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COP29 in Azerbaijan: Some Considerations Based on Direct Observations of the Climate Events and Media Contents

Discussion Paper No. 2

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This preliminary manuscript has yet to undergo the conclusive formal review and should be acknowledged as such. The primary objective of this document is to assemble and refine the materials, concepts and discussions intended for inclusion in the forthcoming academic journal publication, currently in progress. It is imperative to note that the author bears no obligations or responsibilities to produce a final paper solely based on the content presented in this working paper.

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Abstract

This discussion paper examines the key themes and findings from four major events and three pieces of media content on sustainable development, climate finance and environmental policy. Direct observation and structured notes were used as the main methods. The analysis begins with the webinar "Bridge Building in Baku," which highlighted the need for improved quality and quantity of climate finance to support developing countries in their efforts to reduce carbon emissions. It then discusses the comparative perspectives on environmental issues between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, highlighting the need for renewable energy generation to offset environmental deficits. The paper also examines the event "COP29: Opportunities and Challenges for Climate Action," which focused on international cooperation and learning from global best practices to address environmental challenges. Finally, the discussion at the event "Green and Circular Economy in the Turkic World" emphasizes the importance of reducing resource dependency and improving energy efficiency in Turkish states. Policy suggestions include creating financial incentives for green technologies, improving public education on sustainability and promoting international cooperation to effectively address environmental challenges. This paper aims to map the intellectual landscape of climate finance and sustainable development and provides insights for policymakers and stakeholders involved in global climate action based primarily on COP29.

Keywords: Azerbaijani economy, climate events, climate change, COP29, renewable energy, sustainable development

JEL Classification Codes: Q20, Q28, Q54, Q57, Q58

1. Introduction

Climate change events have become a hallmark of our era, serving as crucial platforms for raising awareness, fostering collaboration and driving action towards a more sustainable future. These events trace their roots back to international conferences like the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, considered a landmark event that placed environmental issues on the global agenda (United Nations Environment Programme, 2022). Over time, these gatherings have evolved to encompass a wider range of stakeholders, from scientists and policymakers to NGOs and the private sector. Their relevance lies in their ability to bridge the gap between scientific research and practical solutions. By bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise, climate change events offer a space to exchange knowledge, develop strategies and mobilize resources to address the complex challenges we face. These events can also play a vital role in setting the international agenda on climate change, as exemplified by the landmark Paris Agreement adopted at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 21; Dunwoody, 2015). The Paris Agreement, a product of years of international negotiation at such conferences, established a framework for global cooperation to limit climate change and strengthen resilience to its effects.

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There were other climate events as well which made possible to stimulate this direction of the global policy considerations. The Earth Summit in 1992 produced key agreements like the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, laying the groundwork for future international cooperation (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992). The Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997, marked the first international agreement with legally binding emission reduction targets, although its reach was limited (Bodansky, 2013). More recently, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015) acknowledges the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters, highlighting the need for adaptation strategies alongside mitigation efforts (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015). These examples showcase how climate change events serve as crucial platforms for raising awareness, fostering international collaboration and developing solutions to address this complex global challenge. The organization of such events in developing countries can attract attention and trigger diplomatic activities. For this reason, Azerbaijan will be the focus of international attention in 2024, as Conference of Parties 29 (COP29) will take place on November 22, 2024 (Ministry of Ecology of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2023).

Azerbaijan has strategically positioned itself as a rising hub for international events in recent years. Baku, the capital city, has witnessed a surge in hosting high-profile gatherings across various sectors. This trend is documented in a report by the Azerbaijan Tourism Board, which highlights Baku's successful execution of prestigious events like the European Games in 2015 and the upcoming Perio Master Clinic conference in 2026 (Tourismboard.az, 2024). News outlets like EU Reporter also recognize this shift, attributing it to Azerbaijan's proactive engagement with the international community and its ability to provide a well-equipped and secure environment for diverse global discussions (Auge, 2023). These events not only serve as a platform for Azerbaijan to showcase its diplomatic finesse and economic potential, but also contribute to the country's development by attracting tourism and foreign investment. By strategically leveraging its infrastructure and fostering international partnerships, Azerbaijan is carving a niche for itself as a preferred destination for global gatherings.

While media channels are shedding some light on the COP29 which will take place in Azerbaijan, mainly promoting the country's image and the importance of the event, there are hardly any academic voices that would invite discussion on certain topics. These include, for example, the renewable energy sector, sustainable development, food quality and other economic and business mechanisms that would accelerate Azerbaijan's readiness and policy implementation at the center of global climate change. For this reason, this discussion paper will use the direct observation method to summarize specific presentations and events related to COP29. In this way, this discussion paper will fill a certain research gap that currently exists.

It should be noted that this is a discussion paper and not a definitive research paper and users of this current material must benefit from it in this way. The next section contains a brief description of the data source and the methodology used. The third section briefly summarizes the results, which are mainly the author's interpretations based on the structured notes. The fourth section concludes with suggestions for future studies on

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climate events and climate change using the data collected from the observed events in Azerbaijan.

2. Data and Methodology

Using direct observation methods to study climate events offers significant benefits for research and policymaking. Direct observation involves systematically watching and recording phenomena as they occur in real-time, providing accurate and detailed data that other methods may miss. This approach is particularly useful for studying climate events because it captures real-world conditions and responses, allowing researchers to gather empirical evidence on weather patterns, environmental changes and the impact of these events on communities and ecosystems. For instance, attending and observing presentations by scholars and experts during climate conferences and workshops enables researchers to stay updated with the latest findings, methodologies and theoretical advancements in the field. These observations can be critically analyzed and used to inform future studies, ensuring that research is grounded in the most current and relevant data (Saldaña, 2016). Thus, direct observation is a vital tool in climate research, contributing to more robust and comprehensive understandings that can drive effective environmental policies and interventions.

Based on the above description of the relevance of direct observation of climate events, this study was primarily motivated to highlight events and channels outside the mass media to reflect a more critical and interpretive perspective of the academic voice, rather than advertising and marketing campaigns. A quick survey and search on popular academic platforms such as Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science did not reveal any research works on COP29 in Azerbaijan and the public perception of this event. Again, this is a call to scientists to focus on qualitative research methods on specific topics where it is difficult to obtain data and timely publications are required. Therefore, the advantages of direct observation should be emphasized, as it is one of the most accessible research methods that provides quick results.

Direct observation is a valuable method in academic research, particularly for collecting real-time data and gaining insights into complex phenomena in natural settings. This method allows researchers to gather detailed and nuanced information that might be overlooked by other methods, providing a rich source of empirical evidence. For instance, in environmental studies, direct observation enables the monitoring of ecological changes and human interactions with the environment, which can inform sustainable practices and policies (Angrosino, 2007). In education, direct observation is employed to study classroom interactions, teaching methods and student behaviors. This method helps educators and researchers understand the dynamics of the learning environment and the effectiveness of different instructional strategies (Creswell, 2014). Anthropologists utilize direct observation, often in the form of participant observation, to study cultures and societies. This method allows them to gather in-depth insights into social practices, rituals and daily life, providing a comprehensive understanding of the groups they study (Bernard, 2017). Sociologists use direct observation to study social interactions and organizational behaviors. This method allows them to capture the complexities of social life and the

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impact of societal structures on individual and group behaviors (Gobo, 2008). In business and management, direct observation can be used to analyze workflows, employee interactions and organizational culture. This method helps in identifying inefficiencies, improving processes and enhancing overall productivity (Yin, 2017). To summarize, there is no valid counterargument for not using direct observations in discussion papers about the Azerbaijani economy that shed light on the events or sub-events that are difficult for most people to see through.

However, direct observation is not without its criticisms. Recent scholarly publications highlight concerns regarding observer bias, where the presence and perspectives of the observer might influence the behavior of subjects or the interpretation of data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Additionally, the method can be time-consuming and resource-intensive, posing challenges for large-scale studies or long-term research projects (Patton, 2015). Despite these criticisms, direct observation remains a critical tool in areas where an in-depth and contextual understanding is essential.

This discussion paper uses the overall framework described below to generate and analyze data (see Figure 1). First, specific climate events in Azerbaijan were identified using publicly available data (e.g., social media posts, news). Then, after the author's initial reviews and preparations, the decision to attend the event was made. Second, the events were attended in person and directly observed, with structured notes taken that allowed the application of the direct observation method. Third, after the events were completed, the data were analyzed, reported and interpreted.

Figure 1. The main stages of the current research.

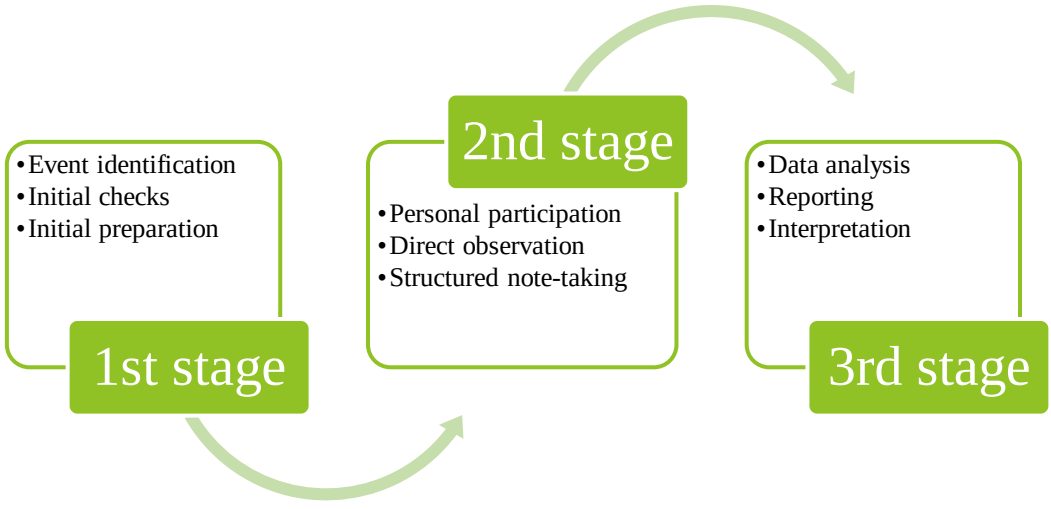

Table 1 lists the events included in the direct observation phase of the current study, their types, the organizers and how these events were found. All events are organized by universities and mainly consist of seminars, workshops and panel discussions. While two of the events was found through social media, the other two events were found through personal invitations received by the author.

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Table 1. The list of events included in the direct observation of the current study.

N	Event name	Date	Organizer	Event type	How the event was found
1.	Bridge Building in Baku: Towards a Transformative Climate Finance Goal	15 May 2024	World Resource Institute	Webinar	Social media
2.	Azerbaijan and environmental problems: towards COP29 [Org: Azərbaycan və ekoloji problemlər: COP29-a doğru]	16 May 2024	UNEC	International online seminar	
3.	COP29: Opportunities and Challenges for Climate Action European and Regional Perspective	22 May 2024	ADA University	International workshop	Personal invitation
4.	"International Scientific Conference of Economics and Management Researchers"— "Green and Circular Economy in the Turkish World: A Roadmap for Transition" [Org: "Türk Dünyasında Yaşıl və Dairəvi İqtisadiyyat: Keçid üçün Yol Xəritəsi"]	24 May 2024	UNEC	Panel discussion	

Notes: "UNEC" refers to Azerbaijan State University of Economics;

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest and no ethical violations. The results are presented in the form of brief summaries and bullet points as well as the notes taken during the question and answer sessions. All data are publicly available, including the media content analyzed in this discussion paper.

3. Results

3.1. Bridge Building in Baku: Towards a Transformative Climate Finance Goal

This event was an online webinar organized by the World Resources Institute and published on the YouTube platform. Several presentations discussed mainly global issues related to climate change, financing mechanisms, etc. This online webinar was mainly of a reportorial nature and contained several policy implications that should be of interest to various institutions and government agencies dealing with global climate action.

At this event, not only the quantity of financing mechanisms was discussed, but also the quality of these financing issues was examined in detail. The quality dimension includes predictability, concessionality, effectiveness and access. While the general trend is predictable that the amount of climate finance will increase by 2030 or 2040, the structure of this finance seems to be somewhat unsatisfactory. Developing countries receive most of the support to reduce their carbon emissions as part of the loans they receive from developed countries, but this should be mainly through grants and equity. Furthermore, developed countries would like to know more about the effectiveness of the loans they provide to developing countries, because if they use these loans inefficiently, this could discourage donors from financing the future steps of the carbon reduction process. Finally, access to finance still seems to be a challenge for developing countries, because some countries have more opportunities to obtain these funds, while other countries are in a weaker position, which means that it depends on their institutional mechanisms.

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The current climate finance target of 100 billion dollars per year for developing countries, which was set 15 years ago, is insufficient. The new target aims to close this gap and provide developing countries with more finance, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to help them adapt and cope with the impacts of climate change. The key elements of the new financing target, including technical expert dialogs and multi-tiered financing frameworks, were discussed, emphasizing the need for predictability, transparency and alignment with national climate commitments and policy frameworks. Challenges include the divergence of climate finance flows, the indebtedness of developing countries and the need for concessional finance instead of loans, as well as mechanisms such as swapping debt for emission reductions to provide relief and encourage investment in climate action.

The webinar underscored the importance of the new climate finance goal for future national climate commitments under the Paris Agreement, aiming to enhance investment, resilience and adaptation measures, with a collaborative approach involving various stakeholders and sectors.

3.2. Azerbaijan and Environmental Problems: Towards COP29

During this online seminar, the speakers mainly discussed the importance of the COP29 event and why such events should be held in developing and emerging countries such as Azerbaijan. The speakers began their presentation by emphasizing the importance of green finance and discussing its key objectives. Then the ongoing climate change and rising carbon emissions were mentioned. In other words, the introduction was mainly related to global and general issues in the current turbulent times related to climate change.

The speakers had a comparative perspective on the Azerbaijani and Turkish economies. They mentioned that the environmental problems of these two countries are very similar. This means that their energy production is highly dependent on fossil fuels, with Azerbaijan's dependence on oil and natural gas being particularly pronounced. Then, the presenter mentioned that Türkiye is the overall leader in renewable energy production, while Azerbaijan does not do very well in this case. There are of course many reasons for this. First, Azerbaijan has lower production costs for energy from fossil fuels simply because the country has abundant fossil fuels. Secondly, Türkiye has had to improve renewable energy production from time to time to reduce the threat to energy security. Thirdly, the speaker mentioned some institutional and regulatory mechanisms related to environmental regulations that could promote or inhibit the use of renewable energy in both countries from time to time, but especially in Azerbaijan. In fact, Azerbaijan's activities in the field of renewable energy are low, which also means that Azerbaijan's ecological balance is not good, but has an ecological deficit. An ecological deficit exists when the ecological footprint is greater than the ecological balance.

The rest of the presentation dealt mainly with the concept of the load capacity factor, which is well known and widely used in environmental economics. The speaker mentioned that the load capacity factor in Azerbaijan has remained the same since 1996 until 2022, while Türkiye has a decreasing trend in this area. The speaker pointed out that the load capacity factor should be widely used to measure the environmental challenges in these two countries.

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The second speaker of the online event had almost the same ideas as the first speaker and argued mainly that the environmental conditions in these two countries and especially in Azerbaijan should be improved with the help of renewable energy production. This means that certain environmental regulations and the development of renewable energies are inevitable. Among the most important challenges are the greater greening of the Azerbaijani economy and the reduction of natural gas-based energy production. The second speaker also mentioned the load capacity factor and argued about its usefulness and benefits when applied to the case study of these two countries.

There was an opportunity for direct questions and answers, and the author of this discussion paper asked the first speaker how he sees the role and position of Azerbaijan in the global practice of emission reduction. This question was mainly related to the fact that countries like Azerbaijan are not highly industrialized countries and that most of the carbon footprint comes from G20 countries and not from small and developing countries. The speaker's answer to this question was that countries like Azerbaijan individually do not contribute significantly to global carbon emissions, but collectively, i.e., at an aggregate level, these countries may have a higher percentage share of a given carbon footprint. If we look at the problem from this point of view, it means that 15 or 30 countries like Azerbaijan should also take certain measures to reduce carbon emissions. Otherwise, there could be a coordination problem if certain countries, regardless of their size and industrialization history, take certain measures to reduce carbon emissions while other countries hold back and remain inactive.

3.3. COP29: Opportunities and Challenges for Climate Action European and Regional Perspective

The event "COP29: Opportunities and Challenges for Climate Action European and Regional Perspective" focused on international cooperation and the exchange of ideas related to typical environmental problems and challenges faced by almost every country. These include water scarcity, environmental degradation, renewable energy production, economic development, growth issues in the context of environmental problems, etc. One of the special features of this event was learning from international experiences. Thus, several experts from Hungary, Georgia and the United States shared their own experiences and observations related to the dynamically changing environmental conditions, especially in the South Caucasus region. Against the backdrop of these international voices, several local decisionmakers and policymakers also shared their own perspectives and observations and tried to integrate the current challenges and available global knowledge related to environmental and climate issues.

Interestingly, several international experiences (i.e., Treaty of Danube) were mentioned during the event that should serve as a benchmark for the new regions, such as the South Caucasus, in addressing their problems and the future use of transboundary water resources. Many speakers repeatedly mentioned that this requires international cooperation and step-by-step meetings at such events (i.e., COP) to create a common basis for future cooperation. Considering all these ideas, efforts to organize climate events and similar activities were seen as a crucial change in Azerbaijan's international image.

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3.4. Green and Circular Economy in the Turkish World: A Roadmap for Transition

At this event, the perspective of the Turkish countries in particular was discussed in detail. Although there was much discussion about the general current trends and dynamics in the field of renewable energy and environmental challenges, the main focus was on the Azerbaijani economy. This primarily meant that Azerbaijan needs to reduce its resource dependency in its economic development and growth, as this generates large amounts of carbon emissions and provides less motivation to reform its industrial capacity to produce clean energy. In this sense, Europe is a leading region and can perhaps serve as a benchmark case to learn from by implementing certain policy decisions such as environmental taxes or similar policy instruments that would reduce negative externalities across the economy.

Speaking of Europe: with the start of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2022, Europe realized that it had not fully solved its energy security problems. Some speakers even pointed out that energy security in Europe is quite low. This has prompted European countries to increase the speed of energy production from renewable energy sources. So, this aspect once again prompts us to pay attention to the fact that Europe is improving its green economy not because it values the environment more than any other nation in the world, but because it is in a precarious position of not having abundant fossil fuel resources. Such motivations can also be found in the case of other countries. The category of other countries can include small countries, developing countries and all resource-rich countries that should join the mainstream of renewable energy development.

Coming back to the Azerbaijani economy, the speakers mentioned that Azerbaijan has undergone a remarkable economic transformation since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Azerbaijan has become a high middle-income country that has improved its infrastructure and increased the prosperity of large parts of its population. However, the economy is still dependent on the extractive industry, even though the government is trying to expand the role of the renewable energy sector, the attempts are still in their infancy. Many international agreements are needed to improve the green economy. Environmental and ecological problems cannot be solved in isolation, as countries may share the same natural resources such as forests and rivers. In fact, international studies in which a green economy index has been created show that in the case of Turkic states, many components need to be worked on. For example, energy efficiency should be improved and more solid international agreements need to be made. Otherwise, Turkic countries will not be able to find the necessary motivation to accelerate their efforts to both solve ecological problems and produce more renewable energy.

The speaker from Kazakhstan then spoke primarily about the government's successful programs and decisions to convert the economy to a green economy in Kazakhstan. The speaker from Kyrgyzstan spoke mainly about the problems and challenges currently facing the Kyrgyz economy. These challenges mainly include transportation and infrastructure problems that prevent the economy from having a higher share of green economy. However, it must be mentioned that many Central Asian countries have great potential for a high share of the green economy in their overall economy.

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The last part of the event dealt with the question of how to manage waste effectively so that it causes fewer negative externalities. It was mainly based on the experience of the Turkish economy and conveyed the clear message that such a thing is mainly related to the psychological aspects of the individual. The necessary cultural development is absolutely necessary for societies to learn how to deal with the by-products of their consumption, leading to sustainable economic development.

3.5. Overview of the Selected Media Contents

UN climate change high-level champion for COP29, Nigar Arpadarai, sets scene ahead of vital summit—Euronews[1]

In her interview with Euronews, Nigar Arpadarai, the high-level UN climate champion for COP29 Azerbaijan, said the following:

> *"Azerbaijan has a record of organizing large scale international events, but COP29 is definitely going to be the biggest one that we have organized. It is the matter of fact that Azerbaijan is an oil and gas country, and actually we are one of the oldest ones. But the country is now making a huge step towards green economy. And in the last couple of years, Azerbaijan has taken lots of commitments, including the drive for the renewable energy and actually hosting. COP29 is also one of those commitments. The biggest commitment? Now we have a common challenge. Common challenge is the rising global temperatures, which affects everyone in the world, and we need to act on that. And we all together need to protect people and protect our home, which is the planet. We feel the impact of climate change very much looking at the Caspian Sea, because the sea level is going down. And this is something that we witness every day. So for me, it is a sign of, how the environment around us is fragile. It is a sign and it is a very vivid example on the impact of climate change. And I believe that this is what COP stands for, that global and regional dialogue and cooperation. And Azerbaijan will be hosting the whole climate community in Baku.*
>
> *UN climate change high level champion role is very interesting. One, and it is a big honor for me to be in this capacity, because it helps to strengthen the climate action by strengthening the engagement of non-state actors, civil society, NGOs, business sector, investors, philanthropists. So, all these stakeholder groups, they have their aspirations and expectations. And as you know, the subject of COP29 will be climate finance. And the focus will be on business engagement. One of the priorities that we will be dealing with, because we believe that you cannot achieve the goals that that are needed without private sector. So, private sector need to step forward. So, every group has its own needs and every voice matters. So, and for us, it is very important to become a platform that all the voices are equally heard. And we will try to have this inclusive cop, where everyone will be on board. We strongly believe in global and regional dialogues, and I am confident that Azerbaijan has*

[1] Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lBnXcj4vtwE [Accessed: 24.05.24]

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> *what it takes for making successful COP. We are looking forward to welcoming all the delegations and COP community in Baku in November, and they will have a warm welcome here and they will feel hospitality of Azerbaijanis."*

Armenia-Azerbaijan efforts to reach peace deal could see Baku host COP29—AP Archive[2]

It is clear from this media content that COP29 was mainly positioned as a peacemaking event between Armenia and Azerbaijan against the backdrop of regional cooperation. The next part was mainly promotional feedback from an independent observer of the information session, referring to Azerbaijan's climate action as a whole.

COP28 to COP29: Impactful Partnership for Climate Action—World Governments Summits[3]

In another media report, we see the promotional speech of the Minister of Economy and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, who mainly talks about Azerbaijan's contribution to COP29. He mainly defended that climate change requires collective action and international cooperation, which Azerbaijan is ambitiously striving for. It is clear from the video that Azerbaijan wants to increase its production of renewable energy while reducing carbon emissions.

4. Concluding Remarks and Suggestions

The aim of this discussion paper was to trace the thematic dimensions of COP29, which will take place in Baku in November 2024, through direct observation of specific events (both online and on site) and media content. The main motivation for this discussion paper was the fact that there are no academic voices or studies addressing the dimensions and timeliness of events in the case of Azerbaijan. Therefore, this discussion paper invites academics and all interested parties to consider the thematic richness of COP29 against the backdrop of the Azerbaijani economy.

In this discussion paper, a carefully selected sample of four significant events and three different pieces of media content from the YouTube platform were used to interpret and analyze the main themes discussed therein. By focusing on these particular events and media content, the paper aims to provide a comprehensive examination of the recurring motifs and conversations prevalent in contemporary discourse.

The selected events were chosen for their relevance and influence on public opinion to ensure a comprehensive context for the analysis. These events span various areas, including social movements, political milestones, cultural phenomena and significant technological advances. Each event was carefully examined to uncover the underlying themes, societal implications and broader narrative to which they contribute. In addition to the events, the three pieces of media content were selected from YouTube to represent

[2] Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtco4jBy4fI [Accessed: 24.05.24]
[3] Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFfzpvVnoM8 [Accessed: 25.05.24]

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a range of perspectives and content types, including expert analysis, public reaction and creative interpretation. This multidimensional approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how these issues are communicated, perceived and discussed in the digital age. Thus, through this dual focus on events and media content, the paper endeavors to draw connections between real-world occurrences and their portrayal in online media, highlighting the dynamic interplay between lived experiences and digital narratives. The insights gained from this analysis are intended to shed light on the evolving nature of public discourse and the role of media in shaping and reflecting societal issues.

The analysis of key events and media content revealed critical insights into climate finance and environmental challenges. The "Bridge Building in Baku" webinar highlighted the inadequacy of the current $100 billion climate finance goal and emphasized the need for higher quality and quantity of finance, particularly grants and equity, for developing countries to effectively manage climate impacts. It underscored the importance of predictability, transparency and effective use of funds, advocating for a new, transformative climate finance goal.

The "Azerbaijan and Environmental Problems" seminar compared Azerbaijan's and Türkiye's environmental issues, stressing Azerbaijan's heavy reliance on fossil fuels and its resulting ecological deficit. It called for increased renewable energy production and improved regulatory mechanisms to enhance environmental sustainability.

The "COP29: Opportunities and Challenges for Climate Action" event focused on international cooperation and the exchange of best practices. It highlighted the necessity of learning from global experiences, such as the Treaty of Danube, to address regional environmental issues effectively.

The "Green and Circular Economy in the Turkish World" event discussed the need for Turkish countries, including Azerbaijan, to reduce resource dependency and enhance renewable energy initiatives. It stressed the importance of international agreements and cooperation to foster a green economy and effectively manage environmental challenges.

The media content observed and discussed in this discussion paper seems to convey mainly promotional messages about Azerbaijan's role in the COP29 event in general. Indeed, when searching for appropriate content for the topic of this discussion paper, it was found that there are few in-depth interviews with individual experts sharing their ideas and opinions and even research findings related to the concept of the event and the main theme of COP29 in particular. This is in contrast to the webinars, seminars and other events observed in relation to COP29. However, it should be noted that reporting on such alternative content should be of utmost importance to the general public, as citizens and interested parties need to have more access to the information.

Certainly, COP29 has triggered several public events to discuss and work on climate action, with a focus on climate finance. Azerbaijan, which will host this event in November 2024, is at the center of attention and is doing its best to host these events. Not only have global issues been addressed at the pre-COP29 events, but the Azerbaijani government has also been asked to take several important steps to overcome environmental problems and promote green growth. Certainly, such events will stimulate the overall course of action in Azerbaijan, but regional cooperation and learning from international experiences remain

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of utmost importance. Most importantly, such events should be analyzed and archived in academic circles to increase their visibility and impact. This discussion paper was merely an attempt to do so.

The Azerbaijani economy is recovering from the economic downturns of 2014 and 2015 and from the COVID-19 pandemic. While macroeconomic and monetary conditions are improving (Orudzhev and Isazadeh, 2018; Orudzhev and Mamedova, 2024) and investment in renewable energy is increasing (Humbatova et al., 2020), trade openness and the link between financial development and non-resource economic growth should be improved (Seyfullayev, 2023a; 2023b). Otherwise, it could be difficult for Azerbaijan to reap the benefits of the energy transition and green growth.

Certainly, this discussion paper was limited to direct observations of specific events and media contents related to COP29 in Azerbaijan. Since there were not enough academic voices on the mentioned climate event and Azerbaijan in particular, this discussion paper is a kind of pioneering work to start such a chain of academic papers accessible to a wide scientific audience. Direct observation is not a scientific method that can empirically and systematically establish a cause and effect relationship. Future studies should therefore use more advanced methods to find patterns based on predefined research questions related to COP climate events. I suggest using mainly qualitative methods, namely thematic analysis, grounded theory, content analysis, in-depth interviews and large-scale surveys. Working with primary data and qualitative methods can overcome such challenges in terms of data scarcity and methodological rigor. Regardless of the limitations, data sources, methods and other technical aspects, the number of academic papers on the COP and related events in the Azerbaijan case study should be increased and used as an objective alternative to social and traditional media in both academic and official circles.

The direct observation of certain events has various consequences for policymakers and decisionmakers in the environment of government agencies and state institutions. First, government support for the organization of climate events is also important for the future. Such events should be systematic and consistent in order to achieve tangible results. In addition, government grants and funding should be considered to promote project-based outcomes that feed into environmental issues in real time. Secondly, more research-based and empirical work should be encouraged to provide evidence-based insights into the real challenges. Otherwise, it is impossible to plan future actions to tackle environmental problems in a scientific way. Thirdly, international experience shows that most discussions are only an abstraction and not practical steps towards a solution until international agreements are signed and implemented. Finally, the public should be fully educated to support government action against climate change or a similar environmental threat. This process should involve not only government institutions and agencies, but also private companies and other stakeholders. This will ensure the involvement of the population and the sustainability of the process with regard to the long-term goals of sustainable development.

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