

# Nations talk, Cities interact?

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A two-level analysis of the network constitution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and the collaborative network processes in the Netherlands.

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## Abstract

‘Nations talk, cities act’ is often stated by the mayors of cities with regard to climate change. They refer to the collective action dilemmas and decision stalemates that occur between nation states in international climate negotiations. Meanwhile, local governments already start to respond to climate change, because they are facing local climate risks. What is often forgotten is the connection that is needed to scale up the local climate actions to a global climate change solution.

This thesis considers Transnational Municipal Networks [TMN] that are able to provide this connection. Specifically, the focus is placed on the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy [CoM]. In this network of European municipalities, participating cities have committed themselves to a common goal and integrate into the network by following three steps: the preparation phase, the draft and approval of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan [SECAP], and the monitoring of progress. There are currently twenty-four signatories located in the Netherlands. However, they do not actively participate in the network compared to signatories in other countries. This limited participation is challenging and therefore leads to the research question of this thesis, which is:

*What is the potential contribution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to climate change solutions and which aspects of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy explain the relatively low participation of Dutch municipalities?*

This question is answered by a two-level analysis of the CoM. For the first level of analysis, the criteria of Global Experimentalist Governance [GXG] are used to determine if the CoM is able to be the connection between the local and global level. The second part of the analysis puts more emphasis on the aspects of the network constitution and collaborative network processes that influence the way the CoM is able to provide outcomes.

The analysis of the CoM constitution shows that it meets the criteria of GXG. This indicates that the CoM network is able to transfer local climate action towards a global climate change solution. However, the collaborative network processes in the Netherlands hardly exist. The signatories do not communicate about the CoM, there is a low level of trust and reciprocal behavior, the reputation of the signatories in the network is not considered to be important, the level of commitment is low, and the intermediate outcomes are limited. Only the shared understanding among the signatories is high. Consequently, the outcomes of the CoM network in the Netherlands are limited.

The lack of the collaborative network processes can be explained by conditions of the institutional design of the CoM. For the signatories in the Netherlands, the CoM is not an exclusive forum, it requires too much effort to report and monitor progress, and some municipalities face language issues. Also, the national leaders do not have the capacity to act and the European leaders have limited knowledge about the CoM in the Netherlands. A new approach for the CoM is needed to make sure the gap between the requirements of the CoM and the needs of the signatories is bridged, and the CoM is able to do what TMNs should do: connect.

## **Acknowledgement**

Complex global issues fascinate me on a daily basis. Therefore, I decided that I wanted to conduct research on the issue of climate change to complete my Master's in Public Administration. After months of reading, puzzling, writing, reconsidering, and rewriting, today is the day: I finish the master thesis in front of you.

Luckily, I did not have to go through this process by myself. My internship at Klimaatverbond Nederland provided me with the tools and support I needed to complete my thesis. Therefore, I would like to thank all my colleagues at Klimaatverbond. Moreover, I would like to thank Jan-Kees Helderma for his guidance. You challenged and inspired me during our meetings, and continuously pushed me to write the best I could.

Finally, I would like to thank family and friends who always supported me. All of you made sure that I was not only looking forward to finish this thesis, but that I was also able to enjoy the process itself. Nevertheless, I am very happy to write this final sentence now. After six years of studying at Radboud University, it is time for new adventures.

I hope you enjoy reading this thesis,

Carmen Vermeer

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## **Abbreviations**

BEI	Baseline Emission Inventory
CA	Climate Alliance
CoM	Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy
CoMO	Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy Office
XG	Experimentalist Governance
EU	European Union
EC	European Commission
GHG	Green House Gases
GXG	Global Experimentalist Governance
JRC	Joint Research Centre
KVN	Klimaatverbond Nederland
RVA	Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
SEAP	Sustainable Energy Action Plan
SECAP	Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan
TMN	Transnational Municipal Network
TAN	Transnational Advocacy Network
UNFCCC	United Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

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# 1. Introduction

Cities will play ‘a leading role in addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century’ (Bloomberg, 2015, p. 116). Here Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York, referred to many challenges but he addressed one challenge in particular: *climate change*. The issue of climate change is the result of a continuous *collective action dilemma*. This dilemma implies that many actors are affected by the global atmosphere and thus benefit from a decrease of the level of Green House Gasses [GHG]. However, there is a free-rider dilemma at stake, since all actors benefit regardless whether they contribute to the costs to accomplish a decrease of GHG emissions. As a result, nation states keep struggling to find an effective response to climate change and its consequences.

It is at this point that local governments<sup>1</sup> have entered the arena. Local governments increasingly act as policy labs that respond to climate change. Some even argue that cities and their corresponding networks, were the only actors that have kept climate change on the international agenda for many years (Toly, 2016). The emphasis on the local level in finding climate change solutions, which is also known as the *localization* of climate change, has a lot of potential, because local governments are already facing local climate risks. (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). Consequently, they have started to adapt to the changing environment (Hunt & Watkiss, 2011; Sabel & Victor, 2016).

Furthermore, in the past decades, local governments received more authority due to political, economic and demographic changes. This led to more responsibilities for local governments which provides them the opportunity to act on the climate change issue (Toly, 2016). Finally,

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis uses the terms local governments, local authorities, cities, urban areas and municipalities interchangeably. While there are differences between the concepts, the main similarity is their sub national character which is relevant for this research. Therefore, they are categorized as the same unit of analysis.

many local governments already adopted climate strategies. This is surprising since this is not considered to be a typical or required task for local governments (Hakelberg, 2014).

Despite the potential for local governments to act on the climate change issue, complexities remain. Climate change and the aligned policies involve a high level of uncertainty and ambiguity which makes it difficult to find solutions independently (Burton & Dredge, 2010; Dessai, Lu, & Risbey, 2005; Keeney & McDaniels, 2001; Laukkonen et al., 2009; Tompkins & Adger, 2005). Nation states acknowledge that climate change solutions should be found in collaboration with local and regional governments and even included this in the Paris Agreement [PA] (Burton & Dredge, 2010; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2015).

While this vertical cooperation is needed, local governments also cooperate in a horizontal manner, by sharing their experiences across national borders with other local governments. This self-reinforcing cooperation could lead to more encompassing problem solving and is complementary to the vertical cooperation on the international level (Bloomberg, 2015; Sabel & Victor, 2016; Victor, 2017). One way to structure the horizontal cooperation is by the use of a Transnational Municipal Network [TMN].

### 1.1 Problem definition

The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy is an example of a TMN and has 7709 signatories within Europe and beyond (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017e). This network sets a common goal to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for its signatories with emphasis on local implementation. The signatories integrate into the CoM by accomplishing three steps: the preparation, the draft and approval of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan [SECAP], and the monitoring of progress.

There are currently twenty-four municipalities in the Netherlands that are signatory of the CoM, but only three municipalities (Delft, Midden-Delfland, and Nijmegen) are fully integrated in the network (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017f). This is surprising since the Netherlands is extremely vulnerable for the consequences of climate change. Located below sea level, the Netherlands is vulnerable to floods and other water related consequences of climate change (Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, 2015).

This is not to say that Dutch municipalities are passive in general. On the local level, various Dutch cities have formulated policies with regard to their response towards climate change. The national government also introduced a stress-test for the near future to test whether local governments are prepared for climate change risks (Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Milieu & Ministerie van Economische Zaken, 2017).

Currently, the activity on the local and national level did not lead to many integrated signatories in the CoM network. Meanwhile, the vulnerability of the Netherlands remains present and is likely to increase in the future. The discrepancy between the current climate change activity on the local and national level towards these vulnerabilities, in contrast to the lack of interest among Dutch municipalities to participate in the CoM leads to the aim of this thesis:

*To study the potential contribution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to climate change solutions and to explain why Dutch municipalities do not actively participate in this network.*

To reach this aim, the following research question will be answered:

*What is the potential contribution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to climate change solutions and which aspects of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy explain the relatively low participation of Dutch municipalities?*

The main research question is supported by three sub questions:

1. Why and in what way did the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy emerge?
2. How does the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy function?
3. Why is the participation of signatories in the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy limited in the Netherlands?

## 1.2 Theoretical and methodological considerations

Chapter two starts with the theoretical context that explains why networks, such as the CoM, emerge by introducing the collective action dilemma in international climate change agreements. It is argued that, global climate risks are rising and have strong potential to lead to disasters and risks. In continuance, further elaboration on the implications of these risks on the local level, including hazards, exposure and vulnerabilities, is provided. Next, it is argued that the local governments that have enough governing capacity are able to respond to those local risks by implementing adaptation and mitigation measurements. Nonetheless, the question remains how these single responses on the local level can contribute to a global climate change solution.

This is the starting point for chapter three. In this chapter, TMNs are introduced through the description of its members and their incentives, and the governance structure. In order to understand the role of TMNs in connecting local action to global solutions, the theory of Global Experimentalist Governance [GXG] is consulted. The final part of chapter three clarifies conditions of the network constitution and the collaborative network processes within a TMN that lead to collaborative outcomes. The theory of collaborative governance is primarily to distinguish these characteristics. Together, all theories are combined in a conceptual framework.

Data about the CoM is collected in order to illustrate the theoretical findings on the emergence of TMNs and the way they function. The data is collected through content-analysis and semi-structured interviews. The content-analysis is based on twenty-three official documents derived from the CoM website to analyze if the conditions of GXG are present in the constitution of the CoM, which is the first level of analysis. In addition, nineteen semi-structured interviews are conducted in order to analyze the collaborative network processes, but also to reflect on the conditions of the network constitution that lead to collaborative outcomes, which is the second level of analysis. The respondents are either civil servants of the Dutch municipalities that are signatory of the CoM or fulfill a leadership position in the CoM network on the national or European level.

### 1.3 Societal relevance

This thesis is relevant, because nearly every Dutch citizen (93%) frequently thinks about climate change and its consequences (I&O Research, 2018). Therefore, it is not surprising that climate change was one of the major themes during the parliamentary elections in the Netherlands in 2017 (Cabrera, 2017). With the upcoming municipal elections, this thesis will fuel the debate about climate change on the local level (Kiesraad, n.d.).

This local debate has become more important over the past years, since the national government puts more emphasis on a local approach in climate change issues, such as the energy transition (Ministerie van Economische Zaken, 2016). The city council members, who will be elected this spring, will be authorized to make decisions about various climate change related issues. In this instance, municipalities will evaluate and reconsider the regional and international climate networks that the municipality participates in.

This thesis can be used by the city council members during these considerations with regard to the CoM network. Eventually, the citizens of Dutch municipalities will notice the consequences

of these considerations, when local climate policies are implemented. These policies will be influenced by the networks that the municipality participates in.

#### 1.4 Scientific relevance

This thesis also contributes to the current scientific debate in several ways. First of all, it contributes to the strategies to cope with climate change from a governance perspective. Keohane and Victor (2011) argue that decentralized regime complexes, such as TMNs, will have more impact than international agreements due to the uncertainty and political flux that is inherent to climate change. By studying one of these decentralized regimes, this thesis contributes to the understanding of this new governance strategy.

This is also supported by scientists who discuss the influence of multi-level governance approaches in climate change policies. For instance, Jordan et al. (2015) claim that more information about transnational governance is needed in order to verify the claim of Ostrom that a multi-level governance approach will increase the contributions of states to the global climate change solution over time. If this multi-level governance approach is successful, it can also be concluded that climate change is a multi-level issue that can only be solved with a multi-level governance solution, such as the involvement of TMNs.

Furtermore, this thesis contributes to the knowledge about networks. An assessment of effectiveness of networks is desired (Torfing, 2012, p. 109). The analysis of the network constitution and the network processes will provide insights about the effectiveness of the CoM network in the Netherlands. The case of the CoM is even more relevant, because it is a European network that could be an example for other parts of the world in the future (Sabel & Victor, 2017). Also, the effects of TMNs have often been overlooked, since they do not fit the current categorization of transnational networks (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). The analysis of the CoM in this thesis will contribute to this void in literature. Thus, in light of the climate change debate

and the theoretical focus, this thesis provides a new and innovative perspective on TMNs and their role in finding global climate change solutions.

Finally, the way the CoM is studied, increases the relevance of this thesis. The emphasis of this thesis is on (Dutch) municipalities, while only a limited part of literature reviews the position of municipalities in TMNs (Toly, 2008). A distinction can be made between the active and the passive members a TMN. While all local governments would be able to participate in the TMNs, the networks are often considered to be networks of pioneers for pioneers (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009). Therefore, research is needed to explore in what way the pioneers and the local governments that are lacking behind could be connected more (Kern & Alber, 2009). This thesis aims to bridge this gap in literature, by providing insight about the CoM and its signatories.

## 1.5 Outline

In chapter two and three, the conceptual framework that explains why TMNs emerged and how they function, is described. Next, the methodology and aligned decisions of this thesis are discussed in chapter four. Chapter five will follow-up on this, because the emergence of the CoM is presented. In continuance, the examination of the functioning of the CoM in the Netherlands is presented in chapter six. The main research question will be answered in the conclusion of this thesis that is presented in chapter seven. Finally, chapter eight consist of a discussion, reflection, a look towards the future and recommendations for further research.

## 2. Localizing climate change

This chapter provides a preliminary answer to the first sub question: *Why and in what way did the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy emerge?* As an example of a TMN, the CoM, and many other networks, emerged as a consequence of the localization of climate change. This chapter elaborates on this localization while addressing the collective action dilemma, local climate risks, local governing capacity, and local response capacity. This chapter ends with a preliminary conceptual framework which is the basis for the conceptual framework of chapter three.

### 2.1 The limitations of international climate change agreements

Climate change can be defined as: ‘a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is, in addition to natural climate variability, observed over comparable time periods.’ (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992, p. 7). At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the climate change issue led to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [UNFCCC], founded by the United Nations in 1992. The primary aim was to stabilize the concentration of GHG within a time-frame that should allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992). Once a year, nation states around the world gather at the Conference of the Parties to negotiate about new international agreements to reach this aim.

Joint implementation of mitigation measurements and monitoring between the nation states should lead to less GHG emissions and a mitigation of climate change as a result (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992, p. 14). Unfortunately, the involved nation states did not succeed in stabilizing the level of GHG. As a consequence of the increasing level of GHG, a variety of hazards are globally present, including sea-level rise, heat waves,

extreme weather events, and the melting of the polar areas (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007; Ostrom, 2014). In order to turn the tie, multiple additional amendments on climate agreements and climate protocols have been signed between 1992 and 2015, with the Kyoto Protocol as the most well-known example. None of them were able to create and enforce collective action amongst the nation states to mitigate climate change.

The failure of international climate agreements is generally considered as an example of the *collective action dilemma* (Sabel & Victor, 2016). The collective action dilemma implies that none of the nation states is likely to decide in favor of the most beneficial collective outcome. As a result, every nation state will face negative consequences. This rational self-interest behavior that leads to negative consequences for the collective is also known as the *tragedy of the commons* (Bernauer & Schaffer, 2012, p. 446; Hardin, 1968; Wilks-Heeg, 2014). In general the following conditions are applicable to the collective action dilemma of climate change (Barrett, 2003, p. 51; Olson, 1971, p. 2; Ostrom & Walker, 2003):

1. There are many rational self-interested actors involved
2. There is a high level of uncertainty and ambiguity
3. There is no external authority with enforcement power

The first condition addresses two aspects: the high number of actors and the way these actors interact with each other and make decisions. The high number of actors is caused by the fact that many actors are needed to create solutions for the climate change issue. Due to globalization, international organizations, transnational organizations, and local governments have the ability to connect with their counterparts around the world. Besides that, the civil society and markets within nation states are simultaneously included. As a result, the nation states are no longer the central actors in policy-making and a new perspective on governance is needed (Coleman, 2012, p. 674). This perspective on governance could be a multi-level

governance approach that entails that decision making capacity and authority are located at different institutional levels (Knill & Liefferink, 2007). The second aspect is that all actors make decisions based on rational self-interest. This means that they make decisions, based on an individual cost-benefit analysis.

The second condition of the collective action dilemma in climate change is the fact that climate change and the aligned policies are characterized by a high level of uncertainty and ambiguity (Burton & Dredge, 2010; Dessai et al., 2005; Keeney & McDaniels, 2001; Laukkonen et al., 2009; Sabel & Victor, 2016; Tompkins & Adger, 2005). Decisions in climate change policies need to be made without any knowledge on probabilities and consequences for the future (Tompkins & Adger, 2005). Measurements that could be implemented do not show results immediately and are often perceived as investments in a threat that is not visible yet (Laukkonen et al., 2009). As a consequence of this uncertainty, the implementation of policies that manage both the causes of climate change as well as the consequences of this change remain limited (Tompkins & Adger, 2005). The decision-makers that make these decisions are challenged to incorporate long timeframes and are required to have a long horizon perspective in order to overcome this uncertainty and ambiguity (Laukkonen et al., 2009; Tompkins & Adger, 2005).

The final condition that is present in the collective action dilemma in climate change, is the lack of political authority (Torfing, 2012, p. 102). Many repeated dilemmas show that individuals can only overcome these dilemmas if an external authority would enforce certain behavior (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 19). Although, international law exists with regard to climate change, it is difficult to enforce. This lack of authority gives the actors involved the ability to be reluctant on the formulation and implementation of climate change policies. As a consequence, the collective action dilemma remains present.

## 2.2 Local climate risks

Due to the collective action dilemma, climate change has evolved over the past decades and increased the number of hazards that cause disasters around the world. Most of the local governments have yet to witness a disaster, but are continuously pressured by possible disaster striking due to the rise of *local climate risks*, which can be determined by the following formula (Sudmeier-Rieux et al., 2017):

$$\textit{Local Climate Risk} = \textit{Hazard} * \textit{Exposure} * \textit{Vulnerability}$$

A hazard is defined as ‘a dangerous phenomenon, substance, human activity or condition that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, loss of livelihoods and services, social and economic disruption, or environmental damage’ (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2009). Examples of hazards that are caused by climate change include landslides, floods and storm surge, extreme weather events, heat, and precipitation (Burton & Dredge, 2010; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007; Kahn, 2016; Ostrom, 2014; Sudmeier-Rieux et al., 2017, p. 2). These hazards are already present, but are expected to increase in the future.

Hazards are insufficient to create local climate risks, because the context in which a hazard takes place determines the risk that a disaster occurs. Therefore, the exposure needs to be taken into account, which is defined as ‘people, property, systems, or other elements present in hazard zones that are thereby subject to potential losses’ (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2009). The level of exposure is determined by several factors, such as the location of a city, the urban planning of the city, and the existence of an early warning system. Furthermore, the physical and economic development and the community of the city influence the level of exposure (Bulkeley, 2012; Sudmeier-Rieux et al., 2017).

The final component of local climate risks is vulnerability. Vulnerability is defined as ‘the characteristics and circumstances of a community, system or asset that make it susceptible to the damaging effects of a hazard’ (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2009). Factors that could lead to vulnerability are poor government, lack of coping capacity, or social inequalities (Sudmeier-Rieux et al., 2017, p. 13). Each local government has a unique combination between hazards, exposure, and vulnerability, and therefore has a unique level of risk (Carmin, Anguelovski, & Roberts, 2012). A distinction between several risks that could occur as a result of previous factors is presented in Figure 1.

#### **Climate risks for local governments**

1. Infrastructural risks – The risks of the physical public assets that are created by local authorities including the insurance that has been linked to these facilities;
2. Planning and policy risks – The risks that include all procedural and policy regulation;
3. Economic risks – All risks that include the economic competitive position in the market as well as the job market in which employees can not compensate their employees for increasing difficulties in their work;
4. Environmental risks – Risks related to the ecological conditions of an urban areas such as the water quality, energy and air pollution;
5. Community risks – Risks that include health impacts (mortality), but also financial consequences as rising prices of resources and capacity of the food production;
6. Political risk – This risk is determined by the willingness of the local politicians to act upon climate change. This is highly influence by the public opinion towards the climate change issue.

*Figure 1* Climate risks for local governments (Burton & Dredge, 2010; Kahn, 2016)

### 2.3 Local governing capacity

Local governments have to respond to the local climate risks. However, transferring this need into action requires *local governing capacity*. Governing capacity ensures that local authorities do not only address the need to act upon climate change, but also act in practice. The governing capacity of a local government consists of three factors.

The first factor is the institutional capacity that includes knowledge and resources (Laukkonen et al., 2009). The most important resource is funding, forming the main reason why climate change policies are not implemented in a sound way (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2007). The second factor is the inclusion of various stakeholders. For instance, the creation of public-private partnerships will increase the resources and knowledge available and thereby also the institutional capacity (Laukkonen et al., 2009; Tompkins & Adger, 2005).

The third factor of the governing capacity is the inclusion of individual local policy areas into other policy programs and processes (Mees & Driessen, 2011). The knowledge about the climate change issue is often centered in the environmental department, which lacks integration into other municipal departments related to urban governance such as social issues, public health, economic growth, and competitiveness.

However, this integration is essential to implement climate policies successfully (Kern & Alber, 2009). If co-ordination is present between the different policy units, conflict and trade-offs between policy areas are avoided (Kern & Alber, 2009). This should be created through ‘a climate policy steering group, a climate protection co-ordination office or an overarching unit with appropriate competences for mainstreaming climate change policy, combined with issue-specific task forces’ (Kern & Alber, 2009, p. 173).

## 2.4 Local response capacity

When local governments use their governing capacity, this is defined as *local response capacity* which entails the ability to deal with ‘both the causes of environmental change and the consequences of that change’ by local governments (Tompkins & Adger, 2005). This broad definition of response capacity is chosen, because it includes mitigation as well as adaptation measurements towards climate change (See Figure 2).

The proliferation of the integrated term of response capacity is desired, as mitigation and adaptation strategies are both needed to create sustainable development. Therefore, a synergy should be found between the mitigation and adaptation measurements (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007; Laukkonen et al., 2009; Shaw, Colley, & Connell, 2007). Yet, the synergy should be carefully regulated since simultaneous implementation of adaptation and mitigation measurements could also be counterproductive (Laukkonen et al., 2009). Finally, the synergy between the two concepts needs to be created, because the future of adaptation strategies is depending on the mitigation strategies that are currently in place (Burton & Dredge, 2010). If no synergy is found, a trade-off between the measurements could arise as a result of scarcity of resources (Kane & Yohe, 2000).

### **Mitigation and Adaptation**

- Mitigation measurements are policies that aim to decrease the level of GHG emissions.
- Adaptation measurements are policies that are implemented to respond to the consequences of climate change that are already present

*Figure 2* Mitigation and Adaptation (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007)

## 2.5 Towards a conceptual framework

In conclusion, the localization in the climate change debate occurred due the interplay between three developments:

1. Global climate change risks occurred, because of the continuous collective action dilemma between nation states
2. These risks emerged on the local level and local governments have to respond
3. Local response capacity is influenced by the governing capacity of local governments

These developments are presented in the preliminary conceptual framework in Figure 3. However, it remains unclear in what way local response capacity can contribute to a global climate change solution to ensure that innovations on the local level are not single responses to climate change (Tompkins & Adger, 2005). Therefore, the local response capacity of individual local governments needs to be disseminated and should be part of an iterative process (Nordhaus & Gottinger, 1995; Tompkins & Adger, 2005). This iterative process can be facilitated by the creation of networks (Allen, Bosch, Kilvington, Oliver, & Gilbert, 2001). The following chapters continues on one type of these networks: TMNs

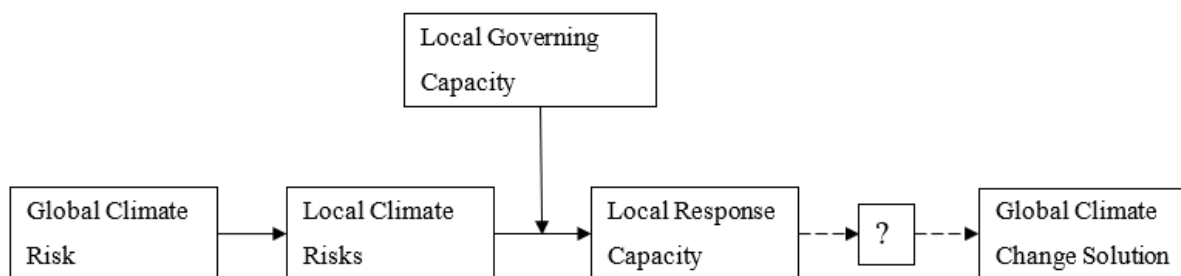


Figure 3 Preliminary Conceptual Framework

### 3. Transnational Municipal Networks

In this chapter, TMNs are used to explain the connection between the local response capacity and the global climate change solution. Section 3.1 and 3.2 set off with a brief introduction on transnational networks and TMNs in particular. In section 3.3, the way TMNs should function to fulfill this connecting role is supported with arguments from experimentalist governance. In continuance, section 3.4 and 3.5 elaborate on the conditions of the network constitution and collaborative network processes, which determine the way TMNs function. The chapter ends with a conceptual framework that is used to provide the theoretical basis for the answer to the following sub question: *How does the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy function?*

#### 3.1 Transnational networks

Transnational networks consist of interactions among actors across the boundaries of nation states and consist of at least one actor that is not a state actor or does not act on behalf of a national government or intergovernmental organization (Risse, 1995, p. 3). There is a distinction between different types of transnational networks: epistemic communities, transnational advocacy networks, and the global civil society (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). The *epistemic communities* mainly consist of experts on a certain topic that have a shared political as well as scientific understanding of a problem. The authority of these networks is derived from the presence of scientific facts. However, the uncertainty in climate change increases the complex position of these networks.

The second type of network is the *Transnational Advocacy Network* [TAN] that ‘includes those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services.’ (Keck & Sikkink, 1998, p. 2). These networks work simultaneously with the national and international policy-makers and often bring actors that have a clear principled position together. These networks

have a state-centered governance perspective and have a horizontal structure that is maintained through the dissemination of knowledge and shared values (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004).

The final type of transnational network is the *global civil society*, which moves away from the state-centered perspective and places non-state actors in the center of the network. The global civil society has many similarities with TAN with regard to the importance of information and knowledge sharing. However, the vertical relation towards the state is different in these networks, because negotiation of goals between the actors is the main principle (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004).

This thesis focusses on another type of transnational network that does not meet the characteristics of the previously described networks completely, which are *Transnational Municipal Networks* (Kern & Alber, 2009). TMNs act as a state actor in contrast to the above described transnational networks that act like non-state actors. Also, the other networks see the state as a unitary actor while the TMNs do not, because of their emphasis on the authority of the sub national authorities (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004, p. 476).

### 3.2 The aspects of TMNs

In this section the members of the TMNs are discussed. Moreover, their incentives to participate are presented, and insight in its governance structure is provided.

#### 3.2.1 Members

TMNs consist of sub-national governments, such as cities and municipalities, and are mainly present in Europe. In a TMN, all members are autonomous and free to join or leave (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009, pp. 309-310). Together, these members aim at ‘the inclusion of best-practice transfer, learning among their members at home and abroad, and the representation of their members interest within the national, European, and international multi-level system’ (Kern & Alber, 2009). The TMNs have an international secretariat and are coordinated by a presidency,

a board, and a general assembly (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009). Once decisions have been made by one of these institutions, these are immediately implemented by the members of the network (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009).

### 3.2.2 Incentives

There are various incentives for sub national governments to join a TMN. The participation in TMNs provides the opportunity for sub-national governments to address issues that could not be raised without the cooperation with other municipalities due to a lack of capacity (Giest & Howlett, 2013). Moreover, the participation in a TMN enable local governments to position themselves within the state on various policy issues and the implementation of these policies (Gordon, 2013).

Finally, the participating sub-national governments are able to share information, knowledge and experiences (Gordon, 2013). For instance, the technical knowledge that is required for some response measurements, can be provided through TMNs (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2007). This way, the participating local governments are better able to innovate and better able to adapt these technologies (Victor, 2017). The sub national governments in Europe have an additional incentive, because they are also encouraged to participate, with the promise of assistance in the EU proposals, project coordination, and the possibility to lobby in Brussels more easily (Kern, Niederhafner, Rechlin, & Wagner, 2005).

### 3.2.3 Governance

TMNs use a multi-level governance structure to expand (Gordon, 2013). This entails that the respective authority and the decision making capacity on a certain issue can be allocated at different institutional levels including the subnational, national and European level (Knill & Liefferink, 2007, p. 31). Scholars support this multi-level approach, because it leads to more effective policy-making (Sabel & Victor, 2016). In issues that involve risk, such as climate

change, a multi-level governance approach is assumed to be even more relevant (Fisher, 2012, p. 418). The synergy between the various levels in a TMN is presented in Figure 4.

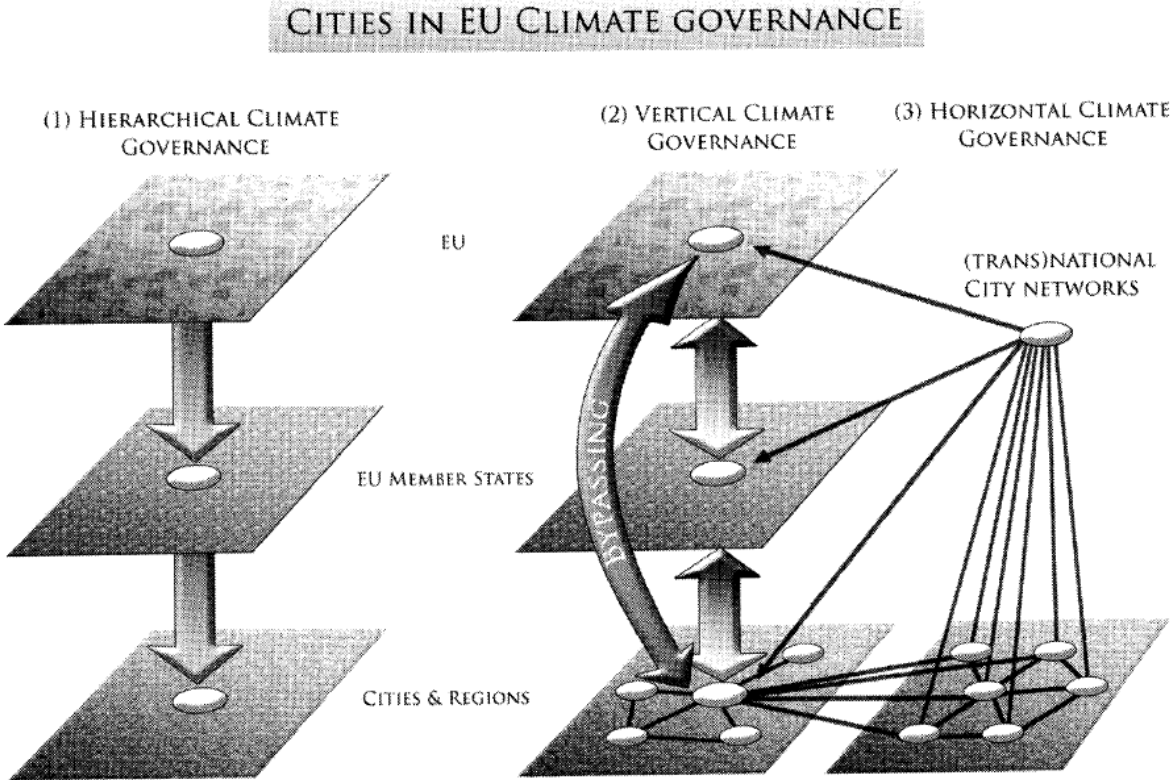


Figure 4 Cities in EU Climate Governance (Kern, 2014, p. 114)

Finally, the TMNs related to climate change seek for commitments of local governments to lower their GHG emissions while also pushing for the implementation of aligned policies. TMNs can stimulate members to reach these goals, monitor progress, and use benchmarking systems to assess their progress (Kern & Alber, 2009). By doing so, the TMNs are assumed to be able to connect the local response capacity to the global climate change solution. However, only TMNs that meet certain criteria are able to be this connection.

### 3.3 Experimentalist governance

In the following section, it is argued that local response capacity can be connected to the global climate change solution through TMNs that are constituted according to the conditions of Experimentalist Governance [XG]. According to the advocates of XG, this approach provides a solution to failing international climate change agreements by using decentralised cooperations.

XG is a bottom-up iterative and cyclical approach and emerged as a response to the failing of top-down policy implementation, which is characterized by hierarchy and down streaming (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The TMNs that are constituted according to the conditions of XG can contribute to the solution for the issue of climate change, because two scope conditions are present. The first scope condition is *strategic uncertainty*. This condition is present in climate change and is described in section 2.1 on the collective action dilemma. The uncertainty led to the formation of cooperations, because finding solutions independently remains difficult. While various networks emerged, TMNs are able to meet the second scope condition of XG: the *polyarchic distribution of power* (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2008).

This condition implies that none of the actors should be able to impose its individual interests on the other actors involved. In this regard, XG stresses the importance of the *penalty default* in the network. A penalty default entails that actors will face a threat or a default if they do not commit and fulfill joint activities during the cooperation with other actors (Sabel & Victor, 2016). The penalty default ensures that the actors that do not function properly, will suffer negative consequences which leads to more encompassing problem-solving.

The cooperation between actors in a network that includes a penalty default needs to be facilitated by an institution that regulates the iterations of the actors in the network (Sabel & Victor, 2016). The TMNs fulfill this role and should focus on *learning the right lessons*, the

revision of the interaction framework after iterations, and the governance of the network, mainly with regard to finance (Sabel & Victor, 2016) (Sabel & Zeitlin, 2012, p. 169).

This introduction to XG already includes some of the conditions for a TMN constitution, yet TMNs crosses national borders. Therefore, the conditions of the aligned theory of Global Experimentalist Governance [GXG] will be used to analyze whether the CoM is constituted in an experimentalist way. These conditions are (De Búrca, Keohane, & Sabel, 2014):

1. Initial reflection and discussion among stakeholders with a broadly shared perception of a common problem;
2. Articulation of the framework understanding with open-ended goals;
3. Implementation of these broadly framed goals left to ‘lower-level’ or contextually situated actors who have knowledge of local conditions and considerable discretion to adapt the framework norms to these different contexts;
4. Continuous feedback is provided from local contexts, allowing for reporting and monitoring across range of contexts, with outcomes subject to peer review;
5. Goals and practices should be periodically and routinely re-evaluated and, where appropriate, revised in light of results of the peer review and the shared purposes.

If the TMN constitution is based on these conditions, the XG approach suggests that the TMNs could offer a new perspective towards the vicious circle of failing international climate agreements (Ostrom, 2014; Sabel & Victor, 2016). These TMNs are able to connect the local to the global level, because the actors that are involved in the TMN interact on the climate change issue. Moreover, their interactions lead to an iterative process, in which knowledge from experiences in the past are used as input for future policy implementation by the actors (Gilardi & Radaelli, 2012, p. 157). This iterative mechanism prevents the repetitive rise of issues in the policy implementation process of climate change in the future (Zeitlin, 2016, p. 2).

### 3.4 Constitutional processes and the formation of networks

The constitutional processes of a TMN will also be analysed to understand in what way the TMN is able to facilitate collaborative network processes. The constitutional processes entail the conditions and shaping of the network in which the actors are interacting (Klijn, 2005; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2006). This thesis uses the concept of *institutional design* to describe these characteristics (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

The first condition of the institutional design is a high level of *participatory inclusiveness* in the network. This entails that the network is open and includes many actors (Ansell & Gash, 2008). An inclusive network increases the legitimacy of the collaborative network processes and avoids future conflicts. Networks can increase their inclusiveness by putting an active effort into it (Ansell & Gash, 2008). For many TMNs this means that the network should not only include pioneer members, but also other local governments (Gordon, 2013).

Contrastively, the *exclusiveness* of the network stimulates the inclusiveness of the network. If the network is ‘the only game in town’, actors are more likely to participate, because they do not want to be excluded. This is also related to the ‘threshold’ effect which entails that actors are likely to participate if a certain amount of other (similar) actors are participating (Scharpf, 1997, p. 53). Furthermore, Ansell & Gash (2008) stress the importance of *clear ground rules* and *transparency* to increase the legitimacy of the collaborative network process.

The final characteristic of the institutional design is *facilitative leadership*. Although TMNs do not have a top-down structure, a facilitative leader is preferable to guide the collaborative network processes. This leader should focus on information and communication, the project-funding and co-operation, and finally the recognition, benchmarking, and certification of the members (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009). This coordination and leadership is complex, but necessary for local governments to be able to exchange their knowledge (Gordon, 2013). The leader

should bring the actors together and engage them in the collaborative network processes. The leadership requires four conditions (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001, p. 51):

1. It should promote broad and active participation
2. Ensure broad based influence and control
3. Facilitate productive group dynamics
4. Extend the scope of the process

To sum up, Table 1 provides an overview of the conditions of the network constitution that should be present in a TMN that is able to facilitate collaborative network processes.

Table 1

*The conditions of the network constitution*

Conditions	
Constitution in order to facilitate collaborative network processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participatory Inclusiveness</li> <li>2. Forum Exclusiveness</li> <li>3. Clear Ground Rules</li> <li>4. Transparency</li> <li>5. Facilitative Leadership</li> </ol>

### 3.5 Collaborative processes within TMNs

Subsequently, the constitutional conditions described above shape the arena of the collaborative network processes. Network processes are about the interaction between the various actors involved in the network (Klijn, 2005; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2006). These interactions are influenced by several conditions that are closely related and eventually lead to collaborative outcomes.

The first condition for collaborative network processes is *communication*, and specifically face-to-face communication (Ansell & Gash, 2008). This is one of the conditions that shows to be effective to decrease the level of noncooperation in the collective action dilemmas (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 29). The communication among actors in the climate change debate is even more important, since it is difficult to discover why and how the other actors are cooperating without it (Ostrom, 2003, p.53). In the end, the most important aspect for communication and the contribution to cooperation is the creation of *trust* (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 34).

Because of the close relation between face-to-face dialogue and trust, this type of communication is considered to be a necessary condition for collaborative network processes (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The combination between the (face-to-face) communication with the ability of individuals to punish the other actors if they do not cooperate is even more effective for a successful collaboration (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 37). This is why XG is also in favor of an institution that is able to enforce the penalty default in case of non-cooperation (Sabel & Victor, 2016).

The third condition of a collaborative network process is *reciprocal behavior*. Reciprocal behavior implies that actors will respond positive towards positive actions of others and negative towards negative actions of others (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 43). When actors behave in a reciprocal manner, actors are likely to cooperate, but will stop doing so if other individuals are not trustworthy or not behaving in a reciprocal manner. Furthermore, they will either stop cooperation and/or punish the other individual if they notice negative behavior (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 46).

When actors use reciprocity in their decision to cooperate, their *reputation* matters. If an actor is considered to be trustworthy, other actors is more likely to respond positive during the collaboration (Ostrom & Walker, 2003, p. 43). While becoming trustworthy, actors try to resist

the short-term gains at the expense of losing opportunities for major long-term benefits. The element of certification, implemented by the leaders of the network, is important for the reputation of actors in the network process. The recognition of the accomplishments of local governments will encourage them to remain involved in a certain network. Therefore, the recognition is an important element for the secretariat and board of a TMN to take into account (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009).

Moreover, Ansell and Gash (2008) add that there needs to be *commitment* to the process. The level of commitment is related to the motivation of the actor. The commitment of an actor is tested when the other actors make a decision that is contradictory to the interest of the actor itself. A consensus-based structure of the decision-making process should prevent this from happening, but it cannot be fully excluded from the collaborative network process (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The commitment is also related to the level of ownership that is experienced by the actors involved. It is expected that a high level of ownership will result in more commitment to the process, because it implies that responsibilities are shared. Here again, trust is important (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

The fifth condition of the collaborative network process is *shared understanding* in form of a common mission or definition of the problem (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Due to uncertainty and ambiguity this is complex in the climate change issue, because actors are likely to have differentiating problem definitions (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Finally, the collaborative process needs to provide *intermediate outcomes* to the actors in order to stimulate the commitment and trust that the actors have in the process (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

These intermediate outcomes are most likely to have a positive influence in TMNs if they increase project-funding, such as an EU grant, or stimulate cooperation. The intermediate outcomes will also increase cooperation between local governments, for instance to participate

in a joint grant application (Kern & Bulkeley, 2009). To sum up, Table 2 provides an overview of the conditions for collaborative network process.

Table 2

*The conditions for the collaborative network processes*

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Conditions for collaborative network processes
1. (Face-to-Face) Communication
2. Trust building
3. Reputation
4. Reciprocity
5. Commitment
6. Shared understanding
7. Intermediate outcomes

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### 3.6 The conceptual framework

This chapter described the members, their incentives and governance structure of TMNs. After this brief introduction, XG was used to explain the conditions for the TMN constitution in order to be able to connect local response capacity to the global climate change solutions. Next, the conditions that need to be present in order to analyze the network constitution and the collaborative network processes of the TMN have been outlined. The conditions identified above, are combined in the conceptual framework that is presented in Figure 5. This framework will be used to evaluate the CoM in order to understand in what way this TMN functions in the Netherlands.

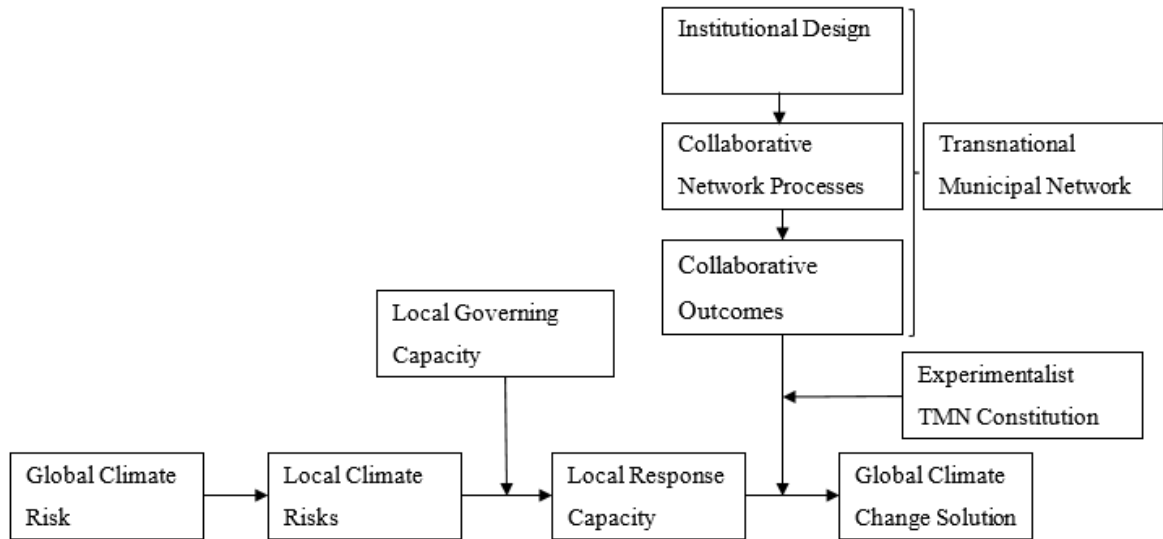


Figure 5 Conceptual Framework

## 4. Methodological framework

This chapter considers the methodological decisions that have been made throughout this thesis. First, the research design will be further elaborated on and the selected case will be introduced. In continuation, the methods that are used for data collection are explained. Next, the theoretical concepts will be operationalized into usable concepts for data collection. Finally, the methodological decisions will be reflected on, based on their impact on the validity and the reliability of this thesis.

### 4.1 Research design

The aim of this thesis is ‘*to study the potential contribution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to climate change solutions and to explain why Dutch municipalities do not actively participate in this network.*’ A multiple case study, which is classified as qualitative research, is used to reach this aim (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Gerring, 2006, p. 29). In case studies a small social or political unit is analyzed, but specific institutions can also be researched (Gerring, 2009). The emphasis on a limited number of cases allows for the gathering of knowledge on causal mechanisms in a different way than quantitative research is able to do. Qualitative research starts from the notion that population level causalities can only occur, if causal processes at the case level can be assumed. In other words, the case level is ontologically prior to the population causation (Mahoney, 2008).

Several concepts need to be taken into consideration in a qualitative research design. These concepts are *variables*, *observations*, and *population*, which are nested into the cases and can be divided based on the argumentation of the research (Gerring, 2006, p. 26). The assorted variables that are studied in the cases include the theoretical concepts that have been discussed in chapter two and three. The variables are studied during observations based on two methods of data-collection: content analysis and semi-structured interviews. The methods of data

collection will be discussed in section 4.4. Finally, the observations are conducted in a certain population. The population in this thesis consists of thirteen local governments that are signatory of the CoM. These sixteen local governments are the cases of this thesis. In addition, the leadership position of the network consisting of the Covenant of Mayors Office [CoMO], the National Covenant Coordinator, and the Covenant Supporter in the Netherlands, are observed. Because the observations are conducted in the local governments that are part of the CoM, this thesis can only draw conclusions on the way the network functions according to the signatories at this moment.

#### 4.1.1 Causal inference: the process tracing method

*Process-tracing* is used to identify the causal processes within the selected cases (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). Process-tracing is a subtype of pattern matching and entails ‘attempts to identify the intervening causal processes – the causal chain and the causal mechanism – between an independent variable and the outcome of the dependent variable’ (George & Bennett, 2005, pp. 206-207; Mahoney, 2000, p. 410). This method is often used for within-case analysis. Small-N analyst researchers conduct this method in combination with cross-case comparison, but the limits of this thesis only allow for process-tracing.

A distinction between theory- and case-centric process-tracing can be made. This thesis is theory-centric, because it is based on the conceptual framework that has been created after extended literature review. The aim of the process-tracing method in the cases of this thesis is to analyze whether the expectations derived from theory are present in practice. Therefore, this thesis uses the theory-testing process-tracing method (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 11).

Theory-testing process-tracing starts with the conceptualization of the variables that are influencing the causal mechanism. These concepts are then operationalized to measure the theoretical concepts during the empirical data collection. The different instruments collect the

empirical data. This data needs to be analyzed and will be used to test the theoretical expectations of the causal mechanism (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, pp. 14-15). However, no statements can be made about the necessity of the variables of the mechanism. This would only be possible when this method is combined with cross-case analysis, because this method is able to analyze the necessity of variables (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 16).

#### 4.2 Case selection

Thirteen Dutch signatories of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy [CoM] are studied in this thesis. This network is chosen because it is one of the TMNs that is categorized as an in-depth network according to typology of Giest and Howlett (2013). In-depth networks are considered to be most successful, because they target a specific region which allows for the formulation of goals that can be used as input for national and global policy-making once voluntary experiments turn out to be successful (Giest & Howlett, 2013).

Also, these networks can hold their members more accountable, because of the tight linkages to the members and the defined guidelines. In comparison to other networks that are part of this category, such as Climate Alliance [CA] and Energy-Cities, the CoM explicitly includes adaptation to its goals. Therefore, the CoM fits the theoretical expectations related to the inclusion of adaptation and mitigation in the concept of response capacity.

Furthermore, many studies on TMNs have focused on the networks that include large cities, (Gordon, 2013). However, the entire local level, including middle and small cities, is part of the localization of climate change. Especially in the Netherlands, where the number of megacities is relatively low, the role of these middle and small urban areas is increasingly important. Since, the CoM includes these municipalities, this network is expected to be relevant in the Netherlands.

Finally, the selected cases need to have causal leverage (Gerring, 2006). Because only twenty-four municipalities are signatory of the CoM, many of them can be covered during data collection with the resources available to this thesis. If the coverage is high, more reliable and valid statements on the functioning of the network can be made. Yet this thesis does not aim to explain why only twenty-four municipalities are signatories. Additional research is necessary to address this issue.

### 4.3 Data collection methods

Two methods of data collection are used in this thesis: content analysis and semi-structured interviews. The advantages of both instruments and the way they are applied in this thesis will be discussed in this section.

#### 4.3.1 Content analyses

The first method of data collection is content analysis. Content analysis includes the study of written, verbal or visual communication (Cole, 1988). The method starts with an operationalization that ensures that theoretical concepts can be empirically found in the documents while they are studied in a structured way (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). This approach is known as the deductive content analysis approach. During the content analysis, a distinction between different categories can be made. These categories identify the structure of a certain process (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). In this thesis, the operationalized theoretical concepts related to the network constitution are studied via content analysis.

In total, twenty-three documents that are available on the webpages of the CoM itself have been analyzed (see Appendix I). All documents were coded in ATLAS.ti which allowed for a structural comparison between the different documents and increases the reliability of this instrument (Ngalande & Mkwinda, 2014). The documents of the content-analysis provide

historical background of the CoM, information on the signatories and on the constitution of the network.

#### 4.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the content analysis, semi-structured interviews are used to reflect on the network constitution, and explore and explain the collaborative network processes in the CoM. This method is chosen, because it is often perceived as the best method to distinguish the subjective factors that influence political decision-making (Rathbun, 2009, p. 687). This method also allows for the gathering of reliable information while new ways to look at a topic can still be created, because of the unique insights that the respondent can give in the different cases (Barriball & While, 1994; Rathbun, 2009, p. 689). Furthermore, respondents are able to answer based on their experience which is relevant, because that provides data on the perception of the collaborative network processes from all actors (Barriball & While, 1994).

The interview questions are prepared in advance and are combined in an interview guide (See Appendix II & III), but the respondents have the ability to answer in the way they prefer. All respondents have similar questions, which allows for comparison afterwards. On the other hand, there remains room for further elaboration on the answers if the respondent prefers to do so (Bleijenbergh, 2015, p. 63). This increases the reliability of the research (Bleijenbergh, 2015, p. 63).

All signatory municipalities in the Netherlands have been contacted via email and phone in order to arrange an interview. Eventually, thirteen municipalities participated in this thesis. The interviews were conducted with the civil servants who are working with the CoM. Most interviews were conducted over the phone. In three municipalities, the interviews were held with two civil servants, because they could complement each others experiences. This resulted in sixteen respondents from various municipalities.

In addition, four respondents that have a leadership position in the network were interviewed. These respondents were the Covenant Coordinator in the Netherlands, the Covenant Supporter and two respondents from the CoMO. An overview of the respondents and the details of the interviews are presented in Appendix IV. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded with ATLAS.ti to increase the transparency, validity and reliability of the thesis. Due to the sensitivity of the data, the respondents are anonymous and referred to as a code. The respondents of the municipalities are referred to as R1 to R16 and the respondents in leadership positions are referred to as R17 to R20.

#### 4.4 Operationalization

The theoretical concepts related to the network constitution and the collaborative network processes are operationalized into dimensions, characteristics and indicators for the empirical data collection, which are presented in Table 3, 4 and 5 (Adcock & Collier, 2001). The indicators are used as codes for the content analysis and are transformed into questions for the semi-structured interviews. Codes are key words that are linked to various elements of the documents of the content analysis or the transcripts of the interviews including opinions, facts, meanings, events, and situations (Van Thiel, 2007, p. 143).

During the coding of the documents for the content-analysis, some of the initial codes have been changed. Firstly, the indicators of communication have been integrated into a single code: 'active communication', because these indicators turned out to be identical during the coding. Also, the conditions of GXG did not take the required resources for the local implementation into account, while this topic was often raised in the documents. In order to include this to the analysis, a distinction between knowledge and financial support was added to the 'implementation support' code.

Contrastively, some codes that were based on indicators were not useful during the coding of the documents, because the documents did not provide any information that could be marked by these codes, for example, discussion and reflection. These indicators were needed to reflect on the way the problem and the goal of the network were constituted, but were not applicable in this regard. Since these indicators were applicable to the CoM constitution in general, the codes are used this way. Finally, the rule appropriateness is not used during the coding of the documents, because this needs to be reflected on by the respondents instead of the researcher.

The transcripts of the interviews are also coded but not on specific indicators. The questions were based on the indicators of the theoretical concepts which were used as the labels for the answers of the respondents. These labels were applied to the transcripts in ATLAS.ti to have an overview of the answers from the respondents. This simplified the comparison between the respondents from the municipalities.

Table 3

*Operationalization of the Network Constitution*

	Dimension	Characteristic	Indicator
Constitution of the TMN to connect the local to the global level	GXG	- Initial reflection	- Participants have the opportunity to reflect on the aim of the network
		- Discussion among stakeholders	- Participants discuss the aim of the network
		- Shared perception among stakeholders	- The participants have a similar aim at the beginning of the collaboration
		- Open-ended goals	- The TMN facilitate a common problem definition
		- Local	- The goal of the network is openly formulated
		Implementation	- Sub national governments are responsible for policy implementation
		- Continuous feedback from the local level	- Participants share their experiences within the network
		- Reporting	- Participants write and communicate about their progress

		- Monitoring	- The participants follow the progress of other participants
		- Peer Reviews	- Participants have to review each other's progress towards the goals
		- Goal revision	- Goals are revised when needed
		- Evaluation	- Results of the network are periodically evaluated
			- Results of the network are routinely evaluated
Constitution in order to facilitate the collaborative network processes	Participatory	- Many actors	- Number of actors that is involved in the network
	Inclusiveness	- Both state and non-state actors are included in the network	- The variety of actors that are part of the network
	Forum	- The network is not comparable to other networks	- The characteristics of the network are not similar to those of another network in the same geographical area
	Exclusiveness	- The network has desirable aspects	- The network has a unique selling-point

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Clear Ground rules

- The network is based on rules

- These rules are understandable for all participants

- The network has a document in which the rules of the network are described

- The rules are formulated in a sound way

---

Transparency

- The network has an open way of communication

- Documents with regard to the network can be consulted

- The network actively communicates about its progress

- The documents with regard to the network are available to study

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Table 4

*Operationalization of Facilitative Leadership*

Dimension	Characteristic	Indicator	Question
Facilitative Leadership	The leader promotes broad and active participation	Promotion	- Does the CoM promote local governments to join the network?
		Instruments	- How is this promotion conducted?
		Target group	- What is the target group for this promotion?
	The leader ensures broad based influence and control	Role perception	- How would you describe the role of the CoM with regard to the network participants?
		Overview	- How does the CoM has an overview of the collaboration between the local governments?
		Interference	- Does the CoM interfere in the collaborative process if needed?
	The leader facilitates productive group dynamics	Interaction	- How does the CoM stimulates the interaction amongst the participating local governments?

The leader aims to extend the scope of the process	Network expansion	- Does the CoM aims an extending of the network? - What would the role of CoM in this process?
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Table 5

*Operationalization of the collaborative network processes*

Dimension	Characteristic	Indicator	Question
(Face-to-Face) Communication	- The local governments meet in person	Meetings	- In what ways do you communicate with other local governments? - Do you often meet fellow participating local governments in person?
	- There is a continuous dialogue between the participants in the network	Dialogue	- How often do you communicate with other local governments - If you communicate with other local governments, what is this communication about?
	- Local governments share their local experiments	Sharing experience	- Do you share local experiments from your local government during this communication?

Trust building	- Local government can rely on the other participants in the collaborative process	Similar effort Continuation	- To what extend do you think other local governments put a similar effort in the CoM? - To what extend do you think that other local governments will remain in the CoM?
Reputation	- Local governments are concerned about the opinion other participants in the process have about them - The opinion of other local governments has an impact on the way a local government acts in the collaborative process.	Role position Perception of others Opinion influence	- How do you think other local governments will perceive your role in the CoM? - Do you think it is important for your organization to be positively perceived by other local governments? - Would you make different decisions if this would improve the perception other local governments have about your organization?
Reciprocity	- Local governments response positive if other	Positive response	- What would be the response of your local government if more local governments in the Netherlands would participate in CoM?

	stakeholders would do the same		
	- Local governments respond negative if other stakeholders would do the same	Negative response	- What would your local government do if other local governments keep failing in reaching the commitments that have agreed on?
Commitment to the process	- Mutual recognition of interdependence	Dependency	- To what extend do you think you are depending on the other local governments in the CoM in finding climate change solutions?
	- Shared ownership of the process	Responsibility	- Do you think that all local governments feel equally responsible for the CoM and its success?
	- Openness to explore mutual gains	Mutual benefits	- Would your organization be willing to explore benefits that are applicable to other local governments?
Shared understanding	- Local governments have a common definition of the problem	Problem definition	- How would you define the problem that the CoM aims to tackle?



## 4.5 Validity and reliability

The final part of the methodological framework will reflect on the validity and the reliability of this thesis based on the methodological decisions that have been made.

### 4.5.1 Validity

*Internal validity* is high when the objectives in the research have been researched in the best possible way (Vennix, 2011, p. 184). The operationalization of the theoretical concepts highly influences the validity of the research findings. A close operationalization of the universal theoretical concepts into measurable dimensions, characteristics, and indicators results in a high level of internal validity (Adcock & Collier, 2001). The theoretical concepts of the network constitution and the collaborative network processes are formulated based on extended literature review. Therefore, it is expected that these concepts will cover the general perception that exists in theory and also suit the current academic debate on TMNs. During the operationalization, the different theoretical concepts have been further specified. Finally, the indicators are included in the interview guide and the codes for the content analysis.

The ability to generalize the research findings determines the level of *external validity* (Bleijenbergh, 2015, p. 111). In general, qualitative research has less external validity than quantitative research. Especially with the theory-testing process-tracing method, there is ambiguity about the generalization of the results to the entire population of the causal mechanisms that are found in individual cases (Bennett, 2009). The functioning of the TMN might be similar in countries that have many overlapping characteristics. However, empirical testing should prove these similarities, because the institutional setting differs per country which makes a comparison complex (Scharpf, 1997). Nonetheless, the research findings with regard to the network constitution and its connecting role between local response capacity to the global climate change solution can be generalized because the constitutional conditions are similar for the entire network.

#### 4.5.2 Reliability

Reliability is related to random defects in the measurements during research (Boeije & Hart, 2009). In other words, high reliability entails that the outcomes are similar if another researcher repeats the research (Vennix, 2011, p. 186). Qualitative research is often less reliable than quantitative research because the number of respondents is low. However, the aim of this thesis is to gain in-depth knowledge of a small-N case study, which is hard to derive from large-N research. Furthermore, the selection of the respondents increases the reliability, because they are selected based on their experience and position in the CoM. All of them are related to the CoM and form the connection between the TMN and the local government. Moreover, the respondents cover a high number of the total population of signatories in the Netherlands.

The content analysis in combination with the semi-structured interviews also increases the reliability, because data about the CoM in the Netherlands is derived from multiple perspectives. In addition, both methods used coding by ATLAS.ti which increases reliability, as arbitrary decisions by the researcher are limited. However, the interpretation of the researcher will still influence interpretation of the data. The inter-rater reliability will therefore not be optimal (Boeije, 2014, p. 152).

#### 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter reflected on the methodological decisions that have been made throughout this thesis. The qualitative multiple case study has been discussed, including methods that are used to collect the required data in a structured way. Furthermore, the case selection has been clarified and the theoretical concepts are operationalized into indicators for the data collection. The data collection will be conducted through content analysis and semi-structured interviews. Finally, the validity and the reliability of this thesis has been reflected on. The next chapter will continue with the elaboration on the CoM and provides insight in the constitution of this TMN.

## 5. The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

This chapter starts with a historical overview of the evolution of the CoM, followed by a description of the CoM Community and its signatories. Next, the different steps of integration into the CoM and the distribution of the signatories per country are described. These aspects are used to analyze if the CoM meets the conditions of GXG. This is the first level of the analysis of the CoM and provides an answer to the sub question: *How does the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy function?*

### 5.1 Evolution of the CoM

In 2008, the Covenant of Mayors was launched as an initiative of the European Commission [EC] with the goal of a CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction of 20% by its signatories in 2020 (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017h, 2017i). Many local governments joined the initiative, which created an incentive for the EU to launch an eastern partnership (Joint Research Centre, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017i). The network continued to grow within Europe, but also expanded beyond the European borders with the inclusion of the ‘Cleaner Energy-Saving Mediterranean Cities’ project (Joint Research Centre, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017i).

In 2014, the Mayors Adapt program was initiated by the EC as a parallel initiative to the Covenant of Mayors (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017a, 2017i). Where the former Covenant only focused on climate change mitigation, the Mayors Adapt program is also focused on adaptation. Since the beginning of 2015, both programs have been integrated into the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy with the adoption of the goal of 40% CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction in 2030 (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017h, 2017i). Signatories of this Covenant endorse a shared vision for 2050: ‘accelerating the decarbonization of their territories, strengthening their capacity to adapt to unavoidable climate change impact, and allowing their citizens to access secure, sustainable and affordable energy’ (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013).

The goal of the CoM is not formulated in an open-ended way, but the CoM reflects on this by arguing that it is a medium-term instrument that should contribute to long term goals in the future (Joint Reseach Center, 2015). The CoM aims to accomplish their goal by going beyond the political mandate and provide solutions to the short term perspective of local politicians (The Covenant of Mayors, n.d).

Moreover, the CoM acknowledges that some participants are more ambitious than the CoM goal. These high ambitions show the political commitment of these participants and stress the importance of local climate response to the local stakeholders (European Commission, 2010; Joint Reseach Center, 2015).

Also, in 2015 the first ambitions were raised about the expansion of the network on the global level (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017i). This resulted in the launch of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the beginning of 2017 (Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, n.d.). To sum up, the evolvement of the CoM is presented in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Evolution of the CoM network (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017h)

The CoM argues that their success is based on the multi-level governance approach where actors from different levels are engaged in a common territory with a similar aim (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013; Joint Reseach Center, 2015). The European institutions view this as an exceptional model in which various governments cooperate to create and implement policies (Joint Reseach Center, 2015).

The CoM is one of the largest initiatives based on the inhabitants that are covered by it (Joint Reseach Center, 2015). Nevertheless, the CoM stresses that its participants should partake in other initiatives as well to gain other skills and resources. Eventually, this could contribute to the goals of the CoM, because of the synergies between other networks. Yet this might also lead to less obvious successes of the CoM (Joint Reseach Center, 2015).

## 5.2 The Covenant Community

The Covenant Community consists of several actors. The actors involved are related to each other, yet take up different positions in the network. First of all, the signatories are the local authorities that sign the CoM. Other governmental levels such as provinces, regions, ministries, national energy agencies, metropolitan areas and groupings of local authorities are also able to join the CoM as a signatory. They are the Covenant Coordinators and commit to the promotion of the network. Also, they assist the signatories in the territorial region, with the exchange of knowledge, and the reporting and monitoring requirements (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017c).

Networks and associations of local authorities, and local and regional energy agencies can also participate in the CoM and are the Covenant Supporters (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017b). Their responsibilities are comparable with those of the Covenant Coordinators and are described in the guidelines for Covenant Territorial and National Coordinators, and the guidelines for Covenant Supporters (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013; The Covenant of Mayors, 2012; The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Centre, 2014)

The associated partners are organizations such as NGO's, and industrial and financial associations. They can participate in the CoM, yet their commitment only involves the sharing of information and the appointment of a contact person (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017d). Finally, the Covenant Community contains academia who do not have an official position, but mainly follow the developments within the network and support this with their research. An overview of the actors in the Covenant Community is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Overview Covenant Actors (Based on The Covenant of Mayors, 2017e)*

Covenant Actors	Number
Signatories	7713
Coordinators	206
Supporters	108
Associated Partners	42
Local and Regional Energy Agencies	66
Academia	76

The Covenant Community is led by the CoM board consisting of seven mayors and local elected representatives who foster the dialogue between the signatories of the European Covenant Community and the EU institutions (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017g). The EU institutions that are mainly involved are the EC, the Joint Research Center [JRC] of the EC and the European Committee of the Regions (The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). On a daily basis, the CoMO is responsible for the initiative in Europe and consists of delegates from several local and regional network authorities including CA, Energy-Cities, Euro-cities, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and the Environment, and Local Governments for Sustainability.

The CoMO created a website, which is partly available in thirty-five languages, to promote the network and provide general and technical information for the participants (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013). The information that is available in multiple languages includes general presentations of the CoM, different commitments, information about the adhesion process, the frequently asked questions, and some general documents (The Covenant of Mayors, 2012). On this website, participating local governments are also able to create an online profile which can be used to exchange information about the local climate action of the participant, providing visibility to the commitment of the organization, and showcasing individual efforts (The Covenant of Mayors, 2012).

The CoM encourage participants to peer-exchange their experiences, but the network does not allow for peer-review among the signatories (The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). Furthermore, the CoMO and the aligned institutions such as the JRC, can be contacted in case of interest in the CoM network (The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Centre, 2014). From the JRC, the participants can also get support during the draft of the SECAP, the determination of the used

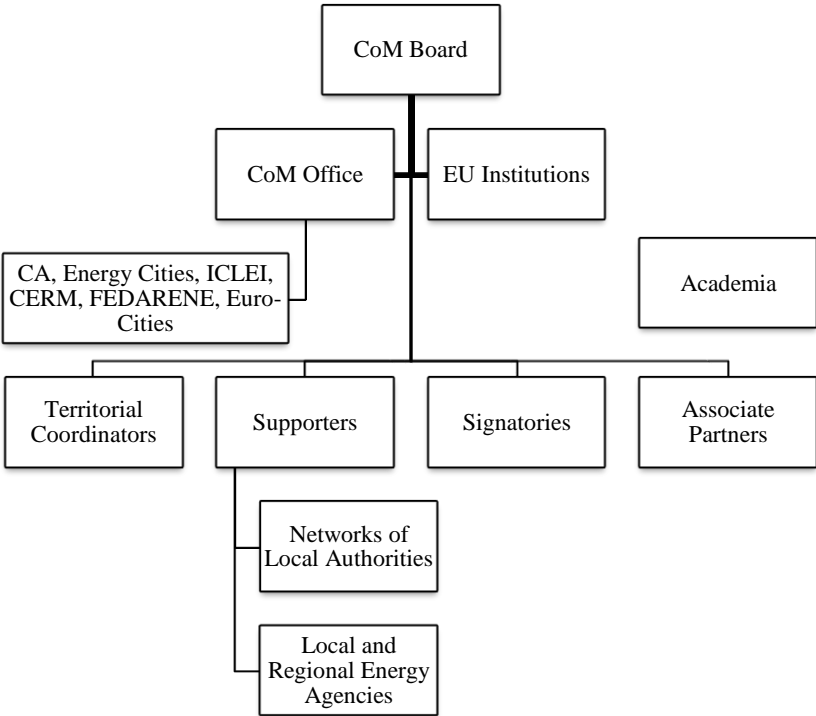


Figure 7 Structure of the CoM Community

data sources, and emission inventories. The website, the account of participants, and the contact opportunities increase the transparency of the CoM network. The structure of the CoM Community is presented in Figure 7.

### 5.3 Signatories

Signatories of the CoM make a strong commitment on climate and energy objectives that goes beyond the European ambition. The CoM is open to local authorities of any size that have elected representatives, that are constituted in a democratic manner, and are also not depending on the state for local climate and energy policy implementation (The Covenant of Mayors, 2016). Different kinds of local authorities are encouraged to participate, ranging from small, middle, and large size municipalities, groups of neighboring local authorities, urban agglomerations, to regional authorities (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013; The Covenant of Mayors, n.d).

Any kind of local government that is willing to participate in the CoM should enhance an inclusive approach by involving other actors such as the private sector, financial institutions, the civil society, and academia (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013; The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). The mobilization of the civil society is a formal commitment for those who sign the CoM (European Commission, 2010). This thesis is focused on the participating small and middle, and large size municipalities, since most of the signatories in the Netherlands are part of this group. Therefore, the process of becoming a member will only be described for municipalities in this section.

For municipalities, the first step in becoming a member of the CoM Community is the preparation phase including a Baseline Emission Inventory [BEI] and a Climate Change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment [RVA].

After the preparation, the municipal council has to agree on a SECAP. The creation of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan [SECAP]<sup>2</sup> and its approval by the CoM is the second step to become a member of the CoM Community. During the draft of the SECAP, the participants are able to routinely discuss the development of the SECAP and evaluate its progress with the JRC (The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Centre, 2014). Furthermore, the feedback of the JRC after validating the SECAP can be discussed in phone- or videoconferences (The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Centre, 2014). Once the SECAP is completed, it needs to be uploaded to the online submission system. This can be done in the national language. In addition, the online SECAP template needs to be completed. In this template the results of the BEI and the RVA are summarized (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017m).

The CoM provides guidelines for a SECAP including the submission, implementation, and reporting and monitoring requirements (European Commission, 2010; Joint Research Centre, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017l, n.d; The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Center, 2016; The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Research Centre, 2014). Similar guidelines are provided for the municipalities that hand in a Joint SECAP (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017k). The Joint SECAP was introduced for smaller municipalities who cooperate beyond the administrative borders in order to create high-level local climate action impact (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017k).

The guidelines for these SECAPs have been created in cooperation with many experts from municipalities, regional authorities, city networks, and private companies (European Commission, 2010). While these guidelines direct the signatories to the goal of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction,

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<sup>2</sup> The SECAP replaced the former SEAP. While most Dutch municipalities still have a SEAP, the new term will be used throughout this thesis.

the SECAP is also used for more open-ended goals. For instance as a communication tool towards other stakeholders, a marketing tool, and finally as a tool to contribute to public awareness (European Commission, 2010; The Covenant of Mayors, 2012).

The implementation of the SECAP is led to the local level including a high level of discretionary space. The SECAPs have a flexible structure that should enable local governments to implement the measurements they prefer, while the only binding factor remains the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction (Joint Research Centre, 2015). The CoM facilitates this process by providing a step-by-step roadmap (The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). This approach was chosen, because the CoM observes that local authorities are able to identify the best way to implement the CoM and are aware of the way it can be complementary to local initiatives in an effective manner (European Commission, 2010; Joint Reseach Center, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2012). By using this approach, the initiative should not be perceived as ‘from Brussels’ but as a way to launch or reinforce local initiatives on sustainable energy (The Covenant of Mayors, 2012).

While the lower level is responsible for the implementation, the CoMO distinguished three additional aspects that contribute to the success of the local implementation of the SECAP: human behavior, communication, and support. Firstly, human actions will determine the implementation of the SECAP, because ‘if people are given responsibility, encouragement, resources and are motivated, things will happen’ (European Commission, 2010).

Also, the CoM argues that the internal as well as the external communication is essential during the implementation (European Commission, 2010). Finally, local governments should have the capacity to implement the SECAP which requires financial as well as knowledge support. This is provided through strategic guidance, grants, and technical assistance by the CoM (Bossio & Accorigi, 2013; Joint Reseach Center, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2012, n.d).

The final step to become a member of the Covenant Community is reporting and monitoring progress. Reporting and monitoring are important facets of the CoM constitution since reluctance could result in suspension of the initiative (European Commission, 2010; The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). Because of the close monitoring, the CoM is more than just a political statement (Joint Reseach Center, 2015). Signatories have to hand in a monitoring report every two years in order to create an assessment of its progress regarding the CoM objectives (Joint Research Centre, 2015). The CoM argues that monitoring already entered a crucial phase, because indicators have to be found that can monitor the SECAP progress in a sound way (Joint Reseach Center, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017j, 2017l).

In order to report on the progress of the SECAP by the local authorities, the CoM developed a template for monitoring data. The evaluation of the monitoring data results into priorities of action, the determination of the impact, and the progress of the measurements towards the objectives of the CoM (European Commission, 2010). Monitoring should provide insight in the energy consumption, the vulnerability of the local government, the adaptation actions, and the priorities of the local climate action agenda (European Commission, 2010; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017l).

Finally, monitoring is used to identify the best practices in the CoM Community that are, for instance, used for the Benchmarks of Excellence (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017l; The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Reseach Center, 2016). Once the monitoring data is available, the local governments should adapt in an accurate way in order to improve their efforts to reach the objectives of the CoM (European Commission, 2010).

As described, the Joint Research Center of the EC is in charge of the reporting and the monitoring of the signatories (Joint Reseach Center, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017n) . However, the monitoring data should also be communicated to the political leadership in the

local government in order to create a continuous learning cycle: Plan, Do, Check, Act (European Commission, 2010). After these three steps, a local authority has become a fully integrated member of the CoM.

The steps to integrate in the CoM are continuously revised by the CoMO. The CoM aims at being an initiative that is ever-improving by including the feedback outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of the community into the processes of the CoM (Bossio & Accorrigi, 2013; The Covenant of Mayors, n.d). The SECAPs and the monitoring data are the main evaluation target for the CoM since these are part of the quality control of the Covenant (The Covenant of Mayors, n.d).

Based on the evaluation, the CoM allows for revision in two ways: 1) on the level of individual signatories and 2) on the structure of the CoM itself. Starting with the individual level, the CoM allows for the revision of the SECAP if the JRC rejected the SECAP, in case the SECAP changes significantly, or a new plan has been developed on the local level. (The Covenant of Mayors & Joint Reseach Center, 2016). Moreover, the structure of the CoM may also be revised. A first explicit revision that was made by the CoM, with the possibility to create a Joint SECAP (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017k).

#### 5.4 Signatory distribution and integration

The number of signatories of the CoM is increasing for many years (see Figure 8) (The Covenant of Mayors, 2017e). The signatories are mainly small and medium size municipalities which are located in 57 countries. However, the majority of the inhabitants that are represented in the CoM belong to cities with large urban centers and global cities with over 250000 inhabitants (See Figure 9) (Joint Research Centre, 2015). The CoM tries to increase the inclusion of smaller municipalities by the provision of external support for the draft of the

SECAP or the possibility to hand in a Joint SECAP, which puts less pressure on the local administrative capacity (Joint Reseach Center, 2015; The Covenant of Mayors, 2017k).

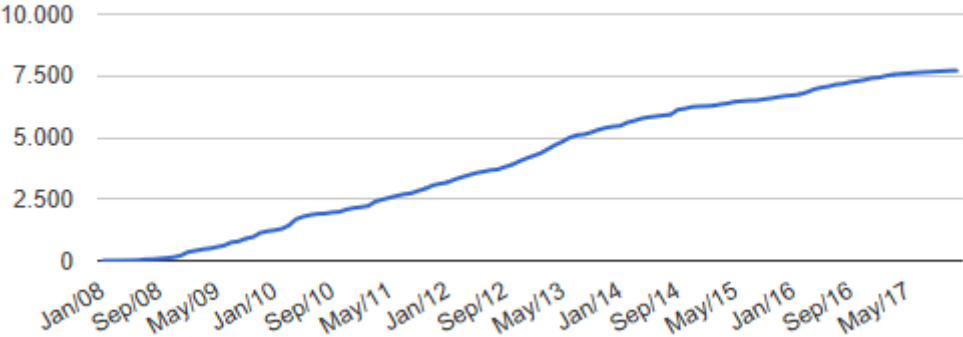


Figure 8 Number of signatories over time (Based on The Covenant of Mayors, 2017e)

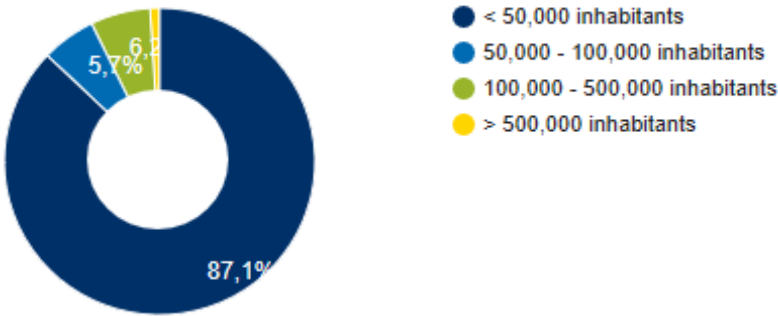


Figure 9 Signatories Profile (Based on The Covenant of Mayors, 2017e)

The number of signatories is unequally distributed over the countries, since most of the signatories are located in the Southern part of Europe (Joint Research Centre, 2015). Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece combined have 6688 signatories, which amounts to 86,7% of all signatories (see Appendix V). The signatory municipalities cover at least 58% of the inhabitants of those countries. This contrasts to the Netherlands, where the twenty-four signatories only cover 26% of the population. The dedicated Covenant Territorial Supporters are the main reason for this inequality according to the CoM (Joint Research Centre, 2015).

Besides the limited number of participating municipalities, the signatories in the Netherlands are also less integrated in the CoM in comparison to signatories of other countries. For instance, the percentage of signatories with a submitted SECAP (the second step of integration) is 90% in the Netherlands, which results in the thirtieth position compared to the integration of signatories in other countries. The percentage of signatories that handed in the monitoring report (the final step of integration) is only 14% in the Netherlands. This results in a twenty-third position in comparison to the signatories in other countries. Table 7 provides an overview of the level of integration of the Dutch municipalities in contrast to the signatories of other countries.

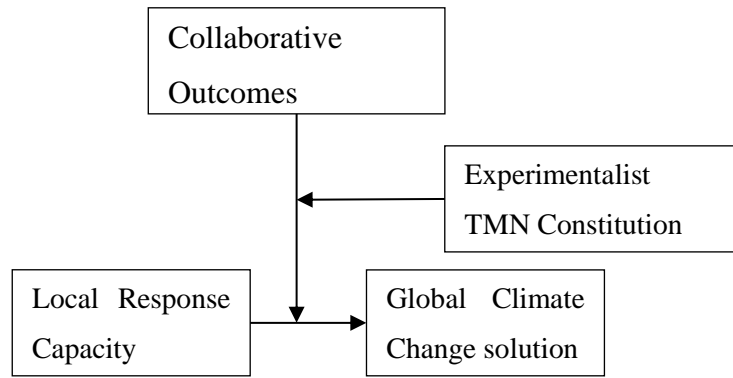
Table 7

*Integration of Dutch signatories*

Signatory details	Netherlands	%	Position of the Netherlands (out of 53)
Signatories	24		24
Inhabitants	4.269.268	26	27
Submitted SECAPs	19	90%	30
Submitted Monitoring reports	3	14%	23

### 5.5 The CoM and GXG

All the aspects of the CoM constitution that have been described in the previous sections are the input for the analysis of the CoM constitution based on the conditions of GXG in order to understand if this TMN is able to connect the local response capacity to the global climate change solution (see Figure 10).



*Figure 10* The conditions of GXG in the CoM constitution

The first two-partite condition of GXG is the initial reflection and discussion among stakeholders with the shared perception of a common problem. The evolvement of the CoM shows that the first part of this condition is not present. The initiation of the platform was located at the EC and the content-analysis does not show deliberation with other stakeholders. The second part, however, is present in the CoM. The stakeholders are all part of nation states that have recognized the problem definition of climate change in multiple international agreements such as the UNFCCC in 1992, the Kyoto Protocol in 2007, and the PA in 2015. Because the CoM adopted a similar problem definition, the shared perception of a common problem can be assumed.

The second condition is the articulation of the framework with open-ended goals. The vision of the CoM has been not formulated in an open-ended way because of the emphasis on the percentages of CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction. However, the CoM also has goals that are formulated in an open manner. For instance, the acceleration of the transition in energy and the availability of affordable energy. Also, the aim to connect local governments and exchange knowledge are formulated in an open-ended manner. Therefore, the analysis of the CoM constitution shows that the second condition of GXG is partially met.

The third condition is the responsibility to implement these goals at the local level. This condition is applicable to the constitution of the CoM. The SECAPs are the main instrument of the CoM and are created and implemented by the signatories who are all part of the 'lower-level'. The local governments are able to set their own ambitions, based on the framework of the CoM. They are also able to choose the instruments they prefer to implement the measurements that are needed to reach the ambitions that have been set.

The fourth condition of GXG is the continuous feedback from the local level, the reporting and monitoring, and a mechanism of peer-review. The reporting already starts with the draft of the BEI and the RVA in the preparation phase. The reporting continues with the draft of the SECAP in the second step of integration in the CoM network. Finally, the monitoring is part of the third step of integration in the CoM network with the conduction of the monitoring reports. Only the peer-review is not part of the CoM, since the evaluation of these reporting and monitoring data takes place between local governments and the JRC.

The final condition is the evaluation and revision of the goals and practices. This condition is also present in the CoM, because of the evaluation practices of the CoMO and the JRC. They revise the rules for the local implementation and the structure of the CoM network itself.

## 5.6 Conclusion

The CoM is a network that has evolved over many years. The CoM community consists of many different stakeholders and welcomes new signatories on a daily basis. Those signatories integrate into the network through different steps: preparation, the draft and approval of the SECAP, and the monitoring.

The network constitution of the CoM shows that this TMN is able to connect the local response capacity of its signatories and the global climate change solution, because three out of the five

conditions of GXG are present, and two conditions are partially met. The ability of the network to fulfill this connection role makes the CoM a network with a lot of potential in theory.

However, Dutch municipalities are not very well-integrated while there are various incentives for municipalities to be involved in TMN. Therefore, chapter 6 will continue with an analysis of the perception of Dutch municipalities on the network constitution of, and the collaborative network processes in, the CoM in order to understand the way this network functions in the Netherlands.

## 6. The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the Netherlands

In this chapter, the following sub question is answered: *Why is the participation of the signatories in the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy limited in the Netherlands?* Sections 6.1 and 6.2 set off this explanation by describing the collaborative network processes of the CoM in the Netherlands. These network processes are influenced by the institutional design of the network which is examined in section 6.3. The theoretical connection that is applied to the CoM in the Netherlands in this chapter, is presented in Figure 11.

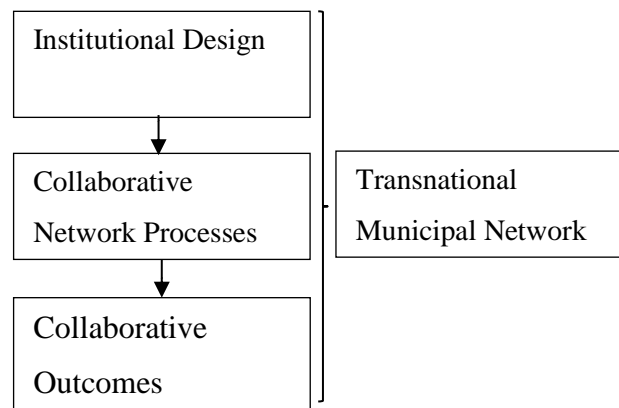


Figure 11 Analysing the CoM in the Netherlands

### 6.1 Incentives to participate

The initiative to join the CoM can be put forward by various parts of the municipality. In the first place, the Mayor or the Aldermen can put this initiative forward. This was the case in four municipalities in the Netherlands (R2; R4; R13; R14, personal communication, 2017). In these municipalities, personal incentives lead them to act on sustainability or a general interest was triggered by the network. (R2; R9, personal communication, 2017). In other municipalities the initiative was put forward by civil servants within the organization (R5; R7; R8; R9; R12; R15, personal communication, 2017). The incentives to participate vary among the signatories, but in general, three types of incentives can be distinguished

First, signatories join the CoM because of a *statement incentive*. They want to ensure that the municipality is part of the ‘pioneers’ in the climate change debate (R4; R5; R6; R8; R9; R12; R13; R15, personal communication, 2017). By joining the CoM, the municipality has the opportunity to express positively towards the climate change issue, which was not widely possible when the initiative was launched. Finally, the participation in the CoM provides the opportunity to address and express the important position of municipalities in the climate change debate (R8, personal communication, 2017). One of the respondents with this incentive argued: ‘The initial incentive to sign was the fact that it was one of the few opportunities to express the municipal position towards the climate goals’ (R3, personal communication, 2017).

Second, signatories can have a *European incentive*. Some municipalities were motivated to participate in the CoM because this increases the opportunity to receive European funding, since being a signatory of the CoM is mandatory for some of the European funding instruments (R3; R5, personal communication, 2017). Besides the financial aspect on the European level, municipalities also want to participate because of the cooperation with other European municipalities and institutions (R1; R2; R6; R14, personal communication, 2017). A respondent with a European incentive stated: ‘We heard about the CoM and noticed that it fit our local goals and that it could increase our impact on the European level, and the projects and cooperations that are present there’ (R1, personal communication, 2017).

Finally, municipalities want to participate in the CoM based on an *organizational incentive*. Municipalities of this kind want to be part of the CoM because this will allow them to exchange knowledge with other signatories (R5; R7; R15, personal communication, 2017). Also, they want to use the CoM to receive direction in local climate action or the municipalities want to participate in the network because it can create connections and collaborations (R3; R4; R10, personal communication, 2017). R4 (personal communication, 2017) stated in this regard: ‘For

me it was a tool to connect our specific tasks of our local climate policy to the CoM goals [...]. I used the CoM back then to have a starting point’.

Despite the distinction between the incentives to participate, many municipalities had multiple, overlapping incentives to enter the CoM community. The incentive to participate led to different steps of integration among signatories in the CoM Community (See Appendix IV). Thereby, they entered the collaborative network processes of the CoM.

## 6.2 Collaborative network processes

The conditions of the collaborative network processes that have been distinguished in the theoretical chapters are applied to the signatories in the Netherlands. The respondents provided insights in the way the network functions on each of these conditions which will be discussed individually in the following sections.

### 6.2.1 Shared understanding

Dutch signatories have a shared understanding about the problem that the CoM aims to tackle and the mission it has formulated. In general, the municipalities in the Netherlands address that the CoM aims at tackling climate change in order to meet the PA (R1; R2; R4; R6; R7; R9; R10; R11; R13, personal communication, 2017).

The municipalities use various concepts to describe the way this should be accomplished, such as energy neutral environment, energy transition, and CO2 neutrality. For instance, R5 (personal communication, 2017) reasons: ‘I believe they want to show what cities are already doing by exchanging knowledge to support the energy transition on the local level’. Finding the instruments to reach this aim remains complex, because there are local governments that do not feel the urgency to act on climate change (R7, personal communication, 2017). Other local governments, who do experience the urgency, might lack information and knowledge to act or

do not have the ability to connect to other local governments to find solutions together (R4; R7; R15, personal communication, 2017).

Municipalities highlight that the CoM aims at the activation and the speeding up of the energy transition process on the local level through the connections that are created (R2; R4; R7; R8; R9; R12; R13; R15, personal communication, 2017). They agree that the CoM does this in a structured way by including several stakeholders and creating connections between signatories to exchange knowledge. Two municipalities stress that the activities in the network should be supported by the national government (R5; R7, personal communication, 2017).

Besides the shared understanding about the aim and the mission of the CoM, the priorities of the CoM and those of the municipalities in climate policies, are also aligned. None of the respondents stated that the priorities of their municipality and the CoM are contradictory (R1; R2; R3; R4; R5; R6; R7; R8; R9; R12; R13; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017).

As mentioned, the priority of signatories in the Netherlands is the energy transformation that should lead up to an energy neutral environment. Especially the transition to natural gas is one of the main focus points of the municipalities (R3; R5; R10, personal communication, 2017). The timeframe in which this has to be accomplished varies among the signatories, yet their target is often more ambitious than the CoM targets. For these signatories, the discrepancy between the ambition of the CoM and the local ambitions makes the CoM less relevant (R4; R7, personal communication, 2017). One of these signatories argues:

‘We were already working on the climate issue, so what the CoM aims for, is something we are already doing. We had some national guidelines and things going on. I think that is why the CoM is less applicable to the case of the Netherlands. For many people it does not have an added value’. (R4, personal communication, 2017)

The presence of the shared understanding and the awareness about this shared understanding, however, are two different things. Municipalities assume that their local climate priorities are compatible to the priorities of the CoM, but often state that they are not enough aware of the CoM priorities to check if their priorities are compatible to the priorities of the CoM (R2; R3; R5; R6; R7; R8; R12, personal communication, 2017).

The same holds for the compatibility of the municipal local climate priorities to those of other signatories in the network. Most of the signatories argue that these priorities are highly compatible (R2; R3; R5; R9; R12; R13, personal communication, 2017). However, three of the municipalities are not aware of the local climate priorities of others (R3; R7; R8 personal communication, 2017). This is influenced by a second condition of the collaborative network process: communication.

#### 6.2.2 Communication

The internal as well as external communication about the CoM is limited among Dutch signatories. Internal communication is the communication within the municipal organization with regard to the CoM. In most of the municipalities this communication is limited, because there is only one civil servant who is responsible for the CoM. Only two respondents from the municipalities state that they have a fellow colleague of the sustainability department (R6; R10, personal communication, 2017).

Four respondents cooperate with colleagues from the European and international affairs departments for the CoM (R5; R8; R9; R14, personal communication, 2017). Within the signatory municipalities, these fellow colleagues are involved in a passive way. For instance, when a request for European subsidy is made and that colleague needs to know if the municipality is a member of the CoM (R14, personal communication, 2017). For instance, R9 (personal communication, 2017) states about this cooperation: ‘I have one colleague at

international affairs. Not related to the content but just to ensure that they know we are, and remain, a signatory’.

The second way of communication is external communication. Most of the municipalities communicate with other municipalities in the Netherlands, but not particularly about or because of the CoM (R5; R7; R8; R10; R11; R12; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017). Several years ago, the municipalities communicated more about the CoM. Meetings were organized by the national coordinator about the monitoring of the CoM which were attended by some of the municipalities (R1; R2; R8, personal communication, 2017).

Others met fellow signatories in the NET-COM, a project that was initiated by Klimaatverbond Nederland [KVN], in which signatories were actively connected (R3; R12, personal communication, 2017). After these initiatives, the signatories did not meet again to discuss the CoM. Yet, the municipality that is part of the regional signatory argues that they meet the fellow signatories in the region on a regular basis (R10, personal communication, 2017).

Finally, the municipalities are also able to communicate beyond the borders of the Netherlands. Some of the municipalities went to meetings in Brussels and met European signatories of the CoM there (R4; R12; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017). Besides the meetings, the CoMO facilitates the external communication beyond the borders with tools for signatories in order to create awareness about the best practices that lead to effective local climate action (European Commission, 2010). Only few municipalities, however, shared their experience in the network (R8; R12; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017). The other municipalities shared their experiences outside of the CoM network.

In general, the signatories in the Netherlands argue that communication and the sharing of experiences takes place all the time, but not with regard to the CoM in particular (R5; R8; R10;

R13; R15, personal communication, 2017). The lack of communication shows that the collaborative network processes in the Netherlands hardly exist

### 6.2.3 Trust, reciprocity and reputation

This section elaborates on the level of trust, reputation, and reciprocal behavior in the CoM. The level of trust depends, in the first place, on the equal involvement of the signatory in comparison to other signatories. Some of the municipalities were not able to respond to this question due to the lack of communication in the network (R6, personal communication, 2017). Others argue that they do not know about the other signatories because they are generally rather passive members (R4; R8; R9; R10; R12; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017).

R4 (personal communication, 2017) says about this passive role: ‘I think we are definitely involved in it, but it depends on the effort you want to put into it yourself. The opportunity is there, it is possible, but it is just a matter of the willingness to invest energy into it’. In conclusion it can be stated that the signatories in the Netherlands are equally involved, but this involvement is passive. Therefore, this is the first indicator that shows the low level of trust among the signatories in the Netherlands.

The second indicator, that determines trust, is based on the believe of signatories that fellow signatories remain member of the CoM. Again, most of the signatories are not aware of this because of the passive role they have in the CoM (R2; R3; R4; R6; R7; R8; R14, personal communication, 2017). Some municipalities address that they understand that municipalities consider a withdrawal from the CoM. Based on their own experience, they address that, especially the smaller municipalities, will face difficulties in meeting the CoM criteria since the administrative burden is high and the advantages are limited (R7; R7; R10, personal communication, 2017). Therefore, they would not be surprised if those municipalities would reconsider their participation in the network.

Together, the limited awareness about the equal involvement in the network and the low or limited awareness about the believe that signatories remain member of the CoM, results in a low level of trust in the collaborative network process.

The second aspect is reciprocal behavior of signatories. Most of the respondents argue that they would respond positively, but in a passive way, when new signatories in the Netherlands join the CoM (R2; R4; R6; R7; R8; R9; R12, personal communication, 2017). The fact that signatories respond positively towards the positive behavior of other signatories shows the presence of reciprocal behavior. Other municipalities, however, are not aware of the fact that new signatories join the initiative or are not opinionated in that matter (R6; R10, personal communication, 2017).

Reciprocal behavior, based on negative behavior of other signatories, is less present. Municipalities do not know if other municipalities meet the requirements of the CoM, because they are passive in the network and do not communicate with other signatories (R6, personal communication, 2017). Again, municipalities understand why other municipalities do not meet the CoM requirements because they know the complexity of the network from their own experience (R2; R8; R9, personal communication, 2017). Because of this, they would not react negatively towards this negative behavior of the other signatories.

The municipality that is part of the Joint SECAP has a different position with regard to reciprocal behavior, because they are influenced by the position and efforts of other municipalities. Therefore, this signatory will act more active if other municipalities within the Joint SECAP are reluctant (R10, personal communication, 2017).

The final aspect is the reputation of the signatories in the network. The position of the signatories in the network is the first step to determine the influence of reputation in the collaborative network processes. If the municipalities reflect on their position in the CoM, most

of them agree that their role is rather passive (R4; R10, R9; R11; R12; R15, personal communication, 2017), or that they do not know what their position is (R3; R6; R8, personal communication, 2017). One of respondents argues: ‘There is little ambassadorship. That is caused by the CoM, because it hardly has benefits’ (R4, personal communication, 2017). Again, only the municipality that is part of the regional cooperation within the CoM expresses that the municipality is positively known for its position in the network (R10, personal communication, 2017).

Despite the passive position of the municipalities, various municipalities state that their reputation in the network matters (R7; R8; R10; R11; R12; R15, personal communication, 2017). Other municipalities argue that their reputation matters in other networks, but not necessarily in the CoM network (R2; R3; R9; R14, personal communication, 2017). The limited importance of the reputation in the network is also reflected by the fact that none of the Dutch signatories would make different decisions in order to influence their reputation in the network. Only one municipalities addressed that different decisions could be taken, but that those will always have to fit the individual goals and framework that has been set (R2, personal communication, 2017).

The combination between the low level of trust, limited reciprocal behavior, and the limited importance of the reputation of the signatories of the CoM, contributes to less participation of the signatories in the collaborative network processes of the CoM in the Netherlands.

#### 6.2.4 Commitment

Consequently, the level of commitment of the signatories is also low. On the positive side, many respondents argued that they would be willing to share successful mitigation and adaptation solutions that could be used by the other participants in the network for free (R2; R5; R6; R7; R8; R9; R10; R12; R14; R15, personal communication, 2017). Municipalities are governmental

organizations and implement policies with public resources. Therefore, they are also responsible to share the implemented policies if these turn out to be successful according to one of the respondents (R14, personal communication, 2017). For instance, R10 (personal communication, 2017) says: 'Yes I think so, of course you are continuously investigating and you are willing to share this. We do not want to keep that for ourselves'.

Because information sharing is perceived as a task for the local governments, this is not additional efforts from the signatories. Specially, for the municipalities with an organizational incentive group, because this was one of the reasons they joined the network in the first place. Nevertheless, the number of municipalities that is willing to share the mitigation and adaptation solutions differs from the number of municipalities that actually shared experiences and solutions. Therefore, the commitment by the Dutch signatories on the indicator of sharing experiences in practice is low.

The second indicator that measures the commitment to the CoM network is the level of dependency that is experienced among the signatories. None of the respondents argued that they experience a level of dependency towards the other signatories. An exception for some municipalities is the participation of other international networks that are signatories of the CoM as well (R9, personal communication, 2017).

The municipalities perceive the goals and the local results towards these goals to be important, but the CoM is not a prerequisite to reach these goals. For instance, R4 (personal communication, 2017) states: 'I know many cities that are member of the CoM and are also very active. However, I think that the CoM is not perceived to be important. It is about the local impact and the CoM should support that. Right now, the CoM is too much of a burden on our organization'.

Nevertheless, one of the municipalities pointed out that the municipality would uphold the goals of the CoM if the CoM would disappear, because they are ambitious on the climate issue (R10, personal communication, 2017). But again, there is discussion within the organization whether the CoM is the instrument that contributes to those goals.

To conclude, the commitment of the signatory municipalities in the Netherlands is low, because they are not sharing experiences and solutions in the network. Besides that, they do not experience a level of dependency towards the other participants in the network.

#### 6.2.5 Intermediate outcomes

The municipalities joined the CoM with various incentives, but all of them want to gain outcomes from the network. During the collaborative network process, municipalities already have to receive some of those outcomes in order to keep them motivated to remain actively involved. As distinguished in the theoretical chapters, there are various outcomes that signatories can gain from participation in the network. These outcomes are related to knowledge and information, to financial resources, or to the position in the climate change debate, and are referred to as the intermediate outcomes during the collaborative network process.

Signatories in the Netherlands received little knowledge and information through the CoM network. New members learn about aspects that did not come across the organization yet, because these aspects are raised by the requirements that need to be fulfilled to join the CoM network (R5, personal communication, 2017). This situation is less applicable to municipalities that are ahead in local climate action, because they already have all the necessary information available (R15, personal communication, 2017).

Only two of the municipalities argued that they have learned from fellow European signatories in the network (R1; R8, personal communication, 2017). Other municipalities state that knowledge and information was gained, but that they do not know whether participation in the

CoM was necessary to receive this information and knowledge. R10 (personal communication, 2017) says in this regard: ‘I think more knowledge and information has been exchanged, but I am not sure if this would not have been done otherwise’. In continuance, R10 argues that it is also likely that this information would have reached the organization through other networks (R10, personal communication, 2017). This is confirmed by R6 that argues that other local and regional networks that are more likely to provide the knowledge and information (R6, personal communication, 2017). Finally, the impact of the knowledge and information that is received has limited impact on local climate action because the learning aspect does not necessarily lead to a direct decrease of CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction (R8, personal communication, 2017).

The second intermediate outcome are financial resources that are the result of participation in the CoM network. Municipalities argued that they benefitted from their involvement in the CoM, especially during the application for European subsidies. For some subsidies the status of signatory of the CoM is required (R1; R3; R4; R6; R8; R9; R15, personal communication, 2017). The smaller municipalities did not experience this benefit. Due to a lack of capacity, this type of European projects cannot be implemented by these municipalities which is pointed out by R6 (personal communication, 2017) that argues: ‘We joined because of the increased opportunity to get European subsidies, but our projects are too small so this is not possible. You should do that [European applications] in cooperation with other municipalities, but this causes other complexities’. This decreases the motivation for signatories to participate in the network, especially if the incentive for the municipality to participate in the network is to increase European cooperation and receive funding.

The middle and larger size municipalities have more capacity to participate in European tenders for subsidy. Three of the signatories participated in these tenders, but only two municipalities eventually received funding (R4; R8, personal communication, 2017). It was often already clear during the application process that there were limited chances at receiving funding. Frequent

rejection of the proposals led to a decrease of motivation for the signatories that applied for the European subsidies. For instance, R2 (personal communication, 2017) states: ‘We applied several times, but without result. Since that time, the interest decreased’. This again underscores the demotivation of municipalities, who joined the CoM in part for its financial benefits, to participate further.

The final intermediate outcome is the position that municipalities have in the climate change debate. This outcome is most applicable to the municipalities that perceive themselves as pioneers in the debate. They want to continuously develop themselves in order to remain in a pioneer position. Some of the municipalities recognize that the participation in the CoM increased their perceived status by other municipalities in Europe (R1, personal communication, 2017). For others it increased the debate on the local level (R10, personal communication, 2017). However, the majority of the municipalities did not experience a different or better position in the climate change debate. Because the municipalities did not experience this outcome, they are also less motivated to participate in the CoM network.

### 6.3 Institutional design

The analysis of the collaborative network processes show that the signatories in the Netherlands hardly participate in the CoM. The limited participation in the network is influenced by the conditions of the institutional design that should facilitate the collaborative network processes. These conditions are analyzed in the following sections.

#### 6.3.1 Forum exclusiveness

According to the CoM constitution, signatories are encouraged to participate in other climate networks that are complementary to the CoM. This demand has been incorporated by the Dutch municipalities. Table 8 provides an overview of the regional and international networks, that

signatories in the Netherlands are part of. This overview is non-exhaustive since the respondents were not always aware of the all activities in other climate networks.

Table 8

*Regional and international network involvement by Dutch municipalities*

Additional networks of Dutch signatories		
Regional network	Brabantstad	Haaglanden area
	West-Brabant	Provincial cooperations
	South East Brabant	Alkmaar area
	Metropolitan area Eindhoven	Zuid-Kennemerland
	Metropolitan area Amsterdam	Parkstad Limburg
	Metropolitan area Rotterdam/The Hague	Maastricht/Aken/Hasselt/Heerlen/Luik
		Arnhem/Nijmegen area
International network	Energy-Cities	ICLEI
	Euro-Cities	CA
	Urban Agenda	C40
	City of the Sun	Resilient Cities
	Cittaslow	

The participation in other networks led to a reversed effect in the Netherlands, which decreased the collaborative network processes of the signatories. Eight municipalities mentioned that regional cooperations are more useful than the international networks (R2; R3, R6; R7; R10; R12; R13, personal communication, 2017). Each of the municipalities has priorities when developing climate policies. Based on those priorities, the municipalities make a decision about the networks they participate in (R15, personal communication, 2017). However, municipalities only have a limited amount of time and resources available to them, which leads to a focus on

the network that is most beneficial to them (R14, personal communication, 2017). Many municipalities characterize the regional networks as more beneficial, because they provide more specific and concrete outcomes. For instance, R6 (personal communication, 2017) states: ‘I think regional, those are most important to us. [...] We face complexities that cross our municipal boarder and in those cases we can find common ground easily, you are just so close to each other’. As a consequence of the limited benefits of international networks, the focus on international networks such as the CoM is put on the back burner. Dutch signatories address that this has led to discussions about the membership of the CoM (R4; R10, personal communication, 2017). Since, the intermediate outcomes of this network are limited, Dutch signatories either remain passive signatories or consider to withdraw from the CoM.

### 6.3.2 Clear ground rules

The CoM created a guidebook in order to support the signatories, Covenant Coordinators, and the Covenant Supporters with the draft and implementation of the SECAP and argues that ‘the guidelines are well understood and applied by the signatories and provide good guidance material on local energy planning, especially for newcomer cities’ (Joint Reseach Center, 2015). Together, these guidebooks are the clear ground rules on which the CoM is based. However, these guidebooks are critically reviewed by the signatories in the Netherlands.

The signatories start to experience difficulties even before the draft of the SECAP. During the preparation phase, the signatories already struggle with the estimation of the BEI (R4, personal communication, 2017). Firstly, because the CoM demands data that the municipalities cannot provide. Also, the municipalities might not be able to meet the requirements, because they are not the legalized authority on the indicator that needs to be reported on. For instance, R9 (personal communication, 2017) says: ‘Local energy production, wind mills for example, we are not in charge of that in the Netherlands’. Finally, it is very complex to determine the specific

amount of energy resources that is used in the municipal territory, which is also demanded by the CoM (R9, personal communication, 2017).

The municipalities also face complexity in the draft of the SECAP. First and foremost, because the local climate action plans, that many of the municipalities already had, were not sufficient for the SECAP template (R5; R8; R14, personal communication, 2017). In order to transform the local climate action plan into the SECAP template, capacity from the municipal organization is needed. This is not necessarily an issue, but, as mentioned in the previous section, if the benefits of the network are limited, the municipal organization will decide to focus on other regional or international networks that require less capacity.

R14 (personal communication, 2017) states about this issue: 'We wanted to participate in the CoM, but the municipality council agreed that it should not require any capacity. Therefore, things got complicated when the local climate action plan was not similar to the SEAP template'. Signatories that did not have a local action plan before they joined the CoM community, argued that the SECAP is useful in its' beginnings. Now, the municipalities have more specific 'route maps' to reach the local climate goals and do not need the general framework of the SECAP; the SECAP has become outdated (R2; R3, personal communication, 2017).

Finally, Dutch municipalities critically review the third step in becoming a member of the CoM Community: monitoring. The indicator differentiation is the primary reason which has already been addressed related to the BEI. Eleven of the Dutch signatories explain that they face complications at this stage. The municipalities address that, similar to the preparation phase, the indicators of the CoM templates are different from the indicators that are used by the municipalities (R8; R9, personal communication, 2017).

Besides the fact that indicators differ, municipalities also have to provide data on indicators that do not exist in their monitoring tools (R4, personal communication, 2017). The municipalities use monitoring tools such as the *Klimaatmonitor*, which provides a specific set of indicators for the CoM. However, municipalities still have to make calculations themselves. This is time consuming and requires capacity (R2; R7; R9; R10; R12, personal communication, 2017). For instance, the need to transform data into the required unit of analysis for the CoM uses up capacity (R3; R6; R9, personal communication, 2017). R12 (personal communication, 2017) states about this monitoring process: ‘The monitoring template is based on European countries which implies different energy sources and modules than are used in the Netherlands which makes monitoring rather complex’.

The second issue that is raised by signatories in the Netherlands is the emphasis on technical matters in the CoM monitoring. The monitoring does not take into account the preparation of the capacity of the organization and the willingness of the citizens, while these are very important aspects according to the signatories (R4; R14, personal communication, 2017). Other efforts, such as communication, are not taken into account either, because measuring its impact is complex. Nonetheless, the complexity of measurement does not make them less relevant in reaching the goals of the CoM (R4, personal communication, 2017). The fact that these aspects are not taken into account by the monitoring template, causes a situation in which not all the efforts of the municipalities are formally recognized. As a consequence, this lowers the motivation of the municipalities to participate in the collaborative network processes, since they, on the contrary to the CoM, do perceive these efforts to be important to reach the local climate goals.

The complexities that municipalities experience during the integration in the CoM Community, influences the complementarity of the CoM to the existing local climate action plans. If this complementarity decreases, the willingness of signatories to participate in the collaborative

network processes of the CoM decreases. Moreover, some municipalities became sceptical about the fellow signatories in Europe. They do not think it is likely that municipalities in other countries would be able to collect the necessary data to measure the required indicators either (R14, personal communication, 2017).

### 6.3.3 Transparency

The next aspect of the institutional design that influences the collaborative network processes is the transparency of the network. As mentioned before, all the information about the CoM is available online, but municipalities addressed that they experience a language issue during the reporting and the monitoring. Translation requires additional capacity from the municipalities and the municipalities want to receive benefits in return for that. For instance, R8 (personal communication, 2017) argues: ‘And then we have to translate everything into English, because we do not have it that way yet, which is time consuming [...]. You want to make progress and therefore it is not useful to waste time on translations’.

Since the outcomes of the CoM are limited, small obstacles, such as language, in the process of integrating in the CoM Community decreases the willingness to participate in the collaborative network processes. The second issue of transparency is the presentation of the signatory data, which has not been presented on the website in a sound way. However, this issue was only addressed by one of the municipalities (R1, personal communication, 2017).

### 6.3.4 Facilitative leadership

The final condition of the institutional design that influences the collaborative network processes is facilitative leadership. Three leadership positions can be distinguished in the CoM network: The CoMO, the National Coordinator, and the Covenant Supporter. Together they have to fulfill four tasks as have been distinguished in the theoretical chapter: promote participation, ensure influence and control, facilitate group dynamics, and extend the scope.

#### 6.3.4.1 Promotion of participation

On the national level, the CoM network has been promoted by the Covenant Coordinator and Covenant Supporter. They consider the network to be important, because it contributes to the awareness of the connection between the CoM and European financial instruments, and awareness of the impact of European policies on local governments (R16; R17, personal communication, 2017). In an early stage, the national leaders noticed that the CoM would become important for European funding, based on information from other networks such as Energy-Cities (R16, personal communication, 2017).

Because the national leaders considered the CoM to be important, they promoted the network in various ways. In the first place, the policy officers that are responsible for local sustainability and energy policies of all Dutch municipalities were introduced to the network (R16, personal communication, 2017). Several sessions were organized to involve municipalities in the network, but none of these sessions were very successful (R16, personal communication, 2017). One of the leaders says about these sessions: ‘the usual suspects joined the initiative from the start and there has not been an increase, which shows the lack of support in the Netherlands’ (R16, personal communication, 2017). In addition, the municipalities that were already active on sustainability and member of KVN, have been informed about the CoM through the NET-COM project (R17, personal communication, 2017). This project created a website with regard to the CoM and was mainly focused on communication.

The European leaders in the CoMO argue that they mainly promote the network through the CoM website. This website provides information on the Covenant, including video’s and leaflets to the signatories (R18, personal communication, 2017). They also organized several meetings to raise awareness. The CoMO recognizes that more promotion in the Netherlands is needed, in contrast to other countries such as Spain and Italy (R18, personal communication,

2017). This promotion should first be targeted at the current signatories and should reach out to new signatories afterwards (R18, personal communication, 2017).

#### 6.3.4.2 Ensuring influence and control

The signatories in the Netherlands only had face-to-face meetings during the events, related to monitoring and European funding, that were facilitated by the Covenant Coordinator or during the NET-COM project (R1; R5; R8; R12, personal communication, 2017). They had the opportunity to influence the network during these events, yet they are aware of the fact that, currently, communication among participants hardly exists.

The influence of the European leaders is more limited. The CoMO influences the network by providing advice to the signatories while they create their SECAP or monitoring reports (R18, R19, personal communication, 2017). However, the CoMO states that the website provides all the needed information (R18, personal communication, 2017). As a consequence, the CoMO is not able to influence the Dutch signatories, because only two municipalities actively communicate through the website.

Dutch signatories also do not participate in other instruments of the CoMO. For example, the CoM conducted a survey that was completed by two of the signatories in the Netherlands and shows that the main priorities in the Netherlands are adaptation and water management. Contrastively, these are not the priorities that are addressed by the responding municipalities in this thesis (R18, personal communication, 2017). This example shows that the lack of communication and participation of the signatories complicates the way the CoMO is able to influence and control the network in the Netherlands.

#### 6.3.4.3 Facilitating group dynamics

The national leaders aimed to facilitate the group dynamic with the organization of various meetings (R16; R17, personal communication, 2017). As mentioned, these activities were not

picked up by the network and did not create an active network process. Therefore, both national leaders decreased their activity with regard to the network. One of them states: ‘On different thematic topics we still organize these meetings, but those are not specifically related to the CoM since this will limit the potential participating local governments’ (R16, personal communication, 2017).

The European leaders continue to organize meetings and webinars related to various subjects that could be attended by the signatories (R19, personal communication, 2017). There are also multiple discussion platforms in which the signatories are able to discuss topics of their interest (R18, personal communication, 2017). This way the European leaders contribute to the facilitation of the group dynamic.

#### 6.3.4.4 Extending the scope

The national leaders argue that they are willing to extend the scope of the network. However, they need capacity and the instructions from the national government in order to fulfill this task successfully. R16 (personal communication, 2017) argues that this capacity is needed ‘otherwise, it will become a sort of hobby of mine and I will not be able to meet the expectations this way’. The additional capacity and instructions from the Dutch national government could also lower the amount of complexities in the monitoring phase which would be beneficial for the signatories (R17, personal communication, 2017).

The European leaders aim to extend the scope of the network but their emphasis is on new geographical areas instead of on the number of signatories in currently participating countries (R18, personal communication, 2017). Nevertheless, they aim to localize the CoM network in order to bridge the gap between the network and national policies, methodologies, and tools (R18; R19, personal communication, 2017). R19 (personal communication, 2017) states about

this localization: ‘That will be one of the challenges to see where a synergy can be found between national tools and methods from the CoM so that the administrative burden is reduced’.

Finally, both national and European leaders argue that the differences between action plan and monitoring templates of the CoM and the local governments is the most urgent issue that needs to be solved before the scope of the network is extended (R16; R17; R18; R19, personal communication, 2017). If this issue is solved, the signatories will be better able to see the added value of the CoM, which could lead to an increase of the network participation in the future (R18, personal communication, 2017).

#### 6.4 Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the way the CoM functions in the Netherlands based on the collaborative network processes and the conditions of the institutional design that influence this processes. The analysis shows that the signatories communicated in the past during meetings that were organized by the Covenant Coordinator, yet this communication is not present anymore. Next, the level of trust in the CoM is low and reciprocal behavior does not occur. Although, the reputation of signatories in the network is relevant, this only holds with regard to other networks than the CoM. Also, the commitment to the CoM is low and there is hardly any ownership among the signatories. Finally, the intermediate outcomes of the CoM are limited. This created a discrepancy between the incentives for municipalities to participate in the CoM and the outcomes and benefits it provides them with. It can be concluded that collaborative network processes hardly exist and therefore, do not provide collaborative outcomes.

The limited collaborative network processes are explained by conditions of the institutional design. First and foremost, the CoM is not an exclusive forum, since regional networks provide more concrete and specific outcomes than the CoM. Furthermore, the reporting and monitoring requirements of the CoM are complex, require much capacity from the signatories which does

not encourage signatories to integrate in the CoM, since the benefits are limited. Next, some of the signatories experience a language issue during the reporting and monitoring. Finally, the leaders want to facilitate the needed conditions for the collaborative network processes in the CoM, yet the national leaders do not have the capacity to do so, and the European leaders have a lack of knowledge and influence about the signatories in the Netherlands.

## 7. Conclusion

Local governments are increasingly present in the climate change debate. Nation states negotiate about international climate change agreements and recognize the need to include the local level in order to find global climate change solutions. Nonetheless, the local climate action that is conducted by local governments needs to be connected to the global level through networks.

One of the networks that is able to create this connection are TMNs such as the CoM, which are mainly present in Europe. Local governments in the Netherlands, as one of the most vulnerable countries in Europe, also participate in these networks. However, they do not actively participate in the CoM. This is challenging and therefore, this thesis answers the following research question:

*What is the potential contribution of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy to climate change solutions and which aspects of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy explain the relatively low participation of Dutch municipalities?*

The main research question is divided into several sub questions:

1. Why and in what way did the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy emerge?
2. How does the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy function?
3. Why is the participation of signatories in the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and energy limited in the Netherlands?

Based on these sub questions, the following sections provide an answer to the main research question.

## 7.1 Localization of climate change

For many years, climate change was mainly discussed among nation states that negotiated about international climate change agreements. However, a trend of the localization of climate change is present because of the interplay between three developments.

First, global climate risks occurred because of the continuous collective action dilemma on the international level. This dilemma is caused by the high number of rational self-interested actors that are part of the negotiations, the uncertainty and ambiguity in climate change, and the lack of political authority that is able to enforce the agreements that have been signed.

The global risks affect the local level which is known as local climate risks. Local climate risks are determined by the combination of hazards, the exposure to these hazards, and the vulnerability of the local level. Local governments facing these risks are motivated to respond to climate change. Their response includes mitigation and adaptation measurements. Together, these measurements are the local response capacity of the local government. However, the ability of local governments to respond to local climate risks is influenced by the local governing capacity. The local governing capacity is determined by the institutional capacity of the organization, the inclusion of stakeholders, and the inclusion of other parts of the municipal organization

Local governments that have a high level of governing capacity respond to climate change, but their local responses have to be connected to the global climate change solution. It is for this reason, that TMNs emerged alongside the localization of climate change. However, TMNs can only provide this connection if they meet certain conditions.

## 7.2 TMN constitution and collaborative network processes

TMNs consist of sub national governments. Together, the members of the network share the best practices within and beyond the national borders through the national and international

multi-level system. TMNs are capable, in theory, to form the connection between the local response capacity and the global climate change solution if the conditions of XG are fulfilled. The global equivalent of XG, GXG, sets the following conditions for TMNs to fulfill this connecting role:

1. Initial reflection and discussion among stakeholders with a broadly shared perception of a common problem
2. Articulation of the framework understanding with open-ended goals
3. Implementation of these broadly framed goals left to 'lower-level' or contextually situated actors who have knowledge of local conditions and considerable discretion to adapt the framework norms to these different contexts
4. Continuous feedback is provided from local contexts, allowing for reporting and monitoring across range of contexts, with outcomes subject to peer review
5. Goals and practices should be periodically and routinely re-evaluated and, where appropriate, revised in light of results of the peer review and the shared purposes

To understand in what way TMNs function and provide outcomes, the constitution and collaborative network processes of the TMN have to be studied. The collaborative network processes are influenced by the institutional design of the network. The institutional design consists of participatory inclusiveness, forum exclusiveness, clear ground rules, transparency, and facilitative leadership. These characteristics influence the collaborative network processes which consist of communication, trust, reciprocity, reputation, shared understanding, commitment, and intermediate outcomes among the participants. These processes ultimately lead to collaborative outcomes. These outcomes influence the connection between the response capacity and the global climate change solution, *if* the constitution of the TMN meets the GXG conditions. All these conditions have been applied to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in order to understand how this TMN functions in practice.

### 7.3 The Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the Netherlands

The CoM started as an initiative from the EC and has been evolving for many years. The initiative includes both mitigation and adaptation goals and aims at the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> by its signatories. The analysis of the CoM constitution shows that this TMN meets the conditions of GXG. Therefore, the CoM is able to connect the local climate actions of its signatories to the global climate change solution which makes the CoM a very useful TMN in theory.

However, the collaborative network processes in CoM hardly exist. The twenty-four signatories do not communicate about the CoM. Although they have a high level of shared understanding about the CoM, their commitment tends to be rather low. Signatories have little trust in the network, do not act reciprocally towards other signatories, and care only slightly about their reputation in the network. Although, the signatories joined the CoM for various reasons, all of them joined the network to receive outcomes of participation. In practice, they enjoy little intermediate outcomes from the network. Consequently, the collaborative outcomes of the CoM in the Netherlands are limited.

Conditions of the institutional design explain why these collaborative network processes are limited. First and foremost, the CoM is not an exclusive forum for the signatories. All municipalities participate in other regional and international networks. Regional networks especially provide more specific and concrete outcomes than the CoM. Secondly, the CoM uses reporting and monitoring frameworks that are too complex for the signatories, require much capacity from the signatories which does not motivate the signatories to participate in the CoM. Also, signatories face language issues in the reporting and monitoring. Finally, the leaders in the network want to facilitate the needed conditions for the collaborative network processes in the CoM, yet the national leaders do not have the capacity to do so, and the European leaders have a lack of knowledge and influence about the signatories in the Netherlands. Because of these conditions, the participation of Dutch signatories in the CoM is relatively low.

## **8. Discussion**

In this chapter, the reflection on the theory, methodology, and results of this thesis are presented. Also, the developments of the CoM in the upcoming years are considered in a look towards the future even as recommendations for future research to follow up this thesis.

### **8.1 Theoretical reflection**

In preparation for this thesis, all international climate change agreements have been studied. This part of the research identified two trends in the climate change debate: the localization of climate change and the increasing emphasis on both mitigation and adaptation. In order to make this research relevant in light of the current climate change debate, these trends have been included in the first theoretical chapter on the localization of climate change. The latest developments in the climate debate have been combined with XG, a relatively new theory in Public Administration literature. The way the characteristics of GXG are used in this thesis is more pragmatic than De Búrca, Keohane & Sabel (2014) use the concept. This could have influenced the interpretations of the results by the researcher.

An analysis of the conditions of the collaborative network processes was needed in order to understand the CoM fully. The starting conditions of the original model by Ansell and Gash (2008) are not included in the conceptual framework, because chapter two provided these conditions. The starting conditions might increase the understanding of the collaborative network processes in the Netherlands. However, the inclusion these conditions increases the number of variables and thereby the complexity of the data-analysis.

### **8.2 Methodological reflection**

During the content analysis various documents were used to analyze the constitution of the CoM. These documents provided extended information about the CoM, but a reflection on these documents by the CoMO might have been useful to this thesis. The description of the

constitution would have been more reliable which contributes to more reliable outcomes in the analysis of the GXG conditions in the CoM constitution.

Furthermore, the analysis of the collaborative network processes of signatories in the Netherlands would be more reliable if all twenty-four signatories participated in this thesis. The twenty municipalities that participated in the CoM at first of November have been contacted. While reaching out to the municipalities, it became clear that the CoM is not popular in the Netherlands. For instance, one signatory responded that they did not want to participate, because they had negative experiences with the network. Another municipality did not want to participate because their involvement in the CoM is too passive. Many of the municipalities that participated in this research were willing to participate, but also addressed in advance that the CoM is not something the municipality is not actively engaged with.

Next, the interview guide consisted of many questions to cover all the variables, but some of the municipalities were not able to answer all questions because of their passive position. The fact that municipalities responded with 'I do not know' provides information on the collaborative network processes as well, but makes an in-depth analysis more complicated. Finally, the responses to the questions have been compared but no conclusions about significant relations between variables can be made. Therefore, additional research should investigate if the conditions of the collaborative network processes are necessary and sufficient with a cross-case analysis.

### 8.3 Reflection on the results

The results of this thesis have been presented in two chapters starting with the analysis of the GXG conditions in the CoM constitution. Two of the GXG conditions were partially met, but this did not result in the rejection of the CoM as a network that functions based on GXG. One could argue that this decision is taken by the researcher on an arbitrary basis. Still, this decision

was made because there are no further specific criteria for the evaluation of the GXG conditions. It could, however, lead to a false classification of the CoM as a network based on GXG if literature would set the criteria that all the conditions have to be met completely.

Furthermore, the results of the analysis of the collaborative network processes are based on the conditions of collaborative governance. Yet, other conditions might be applicable in practice as well. This makes the conditions that are used to describe the CoM non-exhaustive. The addition of other conditions to analyze the network could alter the results and change, even enhance, the understanding of the CoM. However, the extended literature review decreases the likelihood of missing out on conditions that change the analysis of the collaborative network processes significantly. Also, the opportunity for the respondents to add conditions during the data collection is used to make sure that the likelihood of missing out on conditions is limited.

#### 8.4 A look towards the future

The CoM will continue to evolve in the upcoming years. The challenge for the Netherlands, and countries with a similar situation, will be to ensure that the CoM has an added value for the signatories. If the CoM aims at the inclusion of all signatories in the network, the network should adapt to the needs of its signatories. Otherwise, the CoM will see its current, passive, members withdraw.

The development within the CoM towards national strategies provides the opportunity to design a framework and is a first step in the right direction. The main priority should be the limitation of capacity that the CoM requires in comparison to the benefits that signatories receive. This way the signatories will become more motivated to actively participate in the CoM.

Meanwhile, the relevance of the network also depends on the developments within the Dutch national government. If the government gives specific directions to the local governments with regard to local climate action and also provides resources to implement these, the capacity of

local governments to act will increase. The CoM needs to be aware of these developments and adapt their structure to it. This way, a synergy between the European TMN, the national guidelines and, the local climate action can be developed. This will be the only way to speed up the energy transition, create CO<sub>2</sub> neutral cities, and ultimately meet the CoM goals.

### 8.5 Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings in this thesis, there are several recommendations for further research. As mentioned in this thesis, the TMNs contribute to the global climate change solution. However, their institutional architecture still lacks the global representation in order to achieve global climate change solutions. Most of the research, including this thesis, focus on the functioning and constitution of TMNs in Europe. Additional research is needed to increase the presence of these networks in other parts of the world (Bansard, Pattberg, & Widerberg, 2017). This way, local governments are able to connect beyond their cultural borders which could accumulate the learning curve of the actors involved.

Secondly, additional research on the TMNs and their relation to XG is needed. During this research, it was sometimes complicated to determine a position in the governance theories, because of a lack on a clear typology in which the TMNs can be placed. A first step is taken by Ansell and Gash (2017) who developed the concept of *collaborative platforms*. In their typology they also include platforms that show many similarities to the way TMNs function. They already propose a way this typology can be combined with experimentalist governance principles (Ansell & Gash, 2017). The position of TMNs in this new development within the governance literature could be explored in further research and will provide more insight of TMNs in the bottom-up governance theories.

Finally and on the more practical side, research on the functioning of the CoM in other countries should be conducted. Other countries, such as France and Luxembourg, also have a limited

number of active participating signatories in comparison to the Mediterranean countries. These studies would provide the opportunity compare the collaborative network processes in various countries. The CoM should use this information to adapt their framework in order to ensure that the network is able to do what networks do when nations talk and cities act: connect.

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## Appendix

### Appendix I Sources content analysis

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## Appendix II Interview guide local governments

### Interview guide | Stand van zaken CoM en bijbehorend netwerk proces

#### **Cluster 1 → Introductie**

1. Wat is uw functie binnen de gemeente X?

#### **Cluster 2 → Organisatorisch**

2. Hoe bent u betrokken bij het CoM?
3. Hoeveel van uw collega's zijn bezig met het CoM?
  - a. Van welke afdelingen/beleidsterreinen zijn deze collega's afkomstig?

#### **Cluster 3 → Probleemdefinitie**

4. Hoe zou u het probleem dat het CoM probeert te tackelen, definiëren?
5. Wat is volgens u de missie van CoM?
6. Wat zijn voor uw organisatie de prioriteiten op het gebied van klimaat?
7. Komen deze volgens u overeen met de prioriteiten van het CoM?
8. Ziet u veel overeenkomsten tussen de prioriteiten die binnen uw organisatie voorop staan en die van andere betrokken organisaties binnen het CoM?

#### **Cluster 4 → Bewegredenen**

9. Waarom heeft uw organisatie besloten zich aan te sluiten bij het CoM?
  - a. Wie heeft daar destijds het voortouw in genomen?
10. Is uw gemeente ook lid van andere Europese of internationale netwerk samenwerkingen?
  - a. Zo ja, welke?
11. Is uw gemeente betrokken bij regionale samenwerkingen op het gebied van klimaat?

- a. Zo ja, welke?
12. Welke samenwerkingsverbanden leveren voor uw gemeente het meeste op en waarom?
13. In hoeverre gaan de doelstellingen en eisen van het CoM samen met hetgeen dat bij u in de gemeente al gebeurt?
- a. Zo ja, wat is daar een voorbeeld van?
  - b. Zo nee, wat zijn de knelpunten?

### **Cluster 5 → Uitvoering**

14. Waren er moeilijkheden bij het opstellen van het actieplan in uw organisatie?
15. Ervaart uw organisatie problemen bij het monitoren van de voortgang met betrekking tot dit actieplan?
16. Had u bij de opstelling van de benodigde documenten voor het CoM en de daarvoor benodigde informatie, ondersteuning nodig?
- a. Zo ja, van wie?
17. Heeft u bij de opstelling dan wel uitvoering van het actieplan contact gehad met:
- a. De nationale coördinator
    - i. Zo ja, waarover?
    - ii. Zo niet, waarom?
  - b. Ondersteunende organisatie (zoals KVN)
    - i. Zo ja, waarover?
    - ii. Zo niet, waarom?
18. Zijn ervaringen of uitkomsten van lokale mitigatie/adaptatie projecten binnen uw gemeente gedeeld met andere lokale overheden binnen het CoM?

### **Cluster 6 → Communicatie**

19. Hoe vaak hebben jullie contact met andere lokale overheden uit het netwerk van het CoM?
20. Op welke manier hebben jullie contact met andere lokale overheden?
- a. Ontmoeten jullie elkaar in *real life*?
21. Als jullie communiceren met elkaar, waar gaat deze communicatie dan voornamelijk over?

### **Cluster 7 → Vertrouwen**

22. Denkt u dat uw organisatie in vergelijkbare mate betrokken is bij het netwerk als de andere lokale overheden?
23. In hoeverre bent u ervan overtuigd dat andere lokale overheden bij het CoM betrokken blijven?

### **Cluster 8 → Positionering**

24. Hoe denkt u dat andere lokale overheden uw rol binnen het CoM beschouwen?
25. Is het voor uw organisatie van belang is dat overige deelnemers aan het CoM uw organisatie positief bestempelen?
26. In welke mate zou uw organisatie andere beslissingen maken wanneer dit de reputatie van uw organisatie in het netwerk ten goede komt?
27. Hoe zou uw organisatie reageren wanneer meer lokale overheden binnen Nederland zich bij het CoM aansluiten?
- a. Welke concrete acties zouden daaraan verbonden zijn?
28. Hoe zou uw organisatie reageren wanneer overige lokale overheden zich niet aan de gemaakte afspraken binnen het CoM houden?
29. In welke mate beschouwt u, uw organisatie afhankelijk van de overige actoren in het CoM netwerk?

30. Denkt u dat alle deelnemende lokale overheden zich in gelijke mate verantwoordelijk voelen voor het succes van het CoM?

31. Zou uw organisatie bereid zijn om oplossingen te onderzoeken die direct en kosteloos gebruikt zouden kunnen worden door andere lokale overheden?

#### **Cluster 9 → Uitkomsten & toekomst**

32. Wat heeft deelname aan het CoM uw organisatie tot nu toe opgeleverd op het gebied van:

- a. Kennis en informatie
- b. Financiering
- c. Invloed in het klimaatdebat (zoals overheidslagen)

33. Is er een verschil tussen de rol en invloed van het CoM op lokale mitigatie en adaptatie uitkomsten?

34. Ziet u het huidige CoM als een nuttig instrument om de lokale beleidskaders beter te bewaken?

35. Waar zou een Nederlandse versie van het CoM volgens u aan moeten voldoen?

#### **Cluster 10 → Conclusie**

36. Heeft u tot slot nog verdere toevoegingen, op- of aanmerking over het CoM en uw gemeente?

## Appendix III Interview guide leadership position

### Interview guide Leadership position

#### **Cluster 1 → Promotion of the network**

1. Does the CoMO promote local governments to join the network?
2. How is this promotion conducted?
3. What is the target group for this promotion?

#### **Cluster 2 → Influence and Control**

4. How would you describe the role of the CoMO with regard to the network participants?
5. Does the CoMO have an overview of the collaboration between the local governments?
6. Does the CoMO interfere in the collaboration if needed?

#### **Cluster 3 → Facilitating group dynamics**

7. How does the CoMO stimulates the interaction among the participating local governments?

#### **Cluster 4 → Extending the scope**

8. Does the CoMO aim to extend the network?
9. What would be the role of CoMO in this process?

#### **Cluster 5 → The Netherlands**

10. What position do you think the CoM has in Dutch local governments?

11. How would you explain the limited participation of Dutch local governments?

12. In what ways do you think, more local governments in the Netherlands could be involved?

**Cluster 6 → Conclusion**

13. Do you have any additional remarks with regard to the role of the CoMO in the collaborative network processes of the local governments?

## Appendix IV Overview respondents & interview details

Table 1  
*Interview Details*

Municipalities				
Respondent	Level of integration	Method of Interviewing	Date	
R1	Step 3	Meeting	November	10, 2017
R2	Step 2	Phone	November	15, 2017
R3	Step 2	Phone	November	16, 2017
R4	Step 2	Phone	November	20, 2017
R5	Step 1	Phone	November	20, 2017
R6	Step 3	Phone	November	20, 2017
R7	Step 3	Phone	November	21, 2017
R8	Step 2	Phone	November	23, 2017
R9	Step 2	Meeting	November	28, 2017

R10	Step 2	Phone	November 29, 2017
R11	Step 2	Meeting	December 4, 2017
R12	Step 2	Meeting	December 4, 2017
R13	Step 2	Phone	December 5, 2017
R14	Step 2	Phone	December 8, 2017
R15	Step 2	Phone	January 9, 2018
Leadership Position			
R16	Phone		November 22, 2017
R17	Meeting		November 28, 2017
R18	Phone		December 1, 2017
R19	Phone		December 1, 2017

## Appendix V Signatory details

Table 2

*Signatory details per country (Based on The Covenant of Mayors, 2017f)*

Country	Signatories	Inhabitants	Nr. of SEAP	% of signatories	Nr. of Monitoring	% of signatories
Italy	4005	41 993 234 (71%)	3 803	95	992	25
Spain	1820	29 908 459 (67%)	1 528	84	486	27
Greece	155	6 424 260 (60%)	121	78	15	10
Portugal	140	6 098 928 (58%)	124	89	59	42
France	113	15 870 708 (26%)	104	92	11	10
Romania	86	5 017 732 (24%)	74	86	11	13
Germany	71	18 750 082 (23%)	67	94	21	30
Croatia	69	2 028 797 (48%)	62	90	15	22
Sweden	58	4 398 252 (50%)	55	95	21	36
Hungary	55	3 668 944 (37%)	45	82	0	0

Poland	40	4 361 983 (11%)	39	98	7	18
Denmark	37	3 236 970 (62%)	36	97	9	24
U.K.	36	20 856 593 (35%)	34	94	9	25
Belarus	35	2 574 479 (27%)	11	31	0	0
Slovenia	29	710 193 (35%)	29	100	3	10
Slovakia	28	779 985 (14%)	4	14	1	4
Austria	26	1 939 558 (23%)	25	96	5	19
Bulgaria	25	2 601 134 (35%)	25	100	4	16
Cyprus	24	497 875 (58%)	24	100	8	33
Malta	24	114 081 (28%)	24	100	0	0
Latvia	21	1 196 854 (55%)	20	95	7	33

Bosnia Herzegovina	21	1 784 620 (47%)	19	90	4	19
Netherlands	21	4 269 268 (26%)	19	90	3	14
Moldova, Republic Of	19	470 836 (13%)	13	68	0	0
Armenia	17	1 420 960 (46%)	8	47	0	0
Ireland	16	2 484 146 (57%)	13	81	6	38
Czech Republic	16	2 132 725 (20%)	11	69	3	19
Georgia	16	2 099 089 (50%)	11	69	1	6
Lithuania	15	1 407 419 (43%)	14	93	3	20
Turkey	14	14 096 609 (19%)	11	79	1	7
Finland	12	2 196 274 (43%)	10	83	6	50
Morocco	11	2 188 613 (7%)	5	45	0	0

Luxembourg	10	23 436 (5%)	1	10	0	0
Switzerland	9	819 913 (11%)	9	100	2	22
Lebanon	9	128 700 (3%)	3	33	0	0
Norway	8	1 356 872 (31%)	8	100	1	13
Estonia	5	535 284 (42%)	5	100	1	20
Palestinian Territories	4	484 146 (13%)	4	100	0	0
Algeria	3	692 500 (2%)	3	100	0	0
Israel	3	157 000 (2%)	3	100	0	0
Montenegro	3	141 416 (22%)	3	100	0	0
Albania	3	483 786 (15%)	1	33	0	0

Jordan	3	428 000 (5%)	1	33	0	0
Azerbaijan	2	106 861 (1%)	1	50	0	0
Tunisia	2	362 518 (3%)	1	50	0	0
Iceland	1	118 427 (41%)	1	100	1	100
Kazakhstan	1	347 486 (2%)	1	100	0	0
Macedonia	1	600 000 (29%)	1	100	0	0
Serbia	1	255 518 (2%)	1	100	0	0
Tajikistan	1	30 000 (0%)	1	100	0	0
Iraq	1		0	0	0	0