distinction. Hence, analyses of the configurations of sufficient and necessary conditions are conducted separately for each outcome.

I present two truth tables in which I split the cases according to the outcomes of either cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. Truth tables “shift the focus from empirical cases to configurations of conditions” (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012b, p. 91). If a condition is present throughout one column and thus throughout all cases, it features a necessary condition. Each row of the truth table displays all logical combinations of conditions (the conjunction of conditions) that occur in the presence of a certain outcome for each case. The crucial turning point of transforming empirical observations into meaningful conditions is achieved through the process of logical minimization. Logical minimization aims to articulate the same logical truth in a simpler way and is guided by the principle that

if two truth table rows, which are both linked to the outcome, differ in only one condition – with that condition being present in one row and absent in the other – then this condition can be considered logically redundant and irrelevant for producing the outcome in the presence of the remaining conditions involved in these rows (Schneider & Wagemann, 2012b, p. 105).

The result of logical minimization produces a Boolean expression that entails all relevant sufficient conditions for the presence or absence of an outcome.

Table 6 below covers seven out of 12 cases that share the presence of cooperative IO response strategies as a common outcome (58% of the total number of cases).⁶⁵ It shows the configurations of conditions that lead to cooperative IO response strategies. I do not observe contradictory rows (featuring identical cases with different outcomes) or logical remainders (rows that do not contain

⁶⁵ Since the aim of this first part of the empirical analysis is to explain the competitiveness of IO response strategies, I place Admission and Accommodation in the group of cooperative IO response strategies and sort Delegation and Obstruction into the group of competitive IO response strategies.

enough information for a test of sufficiency)⁶⁶ in this truth table. Hence, De Morgan's Law can be applied to find the minimal expression.

	Institutional distinction or emulation ⁶⁷	Challenge to norm dimension	Challenge to resource dimension	IO response strategy
World Bank-AIIB	1	0	1	1
IEA-IRENA	0	0	1	1
FAO-WTO	0	1	1	1
WIPO-WTO	0	0	1	1
IMF-CMI	0	0	1	1
WHO-WTO	0	1	1	1
ILO-WTO	0	1	1	1

Table 6: Truth table for cooperative IO response strategies

The truth table shown in Table 6 elucidates the configurations of conditions that lead to cooperative IO response strategies. A necessary condition for cooperative IO response strategies is the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality. This is discernible by the presence of challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality in all seven cases (see Table 6). Substantially speaking, challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality must be present for cooperative IO response strategies to occur. The respective Boolean equation⁶⁸ shows two sufficient conditions and is as follows:

$$C = R (n + e)$$

Written in plain language, the expression reads as follows:

Cooperative IO response strategy = [challenge to resource dimension(1) AND challenge to norm dimension(0)] OR [challenge to resource dimension(1) AND institutional emulation(0)]

This equation presents a clear and parsimonious empirical finding which highlights two distinct sufficient conditions for cooperative IO response strategies. In the remainder of this section, I elaborate on each sufficient condition separately.

⁶⁶ The general rule being that for "small- to medium-sized N studies (roughly 10-100 cases), the frequency threshold per row is usually set to at least one case" (Grofman & Schneider, 2009, p. 153).

⁶⁷ Where institutional distinction is coded as 0 and institutional emulation is coded as 1.

⁶⁸ where C=cooperative IO response strategy, R=presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality, n=absence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality, and e=institutional distinction.

Path 1 – Presence of challenge to existing IO’s resource dimension of focality & absence of challenge to existing IO’s norm dimension of focality:

The sufficient condition entailing a present challenge to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality and an absent challenge to the existing IO’s norm dimension of focality is fulfilled in four out of seven cases of cooperative IO response strategies. In these cases, the new IO complements the existing IO’s norm dimension of focality. In other words, the new IO appreciates the governance standards set by the existing focal IO. The simultaneous presence of a challenge to the existing IO’s resource dimension and absence of a challenge to the existing IO’s norm dimension expresses that the new IO expands the available resources for governing a global issue without substantively challenging the existing IO’s normative framework.

The absence of challenges posed to the existing IO’s norm dimension of focality illustrate that any contentions which arise between pairs of existing focal and new IOs originate from issue-specific disagreements as both IOs share general normative principles for governing a global issue. For example, in spite of deviations in their conceptions of normative standards for securing the provision of global energy supplies, IEA agreed to “contribute to the development of databases on renewable energy policies, share information [with IRENA], and jointly organize technical and public events” (Esu & Sindico, 2016). In similar instances WIPO and WTO both support an effective intellectual property rights system and the IMF’s “main course of action has been to accommodate the perceived shifts in the preferences of borrowers via continuous modifications to the lending framework and by adopting increasingly flexible lending patterns” (Güven, 2017, p. 1156) although CMI emphasizes economic development and financial assistance to ASEAN member states that avoids political conditionalities.⁶⁹ Hence, the absence of a challenge to the existing IO’s norm dimension of focality is an important aspect which should not be underestimated. In effect, the existing focal IOs’ response strategies are cooperative across these cases.

The sufficient condition features inter-institutional contestation in terms of discords concerning the provided resources for governing a global issue. On one hand such situations likely resemble turf battles over the acquisition of resources (compare Hofmann, 2009). By definition turf battles introduce some competitive dynamics to inter-institutional relations. Yet it has also been demonstrated that cooperative outcomes can prevail when functional overlap arises. As such, a

⁶⁹ For more detailed descriptions of each case, see also Table 4 in chapter 4.2.

division of labor among the existing focal and new IOs may also ensue (Gehring & Faude, 2013, p. 120). On the other hand, a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality entails that the new IO possesses a relatively large financial budget. In turn, the new IO could function as a central resource provider in the regime complex and so establish a new focal actor. Hence, the dynamics which are coined as resource competition could *de facto* enhance the existing IO's available resources for governing a global issue, given that both existing and new IOs share the same normative frameworks. For example, the "rapid growth in financial resources [...] further empowered the [World Bank] and thus increased its focality" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1170). Since the AIIB does not directly contest the World Bank's governance norms enshrined in its mandates, both IOs have agreed to combine financial resources and engage in co-financed development projects. Considering that the World Bank continued to be the lead supervisor in project implementation (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 281), it can be argued that the AIIB's creation has ultimately strengthened the World Bank's focality in the development finance regime complex. The new IO's comparatively large financial budget enhances rather than constrains the existing IO's governance leadership. Upon taking a closer look at the inter-institutional dynamics which play out between the existing focal and new IOs in my cases, I find that the identified challenge to the existing IO's resource challenge included in Path 1 ultimately enhances the existing IO's focality in the regime complex – given that both IOs agree on the same normative framework for governing a global issue.

Outcomes of the QCA analysis support sub-hypothesis H_b that challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality coincide with cooperative IO response strategies. Given that institutional design similarities are absent from Path 1, the empirical evidence does not support sub-hypothesis H_c that institutional distinction coincides with cooperative IO response strategies. Overall, the empirical evidence only lends partial support to the main hypothesis on cooperative IO response strategies (H1) which asserts that the combination of challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and institutional distinction coincide with cooperative IO response strategies. Therefore, institutional design similarities do not play as big a part in Path 1. Thus, the main explanatory powers rest on the absence and presence of challenges posed to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality, respectively.

One implication of this first sufficient condition for cooperative IO response strategies is that a common normative understanding for governing the global issue seemingly outweighs contestations over the distribution of resources for addressing the global issue. Extant research on community well-being similarly finds that a group is willing to work with other organizations when

the new group connects with its core identity and both groups share a larger goal (Cohen & Gould, 2003, p. 3). This finding also applies to situations in which the resource dimension of an existing IO's focality is contested by a new IO's entry to the regime complex. According to the identity-based logic of action, the existing IO responds to the new IO in ways which support its identity as a focal actor in the regime complex.

In summary, the subject of contestation between existing focal and new IOs is relevant for the presence of cooperative IO response strategies. Therefore, the empirical evidence connects two key conditions highlighted in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies: Together, the presence of a challenge to the resource dimension of focality and the simultaneous absence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality pave the way towards cooperative IO response strategies.

Path 2 – Presence of a challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality & institutional distinction:

The second set of configurations which are sufficient for cooperative IO response strategies is present in six out of seven cases in Table 6 above. Considering its high frequency across cases, it represents a very prominent sufficient condition in my sample. In these cases, the new IO possesses a substantial amount of financial resources for governing the global issue and features institutional structures which are visibly distinguishable from the existing focal IO. The presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality bestows the new IO with a realistic potential to serve as an additional focal actor in the regime complex. The intriguing attribute of this sufficient condition is that cooperative IO response strategies are observed despite the new IO's challenge of the existing IO's resource dimension of focality.

Given that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality are absent in three out of six cases which satisfy Path 2 (in Table 6),⁷⁰ existing IOs have the opportunity to strengthen or even expand their focality in the regime complex by cooperating with the new IO. Furthermore, the new IO's institutional distinction may entail some aspects which complement or reinforce the existing IO's focality. One scenario is that the presence of functional differentiation along with informal hierarchies arguably facilitate inter-institutional coordination (Abbott & Faude, 2022, p. 271). For

⁷⁰ In the IEA-IRENA case, WIPO-WTO case and IMF-CMI case.

example, Table 6 shows that all four cases in which the WTO enters the regime complex are part of this second path to cooperative IO response strategies.

On one hand institutional distinction between the existing focal IOs and the WTO is effectively attributable to the WTO's unintended entry to the regime complex. The WTO was not purposefully created to contest the existing IOs' focal positions. On the other hand, the respective existing focal IOs, namely FAO, WIPO, WHO and ILO, expand their official rhetoric and behavior to include trade aspects that are central to WTO's operations. For instance, the FAO expands its rhetoric to also feature market liberal aspects of global food supplies. In another case the WHO responds to WTO's entry to the global health regime complex by highlighting its relative competitive advantage in standard setting and orchestrating international policymaking (Bettcher et al., 2000, p. 530) as well as forging closer ties with WTO to ensure that its interests are represented on the trade agenda (Hanrieder, 2009, 2015b). As a general observation, WIPO, WHO and ILO enforce their central role in governing the respective global issue and thus strengthen their focality in response to WTO's entry to the regime complex.

These observations also speak in support of the mechanism of status threat: the relatively constrained threat to the existing IO's focality is concurrent with cooperative IO response strategies. Path 2 confirms both sub-hypotheses that challenges posed to the resource dimension of focality (Hb) and institutional distinction (Hc) coincide with cooperative IO response strategies. Hence, the empirical evidence further supports the first main hypothesis regarding the interplay of these key explanations: Challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality combined with institutional distinction exhibit a low status threat and coincide with cooperative IO response strategies (H1).

Similar to Path 1, in two cases I also observe that a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality combined with institutional distinction can foster a division of labor between the existing focal and new IOs. The two remaining cases in Table 6 provide more context. IRENA and the CMI are intentionally created to contest existing IOs' respective governance approaches for ensuring global energy security and providing financial assistance to Asian states, respectively. IRENA certainly has the potential to become a new focal point alongside the IEA in the global energy regime complex. For example, IRENA "is able to command much more resources and staff to do analytical work on renewables for a much larger set of member states" (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 170). Moreover, "a de-facto division of labor [prevails] between the two organizations [IEA and IRENA], even if this does not mean that rivalry between them has ended

altogether” (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 234). Similarly, the IMF proposed single program frameworks which foresee close program alignment with CMI. IMF’s vision entails that it takes on the principal role in proposing a lead agency model while CMI is responsible for other aspects (De Gregorio et al., 2018, p. 52). However, this division of labor is tentative at best and not likely to solidify in prospective inter-institutional relations.

In this second path leading to cooperative IO response strategies, the sufficient condition designates that the new IO complements and sometimes even expands the existing IO’s focality. Empirical indicators include an expansion of the existing IO’s rhetoric or structures to strengthen its focality vis-à-vis the new IO and a potential division of labor among the existing focal and new IOs.

In summary, challenges to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality embody a necessary condition and are present throughout all cases of cooperative IO response strategies. This necessary condition combines with either the absence of a challenge to the norm dimension of focality or institutional distinction to form two sets of sufficient conditions for cooperative IO response strategies. Especially Path 2 provides very strong empirical support for my main hypothesis on cooperative IO response strategies (H1) because the hypothesized combinations of conditions are apparent in six out of seven cases of cooperative IO response strategies (compare Table 6). The QCA analysis reveals that despite challenges to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality, the existing IO engages in cooperative response strategies because the new IOs only pose low threats to its status as a focal actor in the regime complex.

5.2.2. Paths to competitive IO response strategies

Competitive IO response strategies comprise important yet largely overlooked phenomena that shape the existing IO’s significance as a focal actor. Owing to the asymmetric properties of set relations, the paths leading to competitive IO response strategies are not simply the inverse of the paths leading to cooperative IO response strategies. Therefore, a separate truth table is established which yields distinct empirical results. In the truth table presented in Table 7, I do not observe contradictory rows or logical remainders. De Morgan’s Law hence applies to finding the reduced expression of the configuration of conditions leading to competitive IO response strategies.

	Institutional distinction or emulation ⁷¹	Challenge to norm dimension	Challenge to resource dimension	IO response strategy
UNHCR-IOM	0	1	0	0
IWC-NAMMCO	1	1	1	0
OSCE-SCO	1	1	0	0
UN-IMO	1	0	0	0
ITU-ICANN	0	1	0	0

Table 7: Truth table for competitive IO response strategies

Table 7 does not display any necessary conditions for competitive IO response strategies. Nevertheless, the general Boolean equation⁷² features three sufficient conditions:

$$c = r(\text{NE}) + \text{ENR}$$

Written in plain language, the expression reads as follows:

Competitive IO response strategy = [challenge to resource dimension(0) AND challenge to norm dimension(1)] OR [challenge to resource dimension(0) AND institutional emulation(1)] OR [institutional emulation(1) AND challenge to norm dimension(1) AND challenge to resource dimension(1)]

Each sufficient condition outlines a different path to competitive IO response strategies. I now elaborate on each of these three paths.

Path 3 – absence of a challenge to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality & presence of a challenge to the norm dimension of focality:

The sufficient condition consists of the absence of a challenge to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality while a challenge to the existing IO’s norm dimension of focality is present. I observe this sufficient condition in three out of five cases featuring competitive IO response

⁷¹ Where institutional distinction is coded as 0 and institutional emulation is coded as 1.

⁷² where c=competitive IO response strategy, r=absence of challenge to resource dimension of focality, R=presence of challenge to resource dimension of focality, N=presence of challenge to norm dimension of focality and E=institutional emulation.

strategies. UNHCR's humanitarian approach to governing international migration movements diverges from IOM's management-based approach, OSCE's emphasis on state sovereignty starkly contrasts with the SCO's authoritarian notion of international security and ITU's regulation of domain names by the public sector is fundamentally different from ICANN's private and self-governed domain name system. One commonality of these cases is that they are all shaped by existing and new IOs which promote different normative frameworks for governing a global issue. The empirical evidence indicates that such normative discrepancies play a crucial role in setting the path for competitive IO response strategies. The sufficient conditions outlined in Path 3 are strongly present in my sample of cases featuring competitive IO response strategies because the two cases which do not represent this sufficient condition (IWC-NAMMCO case and UN-IMO case) epitomize rather special cases.

In this instance existing IOs' competitive response strategies take on the role of defending the status quo of governance standards set by existing focal IOs – at least in situations when norm contestation is present and contestation over resource distributions are simultaneously absent. A look at UNHCR's response to IOM spells out what this may look like in practice. At the time of IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016, a critical situation existed concerning the coordination between the global refugee and migration regimes. Most significantly, UNHCR follows a protection mandate which specifies that it is responsible for people in need of protection (refugees) while IOM's operations are based on a much broader mandate according to which any people that are migrating fall within its area of responsibility (migrants). Most notably,

the main cause of friction between the two organisations has been the overlap between their mandates and the concerns of UNHCR regarding the fact that IOM has increasingly been covering situations that the refugee agency considers to fall under its mandate [...] Against this backdrop, UNHCR has become more defensive in its interactions with IOM and other stakeholders to ensure that its persons of concern are kept separated from the broader category of 'migrants' covered by IOM (Moretti, 2021, p. 38).

UNHCR's insistence on keeping the governance of refugees separate from other forms of migration strengthens its leadership in refugee governance. I contend that by demarcating its own governance boundaries, UNHCR asserts its prominence as a focal actor in the regime complex.

Similar response strategies to dynamics of inter-institutional norm contestation are also observable outside of the refugee regime complex. In the case of SCO's creation, a new IO enters the international security regime complex that exhibits a different understanding of the human

dimension of security compared to the existing focal IO. Differences in the existing and new IOs' governance standards are so pronounced that "the SCO is at times regarded as a "spoiler" of the OSCE's normative agenda in the post-Soviet space, centered on the promotion of democracy and human rights" (Weiffen et al., 2021, p. 10). While both IOs reach some common ground over non-traditional security threats, they have mainly resorted to "non-argumentation, [...] constructive silence and discursive processes that avoid [...] key areas of disagreement" (Lewis, 2012, p. 1229). In another case, the relation between ITU and ICANN is likewise coined by deadlock. ITU and ICANN's normative governance standards are quite different because ITU is part of the broader UN umbrella and ICANN largely carries to the United States' (US) governmental preferences (Drezner, 2004). As the existing focal IO, ITU criticizes ICANN of hypocrisy as the US government argued for self-governance of the internet while maintaining a special role to oversee all ICANN activities. In response ITU increasingly presents itself as the main responsibility holder in internet governance (Kleinwächter, 2004, pp. 239, 243). The empirical evidence shows that when the existing IO's normative standards for governing a global issue are scrutinized, the existing focal IO likely resorts to competitive response strategies such as demarcating governance boundaries and delegitimizing the new IO's aspired role as a normative standard setter in the regime complex.

It is evident that the absence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and the simultaneous presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality are empirically strong determinants for competitive IO response strategies. While these results provide support for the sub-hypothesis that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality coincide with competitive IO response strategies (Ha), it only partially confirms the second main hypothesis which specifies that a combination of challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality and institutional emulation coincide with competitive IO response strategies (H2). Though other configurations of conditions may lead to the same outcome, Path 3 presents at least one viable path towards competitive IO response strategies.

Path 4 – absence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality & presence of institutional emulation:

Two cases exhibit the sufficient condition for competitive IO response strategies in Path 4: OSCE's delegitimation of the SCO and the UN's obstruction of the IMO. Compared to Path 3, the presence of institutional emulation appears as part of the sufficient conditions leading to competitive IO

response strategies. However, the emulation between the OSCE and SCO's institutional structures seems to be more of a coincidence. The trait which stands out from this case is neither the absence of a challenge to OSCE's resource dimension of focality nor institutional emulation, but norm struggles between the OSCE and SCO. Whilst the OSCE-SCO case falls within both Path 3 and Path 4 leading to competitive IO response strategies, I contend that this case more accurately represents the configuration of conditions described in Path 3 above.

The UN-IMO case is distinctive from the outset. The UN's competitive response strategy rather stems from its concern that IMO could be too deeply involved in addressing politically or economically sensitive issues (Blanco-Bazán, 2004). Therefore, the UN's discontent with IMO arises from IMO's development away from a purely technical organization, and not from the IMO's emulation of UN's institutional structures or the absence of a challenge to UN's resource dimension of focality. Given that the OSCE's response to SCO and UN's response to the IMO are more accurately described by Path 3, I remain skeptical about the significance of Path 4.

In contrast to Path 3, this path confirms the empirical relevance of institutional emulation for the presence of competitive IO response strategies (in line with sub-hypothesis Hd), but does not include the presence of challenges posed to the existing IO's focality. Hence, Path 4 provides partial support for my main hypothesis on competitive IO response strategies (H2).

Path 5 – presence of institutional emulation & presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality & presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality:

The third sufficient condition for competitive IO response strategies features the presence of institutional emulation, the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality and the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality. Within this sample of cases this sufficient condition is solely reflected in the IWC-NAMMCO case.

The IWC-NAMMCO case is a little peculiar because unlike all other cases of competitive IO response strategies, it features *inter alia* the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality. The challenge to IWC's resource dimension of focality stems from a comparison of IWC and NAMMCO's budget sizes in 1993. In that year NAMMCO's budget amounted to a total of 338.215,13 US dollars, which is 21.03% the size of IWC's total budget of

1.608.190,24 US dollars (IWC, 1993; NAMMCO, 1992b). Beyond its large budget, however, NAMMCO's financial potential is curbed by its small membership size. As such, NAMMCO does not pose a large challenge to IWC's resources because it only consists of four member states (while IWC consists of 32 member states) in 1993. Taking this into account "it should [overall] be recognized that for the present NAMMCO poses only a very limited challenge to the efforts of the IWC" (Caron, 1995, p. 173). In effect, the present challenge to the IWC's resource dimension of focality only poses a sufficient condition for competitive IO response strategies in combination with the simultaneous presence of institutional emulation and a challenge to the norm dimension of IWC's focality.

Putting the challenge to IWC's resource dimension of focality aside, this case combines the presence of institutional emulation and the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality as shown by the sufficient conditions presented in Path 4 and Path 3, respectively. Whereas this Path confirms the sub-hypotheses that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension (Ha) and institutional emulation (Hd) coincide with competitive IO response strategies, it also features the presence of challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality as part of the sufficient condition. Therefore, nearly full support is given to the second main hypothesis (H2) that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality combined with institutional emulation coincide with competitive IO response strategies.

Overall, this sufficient condition shown in Path 5 seems to be tailored to the IWC-NAMMCO case which raises questions about the reliability of these findings. For these reasons, this sufficient condition for competitive IO response strategies should be treated with caution. It is also possible that this configuration of conditions seems to be delicate because the actual explanation extends beyond the key explanatory variables specified by the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

In summary, the empirical analysis has illustrated three configurations of conditions that are sufficient for the presence of competitive IO response strategies. Path 3 distinguishes itself from Path 4 and Path 5 because it is empirically observable across three out of five sampled cases. Less than half of the sampled cases represent Path 4, which is present in two cases, and Path 5, which is only present in one case, respectively. Therefore, I arrive at the conclusion that the most valid sufficient condition for competitive IO response strategies encompasses the absence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality. Concerns over institutional design similarities take a back seat for

now as existing IOs are mainly preoccupied by the type of norm or resource challenges posed to their focality when they engage in competitive response strategies.

5.3. Empirical evidence for alternative explanations and the state-based approach

The previous sections have demonstrated that the key variables outlined in the theoretical framework offer a relevant yet confined range of possible explanations for the competitiveness of IO response strategies. The IWC-NAMMCO case already showed that additional factors beyond the identified key components of the theoretical framework might contribute relevant aspects to explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. New knowledge on the empirical relevance of alternative explanations and state-based approaches overall enables a more widespread understanding of the sampled cases. Operationalizations of the alternative explanations and state-based approaches are outlined in Appendix II. To ensure that my theoretical framework does not omit alternative explanations that are *de facto* imperative for explaining the competitiveness of IO response strategies, I now turn to an empirical investigation of alternative explanations and the state-based approach specified in chapter 3.2.6. and chapter 3.3, respectively.

The alternative explanations are not featured as part of the QCA analysis to avoid that the quantity of conditions outnumber the quantity of cases. Including more conditions than cases risks a reduction in obtainable robust sufficiency and renders it very difficult to interpret results. Hence, I examine the alternative explanations and state-based approach separately from the QCA analysis featuring the key explanatory variables of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

5.3.1. Alternative explanations

The alternative explanations outlined in chapter 3.2.6. provide some context of the environment in which cooperative and competitive IO response strategies are observed. Hence, the empirical description allows to obtain a broader and more valid understanding of the factors that are relevant for explaining the observed cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. This section scrutinizes if IO response strategies are also affected by institutional densities in their external environment and geopolitical alliances among leading IO member states of the existing focal and new IOs, respectively.

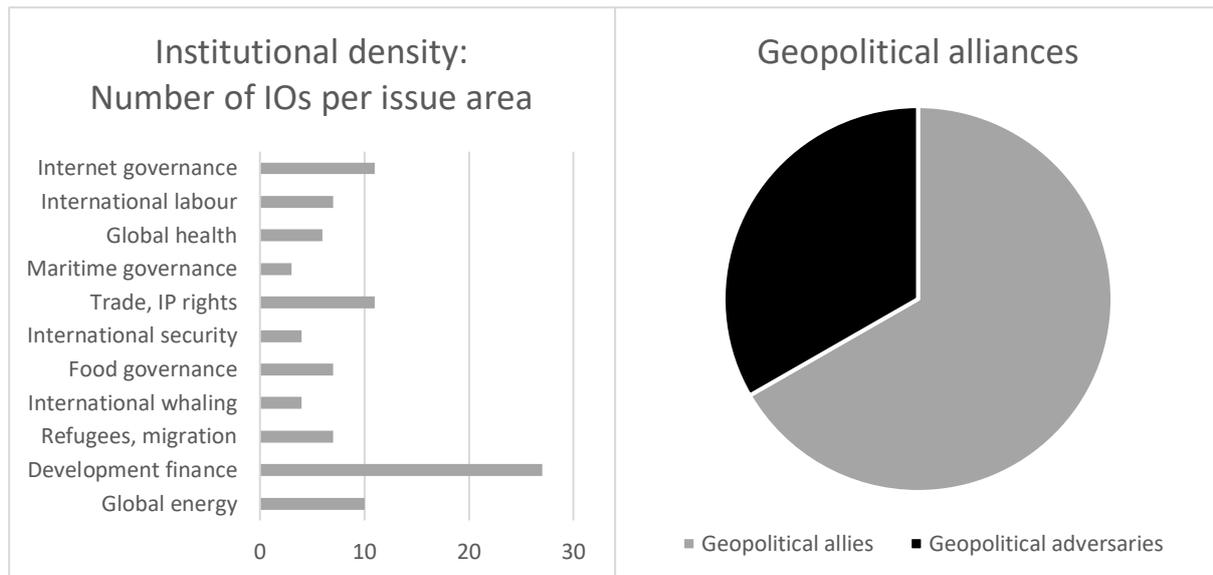


Figure 4: Overview of select alternative explanations

(Source: own data)

One alternate understanding is that patterns of cooperation among institutions are affected by the characteristics of their policy areas. For instance it has been demonstrated that institutional competition is affected by available outside options (Lipsey, 2017, p. 3). Hence, institutional density may change the modes of interaction among IOs. Four out of 11 issue areas feature at least 10 IOs in the regime complex and exhibit a high institutional density. With the exception of ITU's response to ICANN, all four cases show cooperative IO response strategies (see Appendix V). Thus, an empirical trend is discernible that existing focal IOs arguably engage in cooperative IO response strategies in environments that are coined by high institutional densities.

As shown in Figure 4, the regime complex of development finance poses an exception because it features many, sometimes also inefficient, duplications of multilateral development banks (Kellerman, 2019, p. 107). When an issue area is so densely institutionalized with 27 multilateral development banks (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1173), each additional new IO may not be as costly for the existing focal IO. My empirical evidence thus gives credit to Phillip Lipsey's (2017) research which finds that

the marginal utility of joining an activity increases with the total number of participating actors [as high] network effects provide incentives for states to cooperate through universalistic, monopolistic international organizations (p. 28).

Hence, a new IO's entry to a highly institutionalized regime complex might thus be ascribed to the new IO profiting from network effects rather than actively contesting the existing IO's focality. On the contrary, out of the seven issue areas which feature low institutional density, four issue areas contain competitive IO response strategies and three issue areas entail cooperative IO response strategies. The nearly even distribution of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies across cases speaks for the absence of pertinent correlations. Overall, the differences in institutional density across issue areas only show a very loose association with the competitiveness of IO response strategies.

Geopolitical alliances arise when two actors experience affinities for each other because they share similar political and geographic traits. A state is considered as a leading member state when it possesses considerable governance control over an IO. As Figure 4 shows, 67% of cases feature geopolitical alliances between the leading member states of existing and new IOs. The US is the most frequently leading IO member state. This alternative explanation accounts for the possibility that the existing IO's response strategy is likely cooperative when its leading member state shares a geopolitical alliance with the new IO's leading member state.⁷³ This claim is partly supported by my empirical observations: The existing IO's response strategy is cooperative in five out of eight cases in which the leading IO member states are geopolitically aligned (see Appendix III).

When the existing and new IOs' leading member states are geopolitical rivals, two out of four cases feature competitive IO response strategies. However, because the US acts as a leading IO member state in most IOs, in the creation of which it has played a key role, a natural bias towards geopolitical alliances is present throughout the sampled cases. Indeed, six out of eight cases of geopolitical alliances feature the US as the leading member state – or part of the group of leading member states – as part of both the existing focal and new IOs (compare Appendix III). Therefore, a natural bias is created towards geopolitical alliances among the US as the most prominent and leading IO member state. This observation leads to question the meaningfulness of this alternative explanation. To alleviate this bias, I would need to include more IO pairs that feature leading member states which are less US-centric or include more geopolitical rivals in my research to make any convincing claims. Hence, future research should pay closer attention to geopolitical rivalries in shaping inter-institutional relations between existing focal and new IOs. Although geopolitical alliances do matter in other settings such as pooling resources and expertise (Clark, 2021), they play

⁷³ In related research, Phillip Lipsky (2017) finds that it “is reasonable to assume that relative attractiveness of outside options will generally correlate with a country’s material capabilities or geopolitical/economic power in a particular policy area” (p. 40).

less of a prominent role in shaping the competitiveness of IO response strategies in this dissertation research.

In summary, neither alternative explanation is satisfactorily convincing to include it as part of the comparative case studies in the second part of the empirical analysis of IO response strategies. Whereas high institutional densities have a slight propensity towards cooperative IO response strategies, these correlations are weak and should be interpreted very carefully. Seeing that the US was significantly involved in creating many existing focal and new IOs throughout my 12 cases, a natural bias exists in this sample of cases towards geopolitical alliances among leading IO member states.

5.3.2. The state-based approach

In chapter 3.3 I have already discussed the state-based approach as a viable theoretical alternative which supplements my identity-based explanation and empirical analysis of response strategies at the IO-IO level of interaction. The state-based approach embodies the intention of new IO entries and membership overlaps between existing focal and new IOs. Together, they provide valuable information on potential confounding effects which underlie the five identified paths leading to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies, respectively.

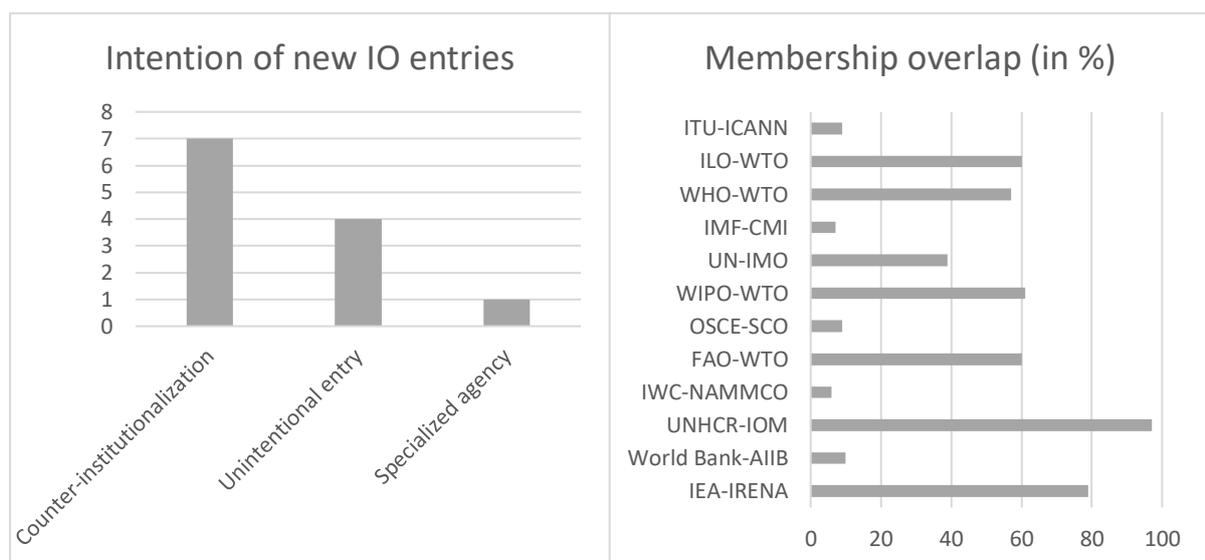


Figure 5: Overview of select variables of the state-based approach

(Source: own data)

First, the motives of states behind invoking new IO entries may induce profound consequences for the management of inter-institutional contestation (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 284). As specified in chapter 3.3, different motivations for a new IO's entry to the regime complex can condition certain types of IO response strategies. CI is present in seven out of 12 cases (see Figure 5). The high frequency of CI suggests that most new IOs enter the regime complex with the intention of undermining the status quo set by the existing focal IO. Furthermore, it is interesting that four out of seven cases of CI coincide with competitive IO response strategies and three CI cases feature cooperative IO response strategies (see Appendix IV).

In turn, a new IO's unintentional entry happens when an existing IO enters a regime complex in the absence of IO creation. For example, it encompasses situations in which an existing IO enters a regime complex due to policy scope expansion or amid a more general trend of growing issue density in international relations (Raustiala, 2013, p. 296). The most prominent example in my sample is the WTO's entry to the global food governance and global health regime complexes (see Appendix IV). Specialized agencies feature a separate category because they are created intentionally by the host organization but are not intended to contest the institutional status quo. Overall, the high number of instances in which new IOs enter the regime complex as part of CI underscores that institutional proliferation is largely driven by states' dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo. Given that the status quo is set by the existing focal IO, it is consequential that existing IOs' response strategies are also affected by the intention of new IO entries. Hence, the intention of new IO entries is important and should thus be included as part of more detailed case studies.

Second, I control for membership overlap because it embodies a "formal connectivity" between existing focal and new IOs, and hence plays a vital part in inter-institutional relations (Tallberg et al., 2017, p. 7). In six out of 12 cases more than 50% of the existing IO's membership overlaps with the new IO's membership. This observation initially speaks for close inter-institutional relations between the respective pairs of existing and new IOs. Further, in five out of seven cases of cooperative IO response strategies more than 50% of member states overlap and the existing IO's response strategy is cooperative: They feature the ILO-WTO, WHO-WTO, WIPO-WTO, FAO-WTO and IEA-IRENA cases (compare Appendix IV). In these cases overlapping memberships might further enhance the existing IO's focality because they enable norm diffusion (Tallberg et al., 2017, p. 8). Viewed from a different perspective, another possibility is that the existing IO perceives the new IO as a threat when it has a similar membership. In this scenario, I would expect the existing IO to respond competitively amid fears of being replaced by the new

IO. My empirical evidence only features UNHCR's response to IOM and ITU's response to ICANN as cases in which more than 50% of the membership overlaps and the existing IO's response strategy is competitive. Nevertheless, regarding the even distribution of cases that feature high and low membership overlaps, membership overlap alone does not suffice to explain the competitiveness of IO response strategies. More information is needed on the nature of interactions between the existing focal and new IOs, respectively. I stipulate that the significance of overlapping memberships only becomes apparent when it is known if member states join the new IO out of dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo or if member states join the new IO for other reasons.

In summary, a closer look at the intention of new IO entries highlights an important aspect that should feature in studies of IO response strategies. In comparison, the share of new IO members which overlap with the existing IO's membership is less telling. Since CI is so prominent in the descriptive overview, it should play a considerable role in the case studies that follow in chapter 6. Therefore, the empirical evidence points to the prominence of intended IO entries as promising elements of the impending in-depth case studies.

5.4. Preliminary empirical conclusions

Chapter 5 has enabled a first view into the properties and possible explanations for the competitiveness of IO response strategies. It comprises a mixture of descriptive insights and QCA analysis, as well as identifies necessary and sufficient conditions for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. This novel approach to studying IO behavior has the potential to shape prospective studies of inter-institutional relations in an evolving regime complex. A distinguishing attribute is that it draws attention to the prominence of focal actors in a regime complex – a feature that is sometimes contained implicitly in theoretical explanations but is seldom the explicit focus of extant research. Explaining the circumstances in which cooperative and competitive IO response strategies are observed invariably generates new knowledge on how existing focal IOs function and how they position themselves towards new IOs that could potentially compose new focal actors in the regime complex. In the remainder of this chapter, I first elaborate on the identified configurations of conditions which lead to cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Then, I further inspect the intention of new IO entries as an additional explanatory specification which supplements the five pathways obtained from the QCA analysis.

Necessary and sufficient conditions	IO response strategy	Hypothesis verification
<p>Necessary condition Present challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality</p>	Cooperative	- Support for Hb
<p>Path 1 (sufficient condition) Present challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality & absent challenge to existing IO's norm dimension of focality</p>	Cooperative	Partial support for H1 Support for Hb No support for Hc
<p>Path 2 (sufficient condition) Present challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality & presence of institutional distinction</p>	Cooperative	Support for H1 Support for Hb and Hc
<p>Path 3 (sufficient condition) Absent challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality & present challenge to existing IO's norm dimension of focality</p>	Competitive	Partial support for H2 Support for Ha No information on institutional design similarities
<p>Path 4 (sufficient condition) Absent challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality & presence of institutional emulation</p>	Competitive	Partial support for H2 Support for Hd No information on type of challenge posed to existing IO's focality
<p>Path 5 (sufficient condition): Presence of institutional emulation & present challenge to existing IO's norm dimension of focality & present challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality</p>	Competitive	Partial support for H2 Support for Ha, Hd + presence of challenge to existing IO's resource dimension of focality

Table 8: Overview of necessary and sufficient conditions for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies

The QCA results have identified one necessary condition and five sufficient conditions for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies in total (see Table 8 above). The collected empirical evidence implies that challenges to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality are essential for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. Though institutional design similarities are part of Path 2, Path 4 and Path 5, they are arguably less pertinent for explaining the competitiveness of IO response strategies. Nonetheless, it is still possible that institutional design similarities exhibit more explanatory potential for the mode as the second dimension of IO response strategies. These intricacies are further explored as part of the case studies featured in chapter 6 of this dissertation. For now, however, I preliminarily conclude that Path 2 empirically confirms my first main hypothesis (H1).

- H1 is confirmed: Challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality combined with institutional distinction exhibit a low status threat and coincide with cooperative IO response strategies.

The presence or absence of challenges posed to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality are featured across all necessary and sufficient conditions. They hence assume an essential role in explaining the competitiveness of IO response strategies. Concerning cooperative response strategies, the cases have shown that a new IO's challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality can often enhance the existing IO's resource provisions. Hence, one way in which existing focal IOs can defend their focal status in the regime complex is by engaging in cooperative IO response strategies as part of an effort to maintain focality through resource expansion. In these situations, the new IO can reinforce the existing IO's focality when it possesses a relatively large budget and can contribute a substantial amount of financial resources for governing the global issue. For instance, the World Bank could expand its focality upon AIIB's entry to the development finance regime complex because both IOs adhere to the same normative framework and together expand the available financial resources for co-financed development projects. Under such circumstances, existing focal IOs respond cooperatively to a new IO's entry to the regime complex.

In a more contentious setting, the cases of competitive IO response strategies exhibit a different purpose underlying the existing IO's governance scope expansion: Throughout the five cases of competitive IO response strategies, the existing focal IO expands its rhetoric and behavior as part of its effort to delegitimize or delimit the new IO's potential to become a focal actor in the regime

complex. These hostile forms of governance expansion are for example featured in UNHCR's policy scope expansion following IOM's entry to the UN system or OSCE's amplified rhetorical emphasis on state sovereignty upon the creation of SCO. The aim of these competitive IO response strategies is to strengthen existent governance standards and to maintain the existing IO's focality by displacing the new IO.

As the QCA analysis shows, challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality are the main triggers for competitive IO response strategies of Delegitimation and Obstruction. The empirical evidence partially supports my second main hypothesis because no path leading to competitive response strategies exactly represents the configuration of conditions specified in H2. Since competitive IO response strategies likely coincide with contentions over the adequate governance standards and normative framework for governing a global issue, the QCA findings partially confirm my second main hypothesis (H2):

- H2 is partially confirmed: Challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality combined with institutional emulation exhibit a high degree of status threat and coincide with competitive IO response strategies.

Throughout all case studies it is noticeable that the existing focal IO does not just let the new IO take on the role of a focal actor in the regime complex. The considerable empirical support for both main hypotheses further corroborates the mechanism of status threat which entails a more general link between the level of status threat and competitiveness of IO response strategies. It shows that the existing IO responds to possible status threats, seeks to survive as a focal actor and even reinforces its focality in the regime complex. Instead of witnessing the existing IO's replacement by a new focal IO, the existing IO continues to play a leading role in the regime complex – even if the new IO establishes an additional focal point in the regime complex.

In summary, this first part of the empirical analysis shows that an existing IO's response strategy is carefully adjusted to the circumstantial context and no coincidence. Taken together, these five paths provide first encompassing explanations for IO response strategies based on the degrees and types of threats which are posed to the existing IO's status as a focal actor in the regime complex. They facilitate a more nuanced understanding how a new IO's entry to the regime complex and the ensuing nature of institutional overlap may affect the presence of cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. The empirical evidence confirms the first main hypothesis (H1) as it provides empirical support that challenges to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and

institutional distinction coincide with competitive IO response strategies. The second main hypothesis (H2), that challenges to the existing IO's norm dimension of focality and institutional emulation coincide with competitive IO response strategies, is partially supported. According to my theoretical framework and QCA findings, the presence of challenges to the existing IO's norm and resource dimensions of focality are valuable contributions for explaining the competitiveness of IO response strategies. Given that these insights are based on a sample which features 11 different issue areas and very different existing focal IOs, these empirical findings are likely generalizable beyond this set of cases. One promising preliminary empirical finding entails that the intention of IO entry potentially plays an important role for an existing focal IO's engagement in certain response strategies.

Chapter 6: IO response strategies to counter-institutionalization

With regards to the research question why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times respond in adversarial ways, the aforesaid results of the QCA analysis offer a very promising, but limited answer. Since the QCA analysis only accounts for the key components featured in the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, it initially foregoes alternate explanations. For example, secondary literature which examines the relation between IMF and CMI points out that besides concerns over resource distribution, struggles over “a [lacking] cohesive strategy [and a] paradigmatically distinct reorientation” of the IMF emerged (Güven, 2017, p. 1166). In another case which also features challenges to the existing IO’s resource dimension of focality, a more holistic depiction of the World Bank’s response to the AIIB’s creation inevitably reveals concerns over “[China’s] parochial economic incentives [and] counter-hegemonic potential to challenge and replace the prevailing substantive rules and norms that govern multilateral development financing” (Ikenberry & Lim, 2017, p. 11). This is not to say that the QCA analysis is faulty. Strictly speaking, these examples show that the explanation of IO response strategies is more complex than the sufficient and necessary conditions identified in chapter 5. Since it is improbable that a new IO contests only the norm or resource dimensions of an existing IO’s focality, it would be rather premature to stop the empirical analysis with the QCA results. What’s more, adopting a broader view as part of the case studies allows to avoid overestimating the necessary and sufficient conditions as full explanations for different types of IO response strategies. Hence, an additional inspection is needed to provide a fully satisfying answer for my research question.

Whereas chapter 5 features strong predictors for the competitiveness of IO response strategies, much more is yet to be discovered about their mode. A closer look at the empirical evidence for the alternative, state-based approach has already shown that additional factors such as the presence of counter-institutionalization – as an expression of the new IO’s motivation for entering the regime complex – likely play a relevant role for explaining IO response strategies. Table 9 relates cooperative and competitive IO response strategies to new IOs’ unintentional entries and counter-institutionalization – a condition that has already attracted attention as a potential additional explanation (compare chapter 5.3.2.). While a new IO’s unintentional entry to the regime complex co-occurs with cooperative IO response strategies (the UN-IMO case is an exception), the pattern is much more vague for response strategies of existing focal IOs to cases of CI. Hence, the question arises whether CI can contribute valuable additional information for discerning the circumstances

under which existing focal IOs respond to new IO entries with Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation or Obstruction, respectively.

IO response strategy	Unintentional IO entry	Counter-institutionalization
Cooperative	FAO – WTO case WIPO – WTO case WHO – WTO case ILO – WTO case	World Bank – AIIB case IEA – IRENA case IMF – CMI case
Competitive	UN – IMO case (specialized agency)	UNHCR – IOM case ITU – ICANN case IWC – NAMMCO case OSCE – SCO case

Table 9: Association between the competitiveness of IO response strategies and the intention of new IO entries to the regime complex

This observation becomes especially relevant for this second part of the empirical analysis in which I further explore untangle the circumstances in which more friendly and adversarial types of response strategies arise. Hence, CI offers a fruitful starting point for the further exploration of the competitiveness and mode of IO response strategies.

The knowledge obtained from the case studies is generated by a structured, focused comparison (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 67). Each case study concludes with relevant lessons learned and is focused on two guiding questions, namely

1. What is the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex?
2. How does the mode of IO response strategies impact an existing IO's survival as a focal actor in the regime complex?

The first aim of each case study is to explore the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex. Based on the empirical findings in chapter 5, counter-institutionalization is present in four out of five cases featuring competitive IO response strategies (with exception of the UN-IMO case) and in three out of seven cases of cooperative IO response strategies. Since the presence of CI alone is not sufficient for distinguishing between cooperative and competitive IO response strategies, more detailed accounts of new IO motivations are needed. It is plausible that “a specific type of dissatisfaction with a given institutional status quo [leads] to a specific motivation for the creation of institutional overlap and that motivation to a specific outcome” (Faude & Fuss, 2020b,

p. 272). Thus, the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex may form a connecting link between a new IO's entry and the observed outcome. Taking a closer look at the motivation for a new IO's entry to the regime complex shines light on the circumstances under which counter-institutionalization leads to Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction. Comparative case studies are best suited for this pursuit as they enable more profound insights into the integral functioning of IOs and complement the general trends identified in Table 9 above. They contribute to existing research by deciphering changes to the existing IO's rhetoric and behavior, while they also help to bridge gaps in the literature of the causes and consequences of institutional overlap (Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021).

The second aim of each case study is to examine changes in the existing IO's rhetoric, practices, policies and institutional structures in light of its endeavor to survive as a focal actor in the regime complex. It pays particular attention to the second dimension of IO response strategies, their mode. Rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies are not mutually exclusive. Remarkably, the genesis of changes in the existing IO's rhetoric or behavior are not expressly examined by research on inter-institutional relations and the consequences of institutional proliferation (with the exception of Betts, 2009a; Heubaum & Biermann, 2015). Thus, a more profound comparative investigation into the mode of IO response strategies allows valuable insights into the strength by which the existing focal IO pursues a cooperative or competitive IO response strategy, as well as shows how far an existing IO is willing to go to protect its position as a focal actor in the regime complex.

In summary, this sixth chapter of the dissertation digs deeper into the motivation of new IOs to enter the regime complex, as well as the contiguity between the mode of IO response strategies and their efforts to survive as focal actors. Comparative case studies epitomize a more holistic approach to better understanding different types of IO response strategies and their effects on ensuring that the existing IO survives as a focal actor in the regime complex (compare Ridder, 2017, p. 282). As such, they complement the identified sufficient and necessary conditions (in chapter 5). All case studies feature IO response strategies as a common unit of analysis. Their conduct is transparent, replicable and exhibits external validity as the findings are theoretically applicable to many different institutional contexts. Therefore, this final empirical chapter offers an ancillary way to grasp complexity and identify additional circumstances that explain IO response strategies.

6.1. Selection of comparative case studies

The selection of cases is based on the QCA results featured in the preceding chapter. The comparative case studies are selected using criterion sampling which “is a kind of purposeful sampling of cases on preconceived criteria” (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 248). The selection of cases is reliable because all cases are chosen from the descriptive overview of IO response strategies displayed in Table 4 (in chapter 4.2.). For one, all selected cases feature the presence of counter-institutionalization. My sample of cases entails seven cases of CI in total.⁷⁴ These cases further exhibit variance in the key conditions of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, namely the type of challenge posed to the existing IO’s focality and institutional design similarities. The four selected cases shown in Table 10 exhibit the most well-known cases based on the availability of public information.

Existing focal IO	New IO	Counter-institutionalization	Institutional design similarities	Challenge to existing IO’s focality	IO response strategy
World Bank	AIIB	Yes	Emulation	Resource dimension	Admission
IEA	IRENA	Yes	Distinction	Resource dimension	Accommodation
UNHCR	IOM	Yes	Distinction	Norm dimension	Obstruction
IWC	NAMMCO	Yes	Emulation	Resource and norm dimension	Delegitimation

Table 10: Overview of selected cases for comparative case studies

Each case also exhibits a different IO response strategy. While the World Bank largely remains unshaken by the creation of the AIIB, the IEA for example establishes a new department for renewable energies following the creation of IRENA. In the latter two cases the UNHCR dramatically expands its policy scope to maintain its central role in the expanding refugee regime complex, whereas the IWC is somewhat distressed by NAMMCO’s creation and fails to engage in impactful response strategies due to institutional gridlock. Together, the comparative case studies increase the external validity of the resultant empirical findings as they span the regime complexes of development finance, global energy, international migration and international whaling. They provide productive insights into the motivations of new IOs to join regime complexes, existing IOs’ efforts to maintain their focality and have more general implications for the overarching development of inter-institutional relations.

⁷⁴ They encompass the WB-AIIB, IEA-IRENA, IMF-CMI, UNHCR-IOM, IWC-NAMMCO, OSCE-SCO and ITU-ICANN cases.

6.2. The World Bank's response to AIIB

In light of the considerable public commotion surrounding AIIB's creation (Dollar, 2014; Gutner, 2018; Hashmi, 2015; Perlez, 2015; Shepard, 2017), it is remarkable that the World Bank presents itself as a confident and composed actor in welcoming this new Asian development bank with open arms. Indeed, the AIIB's creation did not come as a surprise to the World Bank. The World Bank's present and former senior officials took up central roles in shaping AIIB structures and mandates (Lichtenstein, 2018). Nonetheless, the AIIB finances a large portion of China's Belt and Road Initiative – a prestigious project showcasing Asian infrastructure development. At the same time, China has massively grown its presence as an infrastructure provider in developing countries. For instance, since the official start of AIIB's creation process in 2009, China's annual financial commitments to developing countries have altogether surpassed those of the World Bank (Zeitz, 2021, p. 269). The larger point being that the AIIB's economic and geopolitical implications vis-à-vis a US-led World Bank cannot be overlooked. China's strong involvement in development lending inevitably creates competitive pressures for existing IOs. This gives reason to believe that the World Bank takes the AIIB's creation and its implications for the regime complex seriously. Given that the World Bank fulfills the role of a central hegemon, its response strategy takes on a vital role in setting the tone of inter-institutional relations with the AIIB and shaping the governance of international development finance. Yet why do the World Bank's response strategies to the AIIB seem so covert? Is the World Bank afraid of escalating underlying geopolitical tensions? Or does the World Bank simply have nothing to fear as a focal actor in the regime complex of development finance? I contend that the AIIB's motivation for entering the regime complex, a comparison of the AIIB's institutional fit to the World Bank and the type of challenge posed to the World Bank's norm and resource dimensions of focality contain previously untapped explanatory potential for these World Bank response strategies.

The World Bank (originally established as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)) is one of the heirlooms of the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference. It initially guided post-war reconstruction and economic cooperation. From the beginning the IBRD embodied the central governance coordinator in the field of international development finance.⁷⁵ The World Bank's "rapid growth in financial resources and personnel further empowered [it] and thus increased its focality" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1170). Though 10 percent of World Bank

⁷⁵ The World Bank differs from the World Bank Group which is composed of the IBRD, the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

member states also joined the AIIB when it became operational in 2016, the World Bank remains a sturdy focal actor in the regime complex of development finance. Since the World Bank was “deliberately created to be *the* focal IO managing multilateral development finance” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1166 emphasis in original), substantive disputes over the appropriate focal actor in the regime complex of development finance never really existed. Importantly, these debates surfaced upon the AIIB’s entry to the regime complex (Ikenberry & Lim, 2017; Xu, 2017).

The overarching fear by proponents of the Western-led international order is that AIIB increases China’s international political influence at the expense of US leadership (Cai, 2018). One source of anxiety is that the AIIB is potentially part of an attempt to reform the international order from within despite apparent efforts at integration (Xu, 2017). This begs questions of the AIIB’s intent and ambitions for inter-institutional cooperation. At the same time the AIIB conforms to existing norms and institutional models (Stephen & Skidmore, 2019, p. 90). It is hence not enough to explain the World Bank’s response strategy of Admission by reducing inter-institutional relations between the World Bank and AIIB to geopolitical considerations and AIIB’s challenge of the World Bank’s resource dimension of focality. More encompassing information is needed on the nature of institutional overlap, the type of challenge which the AIIB poses to the World Bank’s focality and China’s motivation for creating AIIB in the first place.

I have already established in chapter 4.2. (see Table 4) that the World Bank’s response strategy to the AIIB is one of Admission. This chapter now pays attention to various external circumstances in which Admission is observed. I first describe the AIIB’s creation process before making greater sense of the World Bank’s response strategy in light of the type of challenge which AIIB poses to the World Bank’s focality. This case is significant because the World Bank’s focal status is formally inscribed in its mandate. Given that the AIIB has the potential to durably alter the regime complex of development finance, this case constitutes a critical test for the existing IO’s cooperative and rhetorical response strategy.

6.2.1. AIIB’s entry to the development finance regime complex

The AIIB’s entry to the development finance regime complex is special because it is created and controlled by China – a single non-Western state that is also a rising power (in contrast to other cases such as NAMMCO’s creation supported by an actor coalition of Western states). As an instance of counter-institutionalization, the AIIB’s entry to the regime complex of development

finance is intentional and meant to challenge the existing institutional status quo. But what is China's motivation for creating a new multilateral development bank in the first place? At first sight the AIIB's creation is based on advancing Chinese interest to strengthen the Asian region in terms of infrastructure and economic powers. The growth of China's economy depends on exports and gaining access to new materials and resources through major infrastructure projects abroad. Additionally, infrastructure development allows to reduce China's large accumulation of dollar reserves and financial losses therefrom (Wang, 2015). Yet only looking at the AIIB's potential to undermine the Western-led development financing order or pure economic considerations underestimates its strive for international recognition and having the same status as established powers.

It is important to be aware that the original intention behind AIIB was to build a small bank consisting of China and its regional partners: "No western partners were expected at the time" (Serrano Oswald, 2019, p. 209). But once China understood that it could learn valuable lessons from the longtime experience of Western states, it was also open to welcoming nonborrowing lenders into its development bank. Therefore, it is unlikely that China originally fabricated a plan to win over all Western states and subvert the development finance regime complex. The empirical evidence clearly speaks towards China wanting to build an efficient and functioning governance framework for enhancing infrastructure development in Asia. Accordingly, I contend that the World Bank predominantly responds to the AIIB in terms of a regional bank rather than a geopolitical adversary. This also explains why the World Bank does not go out of its way to obstruct the AIIB's efforts.

What was originally just intended as an empty threat soon became a reality: The AIIB's creation process was launched. Though the AIIB's creation was quite fast and surprising to some, Chinese dissatisfaction with the World Bank was long in the making. Established lending practices disappointed during the 1997-1998 Asian Financial Crisis and left many states with imperiled solvencies. In the 2000s Asian states began to seriously question US leadership of the World Bank (Xu, 2017). Especially China was dissatisfied with its comparatively low vote share in traditional lending institutions. In spite of China moving away from a recipient state to becoming an official International Development Association (IDA) donor state in 2007 (which officially acknowledges China as a player in the same arena as the other G7 states), China continues to only have limited influence in the World Bank (Xu, 2017). In 2009, China's overseas development finance commitments for the first time greatly exceeded the World Bank's financial commitments (Zeit, 2021).

It is not surprising that the first grand demands for World Bank reform were issued by rising powers, including China (Fioretos & Heldt, 2019).⁷⁶ Chinese Finance Minister Xie at the time demands that the future shareholding principles should “aim to achieve the ultimate goal of equitable voting power between developing countries and developed countries” (Xinhua, 2010). As such, AIIB’s entry to the development finance regime complex is driven by China’s conception of inadequate institutional representation in the World Bank; China’s rapidly growing economic powers are not adjusted in terms of voting powers in the World Bank.

Albeit G20 leaders and the World Bank leadership agreed to governance reforms in 2009, the US Senate eventually voted against this proposal despite intense lobbying (Vestergaard & Wade, 2015; Xu, 2017). The outcomes of this negotiation process are more than disheartening for China as a high-income country. A closer look at these negotiations shows just how unwilling World Bank officials are to accommodate China’s demands:

at first glance the voice reforms brought the World Bank close to voting power parity (50 per cent) between developed and nondeveloped countries, one of its stated objectives. In reality the shift was much more modest, because the DTC [developing and transition countries] category includes several high income countries which should not be in the developing country category and do not borrow from the World Bank. [Moreover,] the voting share of developing countries (low and middle income countries) increased from 34.67 percent to only 38.38 percent. [...] Yet it took month after month of ‘24/7’ negotiations, and blistered nerves all round, to even get changes of this magnitude, as Executive Directors and World Bank staff searched for compromises ‘at the third decimal point’, in the language of our informants (Vestergaard & Wade, 2015, p. 6).

No *de facto* improvements took place following the World Bank’s reform process. Given that China’s dissatisfaction with the World Bank’s decision-making rules persisted, China’s motivation to search for alternative institutional fora is power-based.

Representational concerns take center stage in AIIB’s creation process, supported by 57 other countries, mainly from Asia (Wang, 2017). Between January and September 2014 more than twenty Asian countries were invited to participate in five Multilateral Consultation Meetings held in Beijing

⁷⁶ Around the same time the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) emerged as a new actor coalition on the world stage. They were especially vocal in problematizing the overrepresentation of Western countries despite BRICS countries having gained a greater share in world gross domestic product (GDP) (“from 8 per cent to 22 per cent” of world GDP) while the share of world GDP among the world’s seven largest economies – the G7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States) – has declined “from 65 per cent to 45 per cent” between 2000 and 2017 (Wang, 2017, p. 114).

and Shanghai to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019). These meetings started the process of developing the AIIB's structure and operations. A series of Chief Negotiator Meetings among the confirmed prospective founding members elaborated on further details of the soon-to-be organization and negotiated its Articles of Agreement (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019). The AIIB became operational in 2016.

Following the research objective of this dissertation research to learn more about the IO-IO level of interaction, I distinguish between China's development lending practices as a sovereign state and the AIIB's development lending efforts as a multilateral development bank. Nonetheless, the primacy of Chinese leadership in the AIIB is striking. With 26.6 percent of the total vote shares, China has much more control over determining AIIB's activities compared to the US' control over 16.65 percent of total vote shares in the World Bank (Wang, 2017). While the geopolitical dimension is still present, the reallocation of China's vote shares plays a very prominent role in this case. By and large the World Bank rests assured by its strong focality and accepts the AIIB as a new actor in the regime complex. Nevertheless, it is imperative to conduct a differentiated analysis which illuminates relevant aspects of the inter-institutional relations and the nature of institutional overlap as well as AIIB's challenge to the World Bank's focality.

6.2.2. AIIB's fit to the World Bank

At first sight the AIIB's creation resembles nearly a textbook example of counter-institutionalization (or even polity-driven contested multilateralism for that matter (Kreuder-Sonnen & Zangl, 2016)). Upon taking a closer look at the nature of institutional overlap, however, it shows that the AIIB goes to great lengths to establish cooperation – or at least friendly relations – with the World Bank. At the same time, the AIIB also makes concessions to specific Chinese interests such as protecting national sovereignty. In this section I elaborate on the nature of institutional overlap and assess the AIIB's type of challenge to the World Bank's focality in the development finance regime complex.

Precisely because the AIIB has the potential to undermine the World Bank, it works hard to extenuate its economic and geopolitical weight. At the time of AIIB's creation 10 percent of World Bank members are also part of AIIB's membership – inducing a challenge to the World Bank's resource dimension of focality. Extant research shows that less democratic countries which are dissatisfied with their institutional representation in existing multilateral development banks

(MDBs) have been eager to join the AIIB (Wang, 2018, p. 127). Notwithstanding, China repeatedly underscores the AIIB's geniality with its institutional edifice. In the first year following AIIB's creation, its emulation of the World Bank's mandates and institutional structures stand out.

A distinct feature of the AIIB is that it is so carefully adjusted to the World Bank. Fitting the AIIB within the existing institutional architecture was always a central concern during its creation process. As a high-level Brazilian official involved in designing the AIIB explains,

the AIIB is essentially a copy of the World Bank, only that it is China-dominated. It is a response from China to its lack of weight in the existing institutions, but if you look at not only institutional design but also other guidelines and documents these are all essentially a copy of the existing ones (as quoted in Serrano Oswald, 2019, p. 3).

The AIIB's general purpose, which is explicitly stated at the very beginning of its mandate, is to “foster sustainable economic development, create wealth and improve infrastructure connectivity in Asia by investing in infrastructure and other productive sectors” (AIIB, 2015, Chapter I, Article I, §1). AIIB's regional priorities on Asia cannot be overseen. However, the AIIB is neither claiming nor pursuing to act as a worldwide lender of infrastructure development projects. The World Bank's core principles refer to transparency, peace and world prosperity. In 2015 China's Foreign Ministry spokesman stated: “the AIIB will follow the principles of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, responsibility and fairness in its governance structure and operational policies” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015). These core normative principles of the World Bank and AIIB can hardly be recognized as being competitive. Especially the emphasis on transparency is to be noted because China repeatedly criticized the World Bank for its lack of transparency and fairness concerning institutional representation (Jinping, 2017; Lou, 2015). Now it makes up one of the AIIB's fundamental principles. Further, the AIIB supports World Bank efforts in promoting coresearch, cotraining, cofinancing and anti-corruption efforts both rhetorically and through inter-institutional cooperation (Serrano Oswald, 2019).

A comparison of the AIIB and World Bank's norms, institutional structures, lending rules and practices shows a considerable degree of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Serrano Oswald, 2019, p. 207). The AIIB's Charter overwhelmingly follows the classic structure of MDB mandates. A choice that is time-efficient, enhances AIIB's overall credibility and profits from year-long experiences with the World Bank's existing mandate (Lichtenstein, 2018). Nathalie Lichtenstein, who previously served as a senior official of the World Bank, took the lead responsibility in creating and institutionally designing the AIIB. It speaks to the World Bank's

strong focality that the AIIB took some of its expertise and imitated its institutional makeup. This further demonstrates that China conforms to the common standards of international development finance. Overall the AIIB's voluntary adoption of very similar norms and nearly all governance features of multilateral development finance integrates it into the existing financial order (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019; Ikenberry & Lim, 2017). Moreover, it points to the absence of a challenge to the World Bank's norm dimension of focality upon AIIB's entry to the regime complex.

On the surface the AIIB builds close inter-institutional linkages with the World Bank: For example, five out of eight senior management positions and a number of positions on the AIIB's Advisory Board are occupied by previous World Bank employees (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1176). In terms of institutional design, the AIIB's lean institutional setup greatly contrasts the World Bank's voluminous governance structures. Whereas the World Bank has over 10.000 staff in 120 offices worldwide, the AIIB is a more regionally-focused organization that pursues a lean organizational approach (Wang, 2017). The AIIB also features a non-residential board, streamlined decision-making and detailed custom oversight mechanisms. For example, the AIIB's Board of Governors is involved in all decisions. It is a central coordinative body which has much more power vested in it as compared to the World Bank President's office. China even announced that it is willing to give away its veto powers when the AIIB expands – an act that is unrivalled in multilateral development banks thus far (Serrano Oswald, 2019).

The AIIB fills a functional gap of development finance in Asia while still conforming to the World Bank's governance standards. First, it is significant that the AIIB places such large emphasis on environmental and social standards, which are not part of China's usual development lending practices. Already in September 2015 the AIIB presents a draft of its environmental and social standards. It signals China's eagerness to comply with Western development lending ideals. But secondly, the AIIB lacks robust criteria for assessing and enforcing these standards. While adopting the environmental and social conditions is a strategic signal to developed countries and the World Bank that the AIIB takes these standards very seriously and is not here to contest global governance structures at large, these standards are carefully designed to not contradict China's promotion of national sovereignty and to demonstrate its protection of developing states.

Whereas the empirical evidence clearly highlights AIIB's sincere efforts to foster cooperation among MDBs, China "has also been keen that all large MDBs are treated as equals, which reflects status concerns" (Serrano Oswald, 2019, p. 209). It is noteworthy that "China is not undercutting the existing institutions, but, rather, innovating cooperative mechanisms to meet its strategic needs

and the needs of global development financing” (Xu, 2017, p. 257). One distinct trademark of the AIIB is its devotion to infrastructure development in Asia, which is an area that the World Bank has been most criticized for not focusing enough on in recent years (see Qian et al., 2021, p. 6). For instance, the first four projects announced by the AIIB are all important elements of supporting China’s One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative.

Contrary to believes that the AIIB poses a considerable normative challenge and even seeks to replace the World Bank as a focal IO in the development finance regime complex, the empirical evidence speaks otherwise. I stipulate that institutional emulation and the absence of a challenge to the World Bank’s norm dimension of focality prevail because the institutional design similarities between the World Bank and AIIB clearly outweigh their differences.⁷⁷ Concerns over AIIB seizing full control over international development finance are likely exaggerated because China initially embeds itself thickly within existing institutional structures in the regime complex.

6.2.3. World Bank’s response strategy: Admission

When AIIB began its operations in 2016, there already existed 27 multilateral development banks (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1161). Since institutional proliferation was very present in the World Bank’s external environment from the 1950s and 1960s onwards, one could argue that the World Bank was not too worried about yet another regional development bank. In addition, AIIB’s founding president Jin Liqun has recognized “vast room for co-operation” with the World Bank as well as other multilateral development banks (in Fleming, 2016; Ikenberry & Lim, 2017). The World Bank has always been open towards cooperating with the AIIB, even if the US was first very adamant in pointing out the potential threats of AIIB. I argue that the World Bank’s cooperative and rhetorical response strategy stems from its strong focality and its recognition of the AIIB’s potential to fill a functional gap in the provision of global infrastructure development.

Geopolitical (power) concerns arise in a myriad of debates surrounding AIIB’s role in the larger external environment. The AIIB is often considered as an impending threat to US leadership in the realms of international development finance. At the time of its creation, concerns that the AIIB merely functions to support China’s geopolitical interests were mainly voiced by US officials such as former US Treasury Secretary Larry Summers (2015). For the majority of Western economies,

⁷⁷ For a more detailed overview, see Appendix V.

initial considerations of competitive regime creation dissipated after AIIB President Jin Liqun made several visits to these states in the summer of 2014 (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019, p. 357). Seeing that geopolitical concerns took a back seat for Western World Bank member states, I put these concerns aside for now. The remainder of this case study describes the strength of the World Bank's focality and then presents empirical evidence for its cooperative and competitive, as well as rhetorical and behavioral response strategies.

Cooperative and rhetorical response strategies:

Inter-institutional cooperation has seemingly always existed between the World Bank and AIIB. The World Bank even extended offers of cooperation before the AIIB became operational. Many countries displayed an “enthusiastic response” to the AIIB's creation (Wang, 2015, p. 1). As part of its rhetorical response strategies, the World Bank has reiterated AIIB's openness to promoting cooperation. World Bank President Jim Yong Kim at the time warmly received AIIB on numerous occasions which is evident across various speech acts and press releases with welcoming statements such as:

- (A) I look forward to further strengthening our existing strong relationship and identifying specific areas of future cooperation, including co-financing opportunities (World Bank, 2015b);
- (B) From the perspective simply of the need for more infrastructure spending, there's no doubt that from our perspective, we welcome the entry of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (Anonymous, 2015);
- (C) we are pleased to be working with China and others to help the AIIB hit the ground running [...] We view the AIIB as an important new partner that shares a common goal: ending extreme poverty (World Bank, 2015a); and
- (D) If the world's multilateral banks, including the new ones, can form alliances, work together and support development that addresses these challenges [building infrastructure in the developing world], we all benefit – especially the poor and most vulnerable [...] I will do everything in my power to find innovative ways to work with these banks ... We have so much need for infrastructure that we welcome any new players. [...] The fundamental issue for us is your enemy cannot be other institutions. Your enemy has to be poverty. If your enemy is poverty, the natural thing to do is welcome any new players that are interested in developing the kind of infrastructure that will end poverty. [...] the World Bank can, and will, act as a big brother to the new players by providing them over 50 years' worth of knowledge and expertise (Santos, 2015).

These excerpts from Jim Yong Kim's rhetoric stress how elated the World Bank is to provide for global infrastructure development jointly with the AIIB. World Bank president Kim repeatedly recognizes that the World Bank's material capacities are not sufficient for tackling this demanding

task on its own. As a result, the World Bank is happy about any additional actor that it can share material burdens with. In the subsequent sections I explain the World Bank's predominant rhetorical mode of IO response strategies based on the World Bank's own perceived role in the regime complex, its outlook on the AIIB as a promising resource provider and the *de facto* presence of inter-institutional cooperation.

Firstly, the empirical evidence demonstrates that the World Bank is cognizant of its focality in the regime complex and responds accordingly. For instance, statement (D) illustrates the World Bank's self-identification as a mentor (or "big brother" in Kim's words) for the newly created AIIB. I interpret this observation as a sign that the World Bank is not severely concerned about AIIB taking over its focal position. Kim's confidence in the World Bank's focality stems from its extensive accumulation of knowledge and vast expertise. This perennial moral authority enables the World Bank to be a vigorous standard setter and governance leader in the regime complex. The World Bank is not willing to give up its focal position to the AIIB, but it also does not see the need to do so, given that it is so secure in its own focal position. Therefore, I stipulate that the AIIB's entry to the regime complex of international development finance does not substantially threaten the World Bank's survival as a focal actor. Given that the World Bank's focality has persevered for so long, there exists no need for extensive survival strategies, which are kept to a minimum and mainly feature changes in the World Bank's rhetoric.

Secondly, the World Bank mainly views the AIIB's potential as an additional resource provider in the regime complex – at least according to its official rhetoric illustrated in statement (B). The possible presence of several perspectives denotes that there exist different ways of viewing the AIIB and its potential for helping tackle issues of international development finance. Statement (D) for example reveals that the World Bank also considers the potential for inter-institutional competition (recognizing the AIIB as a potential "enemy"), but chooses to welcome the AIIB with open arms instead (as opposed to competing over who is the better proponent of global infrastructure development). Hence, the World Bank observably appreciates AIIB's endeavors which enhance global efforts to provide infrastructure development. While the AIIB has the material capacities to challenge the World Bank's resource dimension of focality (compare descriptive overview of IO response strategies in Table 4, chapter 4.2.), the empirical evidence reinforces that the World Bank perceives the AIIB as a resource enhancer rather than a resource challenger. Direct competition over the provision of material resources is predominantly absent from inter-institutional interactions. Hence, I argue that the World Bank's response strategy is

largely rhetorical because it already perceives of the AIIB as a complementary actor upon its entry to the regime complex.

Thirdly, an important condition for the World Bank's overwhelming cooperative and rhetorical response strategy is that it shares a common goal with the AIIB: to provide finances for infrastructure development and to end extreme poverty (see Statement (C)) – a goal that is explicitly stated in the World Bank's vision and mission (IBRD, 1944, Article I). This statement hence enforces earlier observations that the World Bank does not perceive its focal role as a normative standard setter substantially challenged by the AIIB. The response strategy is mainly rhetorical because *de facto* inter-institutional collaboration between the World Bank and AIIB already exists. It is hence important for the World Bank to position itself as a friendly and supporting partner to the AIIB – at least rhetorically. In its response strategy the World Bank merely re-emphasizes the cooperation which already takes place on the ground. For instance, World Bank president Kim already speaks of an “existing strong relationship” in a statement he released when meeting AIIB president Jin Liqun at the World Bank Group's headquarters in Washington D.C. (see Statement (A)). In the carefully crafted diplomatic language, however, constraints on this cooperation are also evident. Jim Yong Kim notably stresses that cooperation with the AIIB is most fruitful in “specific areas of cooperation such as co-financed projects” to overall achieve “more infrastructure spending” (in statement (B)). I contend that no behavioral response strategies in terms of political or institutional changes to the existing IO are required as effective inter-institutional cooperation already exists. The World Bank's rhetorical response strategy principally reiterates the existing inter-institutional cooperation.

Behavioral response strategies:

Concerning behavioral IO response strategies, the World Bank makes some changes to its lending practices by also including cooperation agreements, co-financed projects and MoUs in its interactions with the AIIB. Yet it does not make any substantive changes to its policies or institutional structures following AIIB's entry to the development finance regime complex. As such, the World Bank's rhetorical response strategies still outweigh its behavioral response strategies. At the same time the empirical evidence confirms that the rhetorical and behavioral mode of IO response strategies are not mutually exclusive.

As I have demonstrated above, the World Bank propagated a voice reform to alleviate discrepancies in China's vote representation, which remained largely unfulfilled. It only resulted in

“minuscule changes” to the World Bank’s voting rules that are far from appeasing China’s longing for a fairer institutional representation of economic strength (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 280; Vestergaard & Wade, 2015). In April 2016 the World Bank signed a co-financing framework agreement with the AIIB to work together on filling the infrastructure gap in Asia. The World Bank’s willingness to sign this cooperation agreement solidifies its rhetorical emphasis on cooperation in its behavioral practices. Under the umbrella of this co-financing framework, the World Bank supports five co-financed projects in Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Indonesia (World Bank, 2017). It further engages as a cooperating organization in 15 out of 32 AIIB development projects since 2016 (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019). The World Bank agrees to be the lead supervisor in joint supervision during project implementation and for the execution of co-financed projects on-the-ground (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 281). Overall this co-financing framework enables the World Bank to effectively coordinate and execute development lending instead of pooling resources (Kapur et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the World Bank has also been willing to sign a formal cooperation agreement with the AIIB in 2017 and a MoU. These cooperation agreements identify mutual areas of interest and cooperation, including but not limited to, “the exchange of information and knowledge in various areas of institution-building and policy-making, the cofinancing of projects, the exchange of staff, and regular high-level consultations” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1176). Notably, they also include the World Bank’s offer to provide advisory services to the AIIB.

A somewhat deeper response issued in part to AIIB’s creation entails the World Bank’s launch of a new Global Infrastructure Facility in October 2014, “which would provide billions of dollars for infrastructure projects in developing countries” (Wang, 2015, p. 3).⁷⁸ This initiative even affected the larger regime complex as it was recognized as a major issue on the agenda of infrastructure development at the G20 summit in Brisbane in November 2014.

In total, the World Bank’s rhetorical and behavioral response strategies combine to strengthen collaboration among the existing focal and new IO. Similar to the World Bank’s proclamation that it fulfills the role of a “big brother” to the AIIB (see Statement (D) above), my case study supports extant research which argues that “focal international organizations can use their position to prevent incoherence” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1160). In the case of the World Bank’s

⁷⁸ Besides direct responses to the AIIB, the World Bank has responded to China’s increased development lending by also increasing development lending in the same areas. This way the World Bank competes with China’s economic rise (Zeitz, 2021).

response strategies to the AIIB's creation, these avenues for inter-institutional cooperation range from cooperation agreements and co-financed development projects to the establishment of a novel Global Infrastructure Facility.

Competitive response strategies:

Besides widespread inter-institutional cooperation with the AIIB, the World Bank also displays contentious rhetorical and behavioral response strategies to the AIIB. I contend that concerns over the sincerity of AIIB's declared mandates and geopolitical objectives lie at the center of the World Bank's more competitive response strategies. The World Bank's contentious stance towards the AIIB is likely stoked up by US fears of losing authority in the field of international development finance. Whereas the World Bank and AIIB's institutional structures are very similar at the operational level, geopolitical rivalries are most present between the leading IO member states, featuring the Western states that are leaders in the World Bank (namely the US, Germany, Japan, France and the UK) and the AIIB's leaders (mainly China, Russia and India) (Qian et al., 2021).

The US quite vehemently warns other Western states of becoming AIIB members. Public negativity concerning the AIIB is most outspoken by the US and Japan as the major shareholders in multilateral development banks (Lichtenstein, 2018, p. 2). In January 2015 a "watershed moment" occurred as the first Western advanced economy, New Zealand, decided to become the first Western member of the AIIB (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019, p. 352). The United Kingdom (UK) promptly followed suit and applied to become an AIIB member on March 12, 2015 (Ashbee, 2021). Just five days later other Western states followed suit. They ignored their pledge to the US to not make such decisions unilaterally (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019). Former senior World Bank official Nathalie Lichtenstein (2019, p. 583) observes that "The United States was reportedly among those critical of the initial AIIB proposal, with concerns about governance, investment policies and transparency, and did not join AIIB at the beginning or since; neither has Japan". Nevertheless, in the same year US President Barack Obama at the time retracted some of these hostilities in his remarks at a joint press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Abe. Despite some rumors circulating in the press that the US is hostile towards the AIIB and especially Western states becoming AIIB members, President Obama set the record straight in outlining the official US position as follows:

let me be very clear and dispel this notion that we were opposed or are opposed to other countries participating in the [AIIB....We] look forward to collaborating

with the [AIIB], just like we do with the [Asian Development Bank] and with the [World Bank] (Obama, 2015).

In the end the US attempted to alleviate the aversion it received for spurring some of the geopolitical competition with Asian states and AIIB leaders.

The World Bank further exhibits competitive and behavioral response strategies: For example, Jing Qian et al. (2021) find that the World Bank decreases the number of infrastructure-intensive projects directed at formal AIIB founding members. These projects include the sectors of transportation, energy and extractives, agriculture, water, sanitation and waste, and the information and communication sectors (compare Zeitz, 2021). In effect, “AIIB founding members on average receive 0.66 fewer infrastructure projects from the World Bank each year, which represents a substantial decrease, greater than 50 percent from the average” (Qian et al., 2021, p. 14). Hence, changes in the World Bank’s lending practices clearly respond to the AIIB’s entry to the regime complex for development lending. However, this response strategy is rather complementary to the World Bank’s predominant cooperative and rhetorical response strategies which follow the AIIB’s creation.

In conclusion, the World Bank primarily resorts to friendly strategies and simultaneously shows full acceptance of the AIIB as a new player in the regime complex. The empirical evidence corroborates that the World Bank’s response strategy corresponds to Admission as defined and operationalized in chapter 2.6.1. of this dissertation. From the moment of AIIB’s entry to the regime complex, the World Bank tolerates and recognizes AIIB as a valuable cooperation partner for solving the global issue at hand. More so, the World Bank’s attempts at maintaining inter-institutional cooperation with the AIIB are directly observable in the empirical evidence. I argue that the compatibility of their normative frameworks for governing global infrastructure development creates benevolent affinities from the beginning. Furthermore, a challenge to the World Bank’s norm dimension of focality is found to be absent (compare chapter 5.2.1.). The World Bank effectively makes room for the AIIB to also play a significant role in governing infrastructure development in Asia. It thus grants AIIB the possibility to build up its own representation as an efficacious actor in the regime complex. Overall, the World Bank accepts the AIIB as a cooperation partner largely without compromise; It does not make substantive changes to its policies or institutional structures upon the AIIB’s entry to the regime complex of development finance.

6.2.4. What I learn from the World Bank's response strategy

The empirical evidence reveals a particularly congenial relationship between the World Bank and AIIB. In this case study the IO response strategy of Admission emerges in the context of an existing IO which possesses strong focality and a new IO that has the potential to substantially enhance the provision of international development finance. Since the AIIB only poses a low status threat to the existing IO's focality and the World Bank engages in cooperative and rhetorical IO response strategies, the mechanism of status threat is further corroborated. Moreover, this case study reveals that the World Bank considerably responds to the new IO's ambitions and its motivation for entering the regime complex. Building on these insights, I contend that the predominance of the World Bank's rhetorical response strategy is attributable to its strong focality, the normative compatibility between the World Bank and AIIB, as well as the World Bank's perception of the AIIB as a resource enhancer rather than a resource challenger with respect to fostering international infrastructure development.

Knowing more about the World Bank's perspective offers a more detailed explanation why it mainly engages in rhetorical IO response strategies and refrains from making any substantive changes to its own policies or institutional structures. Whereas the AIIB's counter-hegemonic potential creates sufficient reason to expect geopolitical rivalry and overt inter-institutional competition, much of the anticipated furies are still outstanding (Faude & Fuss, 2020b). Unlike China's extensive efforts to demonstrate AIIB's geniality,⁷⁹ the World Bank does not go out of its way to accommodate the AIIB. It willingly engages in co-financed development projects starting from the AIIB's inception, but also distances itself from bridging the gap of infrastructure development in Asia. Hence, the inter-institutional dynamics which play out between the World Bank and AIIB are different from what one would expect considering the geopolitical implications of AIIB's creation and the strong opposition voiced by powerful states such as the US. Therefore, the World Bank's response strategy exhibits a case in which the existing IO projects a great sense of confidence regarding its focality in the regime complex. To sum up, the existing IO's focality offers new explanatory potential for understanding inter-institutional relations and IO response strategies that reach beyond the usual accounts of institutional design similarities (e.g. Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021) and geopolitical concerns in this case (e.g. Ikenberry & Lim, 2017).

⁷⁹ China's integration into the world order has been long part of its official rhetoric: Already at times of the 1995 Taiwan Strait crisis, "Jiang formulated the major task of Chinese diplomacy as 'enhancing trust, reducing trouble, developing cooperation and refraining from confrontation'" (Larson & Shevchenko, 2010, p. 198).

Furthermore, the AIIB's creation is motivated by representational concerns. I argue that the portrayal of the AIIB as a major challenger to the coherence of the development finance regime complex is largely exaggerated when comparing it to the ways in which the AIIB *actually* challenges the World Bank's focality (Stephen, 2017; Weaver, 2015). From the outset the AIIB goes to great lengths to “demonstrat[e] Beijing's willingness to negotiate, agree to, and be bound by the constraints of international institutions, albeit under a potentially rival set of rules, practices, and norms” (Ikenberry & Lim, 2017, p. 12). Significantly, China's motivation for creating the AIIB does not question the normative framework that guides the World Bank's development lending – as AIIB adopts the World Bank's overall policies and mandates. In turn, the World Bank greatly accepts the AIIB as another important (potentially even focal) actor in the regime complex. According to the empirical findings in chapter 5 of this dissertation, the AIIB could merely pose a challenge to the World Bank's resource dimension of focality because it enjoys considerable financial support by Western as well as non-Western member states.⁸⁰ This case study also yields that the World Bank mainly responds to the AIIB in terms of a regional actor because the AIIB is engrossed in regional infrastructure development. Arguably, the normative compatibility between existing and new IOs embodies a pivotal factor for cooperative and rhetorical IO response strategies.

When the existing IO accepts the new IO as a full and capable actor in the regime complex, the available resources for addressing global infrastructure development can be best enhanced by establishing a solid foundation for inter-institutional cooperation. Overall, this case study supports the perception that “focality and first-mover advantages have enabled the [World Bank] to advocate its governance features and shape the coherence of the regime complex” (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1162). I suppose that if the World Bank had really wanted to make infrastructure development in Asia a clear priority, it could have signaled this by investing even more resources in its Asian development projects. But this did not happen. Instead, the World Bank works together with AIIB to jointly enhance development spending in Asia. Thus, the World Bank chooses to peacefully coexist and reaps the most benefits from strengthening inter-institutional cooperation.

In summary, it stands to reason that rhetorical response strategies predominate in the empirical evidence. Moreover, the World Bank's limited adaptation to developments in its own environment only underscores its strong focal position (Clegg, 2013; Park, 2010; Weaver, 2008). I stipulate that

⁸⁰ Since China was very eager for Western states to join (Xi Jinping himself proposed to New Zealand's Prime Minister John Key to become an AIIB member), it gave Western states considerable agency to shape their own membership conditions (Knoerich & Urdinez, 2019).

the AIIB's clear subordination to the World Bank's normative framework and overall low degree of threat to the World Bank's focality lead to the response strategy of Admission. Therefore, the empirical analysis in chapter 5 and findings of the case study in chapter 6 combine to provide a valid explanation of Admission as a cooperative and rhetorical IO response strategy.

6.3. IEA's response to IRENA

At the time of IRENA's Founding Conference on January 26, 2009 not every state was happy about the creation of a new international actor that promotes renewable energies. IEA supporting states such as the UK and US were greatly concerned about "alienating the IEA and its oil producing members, who could see the IRENA as a direct challenge to the UN-backed bodies' authority" (Young, 2009). The creation of IRENA represents a phenomenon that is much larger than itself: it poses a challenge to the existing IO's focality in the global energy regime complex. Given IRENA's effort to transform global energy governance, the IEA has little choice but to expand its policies into the realms of renewable energies. Consequently, from IEA's perspective, IRENA's creation raises concerns over the dissolution of the institutional status quo. Fears persist that a move towards more renewable energy sources weakens the IEA's leading role in ensuring that a steady amount of oil supply can be met, even during times of an oil crisis. Hence, from IEA's standpoint enthusiasm about the prospects of more resilient global energy supplies is initially limited.

This case of IO response strategies is special because it impacts the development of IEA and its larger institutional environment in three particular ways. First, results of the QCA analysis in chapter 5.2.1. reveal that IRENA features a direct challenge to the IEA's capacity as the main resource provider for supporting oil- and nuclear-based energy sources. Since IEA's creation following the 1973 oil crisis, challenges to the IEA have been rare. Previous environmental changes such as rapid increases in the oil consumption of large states such as China and India, are no comparison to the creation of IRENA and subsequent challenges to the prevalence of conventional energy sources. IRENA's purposeful design to advance more environmentally sustainable energy supplies increases the pressure on IEA to remain a relevant and influential international actor. As IEA's mandate *inter alia* specifies that it is "determined to [partake in] accelerated development of alternative sources of energy" (Agreement on an International Energy Program, 1974, p. 4), it stands in direct competition with IRENA concerning research and development of new energy sources. IRENA immediately becomes a contender of the IEA as both IOs seek to be the main

providers that establish global energy security based on promising energy sources. Hence, the creation of IRENA presents an outstanding event in which the IEA's focality is seriously challenged in the regime complex. At the same time, each response by the existing focal IO is significant for the functioning of other IOs as the global energy regime complex is only sparsely populated (a total of ten IOs exist upon IRENA's creation in 2009) and possesses oligopoly-like properties (see Appendix V). Therefore, IEA's response strategy to IRENA's creation offers a prominent case for studying the underlying survival strategy as well as eminent effects on the development of regime complexity.

Second, IRENA's creation has heightened IEA's political salience and flung it to the forefront of international policy debates. The controversies arising from IRENA's creation feature a unique situation for the field of global energy governance that comprises "international collective action efforts undertaken to manage and distribute energy resources and provide energy services" (Florini & Sovacool, 2009, p. 5239). Global energy institutions largely evolved based on historical contingencies and path dependent developments. IOs like the IEA are rather technocratic and typically enjoy low political salience in nation states. However, this changes with IRENA's creation. The establishment of IRENA was a highly politicized issue that was highly present in public debates (Connolly & Gow, 2009; Ebinger & Tanaka, 2009; Van de Graaf, 2012a). Given the high political salience which surrounds IRENA's creation, the stakes are raised for IEA to deal with this institutional newcomer and determine an adequate response strategy.

Third, IRENA's advancement of an alternative governance approach to manage global energy provision stimulates conflicts that hitherto have been covert in the global energy regime complex. The global energy regime complex already has a reputation for being highly fragmented and conflictual (Downie, 2022; Dubash & Florini, 2011; Van de Graaf, 2013a). However, the move towards paying more attention to environmental sustainability "is arguably the single most dramatic shift in the global energy landscape over the last two decades" (Dubash & Florini, 2011, p. 10). The resulting contentions are centered around questions of energy security and the mitigation of climate change (Faude & Fuss, 2020b, p. 278). Given that IRENA precisely embodies these topics, inter-institutional conflicts are sharpened by the rise in renewable energies. Overall, a look at the greater institutional context reveals that IEA's response strategies to IRENA's creation take place in a regime complex which is marked by significant discords about the best means for ensuring global energy security.

The descriptive overview of cases (see Table 4 in chapter 4.2.) shows that the IEA's response strategy most notably consists of changes in its practices and institutional structures to accommodate IRENA's demands. However, can IRENA's defiance of IEA's oil-based energy supplies sustain a full explanation of IO response strategies or is there more to the story? Whereas academic attention has been paid to studying the sources of dissatisfaction which underpinned IRENA's creation (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2015; Van de Graaf, 2013a) and examining differences in the institutional designs of the IEA and IRENA (Overland & Reischl, 2018; Van de Graaf, 2012a), my unique research perspective permits new opportunities to grasp the bigger context in which existing IOs respond to new institutional actors. For instance, knowing more about the underlying motivation to create IRENA and the general context in which IEA struggles to survive as a focal actor yield novel insights into inter-institutional relations and a more comprehensive apprehension of IO response strategies.

The remainder of the case study is structured in the following way. It first examines the motivation behind Germany, Spain and Denmark's creation of IRENA as a new global energy actor. Thereby it addresses the primary guiding question for comparative case study analysis which concerns the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex and the reason for states' dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo. Then, the case study compares the institutional properties and governance approaches of the new IO and existing focal IO, respectively. In conclusion, the IEA's response strategy is investigated with regards to the challenges it faces by IRENA. Special attention is paid to the IEA's strategies which should ensure its survival as a focal actor in the regime complex. This speaks to the second guiding question of comparative case study analysis. Altogether, the empirical insights are assembled to provide an encompassing picture of how the mode of IO response strategies relates to its survival as a focal actor and impacts inter-institutional relations.

6.3.1. IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex

IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex had been seething for some time. Its creation coincides with a period of enormous reorientation towards promoting renewable energies in one of its founding members, namely Germany's *Energiewende*. It received a myriad of support from states who sought to move away from the IEA's principal focus on centralized energy security favoring industrialized states (Dubash & Florini, 2011). Though both IEA and IRENA pursue the same governance goal (global energy security), the creation of IRENA directly challenges the IEA

on a substantive level (Faude & Fuss, 2020b). Following IRENA's creation in 2009, IEA's Executive Director Nobuo Tanaka asserts that "The IEA is the only international energy organization with expertise across the entire energy field" (Ebinger & Tanaka, personal communication, February 13, 2009; in Florini, 2011, p. 49). Given that this statement reinforces IEA's governance space, IRENA's objective to provide secure and sustainable energy for all seems to strike IEA's nerves (IRENA, 2009b). What is more, IRENA's statutes reveal that its creation is

motivated by the huge potential of renewable energy in providing decentralized access to energy, particularly in developing countries, and access to energy for isolated and remote regions and islands (IRENA, 2009b, p. 2).

In essence the motivation behind IRENA's creation is twofold: (i) to promote renewable energies and (ii) to establish a more efficient and equitable international distribution of energy supplies.

The creation of IRENA is rooted in a group of states being dissatisfied with the lack of resources that are directed towards sustainable energy production. Besides considerably slow policy changes in UN institutions, the deficient willingness of IEA member states to shift the focus to renewable energies ultimately triggered the creation of IRENA. IRENA's founder Hermann Scheer (2001) proclaims that renewable energy provisions are "the only hope of sustaining an independent and emission-free supply of energy for mankind [as well as] the most obvious substitutes [for conventional energy sources]". According to Scheer (2001) "One thing is certain: Transformation must take place more rapidly and on a larger scale". In grand total, the establishment of IRENA is a compelling case because it is driven by the objective to transform the existing system on the basis of substituting conventional energy sources with renewable energies.

Seeing that the IEA underestimates the likely benefits of renewable energies, IRENA presents an opportunity to circumvent political opposition within the IEA and to shape more efficient ways for ensuring global energy security (Van de Graaf, 2013a). In 2009 IRENA was brought to life based on the initiative of a group of states led by Germany, Denmark and Spain. In this instance of counter-institutionalization, their common objective consists of "counter[ing] the IEA's alleged supportive stance toward the fossil and nuclear energy industries" (Van de Graaf, 2013b, p. 108). Yet no attempt was made to expand or incorporate renewable energies into the IEA (Florini, 2011, p. 47). Unlike other international energy fora that merely offer a forum for discussion, IRENA actually implements policies to promote the use of renewable energies worldwide. It also pays great attention that its operations alleviate the unfair distribution of global energy supplies. This feature

of IRENA becomes more apparent with regards to its institutional fit to the IEA (see chapter 6.3.2. below).

The establishment of IRENA has levied a profound impact on the global energy regime complex and belligerent inter-institutional relations because its endeavor to foster a more sustainable and efficient governance approach starkly contrasts the IEA's business as usual. Already from the outset IRENA was established with the objective of forming an IO that contrasts customary ways of governance. In this sense IRENA defies existing ways of global energy provision to forge a more sustainable and equitable way of ensuring global energy supplies.

6.3.2. IRENA's fit to IEA

The inquiry into IRENA's institutional fit shows in what manner IRENA transforms existing governance approaches and how it establishes a competitive alternative to the present status quo. Most notably, IEA and IRENA pursue the same governance goals of securing global energy sources. The largest deviation of the institutional status quo is embodied in IRENA's advancement of a different governance approach, which solely focuses on renewable energies. Besides challenging the IEA's governance approach, IRENA also defies IEA's objective of being a central energy provider in the regime complex. Hence, I contend that IRENA's challenge of the IEA is based on efficiency concerns. IRENA's design has been carefully constituted to institutionally distinguish itself from the IEA. More specifically, IRENA's founding father asserts that

The IRENA should have a subsidiary function. It should step in where there is a vacuum, where no one else is playing an active role, and where it is asked to provide assistance (Scheer, 2001).

As I detailed in the preceding section, IRENA was created with the purpose of shaping a more sustainable and equitable environment for governing global energy provision. In many regards IRENA's institutional composition is much more inclusive and state-of-the-art compared to the IEA's rigid structures and outdated governance approach. The main differences (and points of contention) between the IEA and IRENA's institutional set-up lie in their membership composition and hierarchical structures, the abundance of financial resources and the amount of attention which is being directed to ensuring governance equity.

Membership criteria:

IRENA's open membership is part of its aspiration to transform global energy governance. Its institutional structures and governance bodies are designed to compensate for the IEA's exclusionary membership and sturdy focus on fossil fuels as global energy sources (Overland & Reischl, 2018, p. 337). On one hand IEA's membership is limited to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) members. Since IEA was created in the aftermath of the 1970s oil crisis, each member state is required to possess crude oil reserves equivalent to 90 days of the previous year's net imports and to which the government has immediate access, engage in efforts to reduce national oil consumption by 10% and have measures in place by which companies directly report oil levels to the government (IEA, 2022a). On the other hand, the hurdles for becoming an IRENA member are much lower. Any country can join IRENA that is a member of the UN and regional intergovernmental economic integration organizations, and is willing to adhere to the objectives laid out in the IRENA Statute (IRENA, 2022). In 2009 already 22 out of 28 IEA members (a total of 79% of IEA members) are also part of IRENA's membership (see Appendix V). The vast interest in IRENA at the time of its creation already demonstrates how IRENA's contrasting membership criteria offer a competitive alternative to the institutional status quo.

The growth in membership rates further underscores IRENA's growing popularity. A comparison of the first decade of their existence exhibits that IEA's membership expanded from 16 founding members in 1973 to 28 members in the 1990s (Colgan, 2009) while IRENA grew from 123 initial members in 2009 to a total of 168 members in 2022. In turn, IRENA's surging popularity places considerable pressure on the IEA to rethink its policy priorities. Without the creation of a new IO whose growing presence can hardly be ignored in the global energy regime complex, the IEA would face considerably lower adaptation pressures.

Despite alarming observations that "the agency is clearly stretched thin" (Florini, 2011, p. 48), the IEA has little choice but to expand its policies into the realms of renewable energies amid states' vast support of IRENA's effort to transform global energy governance. A closer analysis of the institutional fit between the IEA and IRENA hence shows that IRENA is highly effective in filling these representational gaps to its advantage. This way, it comes one step closer to transforming the field of global energy governance towards a more sustainable and equitable system.

Financial contributions:

Unpacking the institutional distinction between IEA and IRENA further reveals that IRENA's grand financial weight and the principle of voluntariness underpinning member state contributions yields that IRENA poses a heavyweight in the global energy regime complex. Unlike other IOs that have entered the field of global energy governance in earlier times, IRENA's material powers undermine the IEA's role as a potential focal actor in the regime complex. Therefore, it is nearly impossible for the IEA to just ignore IRENA's presence in the field. A comparison of the existing and new IOs' financial scopes visualizes this assertion. On one hand the IEA is a relatively small organization with only about 250 staff, and is arguably one of the best equipped organizations in the global energy regime complex, spanning a budget of approximately 30 million US dollars (Downie, 2020, p. 3). On the other hand, IRENA features an initial budget of 6.175 million US dollars (in 2009) which rests on member states' voluntary contributions (IRENA, 2009a). Following IRENA's principle of voluntariness for collecting financial contributions, each member is only asked to pay a minimum contribution of 210 US dollars. IRENA's budget is 25% of the size of IEA's budget at the time of its entry to the regime complex. Conversely, IEA member state contributions have been frozen since 2008 (see Downie, 2020, p. 4). As this empirical evidence illustrates, IRENA's financial significance has given considerable credibility to its endeavor of promoting renewable energies. It fortifies areas of contention between IEA and IRENA. From the perspective of IEA a real possibility exists that a new focal point is established in the global energy regime complex.

Governance equity:

IRENA specifically focuses on promoting renewable energy supplies in developing countries and on having a practical approach to solving global energy issues. For instance African states expressed most political support towards IRENA (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013). This comes to little surprise as that IEA's "open door policy" allows emerging economies to only take on the status of association countries. As this instance shows, IRENA is skillful at drawing on the potential of a group of prominent states whose representation is entirely absent in the IEA's membership. The IEA's unwavering focus on environmentally harmful global energy supplies by OECD countries only deepens the challenges it faces.

In contrast to the IEA, IRENA fosters a much closer bond to its member states. For one, IRENA meets more frequently and includes all member states in its decision-making processes. Meanwhile the IEA's chief decision-making body follows a top-down governance approach led by its

Governing Board. Its Ministerial meetings only take place every second year. Furthermore, the IEA's voting rules have been frozen since its creation in 1974 and allocate a total of 100 votes on the basis of net oil imports in 1973. Such outdated vote distribution promotes significant power asymmetries among IEA members. IRENA enhances the representation of its members in governance processes because it awards each state one vote in the general assembly. Therefore, IRENA pays explicit attention to equal representation by allowing states to have a much greater say in policy making processes.

Importantly, IRENA has always been concerned with more long-term market trends and taken great pride in its open and inclusive governance approach. The main challenge to the IEA is IRENA's grand membership and popular support in the international realm, as well as its practical approach to ensuring global energy security. Since IRENA possesses a comparatively large budget, it is a significant player in the regime complex. Hence, IRENA taps into a part of the global energy market that was largely unscathed by the IEA and other IOs. IRENA's open-mindedness and hands-on pursuit in seeking global solutions effectively cultivates a tactical advantage over the IEA's narrow focus on fossil fuels (Meyer, 2012, p. 394).

6.3.3. IEA's response strategy: Accommodation

In the two decades before IRENA's creation, the IEA remains a staunch defender of oil and fossil fuels. However, since IRENA's focus on environmental sustainability is very popular among member states, the IEA risks losing credibility as a global energy leader if it continues to adhere to oil and fossil fuels as the main global energy sources. I contend that IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex has provided the stimulus for IEA to adapt its governance approach to new realities. Namely,

The establishment of a countervailing institution has made the IEA much more responsive to the views and interests of the supporters of renewables, because it creates opportunities for forum-shopping (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 471).

Considering that IRENA's sustainable and balanced governance approach appeals to many states, the IEA is put under pressure to act. If IEA were to continue its operations as usual, it risks that forward-thinking states shift forums to IRENA. Yet the IEA can also attempt to keep up with IRENA's progressive policies to demonstrate its relevance as a global actor that takes its environmental responsibility seriously. Most importantly, the IEA alters its institutional structures

and shapes new platforms for promoting renewable energies to accommodate the challenges posed by IRENA. As the following sections will outline in more detail, IEA opts for the latter option. It even incorporates some of IRENA's aspirations in its own governance approach.

The remainder of this section begins by examining the challenges posed to the existing IO's focality. Given the observed response strategy of Accommodation, I then pay attention to IEA's cooperative response strategies with a special focus on the presence of changes in IEA rhetoric and behavior. A subsequent analysis of IEA's competitive response strategies follows. In line with my identification criteria, the study of IO response strategies is temporally limited. It starts in 2008 as the year prior to IRENA's creation (in 2009) and culminates five years following IRENA's creation in 2014. To answer the second question guiding comparative case studies, I especially regard how the rhetorical and behavioral modes of IEA response strategies ensure its survival as a focal actor in the global energy regime complex.

Challenges to IEA's focality:

When the IEA was created in 1974, it was the only organization besides the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) that dealt with global energy issues. IEA was further designated as a focal organization of the global energy regime complex. In other words, the IEA "is at the heart of global dialogue on energy" (IEA, 2022b). The IEA's focality is firmly anchored in the institutional environment governing global energy.

Over time, global energy issues diversified – and so did the institutional landscape. Among all pertinent IOs, the greatest challenger of IEA's focality is IRENA. From the outset IRENA was regarded "as a potential rival organization" to the IEA (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 232). As demonstrated in the previous section (chapter 6.3.2.), IRENA defies the IEA's exclusionary membership, possesses large amounts of financial resources and offers states equitable participation in policy-making processes. This has created a strong alternative forum for global energy governance, which is especially attractive to developing states. Consequently, the growing number of IOs addressing global energy issues in general, and IRENA's creation in particular, has put the IEA's focality under substantive pressure. Nevertheless, I contend that IRENA poses a low to moderate challenge to IEA's focality. While IRENA offers an attractive alternative institutional forum to the existing IO, both IOs pursue the same governance goal. In line with the mechanism of status threat, my theory of IO bureaucracy would anticipate cooperative IO response strategies.

According to the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, a new IO's entry to the regime complex can pose different challenges to the existing IO's focality. Surely, the empirical evidence shows that around the time of IRENA's creation, the IEA steps up its efforts to remain a focal actor in global energy governance. In 2009, just after IRENA officially entered into force, IEA's Executive Director Nobuo Tanaka made the following remark:

It is my view that the IEA can and must remain at the centre of such a global dialogue. [...] We have a philosophy of open markets and diversity of supply. We have a reputation for objective and independent analysis. And we provide a range of forums in which governments – both IEA and non-IEA, as well as researchers and industry experts, can come together to solve common problems in a practical and cooperative environment (Ebinger & Tanaka, personal communication, February 13, 2009; in Florini, 2011, p. 49).

Tanaka's affirmation of the IEA's relevance closely relates to its focality: He justifies the IEA's position with reference to its expertise, reputation and provision of governance forums. Two main observations stand out from this statement. First, this claim transmits a sense of urgency because the IEA's Executive Director emphasizes that the IEA "must remain at the centre of such a global dialogue". Hence, a defensive attitude is conveyed towards maintaining the IEA's focality, which also speaks to the IEA's central role being challenged by IRENA.

Secondly, Tanaka promotes the diversity of IEA's governance approach. The IEA certainly distinguishes itself from other organizations by covering a broad range of energy systems and fuels, including renewable energies (Downie, 2020). In this sense I proclaim that the IEA's broad range of expertise functions as a legitimation tool for its focality: "the further widening of the IEA's portfolio cements the Agency's position as the leading international organization in the energy field" (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 235).

Next to representational and legitimacy concerns, the IEA's integration of renewable energies also has practical concerns. Given that IRENA is the world leader in renewable energies, the IEA can reap benefits through close cooperation with IRENA and simultaneously minimize its own transition costs towards renewables. Any refusal of the IEA to accommodate renewable energies in its encompassing repertoire of energy sources would delimit its credibility as a principal energy leader. The above statement voiced by the IEA's Executive Director becomes ever more pressing when considering that IEA has high stakes to lose if its strong focality were to significantly diminish. It thus provides empirical support for the notion that IEA has come under great pressure to maintain its sturdy focality in the global energy regime complex.

While Tanaka's remarks offer some optimism, there exist vigorous signs that IEA's strong role as a central policy coordinator starts to give in once IRENA is in place. In 2010, shortly after IRENA's creation, Nobuo Tanaka admits that IEA "risked losing relevance" (in Downie, 2020, p. 4). Compared to his remarks of February 2009, this signifies a sharp turn in events. Doubts have also been raised that the IEA does not seem to have the capacities that are necessary to be a central node of the global energy regime complex (Florini, 2011, p. 49). Given that IRENA's creation overshadowed all other developments in global energy governance during this time, I purport that relevant changes in the IEA's rhetoric and behavior are induced by IRENA's formal entry to the global energy regime complex. Hence, it stands to reason that IRENA markedly challenges the IEA's focality.

To summarize, IRENA's genuine potential to become a focal actor combined with enormous public support for renewable energies only increases pressure on the IEA to reinvent itself as an organization that also caters to growing environmental needs. Indeed, at the time of IRENA's creation the German government acclaimed that IRENA "shall act as a focal point for RE [renewable energies] within international cooperation" (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013, p. 8). In the following sections I take a closer look at the ways in which the IEA's cooperative rhetorical and behavioral response strategies help to ensure its survival as a focal actor in the global energy regime complex.

Cooperative response strategies:

Given the considerable challenge which IRENA poses to the IEA's focality, it might come as a surprise that the existing focal IO responds by internalizing the new IO's points of critique. A political compromise pervades IEA's operations in the time following IRENA's creation. The IEA insists on the use of fossil fuels, but at the same time also pays more attention to renewable energy sources. In response to changes in its external environment, largely driven by IRENA's creation, "the agency has diversified away from its original *raison d'être*, namely managing an emergency oil sharing mechanism, to become a more proactive policy adviser guiding its member governments toward sustainable energy economies" (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 293).⁸¹ As such, it is

⁸¹ Around the 1990s the IEA's energy portfolio diversified to also encompass natural gas and electricity markets (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 304). The IEA's goals of 1993 already featured the "three E's": energy security, economic development and environmental protection (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 303). Moreover, IEA's Shared Goals of 1993 show how the IEA has turned towards paying more attention to environmental protection as compared to its IEP Agreement of 1974. Five out of these nine goals concern environmental issues. Significantly, in June 2005 a

enthraling that IEA directly responds on the same level at which it is challenged by IRENA: The IEA's cooperative response strategies reflect how IEA expressly adjusts its institutional structures and governance approach to accommodate renewable energies as eminent global energy sources. In the following I first examine alterations in the IEA's rhetoric before investigating more profound changes to the IEA's practices, policies and institutional structures. Both rhetorical and behavioral modes of IO changes constitute parts of the IEA's cooperative response strategies.

Rhetorical response strategies:

A close investigation of changes in IEA's rhetoric demonstrates that IEA has become much more receptive of moving away from its sole focus on fossil fuel-based energy supplies over time. This case study allows to trace the timeline of these changes in more detail. Though one might argue that the finite supply of fossil fuels, altered domestic preferences or technological advancements inevitably urge IEA to concentrate on finding alternative energy supplies, an outline of IEA's rhetoric shows that the main turning point in the IEA's promotion of more sustainable energy sources coincides with the point in time at which IRENA becomes operational.

In the following I reconstruct the timeline of IEA's rhetorical response strategies according to official statements issued by the IEA and its Executive Director. These data sources offer a coherent account of the IEA's development as they give pertinent insights into the policy focus by which IEA seeks to profile itself as a central governance actor on the international stage. In accordance with the identification criteria of IO response strategies (in chapter 2.3.), I begin the empirical analysis at the time of IRENA's creation in 2009 and end five years later in 2014.

- In 2009 IEA releases a statement which declares that “Abolishing fossil fuel subsidies would boost the world's economy, environment and energy security” (Wynn, 2010). Further, IEA Executive Director Nobuo Tanaka emphasizes the mitigation of climate change as “the most important threat facing us today” (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 235). This rhetoric differs from IEA's earlier narratives which featured a Reference Scenario that “fossil energy will remain dominant to 2030” (IEA, 2006, p. 37).
- In 2010 the IEA's outlook on renewables was extraordinarily positive. It even dedicates an entire section of its 2010 World Energy Outlook (WEO) report to the prospects of

brainstorming session of the IEA's Governing Board emphasized the IEA's focus on energy security and sustainability as its top priorities (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 304).

renewable energy production (IEA, 2010). In this report “the IEA predicted that [solar power] could supply up to a quarter of global power production in 2050, which was much more than the IEA had ever envisioned in any of its scenarios in its annual World Energy Outlooks” (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 471).

- In 2011 a tipping point occurred: Whereas the headline of WEO 2010 was focused on the US taking over Saudi Arabia as the largest oil producers, in 2011 the threat of global warming takes center stage (IEA, 2011). For instance, WEO 2011 proposes subsidies and tax breaks to foster “a rapid expansion of renewable energy” (IEA, 2011, p. 536) that will ultimately lead to “several energy security benefits” (IEA, 2011, p. 537) and even proposes a “substitution of fossil fuels by renewable energy” (IEA, 2011, p. 537). In the same year IRENA’s first Assembly took place on April 4-5, 2011; A defining event that gave birth to a new IO which is fully dedicated to providing sustainable energy to all and mitigating climate change.

IEA essentially transforms its governance approach over time. The most dramatic changes in IEA rhetoric are apparent following IRENA’s first general assembly, upon which environmental sustainability takes a central place in IEA’s quest to secure global energy supplies. After the turning point in 2011 the IEA pushes for concerted efforts to tackle climate change issues, to promote the development of renewable energies and to push for a more environmentally sustainable energy future in cooperation with IRENA. For instance, one main observation in support of this claim consists of the temporal proximity of the change in IEA’s rhetoric to the time at which IRENA becomes operational. Other indicators entail the abruptness of IRENA’s changes in rhetoric as exemplified by the headlines of its WEO reports and the absence of other significant changes that took place in the IEA’s external environment. Further, I contend that IEA’s changed rhetoric reflects the evolved relationship between IEA and IRENA that follows IRENA’s operational inception.

- In 2012 at the 3rd Clean Energy Ministerial held in London, IEA’s Executive Director Maria van der Hoeven warned that “The current state of affairs is unacceptable precisely because we have a responsibility and a golden opportunity to act [on climate change]” (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 235). As this statement shows, the IEA increasingly internalizes a leading role in the global fight against climate change using sustainable energy sources.

- In 2013 IEA Director Maria van der Hoeven is interviewed on the prospects of renewable energy sources. She draws a clear line by differentiating that “we are not promoters of renewable energy, like IRENA” (Beckman, 2013). Though she believes that renewables embody a necessary progress, the move to renewables “won’t be a revolution, but an evolution” (Beckman, 2013).
- In 2014 IEA Director Maria van der Hoeven announced that rather than oil, electricity “is going to play a defining role in the first half of this century as the energy carrier that increasingly powers economic growth and development” (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 233). Most tellingly, IEA has moved away from its position that oil and fossil fuels are indispensable in securing global energy supplies.⁸²

The IEA’s simultaneous endorsement of renewable energy sources and distinction from IRENA demonstrates how it seeks to strike a balance between advocating for steady environmental progress and abolishing the status quo based on acknowledging oil and fossil fuels as the main energy sources. Moreover, the interview of its Executive Director in 2013 shows how deeply aware the IEA is of environmental changes happening in the external environment. In fact, I contend that adapting to such wide-ranging changes in the external environment embodies a very rational reaction by IEA to remain in a central governance position. The IEA arguably guards its focality by demonstrating that it continues to be a reliable actor who operates in the middle of the latest developments, including the promotion of renewable energies. Hence, rhetorical IO response strategies embody one way for the IEA to show that it lives up to its role as a focal actor in the regime complex.

In summary, the IEA’s rhetoric highlights its growing priorities on renewable energies, thus moving away from its obstinate convictions that fossil fuels are the ‘only real’ energy sources. It is striking that IEA’s outlooks on global energy supplies changed from anticipating that fossil energies will remain dominant until 2030 to predicting that solar power could supply a quarter of the world’s energy until 2050. This prediction is a drastic change for the IEA.

⁸² On April 9, 2019 the IEA concludes a Memorandum of Understanding with IRENA (IRENA, 2019).

Behavioral response strategies:

The IEA's response strategy to IRENA does not stop at changes in its rhetoric; Most significantly, IEA's growing focus on renewable energies is also reflected in its institutional makeup. These reactions by the existing focal IO reflect behavioral IO response strategies because they contain profound changes to the existing IO's practices, policies and structures (compare chapter 2.5). Having examined IEA's rhetorical response strategies in the preceding section, this section pays close attention to changes in IEA's behavior in response to IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex.

The IEA's rigid structures and rules from 1973 have made it very hard to fulfil its mandate and prove that it is still a relevant and capable actor amid its waning legitimacy in global energy governance (Colgan, 2009, p. 3). Nonetheless, changes in the IEA's structures and policy focus are well documented (Downie, 2020; Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009). Already in 2008, the IEA transformed its renewable energy unit from the Energy Technology Office to the Directorate of Energy Markets and Security. These developments advanced as part of the greater effort of ensuring that the IEA does not relinquish its focality to the new IO:

In 2009, the IEA could have let go of its renewable energy portfolio in response to the development of IRENA, but instead created a Renewable Energy division of its own (Esu & Sindico, 2016).

Most notably, the upgrade into a full division with nine full-time analysts should signal to Germany, Spain and Denmark that IEA was making a serious effort to upscale renewable energies. The impending threat and actual creation of IRENA, which goes hand in hand with member states' forum shifts, "very clearly altered the IEA's behaviour" (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 471). This behavioral response strategy is significant because it characterizes the fortitude with which IRENA challenges the IEA's focality. The IEA's creation of a new division on renewable energies further substantiates that the mechanism of status threat takes effect. These empirical observations underscore that the existing IO will go to great lengths to protect its focality – such as creating a new division as part of its institutional structures.

The IEA's response strategy of Accommodation embodies a significant turning point for global energy governance because it demonstrates a fundamental shift in conventional governance approaches for securing global energy supplies. Continuing on the path of institutional reforms, the International Low-Carbon Energy Technology Platform (Technology Platform) was created in 2010 and the Renewable Industry Advisory Board (RIAB) was set up in 2011. These IEA Divisions

both gather data and provide policy advice on market-relevant aspects of renewable energy technologies. Whereas the Technology Platform constitutes the main tool for multilateral engagement on clean technologies among its member and partner countries, the business community and other IOs, RIAB is composed of private-sector entities from OECD member states, respectively.

Besides these institutional adjustments, changes in IEA practices are likewise visible. For instance, in 2012 IEA agrees to sign a letter of intent to further enhance inter-institutional cooperation with IRENA. To a wider extent inter-institutional cooperation also includes an official partnership agreement which forms the basis for developing a joint database on renewable energy policies, engaging in information sharing and organizing public events (Esu & Sindico, 2016; Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 234). Despite its rigid institutional structures,

the IEA has nonetheless displayed a large degree of institutional flexibility [...] the agency has been revamped and remains the focal point in the institutional landscape of global energy governance (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 315).

Altogether these changes to the existing IO's behavior empirically corroborates that IEA actively supports transitions towards emerging technologies and renewable energy sources. In the context of this case study, the emergence of a collective environmental consciousness also plays a role. Such shifts in the international realm render it increasingly difficult for the IEA to justify a lack of policy adjustment for handling renewable energy sources. Investigating cases of counter-institutionalization once again shows that IEA was already aware of the measures needed to foster environmentally friendly energy supplies, but did not implement them until faced by an institutional competitor that could credibly form a new focal position in the regime complex. In effect, this transformation process has developed IEA "from an oil lender of last resort [...] to a proactive policy advisor on sustainable energy policies" (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 474).

Overall, the IEA's practices and institutional structures have evolved and now increasingly overlap with IRENA. IEA's behavioral response strategies concretize the transformation process which has already been apparent in its rhetorical response strategies: The IEA includes IRENA's preeminent emphasis on renewable energies into its own governance approach. Most interestingly, it shows that the IEA's response strategy occurs at the same level as IRENA's challenge to the IEA's focality. IEA's behavioral changes thus correspond to IRENA's motivation for entering the regime complex, namely to change the existent governance approach for addressing global energy issues. Due to IRENA's significant challenge of IEA's focality backed by substantial financial

resources and growing public scrutiny, the IEA's behavioral response strategy to IRENA plays a central role in its survival as a focal IO in the regime complex.

Competitive IO response strategies:

Generally speaking, existing IOs can take on board parts of the new IO's challenge or outright compete with the new IO. These strategies of handling contentions over the existing IO's focality are not mutually exclusive. Though the preceding empirical investigation has emphasized IEA's rhetorical, political and structural transformation towards IRENA, inter-institutional rivalries continue to persist in their *de facto* interactions (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 234).⁸³ To begin with, IEA officials were not amused by the creation of IRENA (Van de Graaf, 2012a). The IEA secretariat has even “‘pushed back IRENA two or three times’ before it was actually established in early 2009 (interview with former IEA deputy executive director, Brussels, March 24, 2009)” (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 309). In 2008, just before IRENA's creation, IEA impedes the switch to renewable energies and promotes oil, coal and fossil fuels as irreplaceable technologies. The main reason being that a new environmental IO could threaten IEA's focality and potentially its very existence (Downie, 2020, p. 5). It is even openly acknowledged by IEA staff members that IRENA embodies an organization which clearly competes with the IEA. Seeing that IEA and IRENA both pursue the governance goal of promoting secure global energy supplies, the conflict most prominently features distributional concerns over who is the most effective resource provider.

Given their membership overlap and similar jurisdictions, the IEA and IRENA are clearly competing for the same human and financial resources (Colgan & Van de Graaf, 2015, p. 471).

The focus of inter-institutional competition remains at the resource level. Albeit the IEA and IRENA may quarrel over member state resources in some kind of turf battle, the suggested implication is that the existing focal and new IO agree on the general governance goals and normative framework by which to reach these goals. It is further worth noting that the norm challenge of IEA's focality is coded as being absent in the QCA analysis (compare chapter 5.2.1.). Even the conflict line between developed and developing countries concerning the mitigation of climate change does not doubt the IEA's overall purpose that is specified in its mandate as securing global energy supplies (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 309). In the words of a former IEA staff

⁸³ I consider both rhetorical and behavioral modes of IO response strategies together in the analysis of IEA's competitive response strategies because IEA's response strategy of Accommodation is overwhelmingly cooperative.

member, IRENA “will be a distraction that is going to cost a lot of staff time [...] (interview with former IEA deputy executive director, Brussels, 24 March 2009)” (Van de Graaf & Lesage, 2009, p. 309). Hence, IRENA’s creation arguably diverts from the IEA’s envisioned path of development, but does not brush aside its legitimacy for being a focal actor in the regime complex.

In summary, the creation of IRENA does spark some competition with the IEA’s ways of securing global energy supplies. The ways in which the existing focal IO manages such competitive dynamics has greater implications for the strength of the existing IO’s focality as well as the overall direction in which the regime complex develops. Whereas some competitive response strategies have arisen from resource competition, I determine that cooperative IO response strategies nevertheless prevail because IEA and IRENA both pursue the same governance goal of promoting secure global energy supplies.

6.3.4. What I learn from the IEA’s response strategy

The IEA’s response strategy of Accommodation transforms its governance approach in ways that concurrently ensure its survival as a focal actor in the regime complex. Since IRENA has substantial financial resources at its disposal, it instigates the possibility of establishing a new focal point. The empirical evidence shows that IEA asserts its focality by changing its rhetoric, practices and institutional structures to counteract the challenge posed by IRENA and accommodate renewable energy demands. In fact, renewable energy sources have become a central element of the IEA’s governance approach. Though some competitive dynamics exist between IEA and IRENA, much more empirical evidence points to cooperative inter-institutional relations. For instance, the IEA has agreed to establish shared databases and other structures of information sharing on renewable energies (Esu & Sindico, 2016). For sure, “The IEA of today is not the IEA of 1974” (Beckman, 2013).

In the quest of determining the new IO’s motivation for entering the regime complex (the first guiding question of comparative case studies) and explaining how the observed mode of IO response strategies impacts an existing IO’s survival as a focal actor (the second guiding question of comparative case studies), a close examination of observed changes in IEA’s rhetoric, practices and institutional structures culminate in three valuable lessons.

The first lesson is that IEA's response strategy coincides with IRENA's motivation for entering the regime complex. The case study has shown that IRENA's entry to the global energy regime complex is driven by the motivation to alter extant governance approaches for securing global energy supplies (compare chapter 6.3.1.). It seeks to move global energy governance away from its longstanding focus on fossil fuels towards more environmentally sustainable energy supplies. Hence, IRENA's challenge of the institutional status quo is specifically directed at the IEA's promotion of nuclear-based energy sources. The preceding empirical investigation has shown that in response, the IEA alters its governance approach to also include renewable energies. The IEA not only reacts to changes in its external environment, but further engages in rhetorical and behavioral response strategies that are proportional to the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex. IO changes are only made to those parts of the existing focal IO which are actually challenged by the new IO. Hence, this case provides further evidence that IO response strategies are nuanced to the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex. Hence, the in-depth case study corroborates my assumption that a new IO's motivation to enter the regime complex embodies more than an alternative explanation. It extends the empirical findings of chapter 5 because it demonstrates that an existing focal IO's response strategy is likely directed at the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex.

A second lesson entails that cooperative IO response strategies prevail amid resource competitions because IEA and IRENA pursue the same governance goal. Only judging by the QCA results (see chapter 5.2.1.) it remains puzzling why IEA seeks to foster cooperation with IRENA amid altercations over the distribution of financial and other material resources. For instance, questions arise when comparing the IEA's response strategy with the competitive and behavioral response strategy exhibited by UNHCR towards IOM (compare chapter 6.4.); Why does the IEA not attempt to push IRENA out of its governance space? I maintain that the crucial difference between these cases lies in the congruence of their governance goals. Given that IEA and IRENA both seek to acquire a secure provision of global energy supplies, the IEA majorly responds to the "salutary shock" of IRENA's creation in sympathetic ways (Van de Graaf, 2012b, p. 239). After all, the IEA also profits from IRENA's governance approach. Promoting renewable energy supplies simultaneously helps to achieve the goal of securing energy supplies more generally. Hence, this case study underscores the finding that inter-institutional relations between IEA and IRENA "emphasize partnership based on similar mandates, rather than competition as the key dynamic" (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 235). Furthermore, the IEA's cooperative response strategy reflects a central assumption of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies, which posits that existing focal IOs respond to a new IO in rational ways.

The third lesson concerns the mode of IO response strategies. It maintains that the existing focal IO responds in proportion to the challenge which the new IO poses to the existing IO's focality. As the empirical findings have shown, the IEA's focality is markedly challenged by the presence of IRENA. Hence, IEA is in a vulnerable position. I contend that the mode of IEA's response strategy⁸⁴ is crucial for ensuring its survival as a focal actor. At least in IEA's case, the behavioral response strategy awards the existing focal IO the necessary credibility to survive as a steadfast focal actor in the regime complex. It is a real possibility that states would have sidelined the IEA if it had not accommodated renewable energies in its institutional structures. Though speculation, it is further probable that IRENA would have moved passed the IEA if it had maintained its rigid focus on only securing oil and fossil fuels as pertinent global energy sources. Moreover, the IEA's exhibition of focality would not have achieved as much credibility had it only engaged in rhetorical response strategies. Yet by establishing a new Renewable Energy division, the IEA makes a serious of effort to address the points of critique voiced by IRENA with the purpose of remaining a central actor in the global energy regime complex. Therefore, this case study extends the findings of the QCA analysis as it yields that the mode and corresponding mode of IO changes do play a role in protecting the existing IO's focality.

In summary, it is conspicuous that IEA's turn towards renewable energies occurs at the same time as IRENA enters the global energy regime complex. Through the combination of its behavioral and rhetorical response strategies the IEA "demonstrate[s] its ability to respond effectively to past criticism and position[s] itself to respond to future challenges" (Heubaum & Biermann, 2015, p. 237). The IEA's response strategy of Accommodation has enhanced its focality and arguably succeeded at maintaining its relevance as a focal actor in the global energy regime complex. In accordance the following observation is made:

the fact that no new energy IOs have been established to rival the IEA, that it has managed to broaden its mandate, and in turn cultivate new governance functions, are all indications that [...] the IEA's modernisation programme has been positive for the agency (Downie, 2020, p. 6).

It is questionable whether IEA would have emerged in such a strong position following IRENA's creation if it had not accommodated its rhetorical and behavioral composition, respectively. Moreover, this in-depth study of IEA's response strategy yields that the mode of IO response strategies links the type of challenge to the existing IO's focality (as identified in the QCA analysis),

⁸⁴ It is implied that behavioral response strategies reach deeper into the existing IO's functioning as compared to rhetorical response strategies, as further explained in chapter 2.5.

the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex and the existing IO's focal strength to ensure its survival as a relevant focal actor in the regime complex. Therefore, this dissertation begins to fill an important research gap by closely examining the understudied phenomenon of IO response strategies.

6.4. UNHCR's response to IOM

In 2016 the sheer number of around 17 million refugees and 36 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) that fall under the mandate of UNHCR has almost doubled compared to 2010 (UNHCR, 2022). Such a large quantity of people by far exceeds the operational capacities of any single IO. One would think that inter-institutional cooperation is imperative in such a fast-growing environment. Given that each number directly represents one person's livelihood, one would assume that UNHCR extends its open arms to welcoming IOM into the UN system. However, UNHCR's response to IOM's entry in the UN system is quite vigorous. In the place of effective inter-institutional cooperation "there was a competition between the two organisations [UNHCR and IOM] to frame the issue in a way that would give them a more significant role in the response" (Moretti, 2021, p. 43). It is puzzling that UNHCR invests ample resources into constraining IOM's focality in the refugee regime complex when it simultaneously faces the challenge of providing comprehensive and much-needed humanitarian relief for a growing number of refugees and IDPs.

The management of international refugee and migration movements is recognized as a global issue in the 1990s. By the early 2000s, the main international actor working on migration – UNHCR – has been gradually pushed more to the background (Betts, 2009b, p. 11). In 2016 the second important player in international migration management – the IOM – formally entered the UN system.⁸⁵ At the 71st session of the UN General Assembly in New York, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi (2016) announces:

we [UNHCR] are delighted that IOM has now joined the UN family, and are intensifying our collaboration in the context of mixed migratory flows.

Subsequently he also declares that UNHCR's key orientation lies on

enabl[ing] refugees, internally displaced and stateless people to reclaim or acquire full membership in society and build a stable future (Grandi, 2016).

⁸⁵ The IOM was created only one year after UNHCR became operational in 1951. Since interpreting UNHCR's actions in 1952 as IO response strategies would likely overestimate my findings, I specifically focus on UNHCR's response strategy to IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016.

This statement shows two contradictory developments: First, that UNHCR seeks to effectively cooperate with IOM, and second, that UNHCR has crept into the IOM's realm of governance. As this case study will show the latter development largely obliterates the first. Whereas UNHCR was originally mandated to protect refugees based on humanitarian concerns, its governance focus has expanded to also address IDP and stateless persons – a group of migrants that constitutes the main governance focus of IOM.

But why does UNHCR respond so sensitively to IOM's entry to the UN system? And why does UNHCR encourage inter-institutional competition instead of peacefully coexisting with IOM? A profound and qualitative analysis shows that there is indeed more to the story. UNHCR's policy scope expansion is not just a plain response to IOM's entry to the UN system, but is further attributable to UNHCR's waning focal strength. This case is important because it shows how changes in the focal IO's external environment reshape its operational and policy orientation. With its entry to the UN system, IOM also enters the humanitarian governance space. In the following sections I illuminate IOM's motivation to become a formally related organization of the UN, compare institutional design similarities and explain how UNHCR utilizes Obstruction as a response strategy to maintain its focal position in the refugee regime complex.⁸⁶

6.4.1. IOM's entry to the UN system

With this case study, my dissertation research enhances the understanding of the political implications of IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016. So far, research on this topic has been mainly conducted from a legal perspective (e.g. Cullen, 2019). The IOM is created in 1951, when it was still called the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe.⁸⁷ It takes on governance issues such as labor migration and other forms of forced migration that were neglected by UNHCR's rigid focus on humanitarian issues and refugee protection.

⁸⁶ I use the term "refugee regime complex" for reasons of simplicity; the regime complex entails both, movements of refugees and migrants.

⁸⁷ It was also called the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (in 1952) and the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (in 1980) before being named the International Organization for Migration in 1989 (IOM, n.d.).

The US consciously creates IOM as a designated “rival organisation” to UNHCR and the ILO (Geiger, 2020, p. 299). Amid fears of Communist influence in UN agencies, the US was skeptical of UNHCR’s protection approach and favored the actual transportation of people (Geiger, 2020, p. 295; Parsanoglou, 2015, p. 179; Pécoud, 2020, p. 5). It was cheekily dubbed as the “international travel agency” because it operated outside of the UN system and lacked formal acknowledgment as an international migration agency (Pécoud, 2020, p. 2). The IOM was supposed to be confined to logistical work, consist of like-minded capitalist states and be dismantled after resolving Europe’s overpopulation issue. However, the issue of managing international migration flows persisted and only gained traction over time. The migration crisis of 2015 presented an opportunity for the IOM to step up its leadership in managing international migration movements.

By 2016, it was clear that the UN system needed a migration-focused agency, and IOM wanted to avoid the creation of a competitor institution (Bradley, 2021, p. 262).

Five decades after IOM’s creation, the US undertook great efforts to expressly tie it to core human rights standards (Bradley, 2017). In June 2016 IOM member states voted in favor of becoming a related UN organization, but against becoming a full UN member. This decision is based on practical considerations. It allows the UN to approve the official UN-IOM Agreement (A/70/976)⁸⁸ on 25 July 2016, which is still in time for the UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants that took place on 19 September 2016.⁸⁹ An IOM that is related to the UN system maintains its autonomy and independence (it is not subject to oversight by the UNGA) while also keeping its lean bureaucracy and flexible governance approach (Geiger, 2020, p. 293). The objective behind including IOM as a related organization to the UN system is to “enhance [the] ability [of the two organizations] to fulfil their respective mandates in the interest of migrants and their Member States” (Moretti, 2021, p. 35). A first step in this direction is already taken at the time of IOM’s entry to the UN system, when the UNGA unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)⁹⁰ which is the first official document to simultaneously address refugees and migrants. Its objective is to shape “a strong UNHCR-IOM team working together” which issues protection for refugees and migrants as close to their home country as possible (UNGA, 2017, p. 28).

⁸⁸ UNGA seventieth session on July 8, 2016, Agenda item 175: Agreement Concerning the Relationship between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/976).

⁸⁹ Being a UN specialized agency would have required IOM to be accepted by the UN Economic and Social Council, which would have prolonged the process and risked meeting the deadline of the UN summit in September (Bradley, 2021, p. 263).

⁹⁰ Signed on 19 September 2016. This Declaration calls for two distinct global compacts: The Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

In essence, I argue that the IOM's entry to the UN system is driven by the desire to enhance its status and obtain a more prominent role in shaping comprehensive governance frameworks to manage international refugee and migration movements. Previously seen as “primarily a *service organization*” (Goodwin-Gill, 2019 emphasis in original), the IOM is awarded more prestigious responsibilities following its formal entry to the UN system.⁹¹ For example, IOM becomes the lead coordinator of the UN Network on Migration, which is responsible for facilitating the negotiation and later implementing and reviewing the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (UN, 2018). As one direct observer asserts: “It’s a step up. ... It’s like a university joining the Ivy Leagues, it makes a big difference to them [IOM staff] in terms of their morale” (Bradley, 2021, p. 270). Therefore, with its entry to the UN system, IOM has elevated itself to being a key player in shaping the governance framework for managing global refugee and migration movements.

Whereas IOM's formal status has significantly improved since its entry to the UN system, its normative track record still sits uneasily with the positive norms promoted by the UN. One example being non-interference with state sovereignty. IOM is all too often accused of acting in the interest of state governments and against “unwanted refugees” (Georgi, 2010, p. 45) and the people who need protection the most. Therefore, critics fear that IOM utilizes its new status to legitimize actions that conflict with UN values (Cullen, 2019; Goodwin-Gill, 2019; Guild et al., 2017). At the same time, its entry into the UN system grants the opportunity to bolster IOM's normative credibility. In the 2016 Agreement IOM pledges that it “recognizes the responsibilities of the United Nations [UN] under its Charter and the mandates and responsibilities of other [UN] organizations” (UNGA, 2016, Article 2). There also exists empirical evidence which supports such large claims. For example, UNHCR and IOM's extensive cooperation on humanitarian work in the field of displacement. Even before its formal entrance into the realm of UN humanitarian affairs, the IOM has already adopted a focus on humanitarian efforts in its policies such as IOM's 2012 Migration Crisis Operational Framework (IOM, 2012), the 2015 Migration Governance Framework (IOM, 2015a) and 2015 Humanitarian Policy (IOM, 2015c).

Beyond its proclaimed humanitarian engagement, IOM's bundled efforts fall short of actually advancing migrant rights because its Constitution continues to lack a protection mandate. In a way, the UN-IOM Agreement of 2016 reinforces normative contentions which have already existed since the IOM's inception in 1951. At the core, IOM remains a self-proclaimed “non-normative”

⁹¹ Previous attempts by IOM to establish formal cooperation with the UN took place in 2003 and 2007, but failed to reach this objective due to lacking member state support (Bradley, 2021, p. 257).

organization⁹² that shies away from taking up real normative responsibility for its actions. IOM's entry to the UN system sends contradictory signals that demonstrate a certain willingness to evolve into a more serious normative actor on the one hand, but also substantiate claims which accuse the IOM of window-dressing (e.g. Goodwin-Gill, 2019) on the other hand. IOM has arguably seized the possibility to become a formal legal part of the UN system as an opportunity to gain international recognition as a leading policy figure and grow out of its image as a service provider to manage migration movements.

Therefore, I contend that IOM's entry to the UN system ensues based on both a status-driven and norm-driven motivation for becoming a central actor in the global refugee regime complex. As the next section of this case study will show, IOM's entry to the UN system neither resolves substantive differences in UNHCR and IOM's approaches to managing international refugee and migration movements, nor establishes an effective division of labor.

6.4.2. IOM's fit to UNHCR

Investigating the institutional fit is important because it highlights the precise areas of friction between the existing focal and new IO – both in terms of competing over resources and setting the normative standards for the governance of global refugee and migration movements. This case entails an existing focal and new IO which not only possess different normative orientations, but also feature disparate institutional designs. While some willingness to cooperate is shown by both sides, I demonstrate that frictions between their normative frameworks impede productive inter-institutional cooperation. I first examine institutional design similarities before zooming in on the type of challenge which IOM poses to UNHCR's focality.

The institutional designs of UNHCR and IOM reflect their different ways of tackling global cooperation problems. On one hand, as a specialized agency UNHCR is designed to fulfill the UN vision of a 'free and fair world'; It works on a mandate-basis and is accountable to the UNGA. Accordingly, it possesses classical UN structures that follow vertical and highly bureaucratized decision-making and feature majority decisions based on one-state-one-vote procedures. Its convoluted bureaucratic structures render it a rather slow-moving body that takes some time to

⁹² The term "non-normative" highlights its "independent, autonomous and [...] non-normative working relationship with the UN" (Guild et al., 2017, p. 13). Elspeth Guild and colleagues (2017, p. 14) further argue that it is impossible to define "non-normative" in a manner which is consistent with UN human rights objectives.

respond to new developments, especially to crisis situations. Its steadfast institutional structures have firmly positioned UNHCR as a reliable actor that is geared to fulfilling its “surveillance role as set out in the 1951 Convention” (Betts, 2009b, p. 10) and ensuring a fair treatment of refugees according to the UN Humanitarian Principles. From a financial perspective, UNHCR is quite dependent on states. Its budget is predominantly composed of voluntary contributions from state governments (90% of its budget) and supported by contributions from the private sector (9% of its budget) and the UN to cover administration costs (1% of its budget) (ExCom, 2019). In the 1990s it underwent a massive expansion, increasing its budget to \$1.3 billion and a staff size of more than 5.000 (Betts, 2009b, p. 10). By 2016 the budget skyrocketed to a total of \$6.5 billion (UNHCR, 2015).

On the other hand, IOM's operations are directed at making a practical contribution to managing global refugee and migration movements on the ground. The IOM's substantive focus lies on providing “secure, reliable, flexible and cost-effective services for persons who require international migration assistance” (IOM, 2020). IOM enjoys a reputation of being a very flexible and crisis-proof organization (Kreuder-Sonnen & Tantow, 2022). Already at its inception, its institutional structures are designed to operate efficiently. IOM exhibits a highly decentralized decision-making process in which the Headoffice has no formal discretion over the work of the Field Offices. Hence, decisions can be taken at the Headquarters level, at the Head of Missions or Regional Head level and at the Executive Committee level. Decisions are reached by majority (also on a one-state-one-vote basis). Further, the dependency on project-based funding additionally strengthens its flexible approach, but also creates a ‘satisfier’ culture which is directed at meeting states’ demands in order to secure future funding. Its budget amounts to an impressive \$119 million in 2016 (IOM, 2015b). To realize its goals, IOM is highly dependent on donor states (Moretti, 2021). Hence, the IOM's institutional structures contribute to creating a service-oriented governance approach to managing international migration. The differences in decision-making structures, bureaucratic complexity and membership compositions show that the institutional designs of UNHCR and IOM are very distinctive.

IOM's rapprochement to the UN system is steady albeit protracted. In general, the IOM has grown from a purely logistic agency into a more genuine migration agency. By 2016 it follows UN salary schemes, pension schemes, security systems, and the UN Staff Rules and Regulations (Bradley, 2021, pp. 254–255). A rapidly growing IOM membership results in 97% of UNHCR member states also being IOM member states (based on own calculation, see Appendix V). At the time that IOM enters the UN system, “With some 10,000 staff in 500 offices and duty stations, IOM is now by

some measures as large as UNHCR, with its approximately 10,100 staff in 471 locations” (Bradley, 2017, p. 97). According to my theoretical conjectures, growing similarities in their institutional sizes and structures point towards growing friction as each IO bolsters its resources in an attempt to fiercely guard its central significance in the refugee regime complex. The question arises whether these IOs are capable of bridging their differences and shaping a concerted effort to effectively govern international refugee and migration movements.

One open query is to what extent IOM challenges the norm and resource dimensions of UNHCR’s focality. In this next step, I analyze the overlap between UNHCR and IOM’s mandates in more detail. This analysis focuses on better understanding the consequences for the prospects of inter-institutional cooperation between UNHCR and IOM in terms of definitional scopes of refugees and migrants, the absence of a protection mandate and following securitized approaches to managing migration movements.

The definitional scope of refugees and migrants is important because it shows UNHCR and IOM’s consensus over the object that is to be governed. The extent of agreement on the same governance object is a prerequisite for inter-institutional cooperation, turf battles or for existing side-by-side. Most profoundly, UNHCR’s definition of refugees is quite restrictive as compared to IOM’s much more encompassing definition of refugees and migrants. UNHCR significantly limits itself to the protection of refugees classified as

someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being prosecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (UNHCR, 1951, p. 3),

which is also anchored in the 1951 Refugee Convention. For IOM, a migrant reflects

the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons (IOM, 2019, p. 132).

It encompasses groups of individuals ranging from migrant workers and smuggled migrants to movements of international students. IOM hence follows an inclusive approach which recognizes *migrant* as a sort of umbrella term. Since UNHCR’s definitional scope is also contained within IOM’s definition of refugees and migrants, IOM poses the danger of also taking over UNHCR’s governance object. Therefore, IOM poses a high degree of challenge to UNHCR’s focality. Unless

UNHCR enjoys something akin to a monopoly over refugee governance or both IOs come to terms with a clear division of labor, it is already predisposed to respond competitively towards IOM's entry to the UN system.

Different normative frameworks come along with different responsibilities. Concurrently this case exhibits contention over the distribution of lead responsibilities. Especially mixtures of roughly equally large groups of refugees and migrants cause disagreement between UNHCR and IOM. Informal arrangements⁹³ failed in their implementation. As the example of managing Rohingya refugees shows, UNHCR and IOM lock horns over framing the issues to their own advantage. While UNHCR struggles with its humanitarian mandate as it attempts to classify Rohingya people fleeing their country, IOM single-handedly takes on the lead responsibility and immediately characterizes Rohingya refugees as 'irregular migrants':

While both UNHCR and IOM try to profile themselves as the best providers of solutions, it appears that IOM is indeed a more attractive option for states due to its lack of a protection mandate and its flexibility as a service provider that does not question states' policies. These developments appear to have taken place to the detriment of refugees and asylum seekers, to the dismay of UNHCR (Moretti, 2021, p. 43).

One considerable source of friction between the existing focal and new IO constitutes IOM's broad mandate. It further initiates turf battles over the IOs' responsibilities (Moretti, 2021). Their differences are most pronounced in their understandings of the protection needs of refugees and migrants. I contend that IOM's absence of a protection mandate poses a strong challenge to UNHCR's norm dimension of focality. Since the 1950s UNHCR has set the status quo of refugee governance based on international protection and humanitarian assistance (UNHCR, 1950). An encompassing list of humanitarian standards and principles applies to all individuals eligible under UNHCR's protection mandate. They include the right to life with dignity, the right to humanitarian assistance and the right to protection and security (Sphere Movement, 2018, p. 29).⁹⁴ Since IOM's Constitution does not include a protection mandate, it does not limit its operations to such principles and is free to address any group of people that are migrating.

IOM already sets the course for questioning the value of the normative status quo. For example, failed attempts to manage the flows of Rohingya refugees in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea

⁹³ For instance, the informal arrangement that UNHCR takes the lead when groups of refugees prevail and IOM takes the lead when other forms of migrants predominate.

⁹⁴ These are also the minimum standards set out in the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response.

expose substantive disagreements in the development of an effective response plan on how to treat refugees and migrants. The IOM's governance approach entails the construction of detention-like facilities and offering assistance to those who wish to return to their home countries. This state-centric and managerial approach to managing migration, powered by the consideration of costs and benefits, mainly satisfies the interests of the host government. In contrast, UNHCR's humanitarian efforts are centered around finding resettlement options for the Rohingya people. A tradeoff evidently exists in the rigidity of human rights standards. Since IOM largely emphasizes shared benefits, depoliticizes migration, downplays power imbalances between states and imposes fewer constraints on member states, it explains why states may favor IOM at the expense of the UNHCR (Pécoud, 2020, p. 13; Wunderlich, 2012, p. 496).⁹⁵ Though IOM increasingly pays attention to the humanitarian aspects of forced migration (such as humanitarian concerns of migrant workers), its reputation is wedded to acting as an entrepreneur-like organization that is efficient, flexible and quite effective in disaster-induced forms of migration (Bradley, 2017, pp. 97–101).

Since IOM promotes a more securitized governance approach that stands in contrast with UNHCR's humanitarian approach in managing refugee movements, incompatibilities arise. In general

IOM speaks to three political agendas: (1) security concerns and state control over borders; (2) labour market preoccupations with economic migration; and (3) the imperative to protect migrants through humanitarian interventions and development (Pécoud, 2020, p. 15).

Given that IOM defines (groups of) refugees and migrants rather loosely, “when the IOM deals with security or market issues, it does so in a broadly defined ‘humanitarian’ or ‘developmental’ manner” (Pécoud, 2020, p. 14).

One trademark of IOM's governance approach is that it does not impose norms on states, but leaves its rhetoric open to interpretation. Its main governance strategy consists of persuasion and consensus building. It further externalizes border control measures and makes them part of states' responsibilities. Moreover, the IOM promotes a seemingly superficial slogan of *managing migration*

⁹⁵ “Major human rights NGOs [non-governmental organizations], including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have sharply criticized the IOM, while many other civil society organizations perceive the IOM as a rival in the humanitarian marketplace. Other associations feel threatened or ignored by the IOM's project. In some cases, the IOM has even sponsored the creation of new NGOs to challenge already-existing ones, thereby prompting accusations of manipulation” (Pécoud, 2020, p. 14).

for the benefit of all (IOM, 2022). It is no coincidence that the Global Compact on Migration features the same vague language, as IOM plays a relevant role in creating this Compact.⁹⁶

As a closer look at the institutional fit demonstrates, the absence of IOM's protection mandate awards it a competitive advantage over UNHCR in terms of a broader applicability of its governance approach and greater governance efficiency. Over time IOM has grown into an organization that positions itself more and more as a focal actor in the refugee regime complex. Thus, IOM's entry to the UN system does not resolve prevailing normative tensions between UNHCR and IOM. To the contrary: IOM continues to act as a rival organization to UNHCR even after it formally enters the UN system.

6.4.3. UNHCR's response strategy: Obstruction

UNHCR has long expanded its protection mandate and operational capacities beyond the confines of being a sole guarantor of refugee protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention. It relinquishes its role as a nonpolitical and exclusive humanitarian actor by also becoming an advocate for the rights of individuals fleeing from violence. Simultaneously its limited operational capacities grow well beyond giving legal advice on building protection capacity (Betts, 2009b, p. 10). Despite UNHCR's repeated rhetorical emphasis on cooperation, its policy scope expansion significantly encourages competition and is directed at containing IOM's influence in governing international refugee and migration movements. In this sense actions speak louder than words.

What circumstances can explain UNHCR's response strategy of Obstruction? This section focuses on building a more comprehensive explanation for UNHCR's competitive and behavioral response strategy. It casts a wide net of viable explanations because it looks beyond the key components of the theoretical framework of IO response strategies (compare chapter 3) and the sufficient conditions for competitive IO response strategies identified by the QCA analysis (see chapter 5). This case is significant for obtaining a more profound understanding of the development of inter-institutional relations because it shows how a long-standing focal IO and concomitant norm setter in the regime complex struggles against being replaced by an increasingly prominent new IO. After

⁹⁶ The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration is developed by the IOM, the Global Migration Group, the Office of the UN Secretary-General and the Presidency of the UNGA. The Global Compact for Refugees is created and "owned" by UNHCR (Slocum, 2017).

all, the way in which UNHCR and IOM interact has direct real-life implications for the lives of refugees and IDPs.

IOM's entry into the UN system has definitely been a turning point for UNHCR.

Many saw joining the UN system as part of IOM "growing up," and a means of accruing influence in policy debates and operations. Others saw clear costs in entering the UN system and were ambivalent (Bradley, 2021, p. 264).

In this case the former sentence more accurately describes the controversial circumstances as IOM's heightened influence in the refugee regime complex besets UNHCR's focality. A central observation is that UNHCR's response strategy contains an active pursuit of taking over IOM's governance space through policy scope expansion. For example, UNHCR expands the scope of its work into issue areas in which it faces competition such as the management of IDPs (Betts, 2013). While some forms of cooperation mainly exist at the field level, their interactions are nonetheless "charged with competition and suspicion" as well as "conflict" and "resentment" (Elie, 2010, p. 352).

My empirical observations show that IOM's entry to the UN system poses a notable threat to UNHCR's focality. In accordance with my mechanism of status threat,

UNHCR is eager to show that it is ahead of other agencies in regard to any issue relating to forced displacement and protection (Gottwald, 2010, p. 17).

For one, UNHCR seeks to draw a succinct distinction to IOM by offering a clear definition of refugees and migrants. It additionally engages in issue linkage to ensure that states commit to refugee protection. Hence, UNHCR's response strategy goes beyond trying to delegitimize IOM's presence in the UN system. The purpose behind these response strategies is to confine IOM's focality in the refugee regime complex and hinder its expansion. I first elaborate on UNHCR's focality before examining more comprehensive explanations for UNHCR's competitive and behavioral response strategies to IOM's entry to the UN system.

UNHCR's focality:

Traditionally, UNHCR has enjoyed significant moral authority in the refugee regime complex. As a central norm setter, it reinforces the principle of non-refoulement⁹⁷ set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention, the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 3) and the Convention Against Torture. The elevation of non-refoulement to a non-derogable customary international norm lies at the core of its protection mandate and focality. Its vertical structure of decisionmaking further enables UNHCR to effectively set normative standards in the refugee regime complex within the limits of its functional scope and authority prescribed in its mandate (Gottwald, 2010). In the first half of its existence UNHCR “had confidence in its strategic purpose and was aware of the changing global political context” (Loescher, 2017, p. 84). The second and more recent half of its existence has faced a more fragmented international environment with new power centers and different normative approaches to governing international refugee and migration movements. This places great strains on UNHCR's focality.

Previous to IOM's entry to the UN system, UNHCR has repeatedly reinvented itself in order to remain the lead organization in the refugee regime complex. The IOM's growing presence promptly challenges UNHCR's “de facto monopoly over refugee protection” (Betts, 2009b, 2013, p. 74). With its entry to the UN system

the IOM has successfully positioned itself as the leading and dominant intergovernmental organisation concerning nearly all aspects that can be related to migration and have any bearing on migration issues (Geiger, 2020, p. 295).

The IOM's expert authority, central position in the field and close cooperation with states have rendered it a *de facto* focal position in the refugee regime complex (Pécoud, 2020, p. 9). Hence, there exists little doubt that UNHCR's focality in the refugee regime complex has come under great pressure since the 2000s, especially following IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016. The period of 2016-2018 is crucial for the global governance of refugees because at this time the international migration regime starts to institutionalize at the international level (Slocum, 2017). Up until the 2016 Declaration and the UN Summit refugee and migration topics were treated separately.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ The non-refoulement principle forbids the return of individuals to states where they risk facing inhumane treatment or torture (UNHCR, 1951, Article 33).

⁹⁸ Further, national governments have blocked any attempts to establish a coherent international framework for refugee and migration governance because separate regimes enable forum shopping opportunities.

UNHCR's behavioral response strategies are twofold. On one hand UNHCR notably responds to external pressures in terms of institutional reform and the decentralization of institutional structures; relevant work is conducted by field operations and tasks are outsourced to external service providers (Gottwald, 2010, p. 36). On the other hand, UNHCR has sought to maintain its focality amid increasing pressure from the IOM by expanding its mandates and widening its policy scope. These developments have direct consequences for its focal strength:

Many have argued that the gradual shift [...] to a more politicized humanitarian actor since the 1980s has gradually comprised the moral authority of UNHCR (Goodwin-Gill, 2000). Others suggest that the expansion of the work and mandate of the UNHCR has been necessary to ensure its ongoing relevance to states (Betts, 2009b, p. 11).

My research shows that UNHCR substantially expands its work into the spheres of migration and IDPs in an attempt to bolster its own focality. It goes to considerable length to maintain its focality. For example, UNHCR has linked refugee issues to migration and development issues. This move is momentous since UNHCR has always paid careful attention to keep the refugee regime separate from the migration regime including voluntary returns, forced migration, IDPs, and other forms of economic migration. Its underlying aim arguably consists of minimizing IOM's relevance in the field. UNHCR's response to IOM's entry to the UN system is significant because it highlights the urgency for maintaining its focal position in the refugee regime complex. The reform of UNHCR's institutional structures, its widening policy scope and ensuing issue linkage underscore my argument that UNHCR faces a decline in its focality and scrambles to maintain relevance as a focal IO upon IOM's entry into the UN system. Therefore, this case is representative of situations in which an existing focal IO responds to the presence of a new focal IO in the regime complex.

UNHCR's cooperative response strategy:

The tenor of UNHCR's rhetoric is that IOM has *de facto* already operated as a UN organization even well before it signed the 2016 agreement. Therefore, IOM's entry to the UN system is portrayed as a formalization of interactions and interdependence that already existed. In the expression of a former UNHCR official: "They are in the UN, they're called the UN Migration Agency, and they'll be invited to all the key forums" (Bradley, 2021, p. 261).

UNHCR has time and again voiced its intention to cooperate with the IOM, emphasizing that international cooperation “is the only way forward” (UNHCR, 2016). At least in its rhetoric, UNHCR regards IOM increasingly as an equal partner and formal counterpart.⁹⁹ Moreover,

among some leaders there was also optimism that, if brought into the UN system, IOM could be more easily prevailed on to adopt and abide by the UN’s norms (Bradley, 2021, p. 266).

In fact, the empirical evidence also exhibits UNHCR’s attempt at integration through cooperation, which further underscores that IO response strategies are not mutually exclusive. Their joint management of international refugee and migration movements exemplifies how UNHCR and IOM at least have the potential to create an effective division of labor based on their mandates and areas of expertise. One indicator of (albeit limited) success of this integration strategy is that IOM commits to respecting international refugee law and UNHCR’s categorization of refugees and migrants. The observation of more concrete forms of cooperation further indicates that UNHCR and IOM’s cooperative interactions reach beyond rhetorical proclamations. The internationalization of the global migration regime is one prominent example. Within the course of IOM’s entry to the UN system – which already represents one significant step towards shaping a more coherent international migration system – the paths are formed for shaping the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees. UNHCR is mainly tasked with designing the Global Compact for Refugees and is also presented as the ‘sole owner’ of this compact within the UN (Slocum, 2017, p. 4). However, the IOM is tasked with supervising the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration for shaping an international migration system. Hence, UNHCR maintains its function as a central norm setter in international refugee governance while also effectively integrating IOM into its normative framework and at the same time preventing IOM from becoming the sole focal actor in the refugee regime complex.

The empirical evidence further outlines first attempts to clarify their roles in situations in which both IOs allege that they have the legitimacy to intervene. For example, in September 2019 UNHCR and IOM published a joint letter to clarify their roles and coordination arrangements. According to my research design this letter constitutes a formal and rhetorical response strategy on the part of UNHCR to IOM’s entry to the UN system. UNHCR “recognizes IOM’s lead in supporting migrants in vulnerable situations”; Concerning movements that feature a mix of refugees and migrants, UNHCR and IOM proclaim to “work hand-in-hand in establishing and co-

⁹⁹ For example, UNHCR and IOM successfully cooperated on the ground in the Libyan revolution in 2011 and the management of refugees between Indonesia and Australia (see also Bradley, 2021, p. 265; Moretti, 2021, p. 40).

leading Refugees and Migrants Coordination Platforms for effective coordination” (UNHCR & IOM, 2019). Nonetheless, different attempts at creating a formal division of labor between UNHCR and IOM have *de facto* failed to ameliorate the growing competition between UNHCR and IOM as they continue to creep into each other’s governance spaces and areas of expertise.

This section has demonstrated that some inter-institutional cooperation between UNHCR and IOM is evident in rhetoric and practice. However, I argue that it only circumvents the genuine coordination problems caused by their divergent definitional scopes of refugees and migrants as well as their different normative frameworks and governance approaches.

UNHCR’s competitive response strategy:

This case of UNHCR’s response strategy is especially interesting because IOM pursues a dualistic approach: It seeks to establish more cooperation with the UN bodies and at the same time also profiles itself as the most prominent ‘UN migration agency’ – and thus directly competes with UNHCR as the central ‘UN refugee agency’. Given their opposing normative frameworks, refugees and migrants either enjoy access to territories under the principle of non-refoulement promoted by UNHCR, or states follow the ‘internal flight alternative’ promoted by IOM which maintains that IDPs are able to find protection within their own state and thus may be refused asylum by countries (especially Northern states) in which they would be refugees. Inevitably, contentions arise.

Whereas UNHCR’s rhetorical response strategy partly aims to maintain cooperative relations with IOM, at the same time its behavioral response strategy attempts to minimize IOM’s governance space. The empirical observations further reinforce observed responses of Obstruction as UNHCR seizes the opportunity to take control of policy issues that are traditionally addressed by IOM such as the governance of IDPs and other forms of migration.

Competition between the refugee regime and the travel- and labor migration regimes¹⁰⁰ really started in the 2000s when IOM received substantial support and no longer struggled to survive as an international organization. Commentators criticized that formally including IOM as a part of the UN system is no remedy for “unfinished business” (Guild et al., 2017, p. 19) or “missed opportunity” (Micinski & Weiss, 2016, p. 4) in terms of managing large-scale movements of refugees and migrants. From UNHCR’s point of view the bone of contention comprises concerns

¹⁰⁰ These three regimes are all part of the refugee regime complex (Betts, 2013, p. 72).

that its functions will become obsolete in the refugee regime complex because it is incapable of competing with IOM's capacious normative framework which is not bound to the UN human rights framework. As Antoine Pécoud (2020) summarizes, "[t]he rivalry and tensions between the IOM and UN agencies are still perceptible" (p. 6). The empirical evidence shows an environment of great inter-institutional competition between the existing focal and new IO.

During the course of IOM's rising influence, UNHCR becomes increasingly protective of its focal status. Moreover, upon IOM's entry to the UN system,

A defensive posture, based on a fear of 'watering down' refugee protection, is evident in UNHCR's institutional response to efforts to broaden the definition of refugees to include those displaced by environmental factors (Slocum, 2017, p. 1).

In return UNHCR begins to assert the boundaries of its governance object. This move is important because it changes UNHCR's prior expansionary course to also include migrants in its governance efforts – a milestone being the publication of a 10-Point Plan of Action on International Protection and Mixed Migration (in 2007). For example, UNHCR has started to educate the public about the differences between refugees and migrants which involves "policies of exclusion and containment" (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018, p. 48). I argue that these behavioral changes in UNHCR's practices are driven by fears that IOM will establish a new focal point in the refugee regime complex and take over the governance of refugees – the trademark of UNHCR's expertise. The mechanism of status threat leads to assume that the existing IO's fears over the loss of its focality activate Obstruction as the most profound type of competitive IO response strategy. This explains why UNHCR pays meticulous attention to maintain its prominence as an expert in global refugee governance while the presence of international refugee and migration crises would lead one to expect that UNHCR directs its entire energy at managing both refugee and migration movements.

Apart from demarcating its expertise, UNHCR goes one step further in asserting its focality. It even attempts to push IOM out of its solidifying focal position through the means of policy scope expansion. UNHCR thus demonstrates a clear responsiveness to the most prominent changes in its external environment. For example, as contemporary migration movements mainly relate to IDPs, UNHCR extends its policy scope to also cover this group of migrants.

In UNHCR's view, becoming the "UN's Protection Organization" – thus assuming a comprehensive protection role with regard to refugees, conflict induced IDPs and victims of natural disasters – will increase UNHCR's competitiveness with regard to other UN agencies, international and non-

governmental organizations, in the fight for resources within the ever-expanding humanitarian community (Gottwald, 2010, p. 35).

In other words, the existing IO exercises Obstruction to subsume the niche which is occupied by the new IO. Over time UNHCR's strong humanitarian dimension gives way to principles of security in border management – a principle that was previously only promoted by IOM (Betts, 2013). I argue that UNHCR's attempt to minimize IOM's role in the UN system is intentional and part of its response strategy. After all, UNHCR's adoption of a more security-oriented approach towards managing refugee and migrant movements cannot be attributed to other kinds of external developments such as technological advances. Only IOM's growing prominence in the refugee regime complex and UNHCR's concurrent decline in focality offers a compelling explanation.

Historically speaking, UNHCR's management of change is been vision-driven rather than gap-driven (Gottwald, 2010, p. 35). Similarly, I observe that UNHCR follows its vision of being the UN's Protection Organization in its response of policy scope expansion. Instead of filling the governance gaps that are left by IOM, UNHCR's response strategy is driven by the objective of containing IOM's growing influence in the refugee regime complex.

One central takeaway of this case study is that the strength of the existing IO's focality plays a crucial role in explaining the mode of IO response strategies. Taking this empirical observation one step further, this case study shows that Obstruction likely coincides with an existing IO's declining focality. Some of the grander implications of this case point to the analogous aims ascribed to the response strategy of Obstruction and IO survival strategies. Just as IOs employ survival strategies to stay “alive and functioning” (Gray, 2018, p. 1), existing IOs resort to Obstruction to sustain their focality in the regime complex.

6.4.4. What I learn from UNHCR's response strategy

This case is representative of situations in which an existing focal IO faces a new focal actor in the regime complex. I show that developments in the existing IO's external environment have direct consequences for the mode of IO response strategies. Since IO response strategies are equifinal, a combination of factors best explains UNHCR's response strategy of Obstruction. Beyond the sufficient conditions identified in chapter 5, this empirical case study emphasizes that the motivation for the new IO's entry to the regime complex (or the UN system for that matter) and the existing IO's focal strength are pivotal for explaining Obstruction. The qualitative case study

demonstrates that UNHCR's protective behavior is motivated by its desire to maintain its focality in the refugee regime complex. I now discuss the new IO's motivation and the existing IO's focal strength as affiliated explanations for the competitiveness and mode of IO response strategies as well as their implications.

New IO motivation:

This case study has shown that the status- and norm-driven motivation of IOM incites a competitive and behavioral response strategy by UNHCR. I argue that UNHCR responds with Obstruction because it fears that IOM will take over its focal position in the refugee regime complex. After all, IOM's central motivation for entering the UN system is not to work alongside UNHCR or strengthen its operational capacities. Instead, it follows a different governance goal and applies a more economic approach to managing international refugee and migration movements – and so dilutes the status quo of UNHCR's humanitarian governance approach.

This case corroborates the mechanism of status threat. The qualitative analysis points to the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex as another decisive component for explaining rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies. Interestingly, a comparison to the preceding case study of the World Bank's response to AIIB's creation (in chapter 6.2.) substantiates my empirical finding. An important difference between UNHCR's response strategy of Obstruction and the World Bank's response strategy of Admission is that the AIIB overwhelmingly accepts the World Bank's core norms and also adopts these in its own mandates, whereas IOM approaches the global issue with a different normative framework. A comparison of these case studies yields that the new IO's representational motivation (as in the World Bank-AIIB case) or status- and norm-driven motivation for entering the regime complex (as in the UNHCR-IOM case) has relevant consequences for ensuing rhetorical or behavioral response strategies by the existing focal IO. Given that these findings also hold across case studies, they contribute valuable insights to advance contemporary research on better understanding the motivations that drive the development of inter-institutional coordination and conflict in particular (Faude & Fuss, 2020b) and regime complexity in general (Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Benvenisti & Downs, 2007; Panke & Stapel, 2021a, 2022).

Existing IO's focal strength:

UNHCR defends its focal position in the refugee regime complex quite assertively. Its competitive and behavioral response strategy largely aims to contain IOM's focal strength, potentially take over policy areas that are traditionally covered by IOM and to ensure its own survival as a focal actor in the process. The competition between UNHCR and IOM is greatest in areas of migration management in which both IOs have great interests at stake (Koch, 2014; Moretti, 2021, p. 35). I contend that IOM's entry to the UN system poses a substantial threat to UNHCR's focality and so impels UNHCR to defend its existence as the main focal actor in the refugee regime complex. The similarities between IO response strategies and IO survival strategies are quite apparent. Similar to the findings of contemporary studies of IO survival strategies, I find that the existing and new IOs' institutional structures, their normative compatibilities and external circumstances are decisive for competitive and behavioral IO response strategies (compare Dijkstra et al., 2022). These factors are also central in construing focality. Moreover, I observe that as the focality of existing IOs is threatened, the mode of their response strategy more likely coincides with behavioral changes to their policies, practices or institutional structures. In this case UNHCR moves away from its rhetorical emphasis of inter-institutional cooperation and engages in vast policy scope expansion in response to IOM's entry to the UN system. Overall, this case study emphasizes that UNHCR seeks to maintain its focality. It empirically supports my main argument that the stronger the challenges posed to the existing IO's focality, the more competitive its response strategy will be.

To summarize, this qualitative case study not only corroborates findings of the QCA analysis that rivalrous normative frameworks lead to competitive and behavioral IO response strategies, but also underscores that the motivation for the new IO's entry to the regime complex (or the UN system) and the existing IO's focal strength are vital for explaining the presence of Obstruction. More specifically, this case shows that in order to fully explain the presence of a certain type of IO response strategy, the sufficient and necessary conditions identified by the QCA analysis should be combined with a qualitative assessment of the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex and the strength of the existing IO's focality. This case of Obstruction has shown that the existing IO's response strategy is really geared towards the new IO and is not just the product of path dependency or its natural development process. This observation underscores the importance of sustaining this first research endeavor on the presently underexplored topic of IO response strategies.

6.5. IWC's response to NAMMCO

The regulation of commercial whaling epitomizes a struggle over counteracting man-made extinctions of whale populations and permitting whale meat consumption for commercial purposes. The political salience of IOs in governing this global issue can hardly be overseen: “humankind has been the most effective killer of whales in history [...] the final death toll of 20th-century commercial whaling [is] about 2.9 million, before the [IWC’s] ban in 1986 brought it (mostly) to an end” (Musselman, 2022). Following a dramatic decline in the number of whales in the 1980s, conservationists have markedly increased pressure to implement anti-whaling measures and evade the extinction of whales altogether. The debate moves back and forth between determining catch limits based on scientific calculations and promoting a principled ban on commercial whaling altogether. The value conflict concerns the permissibility of whale meat consumption. In accordance, this case is highly relevant to the study of international norm struggles (Bailey, 2008; Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013; Nagtzaam, 2009).

Furthermore, this case is representative of a new IO’s issue-specific challenge to the existing IO’s focality. Whereas the IWC vehemently represents the anti-whaling bloc, the new IO NAMMCO (created in 1992) promotes the interests of pro-whaling states. While the IWC forbids whaling altogether, NAMMCO recognizes that international whaling can take place to some degree and under certain conditions. Nevertheless, “the creation of NAMMCO is an unprecedented showing of opposition to the IWC, posing a serious threat to its existence” (Anable, 1993, p. 638). Naturally, the IWC is not all too happy about the creation of NAMMCO which questions the very foundations on which IWC is built – to protect and ensure the implementation of the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). The ways in which the IWC handles NAMMCO’s entry to the international whaling regime complex not only shows how small-sized IOs handle positional differences for addressing the same global issue, but is also very telling for my research on IO response strategies.

The QCA analysis in chapter 5 already revealed that NAMMCO simultaneously poses a challenge to the norm and resource dimensions of IWC’s focality. Hence, I already know that NAMMCO advances different governance norms and possesses a substantial amount of financial resources. The in-depth case study now allows to take a profound look at NAMMCO’s motivation for entering the international whaling regime complex and how IWC’s rhetorical mode of IO response strategies facilitates its survival as a focal actor in the regime complex. The chapter proceeds as follows: To answer the first question guiding the comparative case studies, it first investigates the

motivation behind NAMMCO's creation. Then, I direct attention at the institutional fit and consequently examine IWC's response strategy of Delegitimation with particular emphasis on its engagement with rhetorical IO response strategies. After addressing the second guiding question, how the mode of IO response strategies affects the existing IO's survival as a focal actor, I conclude with the lessons learned from this case study.

6.5.1. NAMMCO's entry to the international whaling regime complex

The creation of NAMMCO as a new institutional competitor can be seen as a reverberation of the IWC's own resolve to change its longstanding normative framework. In 1986 the IWC's decision to end commercial whaling – also known as the moratorium on commercial whaling – enters into force with 25 votes in favor, seven votes against and five abstentions (IWC, 1982, p. 86). The moratorium effectively forbids all nations from commercial whaling for an initial period of four years. In 1990 the Scientific Committee prolongs the IWC moratorium based on the argument that it lacks sufficient data for drawing conclusions on the stability of whale stocks. Then again, it is decided at the IWC's annual meeting in 1992 to prolong the whaling moratorium for yet another year. It is still effective today.

The IWC's whaling moratorium led to the increasing dissatisfaction of pro-whaling states. They argue that the moratorium violates “the optimum utilization of whale resources” (IISD, 2016, p. 19) and fails to represent “the interests of the consumers of whale products and the whaling industry” (ICRW, 1946) as prescribed in Article V of ICRW. They also distrust IWC's Scientific Committee to have sufficient data for making decisions on when it is safe to resume whaling (Anable, 1993, pp. 642–643). NAMMCO's founding members, namely Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway, had already criticized IWC's establishment of a zero catch quota on whales in 1982. The delegation of Iceland argues that IWC's whaling moratorium is “not [based] on scientific findings nor recommendations of the Scientific Committee, nor with any regard to the economical or social importance of whaling to the whaling nations” (IWC, 1982, p. 79). At this point in time pro-whaling states had had enough. Reaching a compromise with anti-whaling states seems nearly impossible and their patience with the IWC is fading. A diplomatic representative of Iceland and later judge at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Gudmundur Eriksson, summarizes the dissatisfaction with IWC as follows:

“the organization was born out of dissatisfaction with the IWC's zero-catch quota, lack of IWC competence to deal with small cetaceans, and

the need for an organization to deal with other marine mammals such as seals” (Caron, 1995, p. 164).

Hence, a group of commercial whaling proponents consolidated and started to build an alternative institution for the regulation of international whaling. Iceland and Norway create NAMMCO in 1992.¹⁰¹ In sum, NAMMCO’s creation is not the result of *ad hoc* action, but is based on the long-term dissatisfaction of whaling states with the IWC’s total ban on commercial whaling.

The motivation behind the establishment of NAMMCO is to abolish the ban on commercial whaling imposed by the IWC. This case of IO creation is fascinating because NAMMCO’s attempt to overturn the whaling ban (a norm change) effectively seeks to preserve the permission of commercial whale hunting that existed when IWC first became operational.¹⁰² Hence, the purpose behind NAMMCO’s creation is to maintain a norm that has been overturned by the existing focal IO in the field (the IWC). NAMMCO specifically challenges the ways in which IWC seeks to protect cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) and pinnipeds (seals and walruses). NAMMCO argues for a rational utilization of whales, for example, it claims that the population of minke whales has grown large enough for hunting (Anable, 1993; Hardy, 2006). NAMMCO thus embodies a specific issue challenge to the newly minted institutional status quo set by IWC that prohibits all forms of commercial whaling.

6.5.2. NAMMCO’s fit to IWC

From the outset, inter-institutional relations between IWC and NAMMCO are rather contradictory. Within IWC two groups with competing interests developed: saving whales and marine mammals, and continued whaling. On paper, NAMMCO neither violates nor disagrees with either of these objectives (Anable, 1993, p. 638; Caron, 1995, p. 165). NAMMCO’s regional governance focus rests on “cooperation between countries bordering the North Atlantic Ocean in research, conservation and management of marine mammals” (NAMMCO, 1992a Preamble). It is more encompassing than the IWC as it also addresses seals and small whales, which lie outside of

¹⁰¹ Iceland had fully exited the IWC in 1992 even before NAMMCO’s creation. While remaining a member of NAMMCO, Iceland then re-joined the IWC in 2002 (see <https://iwc.int/members>).

¹⁰² IWC’s original stance was that “whaling operations should be confined to those species best able to sustain exploitation in order to give an interval for recovery to certain species of whales now depleted in numbers” (ICRW, 1946 Preamble).

the IWC's jurisdiction.¹⁰³(Anable, 1993, p. 646). Nevertheless, as argued above NAMMCO was specifically created to circumvent IWC's whaling ban, i.e. it targets one of IWC's core norms. Seeing that NAMMCO mainly challenges the specific ban on commercial whaling, however, "for the present NAMMCO poses only a very limited challenge to the efforts of the IWC" (Caron, 1995, p. 173). To understand why IWC responds to NAMMCO with the rhetorical response strategy of Delegitimation, a better understanding of their relations is necessary. The remainder of chapter 6.5.2. first examines the differences in IWC and NAMMCO's governance approaches, followed by a comparative empirical analysis of their institutional structures.

Though IWC and NAMMCO represent different positions on the permissibility of commercial whaling, NAMMCO conforms with IWC in the sense that both IOs share the same governance goals of protecting whale populations. Most noticeably, however, they follow different governance approaches to achieve these goals. IWC's focus on conservation does not feature in NAMMCO's way of addressing international whaling issues; "The aim of pro-whalers is not full commercial whaling, nor the destruction of the existing [anti-whaling] norm" but to obtain the maximum catch while still sustaining the whale population (Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013, p. 13). For instance, NAMMCO is in favor of allowing coastal states and aboriginal communities to earn a sustainable living from whaling that reaches beyond their own subsistence – which constitutes a much more tolerant governance approach compared to IWC's complete ban on whaling for any commercial purposes.

While environmental conservation serves as the mantra of IWC's governance approach, NAMMCO's governance efforts are more utility-oriented. The IWC regulates that "catch limits for the killing for commercial purposes of whales from all stocks for the 1986 coastal and the 1985/86 pelagic season and thereafter shall be zero" (IWC, 1982, p. 86). NAMMCO's members criticize that the IWC has increasingly taken on a conservationist position which proscribes efforts to resume whaling (Bailey, 2008; Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013, p. 13). NAMMCO regulates international whaling through "the rational management, conservation and rational utilization of the living resources of the sea" in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS rules (NAMMCO, 1992a Preamble). These diverging governance approaches are further reflected in discussions concerning IWC's whaling ban, "pointing either to the hunting of some whales [as envisioned by NAMMCO] or the protection of all whales [envisioned by IWC]" (Caron, 1995, p. 170). It becomes increasingly difficult for IWC to justify that aboriginal whaling is permitted as a means of conserving whale

¹⁰³ Given that the IWC has not fully defined its jurisdiction or defined what it considers as 'whales', these categorical boundaries between the IWC and NAMMCO's areas of responsibility are quite fuzzy.

stocks, whereas all other forms of harvesting are prohibited (Young et al., 1994, p. 119). Already a short time after the establishment of the whaling moratorium, NAMMCO's "rebellious spirit" challenges the legitimacy of IWC's anti-whaling norm (Anable, 1993, p. 647; Caron, 1995) and IWC's role as a focal IO and norm setter in the international whaling regime complex

A comparison of institutional structures allows to discern how NAMMCO positions itself vis-à-vis IWC as the existing focal IO. Overall NAMMCO's institutional structures emulate those of IWC (compare QCA analysis in chapter 5.2.2.). Further, it is pertinent that Norway's motivation to establish NAMMCO is not based on issues such as institutional representation, but on its approaches to govern international whaling. Given that NAMMCO's founding states were previously IWC member states, and continue to be IWC members, they have arguably taken up IWC features which work well for them. In both IOs decisions are reached by consensus, operations are financed by annual member state contributions and the institutional edifice is composed of sub-committees that work on specific issues for managing whale stocks and the marine environment (see Appendix V).

Nevertheless, NAMMCO embodies more than a regional spin-off of the IWC. In fact, NAMMCO establishes an effective counterweight to IWC in terms of its availability of financial resources, membership restrictions and the voluntary nature of its policy recommendations.

At the time of its entry to the international whaling regime complex, NAMMCO's financial budget already amounts to 21% of the size of IWC's budget (see Appendix V). This is very impressive, especially considering that NAMMCO consists of four founding members at its creation.¹⁰⁴ Given that a substantial provision of financial resources forms part of IO focality, it implies that NAMMCO has the potential to form a new focal point as an additional resource provider in the regime complex. However, its membership is still very small.

NAMMCO most prominently demarcates itself from IWC with regards to its highly restrictive membership. For one, the membership provisions laid out in the NAMMCO Agreement "are drafted to avoid such shifts in membership, and interests, as occurred in the IWC" (Caron, 1995, p. 165). Indeed, NAMMCO is very protective of its membership which is limited to countries bordering the North Atlantic Ocean. New members are only accepted with the consent of all NAMMCO members (Gillespie, 2002). This small membership bestows NAMMCO with a very dynamic structure and forestalls institutional deadlock because all member state interests can be represented more fully in its policies. Moreover, NAMMCO can address global issues with much more agility as compared to IWC, whose actions are inhibited by institutional deadlock.

¹⁰⁴ Only six percent of the IWC's membership overlaps with NAMMCO's membership in 1992, see Appendix V.

Another important distinction to IWC is that NAMMCO issues voluntary policy recommendations while the IWC's Schedule to regulate whaling and conserve whale stocks is legally binding. The voluntary recommendations underscore NAMMCO's contention that states should obtain greater leeway to set commercial whaling quotas. I go one step further and contend that the voluntary nature of NAMMCO's policies provide a notable counterweight to IWC's existing role as a norm setter in the regime complex. Whilst NAMMCO emulates numerous IWC structures, it advances its own nuances in regulating international whaling.

In summary, NAMMCO induces considerable pressure on IWC to also pay attention to its pro-whaling member states (Caron, 1995, p. 165). A comparison of NAMMCO's fit to IWC yields that NAMMCO seeks to leave a serious impression on the regulation of international whaling by offering an alternative forum that is backed by substantial financial resources and leaves enough room for states to set more lenient whaling standards.

6.5.3. IWC's response strategy to NAMMCO: Delegitimation

The case of the NAMMCO is unique because it features a new IO which directs an issue-specific challenge to both the norm and resource dimensions of IWC's focality (compare QCA findings of chapter 5.2.2.). Seeing that "opposition from NAMMCO, Norway, and Japan is simply too strong to ignore" (Anable, 1993, p. 651), IWC retaliates by inducing its own campaign to delegitimize NAMMCO's governance approach and growing influence in the field of international whaling. Led by the second guiding question of the comparative case studies, I now analyze how the mode of IO response strategies impacts the existing IO's survival as a focal actor in the regime complex.

Before delving deeper into IWC's response strategies to NAMMCO, it is important to take into account the institutional deadlock which IWC starts to experience in the 1990s. Indeed, IWC's pro-whaling bloc has grown from its inception in the 1970s (when it only features 25 member states) to the 1990s (when it features 89 members). Over time the debate within IWC has radicalized as it mainly focuses on the principle question whether commercial whaling should be banned or not. In effect no group of actors can obtain the necessary majority for changing any institutional rules of the IWC. Notwithstanding, "political pressure and side payments are used to keep both blocs together [...] holding the IWC in a constant deadlock" (Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013, p. 13). Due to IWC's institutional deadlock of pro- and anti-whaling camps "NAMMCO and Norway represent to some a small compensation for the inflexibility of the IWC" (Caron, 1995, p. 174).

This institutional deadlock is one of the IWC's most defining institutional characteristics. The observable response strategies described below have overcome this deadlock.

This section continues as follows: it first elucidates the strength of IWC's focality at the time of NAMMCO's creation. It then exposes IWC's cooperative and competitive response strategies as attempts to contain NAMMCO's policy influence. Since the empirical analysis in chapter 5 has identified IWC's response strategy as Delegitimation, I specifically shine a light on IWC's competitive rhetoric towards NAMMCO.

IWC's focality:

It is important to know about IWC's focal strength as it reveals the point of departure from which IWC seeks to survive as a focal IO in the regime complex and concurrently engages in IO response strategies. The IWC's function of being a guarantor of ICRW leaves little doubt that it fulfils an indispensable role in the international management and conservation of whale populations. In the eyes of the US and other leading states the IWC "is seen as the only legitimate international body for dealing with whaling issues" (Gillespie, 2002, p. 23) – even after the whaling moratorium is imposed in 1982 and it faces criticism for the mismanagement of whales as a global common resource (Mazzanti, 2001). Hence, IWC's focality finds overwhelming acceptance in the international whaling regime complex.

IWC's focality is strong because from the outset IWC faces only little competition in its external environment. Three other IOs are part of the international whaling regime complex (see Appendix V). Yet IOs such as IMO or FAO always refer to the expertise of IWC when issues of international whaling are concerned. Beginning in the 1990s the only other IO that *inter alia* specializes in international whaling is NAMMCO. Yet given that IWC and NAMMCO pursue the same governance goals, I maintain that NAMMCO poses a moderate challenge to IWC's focality.

The consequences of NAMMCO's creation on the IWC's focal position are concisely outlined in Kaye Anable's research article:

The position of the IWC as the world's primary whale management organization is being challenged from several angles. [...] The IWC's response to these challenges will be a critical factor in predicting the future of whaling (Anable, 1993, p. 647).

In accordance, I interpret IWC's response strategies as attempts to secure its focality in the regime complex vis-à-vis the challenges posed by NAMMCO. Bearing in mind that NAMMCO could set a precedent for similar regional initiatives, such as possible initiatives by Japan to create a regional alternative in the Pacific (Mitchell, 1998, p. 288), the IWC's response strategies also fulfill a deterrent function to avoid the establishment of additional focal points in the regime complex.

Cooperative response strategies:

Traditionally the IWC has always sought to establish cooperative relations with other IOs in the regime complex. After all, IWC's typical response in the 1990s is "to cooperate to the maximum extent possible within the constraints of its finances, and for the Secretariat to be ready to send appropriate documentation or other information" (IWC, 1991). Hence, my default assumption is that IWC responds to NAMMCO in a friendly manner, just as the international whaling regime complex has always exhibited a considerable proneness to adapt to changed economic, political or environmental conditions (Young et al., 1994, p. 117).

Then again, IWC's attitude towards NAMMCO is a bit more sour. In this case only little empirical evidence exists that IWC establishes cooperative relations with NAMMCO. It is observed that the "cooperation that the IWC has given to other overlapping IOs has often depended upon the relationships between them" (Gillespie, 2002, p. 27). Indeed, the inter-institutional relations are strained from the very beginning of NAMMCO's existence which is rooted in counter-institutionalization. Since Norway and Iceland are longstanding contenders of IWC's anti-whaling policies, IWC is reticent to consolidate sweeping cooperation with NAMMCO. From the outset NAMMCO makes it very clear that it starkly disagrees with the IWC's most profound policy, namely the whaling moratorium. Consequently, IWC's willingness to cooperate dampens.

Regarding IWC's cooperative response strategies, however, its omission to punish Norway's violations of the whaling ban entails a friendly gesture towards NAMMCO. Despite IWC's legally binding Schedule, the US has refrained from inducing any (legal) repercussions to Norway's resumption of whaling. Yet it remains unclear how much of this friendly gesture is attributable to an unwillingness of issuing repercussions, and how much can be attributed to IWC's institutional deadlock. Considering the restraints of IWC's institutional setup, I concur that "the de facto toleration of NAMMCO and Norway's resumption of whaling can be seen as an institutional release mechanism compensating for the IWC's inability to moderate its position" (Caron, 1995, p.

173). In a way the IWC's cooperative response strategy hence stems from its own inhibition to issue a stronger response to Norway's violation of the whaling moratorium.

A more speculative reasoning for IWC's cooperative gesture is that IWC initially sought to establish friendly relations with NAMMCO because pro-whaling states first attempted to reform IWC before establishing a new rival institution (Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013, p. 13). In this spirit IWC would follow the benefit of the doubt and extend an olive branch to NAMMCO in the hopes of mitigating its competing position and building a basis for the continuation of debates in the IWC. If Norway is to return to discussions in the IWC, it would strengthen IWC's credibility as an effective governance leader in the regime complex. Yet this dynamic is mainly observable in IO-state interactions where "the IWC has dealt with the regional IOs, the PCSP [Permanent Commission of the South Pacific], and NAMMCO [...] by focusing upon the individual countries within them and inviting them to join the IWC" (Gillespie, 2002, p. 23). At the IO-IO level of interaction IWC's cooperative endeavors are short lived. Although IWC responds to NAMMCO's challenge by engaging in far-reaching discussions over the ethics of whale use and the killing of small cetaceans (Young et al., 1994, p. 118),¹⁰⁵ it cannot be ignored that NAMMCO unequivocally takes a side which fundamentally disagrees with an overwhelming number of IWC member states and goes against IWC's whaling moratorium as the central piece of its policy framework.

While a grand cooperative gesture is observable by IWC – as it deliberately refrains from reprimanding Norway's breach with the whaling moratorium – a closer empirical analysis shows that it does not necessarily reflect IWC's unwillingness to impose repercussions. Instead, persistent institutional deadlock within IWC inhibits its ability to institute a penalization on Norway's actions. Hence, IWC's cooperative gesture does not entirely fulfill the definition of an IO response strategy in which the existing focal IO demonstrates a reflected answer in reaction to NAMMCO's entry to the international whaling regime complex. Indeed, this case highlights that some attention should be paid to possible restraints of the existing IO's institutional confines as they may inhibit some IO response strategies.

Competitive response strategies:

According to the mechanism of status threat (see chapter 3.2. for more details), existing IOs are responsive to threats which target their status as a focal IO in the regime complex. Given that

¹⁰⁵ See the commentary written by Oran R. Young et al. (1994) for expert suggestions on how to foster a fruitful dialogue between the IWC and NAMMCO.

NAMMCO embodies an adversarial management organization which enjoys high scientific credibility and fosters effective cooperation (Hardy, 2006, p. 198), IWC faces pressure to maintain the upper hand in matters related to setting catch limits and managing whale stocks. Aside from the normative disagreements over the admissibility of commercial whaling, IWC member states are further skeptical of NAMMCO's regional focus and exclusive membership that only comprises four countries bordering the North Atlantic Ocean. Since Norway is the only NAMMCO member that continues whaling for commercial purposes, the suspicion arises that NAMMCO is merely used for window dressing purposes. It is "most probable that all these actors [the US, the main EU states and major western countries] will view NAMMCO as illegitimate" (Gillespie, 2002, p. 23). Considering that NAMMCO poses a moderate challenge to IWC's focality, IWC is compelled to respond to NAMMCO in an assertive way. The subsequent sections show how IWC's changed rhetoric and policies help to maintain its relevance as a focal actor in the international whaling regime complex.

Rhetorical response strategies:

I first direct my attention at rhetorical IO response strategies because they involve fewer material costs as compared to behavioral IO response strategies (see chapter 2.5. for a more detailed elaboration). Whereas the most recent change in IWC rhetoric embodies a response to NAMMCO's creation, a more historical account of changes in IWC rhetoric helps to appropriately classify these findings. I first pay particular attention to how IWC's longstanding environmental rhetoric is augmented with a moral narrative in response to NAMMCO's creation. Second, I show that IWC's rhetorical response strategies are directed at delegitimizing NAMMCO's vigorous presence in the regime complex. Together, a moral-based rhetoric and acts of Delegitimation set boundary limitations on NAMMCO's governance abilities. They are part of IWC's endeavor to survive as a focal actor in the regime complex.

From a historical perspective two major shifts in IWC rhetoric took place: A shift from interest-based arguments to arguments focused on conservation in the 1980s, as well as a shift towards moral reasoning in the late 1990s as a direct response to NAMMCO's creation. At the time of IWC's inception in 1946, debates about whaling are captured by interest-based arguments to respect national sovereignty and ensure sustainable utilization of whales as a common resource. IWC's operational scope is anchored in ICRW, which was created to preserve an optimum utility of whale stocks. As scientific arguments grow more prominent over time, IWC's utility-oriented justification for whaling turns into a rhetoric of environmental preservation and conservation of

whale stocks in the early 1990s (which only acknowledges subsistence whaling of aboriginal people). Hence, IWC has morphed into the role of being a protector of CITES – a treaty that focuses on protecting biodiversity and avoiding overexploitation of whales.¹⁰⁶ However, a shift towards the prevalence of moral reasoning in IWC’s rhetoric takes place after NAMMCO enters the regime complex (Mitchell, 1998). To this day IWC upholds environmental and moral reasoning to justify whaling bans.

Most strikingly, IWC’s moral rhetoric “reject[s] the underlying principles of scientific discourse” (Mitchell, 1998, p. 288). This is a significant development because scientific arguments justify the 1982 ban on commercial whaling. Upon NAMMCO’s creation, however, IWC’s rhetoric takes a turn towards upholding the whaling ban even against scientific evidence that certain populations such as minke whales were proven to be large enough to withstand some commercial whaling activities. In essence anti-whaling states “articulat[e] why estimates of whale populations are not sufficient to justify a return to whaling” (Caron, 1995, p. 166). Hence, the IWC continually “denormalized whaling” in the sense of abolishing this historically widespread practice (Epstein, 2008, p. 139). In other words,

the United States used its power as a leader, both in a global sense and within the context of the IWC, to formally pressure the moratorium dissenters to accept the ban on whaling (Nystrom, 2014, p. 1442).

Environmental organizations are very supportive of these US efforts. IWC not only demarcates its own boundaries, but also coerces pro-whaling states to support the whaling ban.

With regards to the new IO, I contend that IWC’s moral rhetoric seeks to discredit NAMMCO’s potential as a suitable focal actor because it suggests that NAMMCO’s actions are void of any moral considerations. In this sense IWC not only enforces its presence as a moral authority in the regime complex – and thus demarcates its governance space vis-à-vis NAMMCO – but also exhibits a condescending stance towards the new IO. Respective empirical evidence is provided by statements of IWC’s Executive Secretary as well as US and UK officials (as the main supporting states of the IWC). I present five striking examples to demonstrate how the rhetoric voiced by IWC, the US and UK (as its main supporting member states) employs moral arguments to undergird its anti-whaling objectives and disempower pro-whaling arguments, which lie at the core of NAMMCO’s existence. As the following quotes exemplify, I further suppose that IWC’s role as

¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, pro-whaling states continually propose to delist some whale species from CITES (for example Japan insists that its whaling practices for scientific purposes are perfectly legal under ICRW).

a central norm setter in the regime complex continues to receive strong backing by its most powerful member states. It hence becomes evident that IWC's rhetoric trickles down to the rhetoric of its member states.

(A) From 1992 onwards "[IWC's anti-whaling discourse] became, whales should not be killed because they have a moral right to life" (Epstein, 2008, pp. 217–218).

(B) Ray Gambell, IWC's Executive Secretary at the time, proclaimed with regards to the permission of commercial whaling: "In all reasonableness, we would have to say that a commercial catch could be taken without endangering [Minke] stocks" (Reid, 1993).

These excerpts of IWC rhetoric demonstrate a narrative which argues against commercial whaling and at the same time disregards scientific justifications. The assertion that killing whales impedes their moral right to life presented in statement (A) is one that is hard to argue with. In essence it is a philosophical statement that has little to do with scientific research. To turn the argument on its head, IWC's assertion implies that actors who support whaling have no regards for the moral implications of their actions. Hence, IWC takes the moral high road and sets moral standards for international whaling practices. Furthermore, IWC's Executive Secretary most notably appeals to the "reasonableness" of states in statement (B). Though he partly reaches out to anti-whaling states (which make up half of IWC membership), he suggests that it is currently neither reasonable nor justified to permit the commercial catch of Minke whales. On one hand these statements show how IWC claims a space that is rooted in strong moral principle and ethical reasoning above all else. By implication it suggests that all actors outside of IWC's anti-whaling domain – such as NAMMCO as a consolidation of pro-whaling states – are neither reasonable nor aware of the full ethical and ecological ramifications that whaling has for the survival of the Minke whale population. For NAMMCO to demonstrate that it can live up to IWC's sense of morality, it would essentially need to adopt IWC's moral-based rhetoric. Hence, IWC's moral-based rhetoric delegitimizes NAMMCO as an inherent focal IO in the regime complex. It is difficult to objectively argue with IWC's anti-whaling position or to push IWC out of its self-proclaimed role as a principled governance leader on international whaling.

The moral emphasis of the anti-whaling rhetoric initiated by IWC also weaves through the rhetoric of its most powerful member states:

- (C) Concerning pro-whaling efforts more generally, former US Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta said “Putting it plainly, Japan is killing whales in the name of scientific research to satisfy a demand for whale meat in a few high-end restaurants and gourmet boutiques” (Pearlstein, 2000).

Statement (C) underscores how IWC member states name and shame pro-whaling practices which fulfill human luxuries at the cost of whale lives. It further portrays scientific justifications to be nothing but a travesty in this case. As this quote exemplifies, the strength of IWC’s reasoning lies in its shaming of the immoral pro-whaling activities for supporting a lethal practice that only benefits a very small and wealthy part of the human population. Conversely, it is immoral to inflict ecological damage on an already endangered species.

- (D) In the early 1990s British Parliamentary debates also grappled with Norway’s continuation of whaling. The agricultural minister, John Gummer, was hailed by fellow Member of Parliament Simon Hughes in the following terms: “Does the Minister further agree that ... no argument that allows commercial whaling to continue is acceptable to this community or to any other country that calls itself civilised?” (House of Commons, 1991). The Minister agreed.

- (E) US President Bill Clinton voiced concerns that “Norway's resumption of commercial harvesting of minke whales has diminished the effectiveness of the [IWC]” (Clinton, 1993).

As statement (D) shows, the UK also places the humanization of whaling in the foreground of its formal inquiry. Corresponding to IWC’s line of reasoning exhibited in statement (B), ‘the civilization of nations’ is questioned due to their support of pro-whaling activities. This enunciation raises a moral point because it specifies what actions ought to be considered as being ‘civilized’. Hence, it acclaims that any whaling activities are morally and ethically unacceptable. The fact that powerful states like the UK directly adopt IWC’s rhetoric fortifies IWC’s central governance position as well as its moral-based anti-whaling rhetoric. On the flipside, however, President Clinton’s remarks in statement (E) are characteristic of concerns over NAMMCO’s pursuant focal position in the regime complex. It signals that NAMMCO’s presence and support of Norway’s whaling activities harms IWC’s effectiveness and concomitantly truncates its focality. More implicitly, this statement reveals that IWC supporters think of NAMMCO as having a realistic

potential to evolve into a pertinent focal actor alongside the existing focal IO. Overall, samples of IWC and its member states' moral-based rhetoric demonstrate that IWC's competitive and rhetorical response strategies play an important role to deliberately reduce NAMMCO's legitimacy and credibility as a potentially additional focal actor in the international whaling regime complex.

Some empirical observations further indicate that rhetorical IO response strategies are favored over behavioral IO response strategies. As Bill Clinton so candidly proclaims, "the primary interest of the United States in this matter is protecting the integrity of the IWC and its conservation regime"; He continues that

I believe our objectives can best be achieved by delaying the implementation of sanctions until we have exhausted all good faith efforts to persuade Norway to follow agreed conservation measures. It is my sincere hope that Norway will agree to and comply with such measures so that sanctions become unnecessary (Clinton, 1993).

The President's speech accentuates that the US favors rhetorical acts of delegitimizing NAMMCO and the pro-whaling movement's *raison d'être* based on moral arguments as opposed to engaging in behavioral response strategies. Thus, the US, as the most powerful member state of IWC, seeks to retain IWC's response strategies at the rhetorical level and to refrain from engaging in more intrusive measures. Similar to previous case studies in which strong focal IOs are more hesitant to engage in behavioral IO response strategies (such as the World Bank's response strategy to AIIB in chapter 6.2.), I observe a possible correlation between IWC's relatively strong focality and its preference for rhetorical IO response strategies.

In summary, IWC's rhetorical response strategy corroborates its anti-whaling position and commitment to zero-catch quotas. I contend that IWC engages in Delegation to solidify its dependability as a focal actor in the international whaling regime complex. In line with the main assumption of my theoretical framework, IWC responds rationally because it prefers to discredit pro-whaling campaigns based on their lacking moral considerations; behavioral IO response strategies are much less pronounced, as I will show below. Since the support for pro-whaling activities lies at the heart of NAMMCO, IWC rhetorically proclaims boundaries to strengthen its own focality and demarcate its governance space vis-à-vis NAMMCO.

Behavioral IO response strategies:

While IWC's rhetorical response strategies are quite apparent, changes in IWC's practices, policies and institutional structures constitute much rarer responses to NAMMCO's creation. IWC continues to follow its protectionist mandate, advocates for anti-whaling policies and is institutionally petrified due to an ongoing gridlock between pro- and anti-whaling camps. At the same time IWC has great reservations on establishing any kind of working relationship with NAMMCO (Gillespie, 2002, p. 23). Though I observe few behavioral IO response strategies in the empirical evidence, the creation of a whaling sanctuary in 1994 stands out as a meaningful policy change. It reinforces IWC's anti-whaling approach vis-à-vis NAMMCO's commitment to pro-whaling activities.

The permissibility of commercial whaling activities constitutes one of IWC's most demanding topics at its 1994 annual meeting in Mexico. The meeting turns out to be very successful for the anti-whaling camp because it establishes a 11.8 million square mile whaling sanctuary in the Southern Ocean. Twenty-three states vote in favor of the whaling sanctuary, one opposes and six states abstain (IWC, 1995). As the most powerful IWC member state, the US stands firmly behind this policy change. In his statement on May 27, 1994 US President Bill Clinton gives reassurance of strong US leadership in efforts to reach international agreements on whale conservation measures (Clinton, 1994). In fact, "Both the strength of the vote [...] and the language of the resolution indicate strongly that [...] [t]he IWC as presently governed is not likely to moderate its policies. Rather, the IWC seems quite committed to the defense of whales and other marine mammals" (Caron, 1995, pp. 169–170). For one, IWC's policy change shows that it takes NAMMCO's challenge of its whaling ban seriously. On another note, IWC's strong policy stance points to the IWC enjoying strong focality in the international whaling regime complex.

The confrontation between IWC and NAMMCO further revolves around IWC's ability to set governance standards in the international whaling regime complex. I contend that IWC's behavioral response strategy is part of its efforts to survive as a focal IO in the regime complex. For instance, the creation of a whaling sanctuary is regarded as a political measure to exclude commercial whaling from the oceans rather than a protectionist measure which is purely based on scientific insights (Gerber et al., 2005). Given that political considerations factor so prominently in determining IWC actions, I assume that IWC's behavioral response strategy is likely driven by political aspirations to remain a central political figure and standard setter in the regime complex.

To summarize, IWC's behavioral response strategies mainly consist of a change in policies to establish a whaling sanctuary in 1994. In accordance with the mechanism of status threat, the low presence of behavioral IO response strategies further indicates that NAMMCO only poses a moderate challenge to its focality. Since rhetorical response strategies suffice to maintain IWC's focal position, there is no need to engage any further in costly behavioral response strategies. This empirical observation underscores how existing focal IOs act rationally to ensure their survival as focal actors in the regime complex. In addition, IWC's focality continues to be strong despite NAMMCO's issue-specific challenge of the whaling ban. Therefore, this case study points to a plausible association between the extent of the new IO's challenge, the existing IO's focal strength and the mode of IO response strategies as well as their consequences for the existing IO's survival as a focal actor.

6.5.4. What I learn from IWC's response strategy

The altercation between groups of states advocating either for or against the ban on commercial whaling "has placed a dangerous strain on the IWC" (Caron, 1995, p. 168). Essentially, the existing focal IO is confronted by a challenge that can only be handled in two ways: Either IWC gives in to the demands of pro-whaling states represented by NAMMCO and allows commercial whaling activities to take place, or IWC stands its ground and sternly promotes its anti-whaling position. In this case IWC chooses the latter path and resorts to the response strategy of Delegitimation.

This case is representative of an issue-specific challenge to the existing IO's focality because the motivation behind NAMMCO's creation is to challenge IWC's whaling ban. At the same time, IWC and NAMMCO's governance goals to protect whale populations from extinction are synchronous. I contend that this moderate challenge to IWC's focality lays the foundations for rhetorical IO response strategies. Moreover, the governance space rhetorically claimed by IWC provides a stronghold for like-minded states seeking to prohibit commercial whaling. Two years after NAMMCO's creation IWC rallies enough support to adopt a policy establishing a whaling sanctuary. Hence, I contend that IWC's expressly vocal opposition to commercial whaling plays a significant part in ensuring its survival as a focal actor in the international whaling regime complex. The remainder of this section reflects on three prominent explanations for IWC's rhetorical mode of IO response strategies: NAMMCO embodies a moderate challenge to IWC's focality, IWC continually enjoys strong focality in the international whaling regime complex and institutional gridlock persists between IWC's pro- and anti-whaling camps.

First, NAMMCO poses a moderate challenge to IWC's focality because it has been created to specifically challenge the 1982 whaling moratorium. This case is special because NAMMCO's issue-specific challenge of IWC's whaling ban also targets a central part of IWC's normative framework. Given that Delegation is a competitive response strategy, the mechanism of status threat would stipulate that NAMMCO's challenge is rather central to IWC's focal status. However, I maintain that NAMMCO's challenge is moderated by IWC and NAMMCO's agreement on their governance goals. This is a marked difference to cases in which the motivation behind a new IO's entry to the regime complex lies in challenging the existing IO's overall governance goal – such as IOM's status- and norm-driven motivation to enter the global refugee regime complex and subsequent challenge of UNHCR's humanitarian approach for governing refugee and migration movements (compare chapter 6.4. above). At least concerning the outcomes of case studies featuring competitive IO response strategies, the mode of IO response strategies seems to coincide with the breadth of the new IO's challenge to its focality. A central distinction is that issue-specific challenges to the existing IO's focality tend to result in Delegation (as in IWC's response to NAMMCO), while more profound challenges to the existing IO's governance goals likely incite Obstruction (as in UNHCR's response to IOM).

Second, IWC continues to enjoy strong focality following NAMMCO's creation in 1992. The feature of IWC's strong focality is further supported by the mechanism of status threat: The more an existing IO struggles to maintain its focal position in the regime complex, the more likely it is to engage in competitive and behavioral IO response strategies. Seeing that IWC's response strategies are competitive and rhetorical, IWC's struggles to remain a focal actor are arguably less difficult. This is further reflected in challenges to IWC's resource dimension of focality. A comparison of IWC and NAMMCO's financial resources and membership scopes shows the following: Whereas NAMMCO's initial budget comprises an impressive 21% of the size of IWC's budget, NAMMCO nonetheless features a very small membership of four member states (compare Appendix V). Hence, NAMMCO's governance reach is no real comparison to IWC's direct impact on its 32 members at the time of NAMMCO's creation in 1992. Given that IWC enjoys great prestige as a central norm setter and resource provider in the international whaling regime complex, any fears of being replaced by NAMMCO as a focal actor would be unfounded. Assuming that IWC's response strategies are based on rational considerations, rhetorical IO response strategies suffice to ensure IWC's ongoing focal position in the international whaling regime complex.

Third, it stands to reason that IWC's institutional deadlock mitigates the likelihood of behavioral IO response strategies. This qualitative case study points out that the polarization among member states should be considered for explaining variance in IO response strategies. The peculiarity of IWC's internal setup is that member states are divided into almost equally large groups that either support or oppose commercial whaling. When taking into consideration that about half of the member states prefer the opposite governance approach, IWC's response of delegitimizing NAMMCO's pro-whaling position becomes all the more spectacular. However, the critical question persists whether IWC responds with Delegitimation because its institutional deadlock prevents agreement on behavioral response strategies, or whether Delegitimation suffices to ensure the existing IO's survival as a focal actor. While these observations award some credibility to my alternative theoretical approach of explaining IO response strategies based on state aspirations (in chapter 3.3.), it also gives reason to assume that the existing IO can override contention among its member states when engaging in IO response strategies. In light of the qualitative case study results, I purport that a mixture of institutional constraints and rational utility considerations best explains IWC's response strategy of Delegitimation.

In summary, this detailed study of IWC's response strategies expands the QCA results in chapter 5 with qualitative insights. It highlights three supplementary reasons why IWC's response strategy remains at the rhetorical mode: For one, NAMMCO poses a moderate challenge to IWC's focality which specifically targets the whaling ban, but aligns with IWC's governance goal. For the other part, IWC continues to enjoy strong focality despite NAMMCO's creation. This further implies that overall chances are very slim that NAMMCO replaces IWC as a focal actor in the international whaling regime complex. Moreover, IWC experiences an institutional deadlock which prevents any substantial changes to its practices, policies or institutional structures from taking place. Combined, the breadth of NAMMCO's challenge, IWC's continual focal strength and restraints in IWC's institutional confines offer a cogent explanation for the predominance of IWC's competitive and rhetorical IO response strategies following NAMMCO's creation.

6.6. Case study conclusion

This chapter has established that the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex as well as the existing IO's focal strength play vital parts in explaining the mode of IO response strategies. Further, it has shown that shared governance goals mitigate the degree of challenge posed to the existing IO's focality. The modes of IO response strategies can be even better understood when

viewing an existing IO's response strategy as part of its effort to survive as a focal actor in the regime complex.

Throughout all qualitative case studies, the existing IO survives as a focal actor in the regime complex. The empirical evidence hence indicates that a new IO's replacement of the existing IO's focality is a rare occurrence. Considering that the sufficient and necessary conditions for the competitiveness of IO response strategies have been subject of the QCA analysis in chapter 5, the comparative case studies in chapter 6 pay special attention to explaining the rhetorical and behavioral modes of IO response strategies.

Case	Response strategy	Lessons learned
World Bank-AIIB	Admission	The World Bank welcomes AIIB as a resource enhancer that aligns with its normative framework. Since the motivation for AIIB's creation is power-based and the World Bank's focality remains strong, it engages in rhetorical IO response strategies.
IEA-IRENA	Accommodation	IEA and IRENA clash over the means for attaining global energy security but agree on the same governance goals. Next to IRENA's motivation to alter IEA's governance approach, IEA faces a vulnerable focal position and engages in behavioral IO response strategies.
UNHCR-IOM	Obstruction	UNHCR and IOM struggle to agree on a normative framework for managing refugee and migration movements. Since IOM's status- and norm-based motivation to enter the UN system poses a substantive challenge to UNHCR's focality, UNHCR retaliates with behavioral IO response strategies.
IWC-NAMMCO	Delegitimation	IWC and NAMMCO promote different governance approaches that differ in the permissibility of commercial whaling activities while sharing the same governance goals. While NAMMCO is specifically created to challenge IWC's whaling ban, IWC's focality continues to be strong and IWC engages in rhetorical IO response strategies.

Table 11: Lessons learned from comparative case studies

Table 11 summarizes the main lessons learned from each case study based on the guiding questions for structured, focused comparisons. The guiding questions pertain to the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex and focus on explaining the mode of IO response strategies. The case study findings point out that a plausible correlation exists among the new IO's motivation, the existing IO's focal strength and the mode of IO response strategies. They show that power-based and issue-specific motivations of new IO entries and strong existing IO focality likely lead to rhetorical IO response strategies. In contrast, status- and norm-based motivations for new IO entries and abating focality of the existing IO are likely associated with behavioral IO response strategies. Hence, the mechanism of status threat is supported by the comparative case study analysis; Existing IOs are indeed responsive to contenders which defy their focal position in the regime complex. The subsequent sections elaborate on the new IO's motivation and the existing IO's focal strength as supplementary case study results which extend the preliminary empirical findings and augment the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

New IO motivation:

The new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex invariably relates to states' dissatisfaction with the institutional status quo. In the qualitative case studies new IOs' motivations for entering the regime complex originate from power considerations, status aspirations, efficiency concerns or from aspirations to promote a different governance approach. Overall, these insights give a much more detailed account than the distinction between challenges to the existing IO's role as a norm setter in the regime complex or financial resource provision. New IOs' motivations to enter the regime complex are hence distinct from the types of challenges posed to the existing IO's focality (operationalized in chapter 4.3.2.) that are part of the QCA analysis in chapter 5. Given that the identification of new IO motivations is solely based on four qualitative case studies, it entails a first plausibility probe for an affiliation with the mode of IO response strategies. By no means do I claim that the identification of new IO motivations for entering the regime complex is definitive or represents clear-cut types.

One central observation from the case studies entails that some new IOs seek to improve existing ways of governance, while other new IOs are motivated to change the ways in which a global issue is governed and may even fundamentally disagree on the overarching governance goal. For instance, the power-based motivation identified with regards to AIIB's creation resembles an instance in which the new IO ultimately seeks to enhance the existing IO's capabilities for financing development projects in Central Asia. Nonetheless, the World Bank and AIIB agree on the need

to engage in development finance. In fact, the new IO predominantly focuses on the governance solution and not so much on the substance of the governance goal itself. In contrast, IOM's motivation to challenge UNHCR's focus on principles of humanitarian protection and IRENA's motivation to promote the use of renewable energies are more problem-oriented as they fundamentally disagree over the most effective governance approaches and in UNHCR's case even the nature of the global issue itself. Moreover, a comparison of new IO motivations and existing IOs' response strategies yields that existing IOs are prone to engage in rhetorical IO response strategies when the new IOs seek to improve existing ways of governance, whereas behavioral IO response strategies likely ensue when new IOs attempt to change existing governance approaches.

A more intricate case is IWC's rhetorical response to NAMMCO's creation. Whereas the motivation behind NAMMCO's creation is to reverse the whaling ban and thus change existing governance approaches, IWC's response strategy of Delegitimation is overwhelmingly rooted in its competitive rhetoric. Hence, the identified trends are not conclusive. The in-depth study of IWC's response strategy shows that in cases of counter-institutionalization states not only play a notable part in shaping the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex, but also in molding the existing IO's ability to respond. After all, institutional gridlock persists between pro- and anti-whaling states in the IWC. One probable explanation for IWC's rhetorical response strategy thus entails that the stalemate between these estranged groups prevent any changes in its practices and institutional structures from taking place. It is thinkable that IWC's response strategy could have featured behavioral IO response strategies if the institutional deadlock between pro- and anti-whaling states would not have existed. Therefore, the case study analysis demonstrates that member states should not fully be dismissed from the explanation of IO response strategies.

In summary, a closer study of new IOs' motivations for entering the regime complex yields that the mode of IO response strategies likely corresponds to the extent that the new IO seeks to change existing governance approaches and concurs with the identified governance goal. While this association applies to the majority of qualitative case studies, exceptions show that member states still play an important role in averting rhetorical and behavioral response strategies. This precursory conclusion based on new IO motivations hence expands on the QCA findings as the qualitative method casts a broader net for identifying new IO motivations that are not directly derived from the theoretical framework of IO response strategies.

Focal strength:

Given that IOs seek to maintain a certain level of prestige and status (Barnett & Finnemore, 2004; Duque, 2018), existing IOs are attentive to potential reductions in their focality. Viewed from a broader environmental perspective, IO response strategies manage possible paradigmatic shifts upon a new IO's entry to the regime complex that could limit the existing IO's focality. The comparative case studies provide empirical support that the existing IO's focal strength correlates with the mode of IO response strategies.

As a substantial part of an actor's identity, focality expresses an IO's socially recognized role as a normative standard setter and resource provider in the regime complex. An existing IO may struggle to survive as a focal actor when a new IO enters the regime complex. However, I concur that a strong focal IO can withstand pressure that it may be displaced, converted or compromised by the existence of a new IO in the regime complex (compare Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019; Rixen et al., 2016). Strong focality further implies that the existing IO tolerates or even accepts the new IO's presence in the regime complex, even as a potential new focal IO. Alternately, an existing IO with weak focality can face the risk of being pushed out of its focal position in the regime complex. Therefore, the existing IO's focal strength adds a relevant and new perspective to better explain a single IO's behavior vis-à-vis a new IO that addresses the same global issue.

Given that IO response strategies are resemblant of IO survival strategies, their mode is expressive of the existing IO's ability and/or willingness to make concessions when faced by a potentially existential threat (see also Dijkstra et al., 2022). Building on the mechanism of status threat, the greater the existing IO's focal strength, the less willing it is to concede to behavioral IO response strategies. As such, rhetorical IO response strategies do not just signal the existing IO's acceptance of the new IO, but chiefly highlight the existing IO's focal strength. Two examples based on the case study analysis embody the World Bank's strong focality following AIIB's creation and IWC's continually strong focality despite NAMMCO's creation. The World Bank's rhetorical response to the AIIB's creation poses as a prime example: While critics warn of the AIIB's prospects of taking over the realms of international development finance, the World Bank acts very self-assured because it continues to be renowned as the main provider of infrastructure development in the regime complex. Since the World Bank is acutely aware of the tenacity of its focal position (Fioretos & Heldt, 2019), rhetorical changes suffice to ensure its role as a focal actor in international

development finance. Hence, the World Bank does not alter its institutional structures or policies to accommodate or counteract the AIIB.¹⁰⁷

Different situations arise if the existing IO's focal strength is debilitated. The case studies of IEA and UNHCR's behavioral response strategies demonstrate that a weakening focal status is paralleled by behavioral response strategies. Prior to IRENA's creation, the IEA had already been experiencing declining legitimacy and failed to realize its policy recommendations on renewable energies (Colgan, 2009). When IRENA entered the global energy regime complex, the IEA fought for its status as a focal IO. Similar observations are made in global migration governance where UNHCR is considered to be a "challenged institution" (Betts, 2013, p. 69) even before IOM enters the UN system in 2016. Once IOM developed into a new focal point and amplified its member state support, UNHCR's role as a focal actor became increasingly fragile. As a result, UNHCR's focal strength waned such that the existing focal IO scrambled to assert its role as a prime responder to global refugee and migration movements. In consequence, the observed IO response strategies are mainly behavioral, which is expressed by UNHCR's vast policy scope expansion.

In summary, the comparative case studies establish a correlation between the strength of existing IOs' focality and the mode of IO response strategies. Besides, the existing IO's focal strength also gives some indication of the likelihood that the new IO replaces the existing IO as the main focal actor in a regime complex. When the existing IO's focality is strong, it is likely to persevere in its focal position and thus engages in rhetorical IO response strategies as the less costly alternative to behavioral IO response strategies. However, when the existing IO's focality is relatively weak and the new IO has reasonable potential to become a new focal actor or even replace the existing focal IO, the existing IO is much more likely to safeguard its focality via more costly, behavioral IO response strategies.

The major finding of the comparative case studies in chapter 6 comprises that the new IO's motivation for entering the regime complex and the existing IO's focal strength are closely associated with the presence of rhetorical and behavioral IO response strategies. Consequently, the qualitative case studies round off the necessary and sufficient conditions identified by QCA analysis in chapter 5 with more detailed explanations for the mode of IO response strategies. Seeing that the mechanism of status threat is reflected in all four case studies, existing focal IOs are prone to engage in behavioral IO response strategies if the new IO promotes different governance

¹⁰⁷ Special circumstances may arise as an existing IO upholds its strong focality when the new IO features a specialized agency (with exception of the UN's response to IMO's entry to the international maritime regime complex).

approaches and/or has a different understanding of the governance goal – and even more strongly if the existing IO's focal strength is undermined by the new IO's entry to the regime complex. Together, the QCA findings for the competitiveness of IO response strategies and the case study findings form a holistic explanation of variances in IO response strategies. Most significantly, the kind of challenge that a new IO poses to the existing IO's focality still remains the main explanation for different IO response strategies.

7. Conclusion

The preceding chapters have investigated when and why existing focal IOs respond to new IO entries to the regime complex. This dissertation research provides a new angle for studying inter-institutional interactions and IO developments as it shines light on existing focal IOs' response strategies to new IO entries in the regime complex. Though IO response strategies in principle appear with the same frequency as institutional proliferation, they have hardly received any systematic attention outside of this dissertation research thus far. Existing IR research frequently analyzes IOs without really contemplating their overall embeddedness and position within the larger external environment (one exception includes Lipsky, 2017). To answer the question why existing focal IOs sometimes respond to new IOs in friendly ways and other times in more adversarial ways, I conceptualized IO response strategies, developed theoretical explanations of them and tested these explanations on a broad range of case-specific empirical evidence.

The interplay of QCA analysis covering a breadth of 12 cases and in-depth investigations of four cases via structured, focused comparisons has yielded astute explanations for the response strategies of Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction. Moreover, the empirical evidence shows that challenges to existing IOs' norm and resource dimensions of focality epitomize essential components for explaining whether existing IOs engage in cooperative or competitive IO response strategies. The pertinence of the mechanism of status threat is corroborated, which entails that the stronger existing IOs' focality is threatened by new IOs, the more competitive existing IOs' response strategies will be.

In this chapter I embed my knowledge of IO response strategies in larger theoretical debates. I extrapolate my findings to the general conduct and functions of IOs as well as their roles in the larger institutional environment. In a first step, I revisit the theoretical framework of IO response strategies in light of my observations. The purpose is to synthesize empirical findings of the QCA analysis and comparative case studies to refine the theoretical framework and more specifically delineate the exact circumstances under which existing focal IOs engage in each type of response strategy. Secondly, I consider the theoretical implications of my research for the allocated roles between IOs and states in managing new IO entries to the regime complex, the practical implications for the design of new IOs and the broader implications for the overall stability of the global governance system vis-à-vis institutional challengers. Finally, this chapter culminates with an outlook on prospective research endeavors that could bear fruitful paths for adjusting and

extending this novel, identity-based perspective for studying the behavior of existing focal IOs. It has the potential to open new avenues for studying IO development and inter-institutional relations in an evolving regime complex.

7.1. Explanations of IO response strategies

The main takeaway of this dissertation is that existing focal IOs respond to the degree of status threat which is imposed by new IOs entering the regime complex. The initial theoretical framework in chapter 3.2.2. is derived from the IR literature strands on IO development, regime complexity and inter-institutional cooperation and conflict. It features two key variables for explaining cooperative and competitive IO response strategies: the type of challenge posed to existing IOs' focality and institutional design similarities. In a first step of empirical refinement, the QCA analysis in chapter 5 identified different causal configurations of conditions that are necessary or sufficient for cooperative and competitive IO response strategies. In a second step of empirical refinement and subsequent theoretical expansion, the comparative case studies in chapter 6 effectively reveal that existing IOs respond to new IOs' power or status aspirations, to efficiency concerns and to their advancement of new, substantive approaches of collective global problem solving.

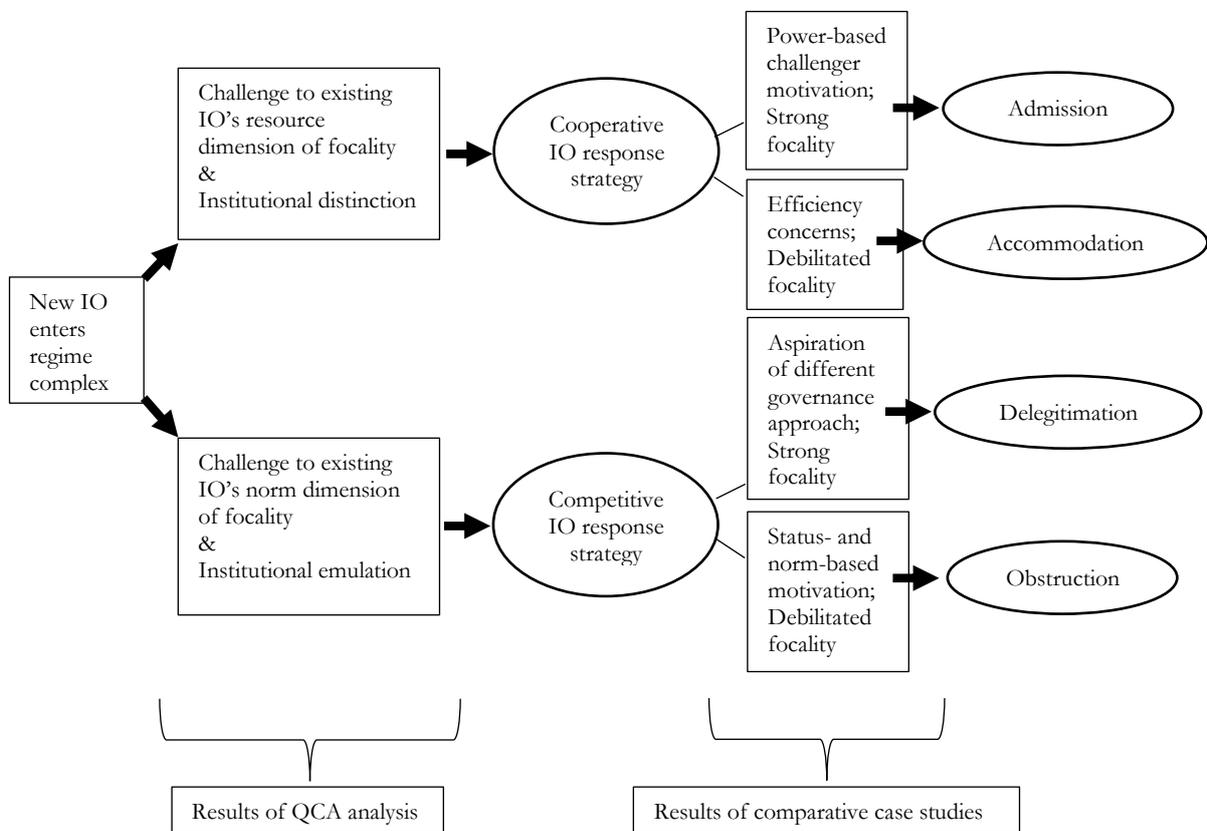


Figure 6: A refined theoretical framework of IO response strategies

Figure 6 graphically joins together the central findings of the QCA analysis and the structured, focused comparison of four cases. It hence combines the main explanations for the competitiveness of IO response strategies with the main insights into the circumstances under which existing focal IOs engage in rhetorical and behavioral modes of IO response strategies. While other configurations of conditions may also lead to either cooperative or competitive IO response strategies (compare chapters 5.2.1. and 5.2.2.), these combinations are displayed in the theoretical framework because they represent the most frequently observed expressions of the key variables.

The depth by which existing IOs are willing to make concessions in their own practices, policies and institutional structures to preserve their focality is further attributable to their focal strength. The structured, focused comparison of cases has shown that some existing IOs such as the World Bank or IWC possess sturdier focality in the regime complex as opposed to other IOs such as UNHCR or the IEA. I find that strong focal IOs can withstand pressure that they may be displaced, converted or compromised by the existence of new IOs in the regime complex. Hence, the motivation for new IO entries and existing IOs' focal strength are added to the theoretical framework as two additional explanations for the rhetorical and behavioral modes of IO response strategies.

Considering that IO response strategies are equifinal, valid explanations rely on a combination of conditions that appear across different contexts. In the first part of the empirical analysis the QCA analysis reveals one necessary condition (the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality) and two sufficient conditions for cooperative IO response strategies (in chapter 5.2.1.). The sufficient condition featuring the presence of a challenge to the existing IO's resource dimension of focality and the presence of institutional distinction (shown in Figure 6) is apparent in six out of seven cases of cooperative IO response strategies. The case studies further reveal that new IO entries motivated by representational concerns and dissatisfaction with single policies likely coincide with cooperative IO response strategies. Furthermore, a combination of new IOs' power-based motivations for entering the regime complex, such as China's creation of AIIB as "a response [...] to its lack of weight in the existing institutions" (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019, p. 1176), and existing IOs' strong focality co-occur with the cooperative and rhetorical response strategy of Admission. If new IOs however agree with existing focal IOs' governance goal but seek to enhance the efficiency for governing a global issue, existing IOs' reputation as focal IOs is stricken in the regime complex. This insight stems from the case study of IEA's

response to IRENA, in which the IEA is greatly threatened by the new IO and hence engages in more drastic means to secure its ongoing focality. Under such circumstances behavioral response strategies likely ensue that feature structural or political IO changes, as in the IEA's creation of a new department to accommodate the rising demand for renewable energies (Esu & Sindico, 2016).

My theory on IO bureaucracy asserts that existing focal IOs are most alarmed by the possibilities of being replaced as a focal actor. I find that new IOs' contestation of extant normative frameworks and simultaneous emulation of institutional designs are most resemblant of such situations. In these instances, high status threats are met with competitive response strategies of Delegation and Obstruction. The sufficient condition which is present in three out of five cases of competitive IO response strategies contains the absence of a challenge to existing IOs' resource dimensions of focality and the simultaneous presence of a challenge to existing IOs' norm dimensions of focality (as is observed in the UNHCR-IOM case and ITU-ICANN case). The case study findings further yield that new IOs seeking to advance different governance approaches are met with Delegation efforts by existing focal IOs as attempts to vocally discredit their relevance. This is for example observable in IWC's response to the creation of NAMMCO, in which IWC's strong focality endures despite a new IO's entry to the regime complex. In reverse situations, new IO entries which are motivated by norm- and status aspirations pose high levels of threat to existing IOs' focality and are likely followed by competitive and behavioral response strategies, also known as Obstruction. I contend that in such situations a realistic chance exists that new IOs seek to replace the existing focal IO or at least attempt to establish a new focal point in the regime complex. Hence, existing IOs are especially prone to engage in competitive response strategies when new IOs question their normative framework for solving a global issue.

In summary, the empirical analysis substantiates the mechanism of status threat. Additional knowledge gained from comparing in-depth case studies supports the conjecture that the stronger existing IOs' focality is threatened by new IOs, the more competitive IO response strategies will be. Moreover, the refined theoretical framework also features new IOs' motivations for entering the regime complex and existing IOs' focal strength as key factors for the level of status threat. This research is significant because it demonstrates the importance of existing focal IOs' response strategies for their continued existence as focal actors.

7.2. Implications of IO response strategies

My finding that IO response strategies are quite nuanced and highly context-specific forms the basis for determining the main implications of my research. Given that my research lies at the intersection of studying IO behavior, inter-institutional relations and the larger trajectories of the external environment, it has multiple implications for different areas of IR research. On one hand, my research implies that states do not have so much saying when it comes to managing and establishing long-term relations with new IOs. Whereas my research shows that states are highly involved in the process of institutional creation, IOs increasingly take over the process of managing inter-institutional relations as time passes. On the other hand, this research has a special relevance for practitioners that are involved in the design of new IOs at both international and state levels. By knowing more about the context in which certain types of IO response strategies arise, practitioners can better anticipate the trajectories of inter-institutional relations based on how certain features of the new IO align with existing focal IOs. On a grander scheme, my research carries significant implications for the stability of the global governance system. Despite being in constant flux and facing potential existential challenges, the implications of my research give reason to believe that the current global governance system is more sturdy than simple narratives of the order in crisis might make us believe.

The supremacy of IOs in the long run:

With this dissertation, I draw attention to IO status as a previously overlooked component for explaining IO behavior upon a new IO's entry to the regime complex. Whereas I acknowledge that states have some *de facto* control as the main financial contributors that keep the IO and its budget alive, my empirical findings certainly point to IO bureaucracies going their own ways. Following an initial phase of IO entry in which states are the driving forces behind creating new IOs or motivating an existing IO to expand its policy scope and address new global issues, IO bureaucracies are the main actors when it comes to engaging in certain types of IO response strategies. The first main implication of this research entails that the engagement of states in managing the subsequent nature of inter-institutional relations between existing focal and new IOs levels off after some time.

The observation that existing focal IOs indeed engage in response strategies as partially autonomous actors bears substantive theoretical implications. On one hand it calls for a clearer theoretical distinction between the behavior of IOs and states. While state control over IOs and state strategies for handling institutional proliferation is subject of extant research (Faude &

Parizek, 2021; e.g. Hawkins et al., 2006), investigations into which actors effectively handle inter-institutional relations are rare. Knowing more about these actors and what determines their actions bears substantive theoretical implications. For instance, if inter-institutional competition exists among IOs, it is probable that the respective contentions can be traced back to the dissatisfaction of IO bureaucracies with a certain situation, and not necessarily to the dissatisfaction of states. Therefore, my research implies that IO rivalries are not the same as state rivalries. Further, it gives reason to presume that IOs keep the larger external environment, as well as their status within this environment, in view as they navigate institutional proliferation.

On the other hand, my observations implicate that states lose interest when it comes to shaping the nature of relations between existing focal and new IOs. In contrast to the comparatively high politicization surrounding IO creation (People's Daily Online, 2014; Young, 2009), the day to day management of IO interactions can at times be quite mundane and bureaucratic. Examples include the establishment of joint databases or the organization of formal or informal communication channels. Once the initial tumult surrounding a new IO's creation has receded, IOs seem to take up the major roles in steering the alignment of different institutions in their greater external environment. For example, a significant amount of geopolitical turmoil flared up surrounding the creation of AIIB. As a major development bank created by China, which openly voiced its dissatisfactions with the World Bank's lack of institutional reforms, the AIIB was recognized as an antagonist and possible opponent by Western states and their media (Perlez, 2015; Xiang, 2016). Yet despite these large geopolitical rivalries among the US and China, the World Bank reacted to AIIB's creation with the response strategy of Admission. What may seem like a frail response strategy by the World Bank at first sight makes a lot more sense when considering its actual status competition with the AIIB. Though potential threats emanating from AIIB's geopolitical ramifications play a major role at the time of AIIB's creation, the AIIB does not discredit the World Bank's preeminent position in the regime complex. Once the initial tumult surrounding China's foreign policy objectives recedes, it becomes evident that the AIIB actually presents itself as the World Bank's ally on the world stage. I contend that the World Bank's response strategy would have likely been more competitive than Admission if it were directly steered by the US. The nature of the IO response strategy hence indicates that the World Bank's secretariat retained a major voice in managing relations with the AIIB. Despite AIIB's creation coming close to a textbook example of CI, the World Bank's response strategy mainly focuses on the weak status threat directed to its own focality. By implication, a lot more is to be learned about the management of inter-institutional relations. One promising avenue is to direct closer attention at IO bureaucracies and continue to theorize how they handle institutional newcomers to the regime complex.

In summary, my research implies that much more is to be discovered about the functioning of IO bureaucracies and their roles in handling inter-institutional relations. Given that IOs fulfil prominent roles in managing new institutional actors in the regime complex, extant research would benefit from a deeper theorization of the behavior of IO bureaucracies.

Practical implications for the design of new IOs:

Being aware of existing IOs' focal status adds a new aspect that practitioners may lose sight of when setting up new IOs. The new insights on existing IOs' status and behavior gained through this dissertation research carries a number of practical implications for public officials. When practitioners such as IO bureaucrats or state diplomats are aware of the consequences pertaining to alignments of IOs' political and normative dimensions, they have a chance to mitigate undesired circumstances. It entails that practitioners should not only consider the design of institutional structures alone. Whereas it is important to ensure that a new IO functions, the new IO's norms and policies are exceedingly important for unfolding relations with the existing focal IO and ensuing developments of regime complexity.

First, bureaucrats should have some clarity whether the new IO is meant to take up a focal position in the regime complex. As my research shows, the more the new IO attempts to establish a new focal point or even replace the existing IO's focal position, the more pushback it likely faces by the existing focal IO. For instance, the existing focal IO may be reluctant to engage in any formal cooperation with the new IO. However, if the aim is to be a focal IO, the new IO likely has the best chances of being accepted as an additional focal actor in the regime complex when the existing IO's focality is strong and both IOs are oriented towards meeting the same governance goal. For example, IRENA and the AIIB were both able to establish themselves as additional focal actors because the IEA and World Bank continued to maintain strong focal positions in the regime complex. Being aware of the existing IO's focal strength and possible hierarchization by design, which assuredly creates authority relations among IOs (see also Green, 2021), can already indicate the new IO's own chances of establishing itself as a new focal IO in the regime complex.

Second, the alignments of new and existing focal IOs' norms, resources and institutional structures also carry substantial implications.¹⁰⁸ One empirical finding of my research on IO response

¹⁰⁸ In the context of my research on IO response strategies, normative coherence arises when existing focal and new IOs share the same understandings of the governance goal around which a regime complex is structured.

strategies yields that IO bureaucracies are attentive to the breadth of challenge which emanates from institutional contenders. The ways in which the new IO aligns and distinguishes itself from the existing focal IO makes a difference for the competitiveness of IO response strategies, the trajectories of inter-institutional relations and development of regime complexity on a broader scale. Thus, it is advisable that practitioners are aware whether the respective new IO merely contests specific issues or further scrutinizes the governance goal pursued by the existing focal IO. By implication, practitioners may have some substantive influence on shaping the trajectories of inter-institutional relations when they can anticipate the scope and depth of existing IOs' response strategies. For example, the AIIB's contribution of additional financial resources for development projects in Asia simultaneously help to achieve the World Bank's goal of enhancing infrastructure development worldwide. Similarly, in IRENA's case, the pooling of resources to promote renewable energies also benefits IEA's ability to realize its mission of promoting renewable energy sources (IEA, 2022b). In both cases, existing IOs' focality is strengthened by new IOs which direct their governance efforts at the same governance goals and largely share the same normative framework. Therefore, my research raises awareness how new IOs may either enhance present dependencies or distance themselves from existing focal IOs. Depending on which avenue is chosen, the emergence of inter-institutional cooperation or conflict likely follows. Therefore, my dissertation research and its practical implications refine existing research concerning institutional proliferation, the consequences of institutional overlap and inter-institutional relations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Faude & Fuss, 2020b; Pratt, 2021; Raustiala, 2013; Reinsberg & Westerwinter, 2021).

Third, the design of new IOs carries implications for the development of regime complexes. Practitioners hence have the chance to play a key part in either corroborating the stability of the regime complex or inducing more fragmentation and potentially destabilizing the regime complex altogether. As central governance nodes, focal IOs propagate normative frameworks which in turn structure the governance approaches of other IOs in the regime complex (Babb & Chorev, 2016). Hence, existing focal IOs play prominent roles in the development of regime complexity. Practitioners may choose to design new IOs in ways that complement the existing focal IO's objectives, which heightens the chances of both IOs operating in unison. Or practitioners may shape new IOs in ways that contradict the existing focal IO's governance objectives, in which case contestations likely arise that may even spur fragmentation of the general institutional architecture in the longer term. Seeing that the cohesion of the regime complex is in part shaped by the new IO's support for attaining the existing focal IO's governance goals, my research indicates that the

design of new IOs not only carries implications for the ensuing response strategies by existing focal IOs, but also for the development of regime complexity in more general terms.

In summary, practitioners in general, and IO bureaucrats or state officials involved in the creation of new IOs in particular, should be aware of how the new IO positions itself with regard to the existing IO's focality. Accordingly, the political and normative alignments between existing focal and new IOs may have considerable consequences for the larger external environment. A central and practical implication entails that the trajectories of inter-institutional relations and the direction in which regime complexes develop can be partly ascribed to the new IO's breadth of challenge of the existing focal IO.

Implications for the global governance system:

Viewed from a broader governance perspective, my research gives reason for optimism to the defenders of the contemporary global governance system. A third central implication of my research contains that the current global governance system largely defies challenges by IOs that are led by non-Western states. It further highlights that it is worth to pay increasing attention to IOs and their role in global governance (compare Zürn, 2018a).

In recent years global governance debates increasingly feature discussions about contestations of the liberal international order (Bettizia & Lewis, 2020; Börzel & Zürn, 2021). Phrases such as a “liberal world order in crisis” and references to the contestation and decline of global governance have also become more common in relevant debates (Ikenberry, 2010; Overbeek et al., 2010; Sørensen, 2011; Zürn, 2018b). In relation to my dissertation research, a decline of the global governance system would imply that a plethora of new IOs arise which threaten the existence of focal IOs as the main governance leaders. However, this research yields that IOs and their practices, policies and institutional structures overall are quite rigid. Even when faced by new IOs whose leading member states do not necessarily agree with the prevalent international order, behavioral IO response strategies by existing focal IOs are mostly absent. Two out of three sampled cases in which the new IO is led by China – a state that is known to be critical of the liberal international order (Kim & Kim, 2022) – feature cooperative IO response strategies (namely the World Bank and IMF's responses to the AIIB and CMI, respectively). Only OSCE has responded to SCO's creation by engaging in the competitive response strategy of Delegation. My empirical observations hence imply that existing focal IOs do not automatically respond competitively to a new IO that is *inter alia* led by authoritarian states who are critically inclined towards the Western-

led global governance system. Given that the contestation of Western-led institutions by IOs which are controlled by non-Western states is not a widespread phenomenon, it does not seem to tell the full story.

The simple narrative that actors tear down orders generally seem to resonate with discussion on the future of the current state of the global order. My research, however, implies that while this may be the case for state and non-state actors, this pointed argument about the global order in crisis does not appear to be manifesting at the level of interactions among IOs. Of course, one would have to see how the trend develops. But for the time being, in the current state of affairs most IOs – both existing and new – continue to remain controlled by Western democratic states. To be more precise, the US remains the leading member state in both existing focal and new IOs in nine out of twelve cases of my representational sample. Given that prevalent narratives of challenges by authoritarian states do not attain much empirical backing, I turn to a case which has considerable implications for the further development of the global governance system, namely IOM's challenge of UNHCR's humanitarian governance approach. Though both IOs are under US leadership, IOM's entry to the UN system in 2016 embodies one of the strongest threats to an existing IO's focality in my sample. Their main subject of contestation pertains to the appropriate normative frameworks and governance goals for managing international refugee and migration movements. As a result, states are increasingly divided over protecting the principle of non-refoulement as advanced by UNHCR or giving the greatest importance to state sovereignty, which is promoted by IOM (Bradley, 2021, p. 267). Subsequently, friction persists among the existing and focal IOs, which can potentially ensue greater fragmentation of the regime complex. Hence, my research implies that confrontations between two IOs likely lead to a greater rift in the coherence of the international environment when they promote incompatible normative frameworks and pursue discordant governance goals. Apparent contestations of the global governance system could also potentially be reduced to different value camps. In any case, growing fragmentation in the external environment does not seem to depend so much on leading member states being supporters of Western democratic or authoritarian values.

It promises to be a valuable exercise to first examine the present configuration of IOs in the global governance system and how their normative orientations may interfere with each other's operations or governance objectives. This type of exercise would allow to obtain a more realistic understanding of current developments before engaging in larger discussions on the future of the global governance system. It might be possible to make some relevant observations regarding the stability of the global governance system by closely examining the constellations of IOs in the global

governance system. According to my research, which states support certain IOs is first and foremost not so important as compared to how different IOs can work together and which goals and normative frameworks they pursue. This gives reason for optimism that the current global governance system is sturdier than one might lead to think.

In summary, this dissertation research has several implications for theory development, practitioners and observers of global governance. While state involvement is found to be very high during more politicized processes such as institutional creation itself, IO bureaucracies constitute the main actors in managing inter-institutional relations as time passes. By implication, current IR research would benefit from making clearer distinctions between the role of IOs and states in handling the ramifications of institutional proliferation. Given that existing focal IOs respond to the potential formation of new focal points, practitioners should not only pay attention to the institutional design of new IOs, but also to the ways in which its policies and normative framework may enhance or hamper the existing IO's focality. Concerning trajectories of the current global governance system, it appears that discrepancies in IOs' normative frameworks and governance goals have some significant implications for contestations of the global governance system as compared to narratives which appeal to the divisions IOs based on their leading member states being democratic or authoritarian states.

7.3. Recommendations for future research

This dissertation research could form the start of a new research agenda on IO response strategies. Its empirical contributions already delineate general trends in the occurrence of different types of IO response strategies. One next logical step could possibly develop this research further by spending some time on theorizing IO behavior with regard to each type of response strategy. For instance, what role does an IO's interconnectedness with other IOs play for the presence of Admission, Accommodation, Delegitimation and Obstruction? A slightly different but related way of expanding the theoretical and empirical scope of this research is to conduct a deep analysis of the circumstances in which IO response strategies are present in the first place. Elaborating on my initial thoughts in chapter 2.2, going back to the roots of IO response strategies enhances present understandings of their objectives and functions. For example, heading down a similar analytical approach as in this dissertation research, a promising avenue for further research could focus on existing IOs' responses to IO death (e.g. Dijkstra & Debre, 2022; Gray, 2018). Instead of explaining when and why IOs die, it could turn the analytical lens around and focus on the incumbents. For

instance, under which circumstances do the existing IOs take over the institutional gap which is left after an IO dies, leave the ensuing governance gap unscathed or engage in the creation of new IOs that are to fill the vacant governance space? I am hopeful that this dissertation research not only shapes the beginning for studying the response strategies of existing focal IOs, but also builds bridges to other forms of IO interactions in which the incumbent is faced by significant changes in their external environment.

Furthermore, I contend that this research endeavor offers a promising start for engaging in systematic studies on IO focality or diving deeper into the intricacies of IO-state relations as well as the precise reasoning of IO officials which underlies their motivation for pursuing one type of IO response strategy as opposed to another. Though I treat IO focality as a rigid state of affairs, it is by no means guaranteed that an existing focal IO stays in its focal position and that a non-focal IO might become focal. In future research which features focal IOs, one possibility is to advance present knowledge on IO focality in theoretical and analytical terms. The strength of the existing IO's focality is an important aspect that could be explored more systematically in future research on IO response strategies. For example, prevailing analyses often overlook that the World Bank has been designed as a focal IO upon its creation at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944. While not impossible, it is highly unlikely that a new IO will replace the World Bank as focal actor. Given that its focal position in the regime complex is backed by constitutional rules,¹⁰⁹ the issue area of international development finance has been structured around the World Bank as a focal actor from the beginning. This arguably impacts the World Bank's response strategies: For instance, by knowing that the other actors in the regime complex greatly rely on the World Bank's support, it can afford to refuse making any changes to its voting rules and chiefly coexist with the respective new IOs (see also Faude & Fuss, 2020b). As this example demonstrates, knowing more about the context surrounding existing IOs' focality – or lack thereof – enhances the validity of the present understanding of IO response strategies. Moreover, this approach likely carries further implications for studying how IO response strategies might differ across focal and non-focal actors in the regime complex. On a secondary note, it could be worthwhile to develop a systematic approach for effectively distinguishing when a new IO indeed attempts to replace the existing IO's focal position or seeks to exist as another focal IO in the regime complex.

While this dissertation research predominantly focuses on the behavior of IO bureaucracies at the IO-IO level of interactions, the intricacies of IO-state relations have always played a subtle

¹⁰⁹ See also Kreuder-Sonnen & Zangl (2016) for the effects of inter-institutional contestation, namely contested multilateralism, for the constitutionalization of multilateral institutions.

undertone. Hence, I am assured that adopting a multilevel research design offers another promising avenue for future research. The advantage of such a design is that it can examine IO-IO interactions and simultaneously account for the interplay of member states and other (non-)governmental actors at the international and national levels of governance. To my knowledge, no present research exists that proclaims which member states play crucial roles in determining an IO response strategy in the first place. So far, extant studies have largely focused on the dynamics among member states or how the external environment impacts IO developments. While complex, I propose that a further development of this research into a multilevel comparative analysis could arrive at even more precise insights into the circumstances under which certain types of IO response strategies prevail.

Last but not least, my final recommendation consists of conducting interviews with IO officials. This methodology offers potential access to the particular reasons which underlie specific response strategies. Given that this dissertation research is based on an external perspective, the in-depth knowledge obtained from expert interviews would effectively complement my present knowledge from an internal perspective. The possibility of obtaining never seen insights that reach beyond publicly available information of formal IO documents render this research expansion as a very attractive option. As decisions on how to respond to new IOs are reached collectively by members of the IO secretariat with the potential input of existing IO member states, this research endeavor contains further implications for the autonomy dynamics between IOs and member states.

I recognize great potential that these proposed research avenues can further advance knowledge on the behavior of IO bureaucracies, especially relating to IO response strategies. While they point out several among many ways to drive this dissertation research forward, much is left to be discovered about the development of IOs in general and their interactions with changes in their external environment in particular.

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Appendix

Appendix I: Coding of institutional design similarities

A coding of 1 represents that the institutional design feature is present in the existing focal and new IOs. A coding of 0 represents that the institutional design feature differs between the existing focal and new IO.

Case (existing focal IO-new IO)	Institutional design similarities (institutional distinction and institutional emulation) ¹	Centralization of decision- making structures	IO secretariat	Dispute settlement	IO funding rules	Voting rules
IEA-IRENA	0	0	1	0	0	0
World Bank- AIIB	1	1	0	1	1	1
UNHCR-IOM	0	0	0	1	0	0
IWC- NAMMCO	1		1	1	1	1
FAO-WTO	0	1	1	0	0	0
OSCE-SCO	1	1	1	1	1	1
WIPO-WTO	0	1	0	1	0	0
UN-IMO	1	1	1	0	1	1
IMF-CMI	0	0	0	1	0	0
WHO-WTO	0	1	1	0	0	0
ILO-WTO	0	0	1	0	1	0
ITU-ICANN	0	0	0	1	1	0

Table i: Coding overview of institutional design similarities for QCA analysis

¹ A coding of 0 represents institutional distinction, and a coding of 1 represents institutional emulation.

Appendix II: Operationalization of alternative explanations and state-based approach

Operationalization of alternative explanations:

- **Institutional density:** Institutional density is operationalized by the number of IOs that are present in the respective regime complex at the time of a new IO's entry. In cases where the number of actors vary in existing research – for example when different numbers of intergovernmental organizations are counted as part of the global energy regime complex (compare Van de Graaf & Colgan, 2016) – I opt for the more inclusive description of actors (the description featuring the greatest number of actors).
- **Geopolitical rivalries:** Geopolitical rivalries are operationalized in terms of the geopolitical alignment between the leading IO member states of the existing focal and new IOs, respectively. Empirically, I pay attention to leading IO member states as states that have (nearly) full control over an IO's agenda setting.

Operationalization of the alternative theoretical approach featuring state aspirations:

Overlapping IO memberships and intended IO entries comprise the empirical indicators for the alternative theoretical approach featuring state aspirations. Their operationalization for the empirical analysis in chapter 5 is as follows:

- **Overlapping IO memberships:** Overlapping IO memberships are operationalized by the share of the new IO's members which overlaps with the existing focal IO's membership. Overlapping IO membership is coded as being present if at least 50% of membership overlap exists. It is coded as being absent if the new IO shares less than 50% of members with the existing focal IO's membership.
- **Intended IO entries:** I operationalize intended IO entries as those IO entries which are the result of counter-institutionalization. Intended IO entries feature deliberately created new IOs that contest the institutional status quo set by the existing focal IO. Unintended IO entries take place when the new IO enters the regime complex due to developments in the institutional environment or increasing complexity of the global issue at hand.

Appendix III: Descriptive overview of alternative explanations

Issue area	Institutional density (number of IOs per issue area)	IO response strategy (existing IO – new IO)
Internet governance	11	Competitive (ITU – ICANN)
International labor	7	Cooperative (ILO – WTO)
Global health	6	Cooperative (WHO – WTO)
Maritime governance	3	Competitive (UN – IMO)
Trade, IP rights	11	Cooperative (WIPO – WTO)
International security	4	Competitive (OSCE – SCO)
Food governance	7	Cooperative (FAO – WTO)
International whaling	4	Competitive (IWC – NAMMCO)
Refugees, migration	7	Competitive (UNHCR – IOM)
Development finance	27*	Cooperative (World Bank – AIIB) (IMF – CMI)
Global energy	10	Cooperative (IEA-IRENA)

Table ii: Institutional density and competitiveness of IO response strategies

* The 24 development banks of IMF-CMI case are already included in the 27 development banks identified for the World Bank-AIIB case.

Appendix

IO response strategy	Cases (existing IO – new IO)	Geopolitical alliance of leading IO member states *
Cooperative	IEA – IRENA case	Yes
	WIPO – WTO case	Yes
	ILO – WTO case	Yes
	World Bank – AIIB case	No
	FAO – WTO case	Yes
	IMF – CMI case	No
	WHO – WTO case	Yes
Competitive	IWC – NAMMCO case	Yes
	OSCE – SCO case	No
	UNHCR – IOM case	Yes
	UN – IMO case	Yes
	ITU – ICANN case	No

Table iii: Geopolitical alliance among leading IO member states and competitiveness of IO response strategies

* The answer “Yes” written in bold represents that the US is present among the leading member states of both the existing focal IO and new IO.

Appendix IV: Descriptive overview of state-based approach

IO response strategy	Cases (existing IO – new IO)	Intention of new IO entry
Cooperative	IEA – IRENA case	CI
	WIPO – WTO case	Unintentional entry
	ILO – WTO case	Unintentional entry
	World Bank – AIIB case	CI
	FAO – WTO case	Unintentional entry
	IMF – CMI case	CI
	WHO – WTO case	Unintentional entry
Competitive	IWC – NAMMCO case	CI
	OSCE – SCO case	CI
	UNHCR – IOM case	CI
	UN – IMO case	Specialized agency
	ITU – ICANN case	CI

Table iv: Intention of new IO entries and competitiveness of IO response strategies

IO response strategy	Cases (existing IO – new IO)	Share of new IO's membership overlapping with existing focal IO's membership
Cooperative	IEA – IRENA case	79%
	WIPO – WTO case	61%
	ILO – WTO case	60%
	World Bank – AIIB case	10%
	FAO – WTO case	60%
	IMF – CMI case	7%
	WHO – WTO case	57%
Competitive	IWC – NAMMCO case	6%
	OSCE – SCO case	9%
	UNHCR – IOM case	97%
	UN – IMO case	39%
	ITU – ICANN case	9%

Table v: Share of overlapping memberships and competitiveness of IO response strategies

Appendix V: Descriptive overview of IO response strategies (extended version)

	Existing focal IO World Bank	New IO AIIB
General context		
New IO entry (year)	2016 (AIIB's operational launch)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	To meet the increasing demands of infrastructure development in Asia and the developing world. To gain more power in Asia, and to become more independent from the World Bank; Another motivation is to put external pressure for achieving reforms by publicly questioning the World Bank's governance features.	
Governance goal	To eradicate poverty across all countries; Originally, the World Bank gave loans to rebuild countries amid the devastations caused by World War II.	Fight fraud and corruption, support sustainable energy in Asia, maintain a framework on social and environmental sustainability.
Governance approach	Development lending based on norms of sovereign equality.	The AIIB invests in new infrastructure projects across the Asian region to unlock capital and foster economic development.
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	27 multilateral development banks exist as of 2019 (according to Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	World Bank Executive Board (composed of 25 members from 188 countries, all shareholders are represented, but not all are represented directly; only large members have a board seat and coalitions of states of similar economic size share one board seat) makes important decisions and delegates other decisions to management (Villafranca, 2016). World Bank grants reserved seats and additional votes to the members who contribute the most capital (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019).	AIIB Board of Directors are unpaid and non-residential and meet periodically (Villafranca, 2016; H. Wang, 2017). The AIIB reserves seats for regional and founding members, respectively, and provides these members with additional votes or veto rights (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019). China attempts to keep its veto power (Villafranca, 2016).
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	No
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	No
IO funding	Development financing is not based on cash contributions by member states, but on capital raised in international financial	Development financing is not based on cash contributions by member states, but from capital

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	markets (J. G. Ikenberry & Lim, 2017). A system based on capital subscriptions that determines relative contributions of member states (as well as how much they can borrow and how many votes they have) (Fioretos & Heldt, 2019).	raised in international financial markets (Ikenberry & Lim, 2017).
Voting rules	World Bank Executive Board (composed of 25 members from 188 countries, where all shareholders are represented, but not all are represented directly) makes important decisions and delegates other decisions to management (Villafranca, 2016); World Bank grants reserved seats and additional votes to the members who contribute the most capital (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019).	AIIB Board of Directors are unpaid and non-residential and meet periodically (Villafranca, 2016; H. Wang, 2017); The AIIB reserves seats for regional and founding members, and provides these members with additional votes or veto rights (Heldt & Schmidtke, 2019); China attempts to keep its veto power (Villafranca, 2016).
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	No (US in World Bank; China in AIIB)	
Membership overlap*	10% of World Bank's membership overlaps with AIIB's membership in 2015.	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	The World Bank approved 7.5 billion USD in loans for the East Asia and Pacific Region in 2016 (World Bank, 2016).	AIIB budget for development loans: AIIB already provided financial loans of about 1.2 billion USD when it first became operational in 2016 (AIIB, 2016).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	AIIB's budget is 16% of the size of the World Bank's budget in 2016.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Admission		
Change in rhetoric	World Bank welcomes the AIIB as a new development bank on the world stage. World Bank's rhetoric is consistently positive and continuously emphasizes its willingness to cooperate.	
Change in practices	Co-financing with emphasis on environmental and social policies. A significant decline in World Bank development loan projects is observed towards states that are also formal AIIB members (Qian et al., 2021).	
Change in policies		
Change in institutional structures		

*based on my own calculations.

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	Existing focal IO IEA	New IO IRENA
General context		
New IO entry (year)	2009 (IRENA creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	IRENA is "motivated by the huge potential of renewable energy in providing decentralized access to energy, particularly in developing countries, and access to energy for isolated and remote regions and islands" (IRENA, 2009b, p. 2); Shaping new substantive norms that promote renewable energies (Van de Graaf, 2013b).	
Governance goal	To obtain global energy security	To obtain global energy security
Governance approach	Promoting oil and fossil fuels to secure global energy supplies	Promoting renewable energy sources to secure global energy supplies
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	10 IOs in global energy regime complex (a total of up to 50 actors including transnational non-governmental actors) (Sovacool & Florini, 2012; Van de Graaf & Colgan, 2016)	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	Binding decisions are possible; Recommendations can also be made by the Governing Board (consisting of one representative of each member state); Decisions are mainly made by consensus in the Governing Board (majority voting or unanimity might be necessary in the event of an oil crisis).	Non-legally binding decisions; IRENA does not seek to establish international treaties or regulations. It rather aims for service provisions: "IRENA is characterized by the principle of equality of all members in decision-making processes" (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013, p. 11). IRENA does not have regulatory power and builds on the principle of voluntariness.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	Yes	No
IO funding	The IEA's regular budget relies on mandatory member state contributions calculated by the Secretariat. Yet these funds are often not enough. The IEA is mainly financed by the US (US contributions make up 25% of IEA's budget; Japan contributes 24% to IEA's budget), but has largely relied on voluntary contributions from member states, corporations or other actors;	Voluntary contributions by IRENA member states (the minimum contribution is 210 USD).

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	IEA experienced a decline in its real budget due to the US having a larger agenda of zero nominal budgets for all IGOs in which it has memberships. Until recently, the IEA did not keep track of its funding (Bamberger, 2004, p. 106; Florini, 2011).	
Voting rules	IEA voting rules have been frozen since its creation; A total of 100 votes is allocated based on 1973 net oil imports: Each member receives 3 votes plus a number of votes based on its share of net oil imports in 1973.	Each member has one vote in the Assembly and the Council. In the Assembly decisions on matters of substance are made by consensus (if no consensus is present, consensus can be achieved if no more than two members object - unless the Statute says otherwise); In the Council decisions on matters of substance are made by majority of two-thirds of its members; procedural decisions are made by simple majority.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US leadership in IEA; US, Germany, Spain, Denmark leadership in IRENA).	
Membership overlap*	79% of IEA's membership overlaps with IRENA's membership (in 2009).	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	IEA Research, Development and Demonstration (RD&D) total budget for renewable energy sources amounts to 24.635 million USD in 2009 (IEA, 2009).	IRENA's budget for 2009 amounts to 6.175 million USD (IRENA, 2009a).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	IRENA's budget is around 25% of the size of World Bank's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Accommodation		
Change in rhetoric	In 2009 the Energy Watch Group accused IEA of obstructing a global switch to renewable energies. The IEA's message of its World Energy Outlook 2008 to its 28 member states promotes oil, coal and nuclear technologies as being 'irreplaceable' technologies and systematically underestimates wind power (Adam, 2009).	
Change in practices	Yes, "in parallel to the founding of IRENA, the IEA began taking a greater interest in RE [renewable energies]" (Roehrkasten & Westphal, 2013, p. 11).	
Change in policies		
Change in institutional structures	"In 2009, the IEA could have let go of its renewable energy portfolio in response to the development of IRENA, but instead created a Renewable Energy division of its own" (Esu & Sindico, 2016).	

*based on my own calculations.

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	Existing focal IO UNHCR	New IO IOM
General context		
New IO entry (year)	2016 (IOM enters the UN system)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	<p>The motivation to include IOM in the UN framework was to strengthen UNHCR-IOM cooperation and ensure a stronger response to situations of mixed migration (including both refugees and economic migrants) (Moretti, 2021).</p> <p>The motivation to create IOM was to have a US-controlled counterpart to UNHCR and to focus on organizing economic migration (Pécoud, 2020).</p>	
Governance goal	<p>To find durable solutions for refugee movements and to ensure refugee protection.</p> <p>UNHCR has far-reaching normative principles that extend throughout all of its humanitarian work.</p>	<p>The original governance goal was to help "eliminate potential social and political tensions in Europe ... to contain the spread of Communism" (Parsanoglou, 2015, p. 59); "to overcome the contradiction between the nationalist/protectionist agenda over border control and the need for a flexible foreign workforce in a globalising economy" (Pécoud, 2020, p. 11).</p>
Governance approach	<p>Elaboration and supervision of international norms (e.g. refugee protection, human rights norms). UNHCR identifies a refugee based on the circumstances from which he/she fled in their home country, and not because he/she is recognized as a refugee by the government (Moretti, 2021).</p>	<p>A distinctly non-normative approach to addressing global migration problems. "Europe's objective is to involve the government of those countries in the control of migration and to externalise border control" (Pécoud, 2020, p. 7). IOM operates a voluntary return programme to send unwanted migrants back to their home countries without restraints; IOM runs counter-trafficking information campaigns to discourage refugees from traveling (Pécoud, 2020). IOM has been involved in developing non-binding standards which neither advocate for the rights of migrants nor condemn lack of protection by governments (Moretti, 2021).</p>
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	<p>Seven IOs (adding UNRWA to the refugee regime complex; the refugee regime complex further features 10 additional non-formal transnational actors (Betts, 2013)). Alexander Betts (2013) describes the refugee regime complex as a „competitive institutional environment“ (p. 69).</p>	

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Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	UNHCR follows vertical decision-making structures. A differentiated approach to decision-making is visible: UNHCR staff have greater say in decision-making concerning personnel issues, and less of a say concerning strategic issues (e.g. structural expansion, policy reform). Strategic issues are often decided in an autocratic manner at the Headquarters level. Note that UNHCR promotes the non-refoulement principle of the 1951 Refugee Convention which is binding for all signatory states.	Highly decentralized decision-making. There exists no general decision ladder and there is no formal delegation of decision-making powers from the Headoffice to the Field Offices (Olin et al., 2008). IOM decisions can be taken at different levels (Headquarters level, Head of Missions/Regional Heads level, Executive Committee level). IOM makes legally non-binding decisions.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	No (IOM has an Ombudsperson for the informal resolution of internal conflicts, but no formal dispute resolution mechanism)
IO funding	90% of UNHCR's budget consists of voluntary contributions from governments and the EU, 10% from the private sector, and 1% from the UN to cover administrative costs.	IOM is "almost entirely dependent on project-based funding" (M. Bradley, 2017, p. 99), which makes it quite dependent on donor states (Moretti, 2021).
Voting rules	Each state has one vote; Decisions are reached by a majority of state representatives participating in the vote.	Each member of the Council (i.e. the general assembly) has one vote. Decisions are made by majority voting (if no majority can be reached the vote is void. If the vote is perfectly split, a new vote is held except during elections). Only decisions on budgetary matters are based on two-thirds majority voting.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US is most powerful member in both IOs)	
Membership overlap*	97% of UNHCR's membership overlaps with IOM's membership (in 2016)	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	UNHCR's budget amounts to 6.546.3 million USD in 2016 (UNHCR, 2015).	In 2016 IOM's total budget amounts 119.468.000 USD (IOM, 2015b).

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New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	IOM's budget is 1.8% of the size of UNHCR's budget.
Existing IO's response strategy: Obstruction	
Change in rhetoric	UNHCR uses formulations such as "refugees and migrants" for its own work (and the formulation 'migrants and refugees' for IOM's work) (Moretti, 2021).
Change in practices	UNHCR has become more defensive in its interactions with the IOM and seeks to draw a clear distinction between refugees and migrants to ensure its relevance. In this sense "states have restricted UNHCR's engagement with "newer" forms of displacement" (e.g. migration due to climate change) due to concerns over its ability to fulfill its core legal mandate (see M. Bradley, 2017, p. 100).
Change in policies	UNHCR expands the scope of its work into the issue areas in which it faces competition (Betts, 2013).
Change in institutional structures	

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO IWC	New IO NAMMCO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1992 (NAMMCO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	Iceland and Norway created NAMMCO to establish a forum that allows commercial whaling of cetaceans such as minke whales and pinnipeds such as seals and walruses. Their hope is to gain enough political support by pro-whaling states that they could represent a viable alternative to the IWC. Yet no other pro-whaling states (such as Japan) ended up joining NAMMCO (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014).	
Governance goal	Conservation of whale stocks (Young et al., 1994).	NAMMCO fosters regional consultations and cooperation to contribute to the rational management and study of marine mammals. It advocates for traditional whaling and whale meat consumption by small whaling communities (Young et al., 1994).

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Governance approach	To advocate for a general prohibition of commercial whaling (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014). The IWC's Schedule to regulate whaling and conserve whale stocks is legally binding.	To establish catch quotas and research programmes involving the killing of whales (Young et al., 1994).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	Four IOs (FAO, IWC, IMO and NAMMCO up until 1992) (compare Deitelhoff & Zimmermann, 2013; Mendenhall, 2019)	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	The main decisions are made in the Commission, which holds biennial meetings on a regular basis. The Bureau gives advice to the Commission's Chair. The Commission Chair is elected from all Commissioners and also serves as the Bureau's Chair. The Chair serves for a period of two years and cannot be reelected. Each Biennial meeting decides on the length and place of the Commission's next Biennial meeting and which Commission sub-groups shall meet by then. The Scientific Committee meets annually.	Each NAMMCO member is also a member of the Council. NAMMCO pays attention to include resource users in the decision-making process (NAMMCO, 2019).
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	No
IO funding	IWC is financed by annual member state contributions. Voluntary distributions to voluntary funds (e.g. "Voluntary Fund for Small Cetacean Research and Conservation") are also possible.	NAMMCO is financed by member state contributions. Norway contributes 50% of the budget, Iceland 25%, Greenland and Faroes 12.5% each (NAMMCO, 2018).
Voting rules	Each member state appoints one Commissioner who participates in Commission meetings. Efforts are made to reach all decisions by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, a vote is held in which each member state possesses one vote. Votes are suspended when a member state does not issue its annual payment.	Decisions are reached by consensus. Council decisions are made annually by unanimous vote by those members that are present and cast an affirmative vote.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US, Iceland and Norway are leading member states of IWC and NAMMCO, respectively)	

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Membership overlap*	6% of IWC's membership overlaps with NAMMCO's membership (in 1992). Overall NAMMCO is very protective of its membership and limits membership to countries bordering the North Atlantic Ocean.	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	The IWC has a total budget of 858.846£ (1.608.190,24 USD) for the financial year 1991/1992 (IWC, 1993).	A total NAMMCO budget of 2.000.000 DKR in 1992. (Norway contributes 1.000.000 DKR, Iceland pays 500.000 DKR, The Faroe Islands pays 250.000 DKR and Greenland pays 250.000 DKR) (NAMMCO, 1992b).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	NAMMCO's budget is 21.03% of the size of the IWC's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Delegitimation		
Change in rhetoric	IWC's rhetoric changes towards emphasizing environmental arguments that support anti-whaling positions.	
Change in practices	IWC is willing to share information on whale populations for databases (e.g. IWC catch databases) as part of initiatives such as the IWC Strandings Initiative and work conducted by the IWC Scientific Committee (see IWC, 2021).	
Change in policies	Policy change or a moderation of the IWC's position based on a strict interpretation of the IWC Moratorium was prevented by institutional deadlock within IWC.	
Change in institutional structures		

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO FAO	New IO WTO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1995 (WTO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	The WTO was created out of the GATT to widen and deepen international trade rules. Its creation was not exclusively focused as a means of counter-institutionalizing the FAO, but it nevertheless addresses the same global issue (international food supply) from a different perspective.	
Governance goal	To ensure food security and a steady access to high-quality food for all; To collect and disseminate	To open trade for the benefit of all and improve the welfare of WTO member states.

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	information and provide technical assistance (Margulis, 2021).	
Governance approach	FAO primarily focuses on the needs of people that face food insecurities. Further, states are obliged to protect the right to food under international law (Margulis, 2013).	To liberalize world agriculture along market-oriented principles, such as using rules to limit state intervention, which can distort self-regulating markets (Margulis, 2013).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	Seven IOs (The regime complex for food security further includes four additional transnational non-formal actors, see Margulis (2021).)	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	The FAO Conference decides on all fundamental matters (budget, organization and structure, and substantive orientation). The Director-General (the agenda setter) draws up an agenda for the General Conference.	Major decisions are made in the WTO General Council. WTO addresses issues of global food distribution through binding international law.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	Yes
IO funding	FAO operates on a two-year Programme of Work and Budget. Member states' mandatory and voluntary contributions are based on the UN contribution scale, adjusted by the FAO.	Annual contributions by member states. Contributions are calculated using a formula that is based on the member states' share of international trade.
Voting rules	A majority of member states' votes constitutes a quorum. A two-thirds majority of the votes is required for special circumstances (for example budgetary decisions, including new items on the Conference agenda, admission of new members, formulation of recommendations to member governments).	WTO is a member-driven organization; Decisions are made by consensus, and not by voting. All decisions are thus made by the membership as a whole, and not by an executive body or the like.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US is most powerful in both the FAO and WTO)	
Membership overlap*	60% of FAO's membership overlaps with WTO's membership (in 1995)	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	FAO has a total estimated budget of 871.069.000 USD for the 1994-95 period (FAO, 1993).	WTO budget amounts to 93.000.000 USD in 1996 (WTO, 1996).

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New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	WTO's budget is 10.68% of the size of the FAO's budget
Existing IO's response strategy: Admission	
Change in rhetoric	Trade liberalization has become a more dominant discursive framing in international food governance.
Change in practices	FAO provided technical support during negotiations on the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture.
Change in policies	
Change in institutional structures	

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO OSCE	New IO SCO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	2001 (SCO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	Creating an IO that counterbalances Western-dominated security organizations such as the OSCE.	
Governance goal	To ensure stability, peace and democracy through political dialogue and shared values (OSCE, 2021).	To maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region, and moving towards the establishment of a new, democratic, just and rational political and economic international order (SCO, 2021).
Governance approach	OSCE pays attention to the politico-military, economic and environmental and human aspects to ensure international security.	SCO actions are driven by the principles of sovereignty and non-interference (Ambrosio, 2008).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	Four IOs (UN, EU, OECD, SCO), see (Hofmann, 2009, 2011)	

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Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	OSCE has four decision-making platforms: Meetings of Heads of State or Government, The Ministerial Council, The Permanent Council and The Forum for Security Co-operation. Political consultations and operational decisions are made in the Permanent Council which includes representatives of all member states and meets on a weekly basis.	SCO decisions shall be implemented, but are largely not legally binding. The Council of Heads of State meets on a yearly basis and is the main body of SCO decision-making. It can also establish new SCO bodies (Al-Qahtani, 2006).
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	Yes	Yes
IO funding	OSCE is funded by its member states.	SCO depends on member state financing. The Council of Heads of Government adopts SCO budgets.
Voting rules	OSCE decisions are adopted by consensus and are politically binding (decisions are not legally binding).	Consensus is the main form of decision-making in the SCO. Instead of votes, decisions are reached when member states do not voice any objections.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	No (US in OSCE; China and Russia in SCO)	
Membership overlap*	9% of OSCE's membership overlaps with SCO's membership (in 2001); SCO membership is limited to regional members only. US application to become an observer in the SCO in 2005 has been outright rejected by the SCO (Patrick, 2011).	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	OSCE has a budget of 208.8 million USD in 2001 (OSCE, 2001).	The SCO budget totals around 4 million USD (China and Russia each contribute around 25% to the budget) (European Parliament, 2015; Toktomushev, 2015).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	SCO's budget is 1.9% of the size of OSCE's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Delegitimation		
Change in rhetoric	OSCE adopts emphasis on state sovereignty in its rhetoric and raises contentious issues such as human rights or democratization which counters SCO's authoritarian understanding of state sovereignty (Lewis, 2012, p. 1235).	
Change in practices	OSCE signals willingness for information sharing, but no institutionalized practices are created (Weiffen et al., 2021, p. 15).	
Change in policies		

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Change in institutional structures	
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*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO WIPO	New IO WTO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1995 (WTO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	The stalemate in negotiations over IP rights between industrializing and developed countries motivated developed countries (especially the US) to search for an alternative forum that can promote IP rights. TRIPS was nested in the established GATT/WTO structures, which made them legally binding and allowed the use of trade rules and sanctions to enforce IP rights (Urpelainen & Van de Graaf, 2014).	
Governance goal	To ensure cooperation among states in promoting the protection of IP rights and lead the development of a balanced and effective international property system that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all (WIPO, n.d.a).	To open trade for the benefit of all and improve the welfare of WTO member states.
Governance approach	To ensure cooperation among states in promoting the protection of IP rights.	To liberalize world agriculture along market-oriented principles, such as using rules to limit state intervention, which can distort self-regulating markets (Margulis, 2013).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	11 IOs (the most relevant IOs of the IP regime complex being WIPO, WTO, WHO, UNIDO, FAO, World Bank, UNESCO, ECOSOC, CHR (Commission on Human Rights), UNDP, WCO (World Customs Union)) (Muzaka, 2010).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	Each member state can propose a topic that is to be discussed during the respective WIPO session.	Major decisions are made in the WTO General Council. WTO addresses issues of global food distribution through binding international law.
Is IO secretariat present?	No	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	Yes	Yes

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IO funding	<p>WIPO is almost entirely self-financing. 95% of WIPO income are fees from services provided to users of the international systems through the PCT, Madrid, and Hague Systems (WIPO, n.d.b).</p> <p>WIPO has two separate budgets: Expenses common to the Unions which are financed by contributions of the Unions which are fixed by the Assembly of that Union (constitutes 90% of WIPO's income), and the budget of the Conference. The budget of the Conference is financed by states party to the WIPO Convention not members of any of the Unions and any sums made available by the budget of the Unions (WIPO, 1967).</p>	Annual contributions by member states. Contributions are calculated using a formula that is based on the member states' share of international trade.
Voting rules	WIPO follows the 'one state one vote' voting procedures, such that developing countries largely determine voting outcomes.	WTO is a member-driven organization; Decisions are made by consensus, and not by voting. All decisions are thus made by the membership as a whole, and not by an executive body or the like.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US is most powerful in both the WIPO and WTO)	
Membership overlap*	61% of WIPO's membership overlaps with WTO's membership (in 1995).	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	WIPO levels of participation for the PCT Union (WIPO's International Patent Cooperation Union) amounts to 3.250.000,74 USD in the 1992-93 Biennium (WIPO, 1993).	WTO budget amounts to 93.000.000 USD in 1996 (WTO, 1996).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	WTO's budget is 2.861,5% of the size of WIPO's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Accommodation		
Change in rhetoric		
Change in practices	WIPO has stepped up in areas that are not fully covered by WTO such as areas relating to rapidly changing technologies. WIPO continues to play a large role in the evolving international consensus on norm setting on technical and complex issues, and procedural issues that are not inherently controversial (Watal, 2005); "It has restructured its norm development processes to enable it to respond	

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	expeditiously to new issues through the adoption of soft law instruments" (Dinwoodie & Dreyfuss, 2009, p. 1193). WIPO agrees to have primary responsibility "to collect information on IP laws and statistics for joint WIPO and WTO use of WIPO legal technical assistance and technical cooperation for WTO member" (Fryer, 2001, p. 177).
Change in policies	WIPO is willing to share a Common Register with WTO (Hrbatá, 2010).
Change in institutional structures	

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO UN	New IO IMO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1948 (IMO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	To establish governmental regulation for all kinds of shipping matters that also engage in international trade, to ensure efficient navigation of maritime traffic and prevent maritime pollution from ships.	
Governance goal	To maintain international peace and security, protect human rights, deliver humanitarian aid, support sustainable development and climate action and uphold international law (UN, n.d.a).	To "significantly enhance maritime safety, security and the quality of the marine environment by addressing human element issues to improve performance" (IMO, 2019d).
Governance approach	UN is based on the principle of sovereign equality of its member states; It follows peaceful means to resolve international disputes, refrain from using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of states, and refrain from intervening in the domestic jurisdiction of any state (UN, n.d.b).	IMO largely bases its actions on human element principles: It extensively reviews existing IMO instruments; Promotes and communicates a maritime safety culture; Provides a framework for non-regulatory solutions; Provides educational material for seafarers; Provides a framework for identifying and managing risk factors in a holistic and systemic manner (IMO, 2019d).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	3 IOs (IWC, UNCLOS, IMO) (Mendenhall, 2019)	

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Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	The UN General Assembly is the main decision making body. Decisionmaking varies by body, for example veto powers in UN Security Council.	IMO itself does not have legal enforcement powers. The Assembly is IMO's highest governance body and meets every two years. It approves the work programme, votes on the budget, disseminates financial arrangements and elects the Council (IMO, 2019c).
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	Yes	No
IO funding	Contributions are assessed based on the relative ability of each member state to contribute according to its gross national income of the previous six years. Amounts that developing countries are unable to pay are borne by the five permanent UN Security Council members (German Federal Foreign Office, n.d.).	Member state contributions are determined in proportion to their UN financial contributions and their gross registered tonnage listed in Lloyd's Registrar of Shipping (IMO, 1959b). IMO's financing structure is complex: It consists of the Technical Cooperation Fund, Multi-Donor Trust Funds, Bilateral arrangements, other arrangements and one-off cash donations (IMO, 2019b).
Voting rules	Each member of the UN General Assembly has one vote. Important decisions (e.g. recommendations on international peace and security, election of members to UN organs, budgets) are made by two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are made by a majority of the member states present and voting (UN Charter Article 18). A member state that has not paid its financial contributions cannot vote (UN Charter Article 19).	Most decisions are de facto taken by consensus (Blanco-Bazán, 2004). Each member has one vote and decisions are officially made by majority vote (IMO Convention Part XIV, Article 62).
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US and EU member states are most powerful in the UN and IMO)	
Membership overlap*	39% of UN's membership overlaps with IMO's membership (in 1959).	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	The UN budget amounts to 59.006.170 USD in 1959, financed by its member states (UN, 1958).	IMO's budget amounts to 237.500 USD in 1959 (IMO, 1959a).

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New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	IMO's budget is 0,4% of the size of the UN's budget.
Existing IO's response strategy: Obstruction	
Change in rhetoric	
Change in practices	Maritime powers, especially Nordic and other developed countries, pressured IMO to remain a technical organization and refrain from addressing politically or economically sensitive issues, which counters the IMO's purpose of removing any unnecessary overlaps as spelled out in IMO Convention articles 1(b) and (c) (Blanco-Bazán, 2004).
Change in policies	
Change in institutional structures	

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO IMF	New IO CMI
General context		
New IO entry (year)	2000 (CMI creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	To establish a regional financial safety net for the Asian region (focusing on ASEAN member states). The general motivation behind creating CMI was to become (somewhat) financially independent from Western-led financial institutions.	
Governance goal	To promote international monetary cooperation, facilitate the expansion of international trade, secure financial stability, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world (IMF Articles of Agreement, Preamble).	To enable East Asian states to overcome financial crises and ensure a stable regional economy, finance and exchange rates in Asia.
Governance approach	The IMF oversees economic development, engages in development lending and fosters capacity development.	The CMI addresses balance of payment and/or short-term liquidity difficulties in the ASEAN +3 region and supplements existing international

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		financial arrangements (AMRO, 2018).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	24 multilateral development banks exist in 2000 (compare Pratt, 2021).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	Quotas, Special Drawing Rights, membership, and amendments to the Articles of Agreement or By-Laws are determined by the Board of Governors (the IMF's main decision-making body consisting of member state's finance ministers or heads of central banks). The Board of Governors delegates most of its tasks to the Executive Board (IMF, 2022).	Fundamental decisions are based on consensus and made by the Ministerial Level Decision Making Body consisting of ASEAN +3 Finance Ministers. Executive Level Decisions are made by two-thirds majority comprising the deputy-level officials of Finance Ministers and Central Bank chiefs (AMRO, 2016).
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	No
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	No
IO funding	IMF is funded by quotas allocated to each member state.	Finance ministers of CMI member states decide on their financial contributions. Weighted voting is used to determine the proportion of a state's contribution to the overall fund (Henning, 2009).
Voting rules	IMF is a quota-based institution (quotas are determined by Special Drawing Rights); Vote shares in the Executive Board and Board of Governors are based on a member state's financial resources and economic powers (Tokhi, 2019). IMF's Board of Governors reviews quotas at regular intervals and no more than five years apart.	Decisions are taken by supermajority rather than simple majority (Henning, 2009).
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	No (US is most powerful in IMF; While China is a geopolitical rival to the US, Japan embodies a geopolitical ally)	
Membership overlap*	7% of IMF's membership overlaps with CMI's membership (in 2000).	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	In 2000 IMF has an administrative budget of 582.991.000 USD (IMF, 2000a).	The CMI was established at 120 billion USD (AMRO, 2018).

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New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	7% of IMF's membership overlaps with CMI's membership (in 2000).
Existing IO's response strategy: Admission	
Change in rhetoric	The IMF more often acknowledges the negative impact of its programmes for developing countries (Güven, 2017), recognized failures in handling the Asian financial crisis (West, 2017) and repeatedly emphasized how its work affects Asian countries (e.g. acting Managing Director John Lipsky (2006) made explicit reference to Asian states when outlining planned IMF reforms).
Change in practices	Though the IMF made several attempts to initiate major reforms, these reforms were not sufficient to appease dissatisfied Asian states. Continuous adaptations to the IMF's lending framework are made, which induced increasingly more flexible lending patterns (Güven, 2017). IMF adjusted its quotas, but only minimally.
Change in policies	
Change in institutional structures	

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO WHO	New IO WTO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1995 (WTO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	The WTO was created out of the GATT to widen and deepen international trade rules; "The normative framework of GATT and WTO originally evolved because of the 'devastating protectionist policies' of the 1930s" (Bettcher et al., 2000, p. 521).	
Governance goal	WHO's objective is "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health" (WHO Constitution, 1946, Article 1).	To open trade for the benefit of all and improve the welfare of WTO member states.
Governance approach	WHO adopts legally binding decisions as the main (co-)authority in global health issues and also provides technical assistance (e.g. in emergency	To liberalize world agriculture along market-oriented principles, such as using rules to limit state intervention, which can distort

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	situations or directly to developing countries). It also maintains close cooperation with other UN organs and agencies (WHO Constitution, 1946, Article 2).	self-regulating markets (Margulis, 2013).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	6 IOs (WHO, WTO, UNDP, UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), UNICEF, World Bank) that are part of the global health regime complex existed in 1995 (Bahr et al., 2021, p. 74).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	The World Health Assembly (WHA) is WHO's main decision-making body. WHO decisions are legally binding. The Executive Board gives effect to the decisions made in the WHA (WHO, 2022a).	Major decisions are made in the WTO General Council. WTO addresses issues of global food distribution through binding international law.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	Yes
IO funding	WHO is funded by mandatory and voluntary contributions of its member states. Mandatory contributions are calculated as a percentage of the state's GDP as agreed by the UN General Assembly and only amount to 20% of WHO's budget. 80% of WHO's budget is funded by member states, UN organizations, IGOs, philanthropic foundations, private sector and other sources (WHO, 2022b).	Annual contributions by member states. Contributions are calculated using a formula that is based on the member states' share of international trade.
Voting rules	Each member has one vote in the WHA. Important decisions are made by two-thirds majority (e.g. adoption of conventions). Votes usually take place by show of hands, unless a majority of members requests secret ballots. Elections are normally held by secret ballot.	WTO is a member-driven organization; Decisions are made by consensus, and not by voting. All decisions are thus made by the membership as a whole, and not by an executive body or the like.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US is most powerful in both the WHO and WTO)	
Membership overlap*	57% of WTO's membership overlaps with WHO's membership (in 1995)	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	WHO's approved effective working budget for 1994-1995	WTO's budget amounts to 93.000.000 USD in 1996 (WTO, 1996).

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	amounts to 822.101.000 USD (WHO, 1996).	
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	WTO's budget is 11.31% of the size of WHO's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Admission		
Change in rhetoric	WHO more prominently highlights its relative competitive advantage compared to other actors in the global health regime - especially regarding standard setting and international policymaking (Hanrieder, 2009, 2015b).	
Change in practices	As global health issues are increasingly subject to market influences, WHO more visibly fills its constitutionalized role as a lead orchestrator of global health issues (Hanrieder, 2009, p. 180).	
Change in policies		
Change in institutional structures		

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO ILO	New IO WTO
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1995 (WTO creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	WTO is created independent of states' dissatisfaction over lacking labor standards in international trade.	
Governance goal	Workers should be afforded certain basic rights; promote respect for international labor standards (Hughes & Wilkinson, 1998).	To open trade for the benefit of all and improve the welfare of WTO member states.
Governance approach	To foster social justice and political stability (Plasa, 2015). The ILO promotes four categories of labor rights: freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, elimination of forced labor, abolition of child labor,	To liberalize world agriculture along market-oriented principles, such as using rules to limit state intervention, which can distort self-regulating markets (Margulis, 2013).

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	elimination of discrimination (ILO, 1998).	
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	7 IOs (ILO, WTO, IMF, World Bank, UN, UNHCR, IOM) (Gómez-Mera, 2016, 2017; Haworth et al., 2005).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	ILO follows less centralized, tripartite decision-making among states, trade unions and employers' organisations (Louis, 2019). Main decisions (e.g. creating commissions of inquiry or creating ILO's budget) are made in the ILO Governing Body (112 members consisting of 56 full members and 66 deputy members in 1995) and the International Labour Conference (ILC). Members of the ILO Governing Body are mainly elected every three years by the ILC. ILO conventions are only binding on the states that ratify them.	Major decisions are made in the WTO General Council. WTO addresses issues of global food distribution through binding international law.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	Yes
Is dispute settlement body present?	No	Yes
IO funding	ILO's regular budget is subject to a fixed scale common to the agencies of the UN system, unlike voluntary member contributions. US contributes 22% to ILO's regular budget, Japan 9.68%, Germany 6.39% and the UK about 4.46% (Louis, 2019).	Annual contributions by member states. Contributions are calculated using a formula that is based on the member states' share of international trade.
Voting rules	Only tripartite participants have voting rights. Many decisions are reached by consensus. The International Labour Office plays a large informal role in ILO's decision-making (Louis, 2019).	WTO is a member-driven organization; Decisions are made by consensus, and not by voting. All decisions are thus made by the membership as a whole, and not by an executive body or the like.
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	Yes (US is most powerful in both the ILO and WTO)	
Membership overlap*	60% of WTO's membership overlaps with ILO's membership (in 1995).	

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Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	ILO's budget entails assessed contributions of 249.031.557 USD in 1996 (ILO, 1997).	WTO's budget amounts to 93.000.000 USD in 1996 (WTO, 1996).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	WTO's budget is 37.34% of the size of ILO's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Accommodation		
Change in rhetoric	ILO proliferation of speeches, press releases and reports is observable, which is aimed at increasing ILO's visibility and importance of setting high standards for international labor rights (Hughes & Wilkinson, 1998).	
Change in practices	ILO is willing to work together with WTO secretariat on technical issues to ensure coherence in global economic policymaking (WTO, 2022).	
Change in policies	ILO's Social Declaration (1998) states that "Labour standards should not be used for protectionist trade purposes, and that nothing in this Declaration and its follow-up shall be invoked or otherwise used for such purposes; in addition, the comparative advantage of any country should in no way be called into question by this Declaration and its follow-up".	
Change in institutional structures		

*based on my own calculations.

	Existing focal IO ITU	New IO ICANN
General context		
New IO entry (year)	1998 (ICANN creation)	
Motivation of new IO entry to regime complex	To move away from ITU's intergovernmental structure and have a private sector-led organization which governs over core features of the internet. Amid pressures of corporate lobbying, the US government initiated official government control to create "stability"; the government was only interested in "policy authority", but not in having direct responsibility (Mueller, 1999, p. 504). Due to heavy corporate lobbying, ICANN promotes IP rights in favor of the trademark holders.	
Governance goal	ITU works to "enable the growth and development of telecommunication services,	The stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier system. This involves global coordination of the domain name

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	networks and technology around the world" (ITU, 2022a).	system root and Internet protocol addressing (ICANN, 2013).
Governance approach	ITU has four main areas of activity: radiocommunications, standardization, development and ITU Telecom (World Telecommunication Exhibition). ITU is responsible for the implementation and follow-up of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum.	ICANN "[c]oordinates the allocation and assignment of the three sets of unique identifiers for the Internet, which are domain names [...], internet protocol addresses and autonomous system numbers, protocol port and parameter numbers; Coordinates the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system; Coordinates policy development reasonably and appropriately related to these technical functions" (ICANN, 2013).
External environment		
IO density in regime complex	11 IOs (ITU, ICANN, WIPO, WTO, INTERPOL, World Bank, IMF, IBRD, OECD, SCO, OSCE) in the regime complex for cyber activities (Nye, 2014).	
Institutional structures		
Centralization of decision-making structures	ITU's Plenipotentiary Conference is the main decision-making body. In between Plenipotentiary Conferences, the Council acts as ITU's main governing body. The Council coordinates work programs, approves budgets and controls finances and expenditures (ITU, 2022b).	ICANN is a multi-stakeholder entity in which several governmental and non-governmental actors work alongside each other. ICANN's Board of Directors consists of 16 voting members and four non-voting members.
Is IO secretariat present?	Yes	No
Is dispute settlement body present?	Yes	Yes
IO funding	Sales of ITU products (e.g. registration of Universal International Freephone Numbers or satellite network filing fees), states can choose their own class of contribution; ITU has a biennial budget (ITU, 2014).	ICANN is financed by contributions, grants, fees for domain name registrars and related accreditation activities (ICANN, 1999).
Voting rules	ITU follows a one nation-one vote structure.	ICANN's Board of Directors (consisting of 16 voting members and five non-voting liaisons) makes the main decisions (ICANN, 2012).
Geopolitical alliance of most powerful member states	No (Russia, China and US are leading member states in ITU & US is leading member state in ICANN)	

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Membership overlap*	9% of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) state members overlaps with ITU's membership (in 1999). While the ITU has 188 member states, ICANN's GAC only has 17 member states at its inaugural meeting.	
Budget at time of new IO's entry to regime complex	ITU's biennial budget for the 1998-1999 period amounts to 225.338.536 USD (ITU, 1997).	ICANN's total revenues amount to 707.870 USD in 1999 (ICANN, 1999).
New IO's relative budget size as compared to existing IO's budget*	ICANN's total revenues are 0.31% of the size of ITU's budget.	
Existing IO's response strategy: Obstruction		
Change in rhetoric	ITU criticizes ICANN of hypocrisy as the US government argued for self-governance of the internet while maintaining a special role to oversee all ICANN activities. ITU increasingly presents itself as the main responsibility holder in internet governance (Kleinwächter, 2004, pp. 239, 243).	
Change in practices	ITU increasingly presents itself as the main authority holder in internet governance.	
Change in policies		
Change in institutional structures		

*based on my own calculations.

Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Hiermit versichere ich,

Julia

Vorname

Fuß

Name

an Eides statt, dass die vorliegende Arbeit von mir selbstständig und ohne unerlaubte Hilfe Dritter verfasst wurde und ich keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet sowie wörtliche und sinngemäße Zitate als solche kenntlich gemacht habe.

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