# The function of side events at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

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# Abstract

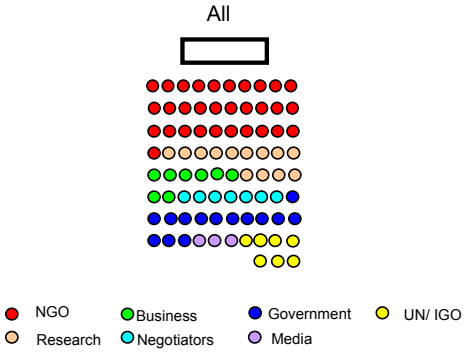
Civil society involvement has grown to become an integral part of the UN negotiating process. The side events at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are today the most visible component of and the only formal avenue of civil society involvement in international climate negotiations. This study assesses the extent to which side events effectively: a) provide input to the negotiations and b) contribute to the construction of the climate regime. Through surveying organisers of and participants in side events as well as COP delegates, we have analysed *i)* who attends side events, *ii)* why they attend them, *iii)* why organisations arrange side events, and *iv)* the outcome of side events.

We distributed a questionnaire to all organisers of side events at COP 13 and the participants in twenty of the 200 side events held in Bali in November 2007. In addition, we also surveyed a strategic sample of the 10,800 participants at COP 13, receiving a total of nearly 1,100 responses.

This report concludes that the side events fulfil the broader official objective of benefiting COP participants, as these events are rated of high value across all participant groups and geographical categories. Negotiators were by far the most important target audience of all categories of side events, followed by representatives of UN organisations and researchers. Organisers considered the G77 plus China to be the most important Party groupings to reach in all categories of side events.

The average number of side event participants was 82. The attendance at *mitigation* side events was 42% higher than at *adaptation* events. However, more negotiators and government representatives attended *adaptation* side events, whereas there was very little media and business and even less NGO and researcher presence at *adaptation* compared with *mitigation* events. If we up-scale the results of this survey, approximately 1,400 of the 3,500 Party participants attended side events.

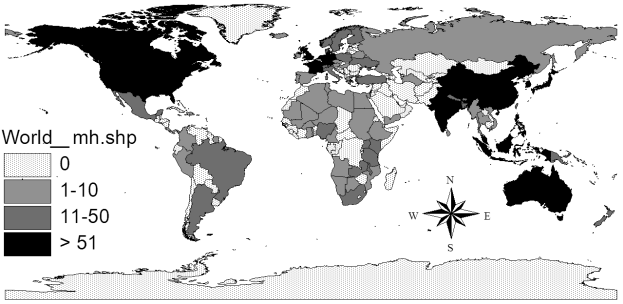

**Figure 1.** Number of side event participants by primary role at COP 13.




The study indicates high side event participation from countries with large economies, countries near the COP venue, and the host country (Figure 2). Three of eight side event participants were NGO representatives (Figure 1). About one quarter of the participants consisted of negotiators or government representatives. Each side event was attended by an average of seven negotiators, 14 government representatives, eight business representatives, seven UN/IGO representatives, and three media representatives. Business representatives

came mainly from the *power and energy*, *manufacturing industry*, *business services*, and *flexible mechanisms* sectors.

**Figure 2.** The estimated number of side event participants at COP 13.




The role of side events in capacity building is often overlooked. Side events bring together a wide range of highly qualified people that it would be very costly to gather elsewhere or at other times. Consequently, side events provide an efficient way of gaining exposure to currently pressing issues in climate policy and science, and hence attract many developing country negotiators and those in other primary roles.

More than half of the organisers had no plans to disseminate information or did not answer the question about that. When such plans did exist, they often relied on people finding their own way to the organisers' websites. Publications and presentations at other meetings and fora were the other two major ways of spreading word of the side events. In contrast, over half of the side event participants had a formal responsibility to report back to their organisations.

Even though the side events fulfilled their broader official objective of benefiting the negotiations, we suggest six ways to improve them further, by:

- recognising their capacity-building function and the attendance of negotiators and government officials;
- recognising and making use of their highly qualified audience;
- bringing side events closer to negotiations, not just spatially but, even more importantly, by more systematic documentation of side event outcomes and a clearer process for how side events can contribute to ongoing and future negotiations;
- reducing the number of side events, while increasing the significance of transparent selection criteria for side events so as to facilitate equitable representation;
- request plans for information dissemination; and
- prioritise presenters who have kept to the subject and adhered to time limits.

# Preface

This report represents the results of a project within the Climate Policy Research (Clipore) programme, supported by the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research. The report would have been impossible to complete without the endorsement of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The authors are very grateful for the discussion of the results at a brown bag seminar in Bonn. A special thanks is expressed to Mrs. Barbara Black and the NGO Liaison Team at the UNFCCC secretariat for support when the study was initiated, when it was executed at COP 13, and for data on previous side events at COPs and Subsidiary Bodies. We also extend our gratitude to the following people: Madelene Ostwald, Eskil Mattson, and Eva Lövbrand for distributing questionnaires at COP 13; Charlotte Billgren for compiling the organiser survey and laying out the report; and Ingrid Tjernström and Karin André for help distributing the surveys to the organisers. The results will be elaborated on in two articles: Hjerpe *et al*. (forthcoming a) and Hjerpe *et al*. (forthcoming b).

# Contents

## Figures



## Tables

## Abbreviations

**BICC:** The Bali International Convention Centre
**COP:** Conference of the Parties
***ENB*:** *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, a daily newsletter produced at COPs and at other times
***ECO*:** *ECO*, the daily NGO newsletter produced at COPs
**EIG:** The Environmental Integrity Group, a Party grouping consisting of Mexico, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland
**IGO:** Intergovernmental organisation
**LDC:** Least-developed countries, at present comprising 50 of the poorest states
**NGO:** Non-governmental organisation
**SB:** Subsidiary Body
**UNFCCC:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

# 1. Introduction and problem statement

If climate change negotiations do not appear legitimate to various groups, it may impede their ability to reach and implement agreements. One factor in attaining increased legitimacy is to secure a forum for input to the negotiations outside the formal negotiations, a forum where Parties, civil society, business, trade unions, and others, who all have a stake in the outcome of the negotiations, can present their views. Starting with the parallel conferences arranged at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, civil society involvement has grown to become an integral part of the UN negotiating process.

The side events at the Conference of Parties (COP) are today the most visible component of civil society engagement in the international climate negotiations. They provide a forum for science and policy interaction and for NGO and social movement participation in the multilateral negotiations. They also comprise a forum where countries and international organisations can convey their messages outside the more constrained formal negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

> Side events have the sole purpose of benefiting participants attending the session of the Conference of the Parties and/or subsidiary bodies of the Convention.

This passage is contained in the instructions to organisers of and participants in side events and exhibitions at COPs. The purpose of the side events can be achieved in various ways.

A common conception is that the side events should provide a forum for input to the negotiations. Wide participation in side events is expected to increase the legitimacy of both the negotiating process leading up to agreements and the results achieved at COPs. By involving a wider range of stakeholders and perspectives, side events can be said to legitimise climate governance through fostering inclusiveness – i.e., engaging a range of major stakeholders in the process leading up to multilateral decisions on climate change (Seyfang 2003). Our starting point was the question of input legitimacy and the procedural framework for the diffusion of ideas in the negotiations. However, as this study will demonstrate, side events also promote other objectives, most notably capacity building.

The literature on side events at global environmental negotiations is very sparse. One common explanation of this lack refers to the legacy of realism; that is, there is a focus on states as the most important actors in global environmental negotiations at the expense of attention to other actors. Consequently, very few studies have gone beyond examining state actors; those that have, have mainly analysed the participation of NGOs (e.g., Clark *et al*. 1997) and, more recently, the role of convention secretariats (e.g., Andresen and Skjaerseth 1999, Busch 2006) and chairpersons (Depledge 2007) as actors influencing and contributing to regime effectiveness. Studies of NGO participation in multilateral negotiations include quantitative studies of, for example, the Implementation Conference of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa 2002, Carr and Norman 2008) and UN conferences (Clark *et al*. 1997). To identify how and the extent to which side events benefit COP participants, we collected data on the experiences of participants, organisers, and the secretariat by means of surveys, personal interviews, observation, and document analysis at the 13$^{th}$ COP of the UNFCCC in Bali, Indonesia, 3–14 December 2007.

## 1.1 Aim and research questions

Our study aims to assess the extent to which side events effectively: a) provide input to the negotiations and b) contribute to the construction of the climate regime. Our primary research questions have been: *i)* who attends side events, *ii)* why do they attend them, *iii)* why do organisations arrange side events, and *iv)* what are the outcomes of side events?

## 1.2 Outline of the report

This report consists of six chapters. After this short introduction, the next chapter considers the history of the organisation of and participation in side events at COPs. Chapter 3 describes the methods and materials used to undertake the study and compile this report. In chapter 4 our results are presented; this chapter is divided into four sub-sections corresponding to the research questions stated above, regarding side event attendees, reasons for attending side events, reasons for organising side events, and side event outcomes. In chapter 5 we discuss our results and also make suggestions on how to organise side events at future COPs.

An Appendix is attached to the report; it presents additional background figures and statistics regarding COP 13.

# 2. History of side events at UNFCCC COPs [1]

Side events have been organised in COP and Subsidiary Body (SB) sessions of the UNFCCC since the first one in Berlin in 1995.[2] Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below present the total number of participants as well as composition in terms of Party, media, and observer organisation (e.g., NGOs) participants at COP and SB sessions from 1995 to 2007.

**Figure 2.1.** Total number of participants and composition in terms of Party, media, and observer organisation (e.g., NGOs) participants at COP sessions from 1995 to 2007.

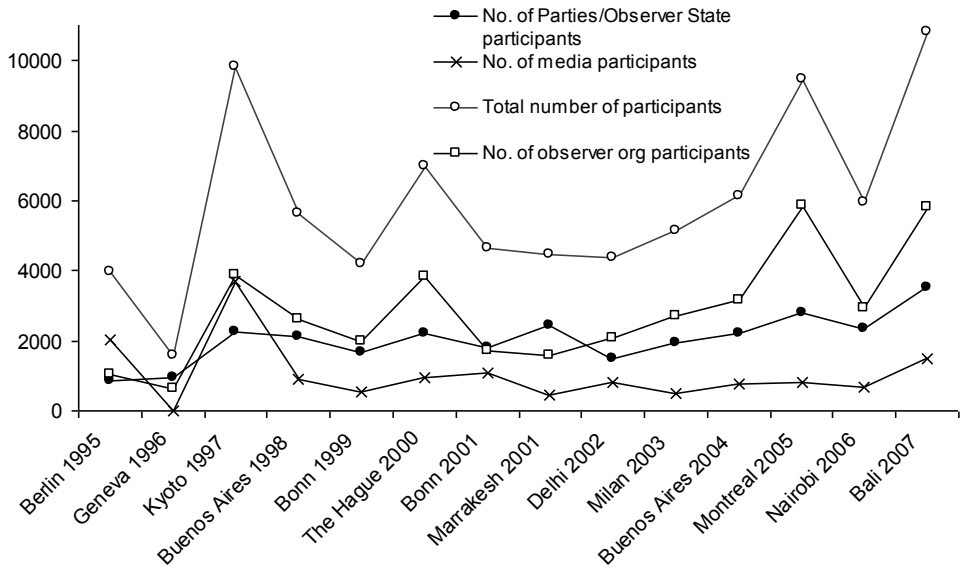



Figure 2.1 shows that four COPs attracted significantly larger attendance than did the others, in chronological order: Kyoto 1997 (COP 3), The Hague 2000 (COP 6), Montreal 2005 (COP 11), and Bali 2007 (COP 13). The total number of participants at these events was almost 10,000 in Kyoto, 7,000 in the Hague, 9,400 in Montreal, and nearly 11,000 in Bali. At other COPs, total participation was between 4,000 and 5,000 participants. Linear regression suggests that the total number of participants has increased by approximately 300 per year.

The attendance rates of Party, observer organisation, and media participants have evolved in different ways. The proportion of observer organisation attendance has basically followed the evolution of the total number of participants and thus displays the same four spikes. It increased rapidly from about a quarter of all participants in Berlin to about half of total attendance since Buenos Aires. Media representatives have made up approximately 10% of total COP attendees. Media attendance was by far the highest in Kyoto, where it reached almost 4,000 media participants, followed by the first COP, in Berlin, where it reached 2,000. After Kyoto, media attendance was declining until Bali, when a significant increase was

[1] This section was compiled thanks to UNFCCC secretariat statistics, generously gathered by the NGO Liaison Team under Barbara Black, the NGO Liaison Officer from 1996 to 2008.
[2] Official statistics are lacking for COP 1 and SB 1–4, so the data referring to these are unofficial.

noticeable and 1,500 media participants were present. Roughly every third COP attendee is a Party participant. The number of Party participants totalled approximately 1,000 at the first two COPs and then varied only slightly between 1,500 and 2,200 from Buenos Aires I to Buenos Aires II, except at Marrakesh 2001. In the last three years, Party participation has increased, reaching almost 3,000 in Montreal and 3,500 in Bali.

Attendance at SB sessions increased between sessions 20 and 26. The number of Party participants at SB sessions has increased significantly, while observer organisation attendance has increased more slowly. Concurrently, media attendance has increased dramatically from three to 57 per SB session.

The total number of side events has varied significantly from Geneva to Bali (Figures 2.2a and b). Roughly, the pattern reveals an increasing number of side events from Berlin (approximately 100) to Bonn (134); the number then levelled out and fell to fewer than 100 in Marrakesh and Delhi. Since then, the number of side events has increased steadily. Bali 2007 was exceptional in hosting over 200 side events – 50 more than in Montreal two years earlier.

**Figure 2.2a.** The number of side events by organiser, from Geneva to Bali.

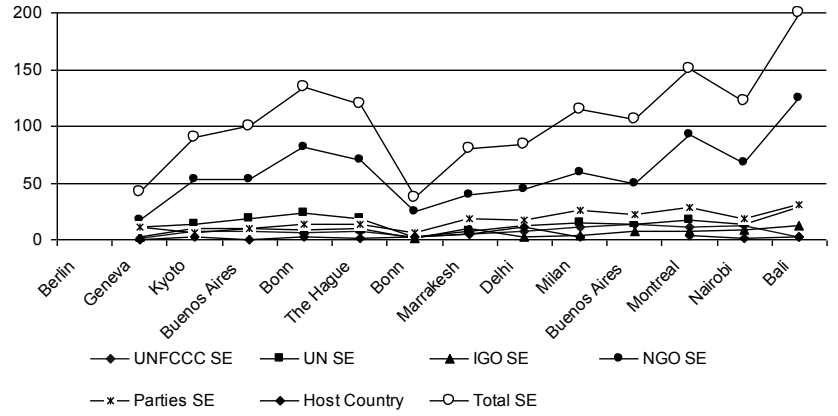
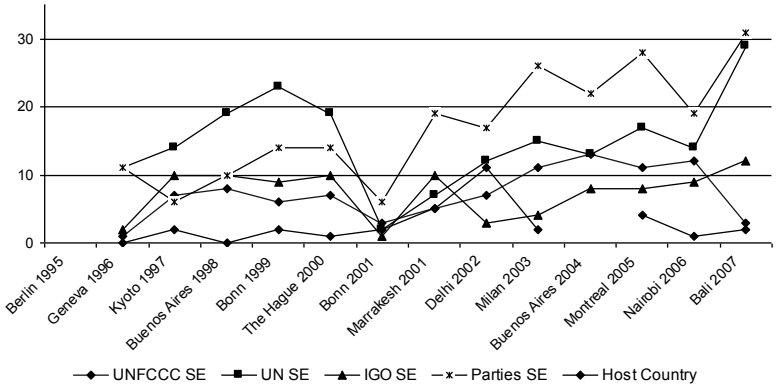



**Figure 2.2b.** The number of side events by organiser, from Geneva to Bali.




NGOs usually organise between 50 and 60% of the side events at COPs and there has been a significant correlation between the numbers of NGO-organised side events and the total

number of events. The number of side events organised by the UNFCCC secretariat was about eight until the Hague, and about ten the last few years. At Bali, however, only three side events were organised by the UNFCCC secretariat. Parties generally organise between 20 and 30 side events, and the numbers have varied in line with the total number of side events, except that the number of Party-organised events was not particularly high in Bali. Host countries have organised about two side events, with some exceptions. The number of UN-organised side events has also been in line with the total number of side events, except for an increase in Bali from 15 to 19. The number of IGO-organised side events has been stable at about ten for the last years.

The UNFCCC secretariat has estimated the total number of side event participants over the past four years based on a head count at the beginning of each event. The estimated average number of side event participants was 64 (Buenos Aires II), 116 (Montreal), 48 (Nairobi), and 84 (Bali), compared with the actual average number of participants at UNFCCC-organised events over the same period: 64, 87, 85, and 118, respectively.

After this short background on the history of COPs of the UNFCCC, we turn to the most recent COP, the 13th COP of the UNFCCC, held in Bali, Indonesia 3–14 December 2007. In the following sections, we will identify the participants and organisers, why they were involved in side events, and their expectations of the COP.

# 3. Study design

To enable analysis of the function of COP side events, we surveyed all organisers of side events at COP 13 and the participants at twenty of the 200 side events held in Bali in November 2007. In addition, we also surveyed a strategic sample of the 10,800 participants at COP 13. As previously stated, the survey aimed to determine: *i)* who attends side events, *ii)* why they attend them, *iii)* why organisations arrange side events, and *iv)* the outcome of side events.

Semi-structured telephone interviews with secretariat staff were conducted in November 2007. The interviews were taped and transcribed, and the responses were categorised. The interviews were intended to provide a clearer interpretation of how the official purpose of side events has been operationalised in COPs. On this basis, we were able to formulate a short and more accurate questionnaire for the side event organisers and participants.

The methods and materials used in the investigation are further described below.

## 3.1 Survey of side event organisers

The survey of the organisers of side events at COP 13 covered issues such as: the primary objectives of the side events, the primary target audience, the expected outcome and number of participants, plans for attracting people to the side event and for spreading information from the side event, presenter affiliation, presenter country of origin, presenter professional background, and previous experience organising side events.

The survey was distributed by e-mail on 8–9 November 2007 to the contact person of each of the 200 side event organisers. Due to technical problems, some organisers could not reply immediately, which likely resulted in a lower response rate than otherwise would have been the case. A reminder was sent out on 21–23 November, very close in time to the COP. We received a total of 61 answers, for a response rate of 30%.

The subjects and types of organiser of the 200 side events at COP 13 are presented in Table 3.1. In the survey, the organisers of these side events could choose how to describe the subject the event would deal with and the type of organisation they represented. The UNFCCC secretariat had divided the side events into non-exclusive categories, such as *mitigation*, *adaptation*, *long-term*, *development*, *forestry*, *mechanisms*, *science*, *technology*, and *finance*. Ten organisers did not fill in type of organisation and/or issue and are excluded from the results.

There were three major issue categories, i.e., *mitigation*, *adaptation*, and *long-term*, followed by three categories of medium prominence, i.e., *development*, *forestry*, and *mechanisms*. *Science*, *technology*, and *finance* were minor side event categories. NGOs were the most common organiser of side events, arranging 123 side events, followed by UN organisations (30 events), Parties (29), and IGOs (eight).

The average number of subjects dealt with at an event varied among the different side event issue categories. Evidently, the minor categories had stronger linkages to other categories. Events dealing mainly with *forestry*, *mechanisms*, and *long-term* subjects all dealt with a low average total number of issues, indicating low linkage with other climate change negotiation

issues, at least from the perspective of organisers. On the other hand, *development*, *finance*, and *technology* side events dealt with a high average number of issues, indicating a high degree of linkage. The strongest linkages were found between *technology* and *mechanisms*, on one hand, and *mitigation*, on the other, as well as between *finance* and *adaptation*.

Different types of organisations were relatively over-represented in the various side event subject categories. UN organisations were more common as organisers of *finance*, *adaptation*, and *science* side events, while Parties were more common as organisers in the *forestry*, *mechanisms*, and *technology* event categories. NGOs were more common as organisers of *development*, *mitigation*, and *long-term* side events. The Parties that organised side events dealing with *mitigation* all belonged to Annex B, one of which was a non-Annex II Party. In contrast, Parties that organised side events dealing with *adaptation* were dominated by non-Annex I Parties (i.e., developing countries). *Long-term* side events were organised by Annex B Parties and two large non-Annex I Parties.

**Table 3.1.** Characteristics of the side events by subject.

| | *Mitigation* | *Adaptation* | *Long-term* | *Development* | *Forestry* | *Mechanisms* | *Science* | *Technology* | *Finance* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Linked subjects* | **M**, Ad, Dev | **L**, Mit, Dev | **L** | **H**, Ad, LT, Mit | **L** | **L**, Mit | **L** | **H**, Mit, LT | **H**, Ad |
| *Organiser* | NGO, IGO | UN | P, NGO | NGO | P, NGO | P | UN | P | UN |
| *Parties* | All 6 Annex B, 5 Annex II | 5 non-Annex I, 1 Annex B (Serbia) | 6 Annex B, 2 non-Annex (Brazil + India) | 2 Annex B, Serbia, non-Annex I | 3 non-Annex, 1 Annex I, (Australia) | 2 non-Annex, 1 Annex B, 1 Annex I | - | 2 Annex B, 1 non-Annex | - |
| *Number* | H (59) | H (53) | H (49) | M (33) | M (24) | M (22) | L (14) | L (10) | L (7) |

Key: Strength of linkages: **L**, **M**, and **H** = low, medium, and highly linked to other side event issues. Mit = linked to *mitigation*, Ad = *adaptation*, LT = *long-term*, Dev = *development*. Organisers: NGO = non-governmental organisation, IGO = intergovernmental organisation, UN = UN organisation, P = Party to the Convention. Number: L = fewer than 15 side events, M = 15–40 side events, H = over 40 side events about the issue.

## 3.2 Survey of side event participants

The survey of the participants in the side events at COP 13 covered issues such as the primary role at the COP, primary professional interests, value of side events as information source, reason to participate in side events, formal responsibility to report back, planned participation in side events, previous experience of COP attendance, and background information (i.e., gender, age, and nationality). The survey was limited to eight questions to facilitate a high response rate. To facilitate the survey of participants, we selected side events from the two largest subject categories of side events, i.e., *mitigation* and *adaptation*. Ten side events in each category plus one in reserve were selected. These events were distributed over the duration of the COP and were organised by NGOs, Parties, the UNFCCC, and IGOs. For three of the side events selected, the organisers had chosen both subject categories (referred to as the "*Ad & Mit*" category).

### *3.2.1 Distribution of surveys to side event participants*

The organisers of the side events we selected were contacted by e-mail beforehand about our intention to distribute a questionnaire to the participants. They were also approached immediately before the start of the event. We informed them of the purpose of the study and

asked whether we could distribute the questionnaires when the participants entered the room. We were permitted to distribute the surveys inside the room in 20 of the 21 selected side events. In one case, in which the organisers did not permit indoor distribution of the questionnaires, we distributed the surveys immediately outside the door to the room.

The total response rate was nearly 60% after subtracting participants who stated that they had already completed the survey (Appendix, Table A.1). Response rates were 15% higher in *adaptation* than in *mitigation* side events. Response rates varied between side events, ranging from 33% in a high-level meeting in week two to 83% in two *adaptation* side events held at the beginning of week one. Altogether, 860 surveys were collected, 288 from *adaptation*, 400 from *mitigation*, and 143 from *Ad & Mit* side events. We did a head count of the total number of participants at each side event, including how many men and women were present. We counted until the presentations finished and discussions began. We found that the average number of participants in a side event was 82 people (1,552/19).

## 3.3 Survey of COP participants

Participants at the main COP venue (the Bali International Convention Centre, BICC) were surveyed in order to compare their responses with those of the side event participants. The survey included questions about: primary role, sources of information at the COP, professional interests at the COP, intended side event participation, professional value of side events, and reason for participation in side events.

Surveys were distributed face-to-face at the BICC in the middle of week one and during the high-level segment in the second week. We also tested the feasibility of distributing the surveys and collecting them in marked boxes at two of the information points. Only a handful of surveys were returned in this way and the boxes were mistakenly removed by BICC staff, so we decided not to continue with this approach. A total of 216 completed surveys were collected, 106 in the first week and 110 in the second week of the COP.

We primarily focused our survey on the negotiators and government representatives and to a lesser extent on the other categories of COP participants. We did this because it was thought that members of these participant categories would have less time to participate in side events. Furthermore, we wanted to be able to test the perception that negotiators and government representatives scarcely participate in side events. For these reasons, the surveyed COP participants cannot be treated as a representative sample, though limited comparisons between the participant categories are possible. Nevertheless, the study fulfilled the purpose of testing the hypothesis that negotiators and government delegates, particularly from smaller delegations, participated in scarcely any side events.

## 3.4 Data analysis

All valid responses were loaded into Excel spreadsheets for further analysis. The results are presented in section 4. ArcView 3.3 was used to generate COP participation figures in terms of country population, using a methodology similar to that of Carr and Norman (2008). COP participation in terms of country population was estimated by multiplying the average number of participants at COP 13 side events (82.1) and the total number of side events (200) and using the same primary group and geographical proportions as used in our study. Population data were collected for 2007 (UN 2007), while total and per capita greenhouse gas emission data came from the World Resources Institute's Climate Analysis Indicator Tool (accessed

via http://cait.wri.org/). The proportions of negotiator, government representative, and NGO participation were also estimated. These results are presented in section 4.5.

## 3.5 Analytical structure

The matters presented in Table 3.2 were covered by the surveys administered to the side event and COP participants.

**Table 3.2.** Survey design.

| *Questions* | *Organisers* | *Side event participants* | *COP participants* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Who participates?* | Target audiences | Primary roles, age, gender, previous COP experience, professional interest | Primary roles, age, gender |
| *How many participants?* | Expected number of participants | Real number of participants | Proportion who had participated or intended to participate in side events |
| *Why side events?* | Reason to organise | Reasons to participate | Reasons to participate |
| *Side event as source of information?* | Plans to spread info, reasons to organise, expected outcome | Reasons to participate, reporting | Information sources at COP |

# 4. Results

This chapter is divided into four sub-sections matching our four research questions: *i)* who attends side events, *ii)* why do they attend them, *iii)* why do organisations arrange side events, and *iv)* what are the outcomes of side events?

## 4.1 Who participates?[3]

### *4.1.1 Background data on participants*

The average age of the respondents was 39 years for the side event participants and 40 for the COP participants. About one third of the side event participants were in the 30–39-year age interval, followed by approximately 23% in each of the 20–29 and 40–49-year intervals. Roughly 5% of the side event participants were older than 60 years and very few participants were younger than 20 years.

Compared with COP participants, more side event participants were in the 20–29-year age interval and fewer in the older age intervals. Consequently, our study suggests that younger COP participants are generally more inclined to participate in side events than older ones. The average age of a female side event participant was 36 years, five years younger than the average male side event participant. *Mitigation* side event participants also were younger than *adaptation* participants: 38 versus 41 years old.

Approximately 39% of the respondents were women, with higher percentages of women NGO representatives and researchers. According to primary role at the COP, there was only one significant difference between male and female side event participants, in that fewer female participants were negotiators: in real numbers, the difference was 17 female versus 55 male negotiators.

Table 4.1 presents the number of COPs attended by side event participants. More than half of the responding side events participants, both men and women, were attending a COP for the first time. Slightly more than 10% of the respondents had participated in over five COPs before Bali. A slightly higher percentage of male than female side event participants had attended more than five COPs, and a slightly higher percentage of women than men had participated in 3–5 COPs (male participants with previous COP-attendance experience had participated in slightly more COPs than had comparable women). In part, the large number of new attendants can be explained by the marked increase in participants at COP 13 (see chapter 2).

**Table 4.1.** Number of COPs attended by side event participants.

| *Number of COPs attended* | *No. of people* |
|---|---|
| *1* | 419 |
| *2–3* | 198 |
| *3–5* | 89 |
| *>5* | 85 |
| *n* | 791 |
| *First time attendance* | 53% |

[3] More figures and tables outlining the backgrounds of the respondents can be found in the Appendix.

### *4.1.2 Primary roles of participants*

The number of COPs attended in terms of primary role is presented in Table 4.2. Negotiators and UN representatives likely attended more COPs than did those in other primary roles. The COP attendance among media representatives was more polarised than among those in other primary roles, i.e., among media representatives there were both more first time attendees and a higher proportion of who had attended over five COPs. Few government representatives had experience of over five COPs.

**Table 4.2.** Number of COPs attended in terms of primary role at COP 13, %.

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | 53 | 53 | 36 | 57 | 43 | 57 | 50 | 56 | 53 | 53 |
| *2–3* | 26 | 24 | 33 | 25 | 28 | 14 | 24 | 26 | 23 | 25 |
| *3–5* | 9 | 15 | 15 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| *>5* | 12 | 8 | 16 | 6 | 20 | 21 | 14 | 8 | 14 | 11 |

Key: M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, UN = United Nations representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, NGO = non-governmental organisation representatives, Bus = business representatives.

Table 4.3 presents the planned side event participation in terms of primary role. Approximately 56% of the side event participants planned to attend more than seven side events at COP 13. Only 10% planned to participate in one to three side events. Female side event participants planned to participate in more side events than did men. Negotiators as well as UN, IGO, and government representatives planned to participate in fewer side events than did those in other primary roles. Media, research, and business representatives planned to participate in more side events than did those in other primary roles.

**Table 4.3.** Planned side event participation in terms of primary role at COP 13, %.

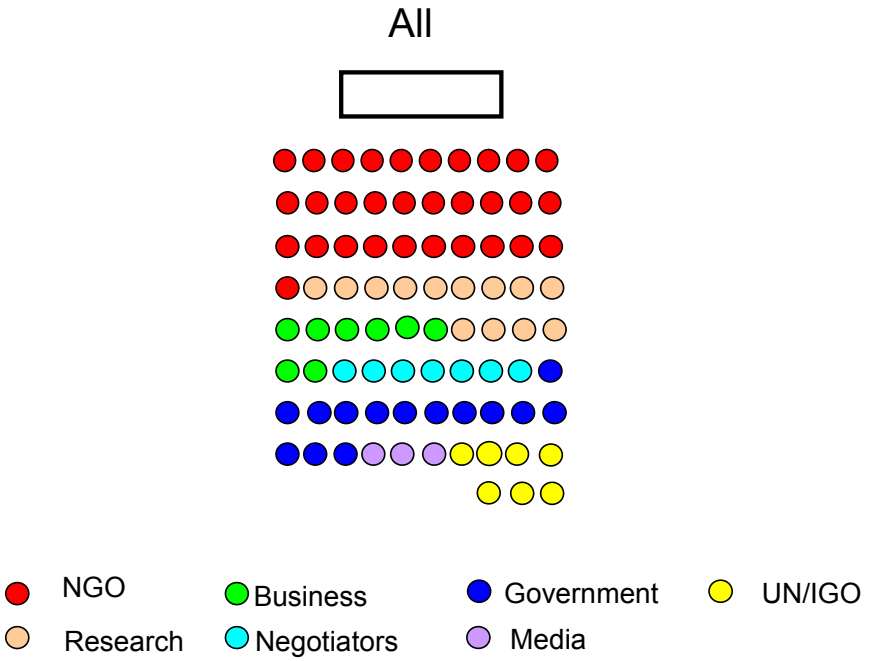
| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1–3* | 10 | 8 | 17 | 12 | 15 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| *4–6* | 35 | 33 | 51 | 41 | 35 | 26 | 23 | 34 | 31 | 34 |
| *>6* | 54 | 60 | 32 | 47 | 50 | 70 | 69 | 59 | 63 | 56 |

Key: M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiator, Gov = government representatives, UN = United Nations representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, NGO = non-governmental organisation representatives, Bus = business representatives.

Figure 4.1 presents the number of side event participants broken down by primary role, i.e., NGO representative, business representative, researcher, negotiator, government representative, UN or IGO representative, and media, according to our head count and the same proportions as in our selection of 21 side events.

Altogether, 52 or about two thirds of the 82 (83) participants were NGO, research, and business representatives, 31 of whom were NGO representatives. About one quarter of the participants were either national delegation negotiators or government – national or local – representatives. In each side event, seven negotiators and 14 government representatives participated on average. According to our study, seven participants of UN and other intergovernmental organisations as well as three media representatives were present at an average COP 13 side event.

**Figure 4.1.** Number of side event participants according to primary role at COP 13.




N.B.: All the figures are rounded, which means that the total number does not add up to the average total number of participants.

We categorised data on respondent business sector, and the results are presented in Table 4.4. The largest categories were as follows: *power, energy and renewables*, *manufacturing and materials extraction*, *business services*, and *flexible mechanisms*. For male side event participants, *manufacturing and materials extraction*, *power, energy and renewables*, and *flexible mechanisms* were the three largest business categories. For women, the largest were *business services* and *power, energy and renewables*. More women than men were business representatives in the renewable energy business sector.

**Table 4.4.** Business sectors of male and female side event participants.

| | *Men* | *Women* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Manufacturing and materials extraction* | 9 (10) | 1 | 10 (11) |
| *Power, energy and renewables* | 7 (1) | 6 (3) | 13 (4) |
| *Environment* | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| *Forestry* | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| *Business services* | 2 | 8 | 10 |
| *Financial services* | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| *Flexible mechanisms* | 6 | 2 | 8 |

### *4.1.3 Expected and actual participation in side events*

Approximately 80% of the organisers expected between 41 and 100 side event participants, and a slightly higher proportion expected 41 to 60 participants. Slightly over 10% expected more than 100 participants. The outcome according to our head count indicated an average of

82 side event participants. The average number of participants was 64 in *adaptation* and 91 in *mitigation* side events. Figure 4.2 shows a markedly higher proportion of *mitigation* than *adaptation* side events in the higher attendance categories.

**Figure 4.2.** Number of participants at the COP 13 side events surveyed.

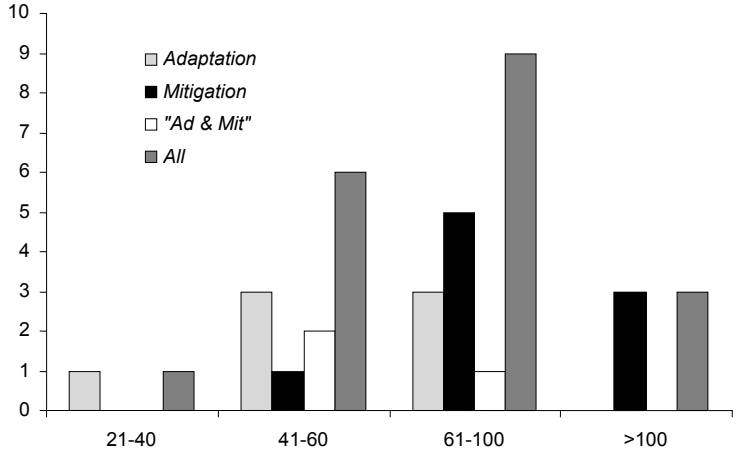



Figure 4.3 shows the number of participants at *adaptation* and *mitigation* side events. *Adaptation* side events attracted 64 people on average, of whom 37 (57%) were NGO, research, and business representatives: 25 were NGO representatives, eight were researchers, and four were business representatives. On average, about one third of the *adaptation* participants were either national delegation negotiators or government representatives: eight were negotiators and 13 government representatives. Five representatives of UN and other intergovernmental organisations as well as one media representative were present at the average *adaptation* side event.

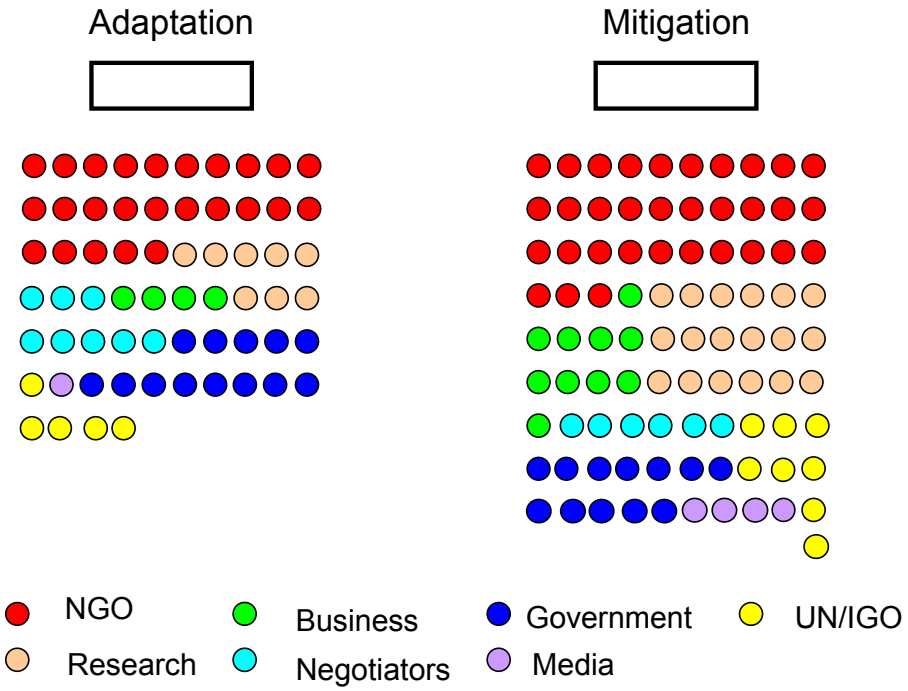
*Mitigation* side events attracted 91 people on average, of whom 61 (67%) were NGO, research, and business representatives: 33 were NGO representatives, 18 were researchers, and 10 were business representatives. On average, approximately 20% of *mitigation* event participants were either national delegation negotiators or government representatives: six were negotiators and 12 were government representatives. Eight representatives of UN and other intergovernmental organisations as well as four media representatives were present at the average *mitigation* side event.

There was higher attendance at *mitigation* than *adaptation* side events. There were, however, more negotiators and government representatives at *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events, whereas there was very little media or business presence. There was also a smaller NGO and researcher presence at *adaptation* than at either *mitigation* or all side events in general.

Our results were up-scaled to the total negotiator participation in side events, assuming similar negotiator and government attendance in side events dealing with other subjects matter. In that case, Bali had 4,200 negotiator and government representative attendances at side events. According to our COP survey, only 16% of the responding negotiators and government representatives stated that they did not plan to attend side events. On average,

they planned to participate in about three side events. If that was the case, approximately 1,400 of the 3,500 Party participants attended side events.

**Figure 4.3.** Number of *adaptation* and *mitigation* side event participants according to primary role at COP 13.




N.B.: All the figures are rounded, which means that the total number does not add up to the average total number of participants.

### *4.1.4 Geographical origins of negotiator and government side event participants*

The geographical origins and Party groupings of the negotiators who participated in the studied side events are presented in Table 4.5. Asia was the most common geographical origin, even after compensating for the geographical proximity of countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. Africa was the second most important geographical origin of negotiators, followed by Europe. Only one negotiator from Oceania returned a questionnaire in our studied side events.

By far the largest Party grouping was G77 plus China, and the number of LDC negotiators was almost twice as high as the number of EU or EIG negotiators. Altogether, about five negotiators from the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Umbrella Group participated in all the studied side events. Contrary to what we expected, more negotiators from all geographical categories except Africa participated in *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events. For Europe, about the same number of negotiators participated in *adaptation* and *mitigation* events. According to Party group adherence, more negotiators from all Party groupings except the EIG participated in *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events. However,

about the same number of EU and LDC negotiators participated in *adaptation* and *mitigation* side events.

**Table 4.5.** Negotiators attending side events according to geographical category and Party grouping.

| | *Adaptation* | *Mitigation* | *Ad & Mit* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Africa* | 6 | 10 | 3 | 19 |
| *Asia* | 12 | 8 | 4 | 24 |
| *Europa* | 7 | 5 | 2 | 14 |
| *Latin America* | 8 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| *North America* | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| *Oceania* | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| *G77 + China* | 25 | 16 | 8 | 49 |
| *EU* | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 |
| *Umbrella Group* | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| *AOSIS* | 4 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| *EIG* | 4 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| *LDC* | 8 | 6 | 3 | 17 |

Key: G77 + China = Group of 77 plus China, EU = European Union, AOSIS = Alliance of Small Island States, EIG = Environmental Integrity Group, LDC = least-developed countries.

The geographical origins and Party groupings of the government representatives participating in COP 13 side events are presented in Table 4.6. Asia was the most common geographical origin, explained by the presence of 27 government representatives from the host country, Indonesia. Europe and Africa sent 37 and 26 government representatives, respectively. Seven government representatives participated from Latin America and Oceania, most of them from small island states, whereas only two government representatives came from North American countries.

By far the largest Party grouping was G77 plus China, and the LDCs sent as many government representatives as did the EU. Fifteen government representatives from Umbrella Group countries participated in the side events surveyed.

*Adaptation* was the most common category of side events attended by Asian and Latin American government representatives. About the same number of both Africa and Europe government representatives attended both *adaptation* and *mitigation* side events. All Oceanian government representatives went to *mitigation* side events and none to *adaptation* events, according to our survey. LDCs and the EU had about equal representation in both side event categories, whereas G77 plus China government representatives attended more *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events (explained by a large number of Indonesian government representatives participating in *adaptation* events).

**Table 4.6.** Government representatives attending side events according to geographical origin and Party grouping.

| | *Adaptation* | *Mitigation* | *Ad & Mit* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Africa* | 9 | 10 | 7 | 26 |
| *Asia* | 29 | 19 | 9 | 57 |
| *Europa* | 12 | 14 | 11 | 37 |
| *Latin America* | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| *North America* | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| *Oceania* | 0 | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| *G77 + China* | 38 | 28 | 17 | 83 |
| *EU* | 7 | 9 | 5 | 21 |
| *Umbrella Group* | 3 | 7 | 5 | 15 |
| *AOSIS* | 2 | 6 | 0 | 8 |
| *EIG* | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 |
| *LDC* | 9 | 9 | 5 | 23 |

Key: G77 + China = Group of 77 plus China, EU = European Union, AOSIS = Alliance of Small Island States, EIG = Environmental Integrity Group, LDC = least-developed countries

### *4.1.5 The gender of side event participants by target audience*

Table 4.7 presents the number of side event participants broken down by event subject and the participants' primary role at COP 13. A higher percentage of female than male side event participants participated in *adaptation* events. Compared with male side event participants, a significantly lower proportion of female negotiators participated in both *adaptation* and *mitigation* side events. There was also a higher percentage of female NGO representatives in *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events. Proportionally, there were twice as many negotiators and significantly fewer business representatives and researchers in *adaptation* than in *mitigation* side events (for both genders). There was also a higher proportion of female NGO participants in *adaptation* than in *mitigation* side events. There was a higher percentage of male media representatives but a lower percentage of male government representatives in *mitigation* than in *adaptation* side events.

**Table 4.7.** Number of side event participants by subject and primary role at COP 13.

| | *Women* | | | *Men* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Ad* | *Mit* | *Ad & Mit* | *Ad* | *Mit* | *Ad & Mit* |
| *NGO* | 52 | 43 | 21 | 60 | 87 | 37 |
| *Res* | 17 | 26 | 6 | 18 | 47 | 9 |
| *Bus* | 7 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 29 | 9 |
| *Neg* | 9 | 3 | 4 | 28 | 22 | 5 |
| *Gov* | 23 | 19 | 11 | 31 | 30 | 18 |
| *Media* | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 12 | 4 |
| *UN/ IGO* | 10 | 10 | 2 | 15 | 18 | 7 |
| *All* | **121** | **119** | **52** | **168** | **251** | **88** |

Key: Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, UN/IGO = United Nations or IGO representatives, Ad = adaptation, Mit = mitigation.

The number of female negotiators was three times lower than the number of male ones, but the number of female government representatives was only 30% lower than the number of male ones. Asia was the largest geographical category in all but the female negotiator category, in which African female negotiators were the most numerous (very similar to the number of African, Asian, Latin American, and European female negotiators). Oceania and North America were very poorly represented in all four categories, except for Oceanian female government representatives. Also, African female government representatives were

less common. Asian (and African and European to a lesser extent) female negotiators were relatively less common. We were unable to compare the side event attendance figures on gender with the overall gender distribution of COP 13 attendees.

### *4.1.6 The geographical origin of side event participants by primary role*

The proportions of side event participants broken down by primary role and geographical origin are presented in Table 4.8. The largest differences between the geographical origins of all respondents and the primary role categories were as follows:

- *Researchers:* The proportion of African-based research participants was significantly lower than their proportion of *overall* side event participation. The proportion of European-based researchers was higher than the proportion of overall European side event participation.
- *Business:* The proportions of Asian and African business participants were lower than their proportions of *overall* side event participation. The proportions of European, North American, and Oceanian business participants were higher than their proportions of overall side event participation.
- *Negotiators and government:* The proportion of African representatives was higher than their proportion of *overall* side event participation. The proportions of North American, European, and Oceanian negotiators and North American government representatives were lower than their proportions of overall side event participation.
- *Media:* The proportions of Asian and Latin American media representatives were higher than their proportions of *overall* side event participation. In contrast, the proportion of European media representatives was lower than their proportion of overall side event participation.
- *NGOs*: The NGO participation from Europe was lower and from North America was higher than their respective proportions of overall number of side event participants.

**Table 4.8.** Distribution of side event participants by geographical origin, %

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Asia* | 37 | 35 | 34 | 37 | 32 | 52 | 34 | 38 | 28 | 36 |
| *Africa* | 12 | 8 | 27 | 23 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| *Europe* | 28 | 27 | 21 | 28 | 35 | 20 | 40 | 21 | 37 | 28 |
| *N Am* | 13 | 16 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 22 | 20 | 14 |
| *L Am* | 4 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| *Oceania* | 6 | 10 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 11 | 7 |

Key: N Am = North America, L Am = Latin America, M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN = United Nations or IGO representatives.

### *4.1.7 The Party groupings of side event participants by target audience*

The proportions of side event participants by primary role and Party grouping are presented in Table 4.9. The largest differences between the Party groupings of all respondents and the primary role categories were as follows:

- *LDC*: Lower proportion of female than male side event participants; higher proportions of LDC negotiators and government representatives; lower proportions of LDC researchers and of UN, IGO, and NGO representatives.
- *Umbrella Group*: Higher proportion of female than of male side event participants.

- *G77*: Higher proportions of negotiators, government, and media representatives; lower proportions of G77 business representatives and researchers.
- *Umbrella Group*: Lower proportions of negotiators, government, and media representatives; higher proportions of business and NGO representatives.
- *EU*: Lower proportions of negotiators and of government, media, and NGO representatives; higher proportions of researchers and of business and UN and IGO representatives.
- *Environmental Integrity Group*: Higher proportion of negotiators; lower proportions of researchers and of business and UN and IGO representatives.
- *AOSIS*: Higher proportions of negotiators and of government and media representatives; lower proportions of researchers and business representatives.

**Table 4.9.** Distribution of side event participants by Party grouping, %

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *G77* | 45 | 41 | 68 | 61 | 40 | 68 | 30 | 43 | 16 | 44 |
| *Umbrella* | 23 | 30 | 4 | 11 | 25 | 12 | 29 | 31 | 49 | 26 |
| *EU* | 23 | 23 | 13 | 16 | 33 | 12 | 37 | 18 | 32 | 23 |
| *EIG* | 5 | 2 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| *LDC* | 13 | 5 | 25 | 20 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 9 |
| *AOSIS* | 3 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 3 |

Key: EIG = Environmental Integrity Group, LDC = least-developed countries, AOSIS = Alliance of Small Island States, M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN = United Nations or IGO representatives.

### *4.1.8 Who was presenting at COP side events?*

Table 4.10 presents the affiliations of the side event presenters who responded to our survey. Organisers mainly selected representatives from academia (e.g., researchers) to present at side events, followed by members of national delegations (i.e., negotiators and government representatives). ENGO and UN representatives were less common. *Mitigation* side event organisers differed from the general pattern in that they primarily selected members of national delegations followed by business representatives; researchers were not among the four most common categories of *mitigation* event presenters. In *adaptation* side events, most organisers followed the same pattern in selecting presenters as applied to all side events in general, except that other NGO representatives were more common than UN representatives.

**Table 4.10.** Presenters at COP side events in terms of affiliation.

| *Adaptation* | *Mitigation* | *All* |
|---|---|---|
| Academics/researchers | Negotiators/delegation members | Academics/researchers |
| Negotiators/delegation members | Business representatives | Negotiators/delegation members |
| ENGO representatives | UN staff | ENGO representatives |
| Other NGO representatives | ENGO representatives | UN staff |
| UN staff | | |

## 4.2 Why participate in a side event?

This section presents the responses to questions about reasons for participation in side events from side event and COP participants. We have also included the reasons for participation of those in various primary roles at COP and gender considerations.

### *4.2.1 Side events as a source of information during a COP*

The survey of all COP participants contained a question about the three primary sources of information at a COP. Table 4.11 presents the percentages of the various information sources according to the participants' primary role at the COP. The most important information sources were official UNFCCC documents, which were rated as the most important by both genders and all primary roles except NGO (3rd), media (1st together with informal meetings), and UN (2nd after side events). Negotiations, i.e., plenary sessions, contact groups, informal meetings, and side events, were the second most important information sources. Respondents rated *ENB*, Party material, informal communications, and *ECO* as the third most important category of information sources. Webcasts were considered less useful as a source of information at the COP, possibly because webcasts were primarily intended for audiences outside the COP.

Side events were rated as the most important source of information by UN and IGO as well as NGO representatives. Negotiators, government representatives, and the media rated side events as relatively less important. Negotiators rated the three more "formal" sources as relatively more important than the less formal ones. Government representatives followed the same pattern, except for negotiations. In contrast, NGO representatives and researchers rated less formal sources, except webcasts, as relatively more important than "formal information sources.

Interestingly, all those in observer roles rated informal communication as more important than information from national delegations. There were small differences between genders: women rated official documentation as slightly less important than did men (although there was no difference between male and female negotiators) and the *ECO* daily NGO newsletter slightly higher.

**Table 4.11.** Three primary information sources at COP 13 according to primary role of participant, %.

| | *Official* | *Nego-tiations* | *Party* | *ENB* | *ECO* | *Side events* | *Informal* | *Web-cast* | *Exhibi-tions* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Neg (2.93)* | 91 | 76 | 49 | 31 | 2 | 18 | 13 | 4 | 9 |
| *Gov (2.45)* | 76 | 40 | 38 | 26 | 9 | 29 | 14 | 10 | 3 |
| *NGO (2.96)* | 44 | 33 | 11 | 31 | 48 | 67 | 33 | 6 | 28 |
| *Res (2.75)* | 63 | 31 | 13 | 31 | 25 | 50 | 44 | 0 | 19 |
| *Bus (2.93)* | 79 | 50 | 21 | 29 | 7 | 43 | 50 | 0 | 14 |
| *Media (2.73)* | 64 | 18 | 18 | 27 | 36 | 36 | 64 | 0 | 9 |
| *UN/IGO (2.45)* | 77 | 23 | 0 | 23 | 8 | 85 | 0 | 8 | 31 |
| *Men (2.73)* | 73 | 44 | 29 | 27 | 16 | 41 | 25 | 5 | 14 |
| *Women (2.81)* | 63 | 46 | 23 | 30 | 28 | 46 | 24 | 9 | 13 |
| *All (2.75)* | **69** | **44** | **26** | **28** | **20** | **42** | **24** | **7** | **14** |

Key: Nego = official negotiations, *ENB = Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, *ECO = ECO*, the daily NGO newsletter produced at the COP, M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN/IGO = United Nations or IGO representatives. The numbers in parenthesis are the average numbers of primary information sources indicated by the respondents.

To check whether the differences between genders were caused by different proportions of primary roles, comparisons between genders were made within each primary role (and the number of men and women within each primary role). There were significantly fewer female than male negotiators, business representatives, and UN or IGO representatives. There were, however, more women than men in the media and NGO categories.

The primary information sources of male and female:

- *negotiators* were similar, except *ECO* was slightly more important to women and webcasts to men;
- *government representatives* differed in that official sources were more important to men and informal events, side events, and negotiations were more important to women;
- *NGO representatives* differed in that side events, informal events, and material produced by Parties were more important to men and *ECO* and webcasts were more important to women;
- *researchers* differed in that *ENB*, *ECO*, and informal sources were more important to men and Party sources were more important to women;
- *business representatives* differed in that negotiations and side events were more important to women and informal events and exhibitions were more important to men;
- *UN and IGO representatives* differed in that side events and exhibitions were more important to men; and
- *media representatives* differed in that official sources, *ENB*, and exhibitions were more important to men.

No major gender differences were noted between the official and negotiation categories. More importance was accorded to:

- informal sources by male NGO and business representatives and researchers, and female government representatives;
- side events by male UN and IGO representatives and NGO representatives, and female government and business representatives;
- *ENB* by male researchers and media representatives, and to *ECO* by female negotiators, NGO representatives, and male researchers; and
- exhibitions by male business, UN and IGO, and media representatives.

### *4.2.2 COP participants' reasons for participating*

COP participants were asked to select and rank the three most important reasons for participating in a side event (Table 4.12). Many respondents misunderstood this somewhat ambiguous question. Accordingly, we analysed the answers in separate categories according to the kind of answers provided.[4] Despite the form of response, the most important overall reason for such participation was to inform oneself about international climate policy. This was not valid for researchers and media representatives, however, for whom obtaining information about research and networking were rated the most important reasons. Information on climate policy was ranked as relatively more important by business, government, and UN and IGO representatives and less important by the media.

The second most overall important reason for participating in a side event was to inform oneself about scientific research results, although the next most important reason, networking, came a very close third – though this was not significant across all primary roles. Negotiators, government representatives, and researchers ranked obtaining information about research before networking, in contrast to NGO, UN and IGO, media, and business representatives, who all ranked networking before research. Moreover, women ranked networking as the

[4] Answers contained 1 to 5 reasons ranked or not ranked.

second most important reason, while men ranked it third. Men also ranked obtaining information about science as slightly more important than women did.

The fourth most important reason for attending a side event was to influence climate policy; NGOs considered this reason relatively more important, and researchers, business, media, and UN and IGO representatives less important. The least important reason for attending was to monitor the work of competitors, except for media and business representatives (for whom it was the fourth most important reason). Media representatives ranked this reason as more important than did those in other primary roles at COP 13.

**Table 4.12.** Reason to participate in side events according to primary role and gender.

| | *Inform oneself of international climate policy* | *Inform oneself od scientific research results* | *Monitor the work of competitors* | *Influence climate policy* | *Establish contacts* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Negotiators* | Slightly Higher | Slightly Higher | Slightly Higher | Slightly Lower | Lower |
| *Government* | Higher | Lower | No difference | Slightly Higher | Slightly Lower |
| *UN/IGO* | Higher | Lower | Slightly Higher | Lower | Higher |
| *Media* | Lower | Lower | Higher | Lower | Higher |
| *Researchers* | No difference | Higher | Lower | Lower | No difference |
| *Business* | Higher | No difference | No difference | Lower | Higher |
| *NGOs* | Slightly Lower | Slightly Lower | Slightly Lower | Higher | Slightly Higher |
| *Women* | No difference | Slightly Lower | No difference | No difference | Lower |
| *Men* | No difference | Slightly Higher | No difference | No difference | Higher |
| ***All*** | **1** | **2** | **5** | **4** | **3** |

### *4.2.3 Side event participants' reasons for participating*

Side event participants were asked to select and rank the three most important reasons for participating in a COP side event. Many respondents misunderstood our formulation of the question by assigning all options a ranking of one to three, instead of only ranking the primary, secondary, and tertiary reasons. Accordingly, we analysed the answers in separate categories according to the kind of answers provided.[5] Despite the mistaken form of response, it emerged that the most important reason for participation was to inform oneself about international climate policy; this was valid for people in all primary roles at COP 13. Obtaining information on climate policy was ranked as relatively more important by business, government, and media representatives and as less important by researchers; this result was slightly more significant for men than women.

The second most important reason to attend was to inform oneself about scientific research results. This ranking also differed across primary roles at COP 13, since UN, IGO, NGO, and business representatives ranked establishing contacts as the second most important reason to participate in side events. Accordingly, researchers and media representatives ranked obtaining information about research results as relatively more important. For researchers, obtaining information about research was nearly as important as informing oneself about climate policy. Negotiators ranking it as slightly more important than did those in other primary roles.

[5] Answers contained 1 to 5 reasons ranked or not ranked.

Networking/establishing contacts was considered the third most important reason for participation in side events. This was ranked as relatively more important by UN and IGO, NGO, and business representatives and relatively less important by negotiators, government, and media representatives. Women generally considered establishing contacts as relatively more important than did men.

The fourth most important reason for attending side events was to influence climate policy. Government representatives and negotiators considered this reason as relatively more important while researchers considered it relatively less important. Generally, the least important reason for attending was to monitor the work of competitors, and this was clear regardless of the form of response. This result was more significant for media representatives, negotiators, and women. As expected, business representatives ranked this reason as relatively more important than did those in other primary roles at COP 13.

**Table 4.13.** Reason to participate in side events according to primary role and gender.

| | *Inform oneself of international climate policy* | *Inform oneself of scientific research results* | *Monitor the work of competitors* | *Influence climate policy* | *Establish contacts* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Negotiators* | No difference | Slightly higher | Lower | No difference | Lower |
| *Government* | Higher | No difference | No difference | Higher | Lower |
| *UN/IGO* | No difference | No difference | No difference | Slightly higher | (Slightly) Higher |
| *Media* | Higher | Higher | Lower | No difference | (Slightly) lower |
| *Researchers* | Lower | Higher | No difference | Lower | No difference |
| *Business* | Higher | (Much) Lower | Higher | No difference | (Much) Higher |
| *NGOs* | No difference | No difference | No difference | No difference | Slightly higher |
| *Women* | Slightly lower | No difference | Slightly lower | No difference | Slightly higher |
| *Men* | Slightly higher | No difference | Slightly higher | No difference | Slightly lower |
| **All** | **1** | **2** | **5** | **4** | **3** |

### *4.2.4 Who did not participate in side events?*

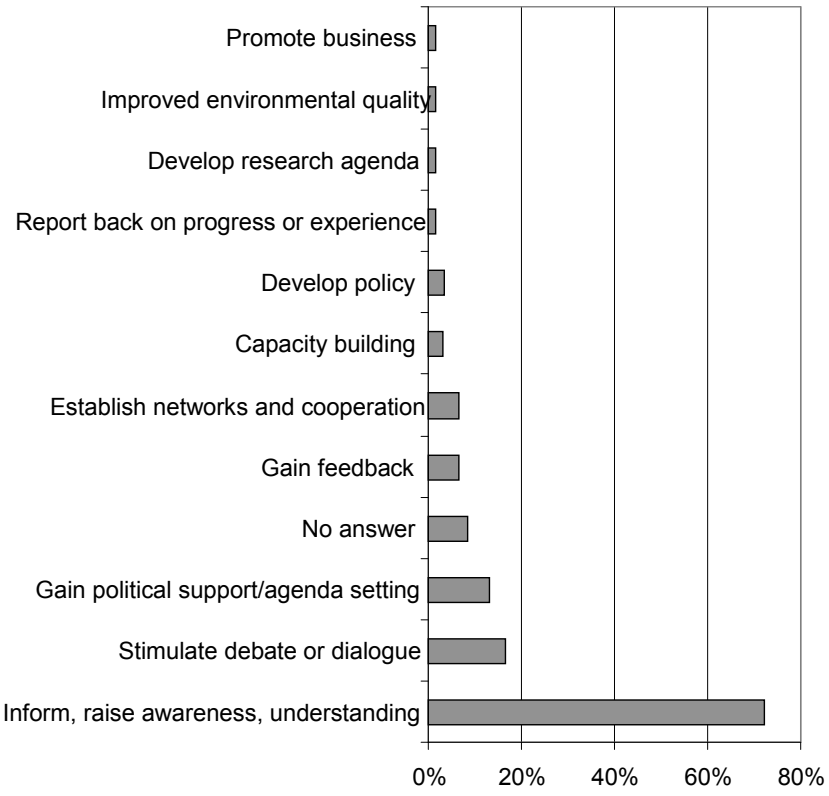
COP 13 participants were asked whether or not they intended to participate in any side events. Approximately 10% of the respondents did not intend to participate. A higher proportion of women than men intended to participate in side events. The average age of those not intending to participate was two years greater than the average age of our respondents. All researchers and UN and IGO representatives planned to participate in side events. More negotiators and government representatives did not intend to participate than did those in other primary roles. Media and business representatives occupied an intermediate position together with NGO representatives.

In terms of geographical origin, Indonesian COP participants were significantly more common than COP participants from elsewhere among those not intending to participate in side events. However, other Asian participants planned to participate to the same extent as did average and European COP participants. Regarding African COP participants, 14 of 15 intended to participate in side events. North American, Latin American, and Oceanian COP participants planned to participate to a somewhat less than average extent. More participants from the EU, the Umbrella Group, and the EIG planned to participate in side events than did G77 plus China participants.

## 4.3 Why organise side events?

Why an organisation decides to organise a side event is closely related to the outcomes it expects from the side event. We asked side event organisers to list their expected outcomes (Figure 4.4). The most frequent answer was to "inform, raise awareness, and understanding". Other common answers, although not close in percentage terms to the *inform* category, was "stimulate debate or dialogue", "gain political support/agenda setting", and "establish networks". Hence, our survey suggests that side events, from the organiser viewpoint, are held primarily to serve as meeting fora and to spread information on particular issues.

**Figure 4.4.** Organisers' expected outcomes/results, categorised free-text answers, %.




Naturally, the reason to organise a side event is also related to who you believe will attend your side event. As stated above, about 80 % of the organisers expected between 41 and 100 side event participants. Organisers of side events were asked to select and rank the most important target audiences (Table 4.14). Negotiators were by far the most important target audience in all categories of side events followed by representatives of UN organisations and researchers. There was a slight difference between *Adaptation* and *Mitigation* side event organisers. *Adaptation* organisers targeted Environmental NGOs and researchers to a larger extent than did *Mitigation* organisers, who to a large extent expected representatives from other Intergovernmental organisations and the media.

**Table 4.14** Expected target audiences/primary roles (five most important):

| *Adaptation* | *Mitigation* | *All* |
|---|---|---|
| Negotiators | Negotiators | Negotiators |
| ENGO | IGO | UN |
| UN | ENGO | Res |
| IGO | Media | ENGO |
| Res | UN | IGO |

Key: ENGO = environmental non-governmental organisations, IGO = intergovernmental organisations, Res = researchers, UN = United Nations organisations.

Organisers' expected target Party groupings are presented in Table 4.15. Organisers considered the G77 plus China as the most important Party grouping to reach in all categories of side events. EU Parties were considered the second most important Party grouping to reach in all side events combined and in the *mitigation* category. In *adaptation* side events, least-developed countries (LDCs, a subcategory of G77) were considered the second most important Party grouping, followed by the EU. In *mitigation* side events, the Umbrella Group was the third most important Party grouping to reach.

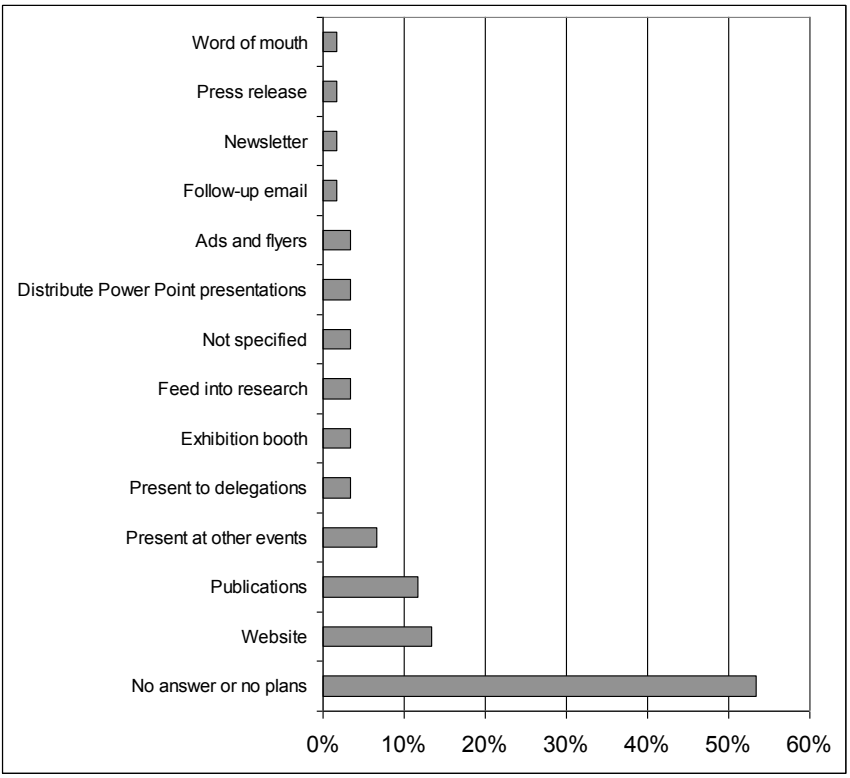
**Table 4.15.** Expected target Party groupings (most important).

| *Adaptation* | *Mitigation* | *All* |
|---|---|---|
| G77 + China | G77 + China | G77 + China |
| LDC | EU | EU |
| EU | Umbrella | Umbrella/LDC |
| AOSIS | EIG/LDC | |
| Umbrella | | |

Surprisingly, over half of the organisers who responded had no plans to spread information about their events or did not answer the question (Figure 4.5). If such a plan did exist, it often relied on people finding their own way to the organisers' websites. Publications and presentations were the other two major ways of spreading word about side events.

In contrast, more than half of the side event participants had a formal responsibility to report back to their organisations. The most common formats for doing this were *a)* written reports *b)* oral reports *c)* articles (newspaper, web, and scientific) *d)* e-mailing lists *e)* lectures and presentations, and *f)* memos and summaries (short written format).

**Figure 4.5.** Organisers' plans for spreading information from side events, (%)




Key: Percentage of categorised free-text answers by type of outcome.

## 4.4 Participants' rating of the value of side events

COP participants rated how valuable they considered side events to be as a source of information for their work (Table 4.16). Overall, 55% rated side events as very valuable for their work and only 5% rated them as not very valuable or of negligible value. A slightly lower percentage of female than male COP participants who intended to participate in side events rated them as not very valuable or of negligible value. A higher than average percentage of government, UN and IGO, and NGO representatives rated side events as very valuable. In contrast, a smaller proportion of negotiators, media, and business representatives rated them as very valuable. Also, a higher percentage of researchers and media representatives rated side events as not very valuable or of negligible value.

**Table 4.16.** Value of side events as information source for respondents' work, as rated by COP participants *planning* to take part, %.

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very valuable* | 55 | 57 | 39 | 70 | 69 | 33 | 53 | 62 | 36 | 55 |
| *Moderately valuable* | 38 | 40 | 52 | 25 | 31 | 56 | 33 | 36 | 64 | 39 |
| *Not very valuable* | 7 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 5 |

Key: M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN = United Nations or IGO representatives. The "Not very valuable" category also contains the "Negligible value" answers.

Side event participants rated how valuable they considered side events to be as a source of information for their work (Table 4.17). Overall, 55% rated side events as very valuable for their work and only 4% rated them not very valuable or of negligible value. A higher than average percentage of negotiators and media representatives rated side events as very valuable; in contrast, a lower percentage of researchers rated side events as very valuable. A higher proportion of UN and IGO representatives rated side events as not very valuable or of negligible value. The average age of side event participants rating these events as not very valuable or of negligible value was lower than the average age of all side event participants.

**Table 4.17.** Participants' rating of side event value as information source for participants' work, %.

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very valuable* | 55 | 55 | 60 | 57 | 52 | 67 | 45 | 56 | 54 | 55 |
| *Moderately valuable* | 42 | 41 | 35 | 41 | 40 | 33 | 51 | 40 | 44 | 42 |
| *Not very valuable* | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |

Key: M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiators, Gov = government representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN = United Nations ro IGO representatives. The "Not very valuable" category also contains the "Negligible value" answers.

The geographical categories and Party groupings of COP participants intending to take part in side events, together with their ratings of the value of side events as a source of information for the respondents' work, are presented in Table 4.18. African COP participants rated side events as more valuable than did the average COP participant, while Latin American participants rated them as less valuable. G77 participants rated side events as more valuable than all other Party groupings.

**Table 4.18.** Side event value as information source for respondents' work, as rated by COP participants *planning* to take part, by geographical category, %.

| | *As* | *Afr* | *Eur* | *L A* | *N A* | *Oc* | *G77* | *EU* | *Umb* | *EIG* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very valuable* | 55 | 70 | 55 | 42 | 53 | 55 | 60 | 54 | 55 | 50 | 56 |
| *Moderately valuable* | 38 | 30 | 41 | 50 | 40 | 36 | 36 | 44 | 39 | 50 | 39 |
| *Not very valuable* | 7 | 0 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 5 |

Key: As = Asia, Afr = Africa, Eur = Europe, L A = Latin America, N A = North America, Oc = Oceania, EU = European Union, Umb = Umbrella Group, EIG = Environmental Integrity Group. The "Not very valuable" category also contains the "Negligible value" answers.

The geographical categories and Party groupings of side event participants together with their ratings of the value of side events as a source of information for the respondents' work, are presented in Table 4.19. African and Latin American participants rated side events as more valuable than did the average side event participant, while North American and Oceanian participants rated them as less valuable. G77 participants rated side events as more valuable and Umbrella Group and Environmental Integrity Group as less valuable than did other Party groupings. Indonesian side event participants rated side events as more valuable than did other Asian participants. If Indonesian participants are excluded, Asian side event participants ranked side events as less valuable than did the average side event participant. Notably, in contrast to the *COP* participants from Latin America, the *side event* participants from that continent were more positive as to the value of side events: whereas only four of ten Latin

American COP delegates ranked them as very valuable, the side event participants assigned them the highest value of all geographical groups.

**Table 4.19.** Participants' rating of side event value as information source for participants' work, according to geographical category and Party grouping, %.

| | *As* | *Afr* | *Eur* | *L A* | *N A* | *Oc* | *G77* | *EU* | *Umb* | *EIG* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very valuable* | 51 | 71 | 53 | 74 | 49 | 49 | 61 | 52 | 46 | 25 | 54 |
| *Moderately valuable* | 46 | 28 | 42 | 23 | 44 | 51 | 38 | 43 | 49 | 63 | 42 |
| *Not very valuable* | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 13 | 4 |

Key: As = Asia, Afr = Africa, Eur = Europe, L A = Latin America, N A = North America, Oc = Oceania, EU = European Union, Umb = Umbrella Group, EIG = Environmental Integrity Group. The "Not very valuable" category also contains the "Negligible value" answers.

The geographical categories and Party groupings of COP participants intending to take part in side events, together with previous COP experience, are presented in Table 4.20. A smaller share of COP participants from Africa, Latin America, and North America were participating in a COP for the first time. A larger share of Asian and Oceanian COP participants were participating for the first time, in line with expectations relating to their geographical proximity to Bali. A larger share of Latin American COP participants had participated in more than five COPs.

**Table 4.20.** COP experience of side event participants according to geographical origin and Party grouping, %.

| | *As* | *Afr* | *Eur* | *L A* | *N A* | *Oc* | *G77* | *EU* | *Umb* | *EIG* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | 57 | 45 | 55 | 40 | 48 | 57 | 54 | 54 | 48 | 54 | 53 |
| *2–3* | 26 | 35 | 19 | 33 | 28 | 19 | 29 | 20 | 26 | 9 | 25 |
| *3–5* | 9 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 15 | 14 | 8 | 11 |
| *>5* | 8 | 10 | 12 | 17 | 11 | 15 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 19 | 11 |

Key: As = Asia, Afr = Africa, Eur = Europe, L A = Latin America, N A = North America, Oc = Oceania, EU = European Union, Umb = Umbrella Group, EIG = Environmental Integrity Group.

The primary roles and gender of side event participants, together with previous COP experience, are presented in Table 4.21. A smaller share of negotiators and UN and IGO representatives were participating for the first time at COP 13, which was in line with our expectations. Larger shares of negotiators, UN and IGO representatives, and media representatives had participated in more than five COPs, while a smaller share of government representatives had participated in more than five COPs.

**Table 4.21.** COP experience of side event participants according to primary role and gender, %.

| | *M* | *W* | *Neg* | *Gov* | *UN* | *Med* | *Res* | *NGO* | *Bus* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | 53 | 53 | 36 | 56 | 43 | 55 | 49 | 55 | 53 | 52 |
| *2–3* | 26 | 24 | 33 | 26 | 30 | 14 | 25 | 26 | 23 | 26 |
| *3–5* | 9 | 15 | 15 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 11 |
| *>5* | 12 | 8 | 15 | 6 | 20 | 24 | 14 | 8 | 14 | 12 |

Key: M = men, W = women, Neg = negotiatorS, Gov = government representatives, Med = media, Res = researchers, Bus = business representatives, UN = United Nations or IGO representatives.

The previous COP experience of side event participants, together with their ranking of the value of side events as a source of information for their work, is presented in Table 4.22. Our study did not find any significantly different ratings of side events value according the

number of previous COPs attended. A slightly larger share of side event participants who had attended over five COPs rated them as not very valuable or of negligible value.

**Table 4.22.** COP experience of side event participants according to ranking of side event value as information source for their work, %.

| | *1* | *2–3* | *3–5* | *>5* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Very valuable* | 56 | 51 | 59 | 55 | 55 |
| *Moderately valuable* | 42 | 44 | 39 | 38 | 42 |
| *Not very valuable* | 3 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 4 |

Side event participants with no previous COP experience planned to participate in as many side events as did the average side event participant. The planned number of side events in which to participate co-varied positively with the number of COPs previously attended.

Previous COP experience did not affect the reasons to participate in side events. Participants who had attended more than five COPs ranked informing oneself of the international policy process as less important and influencing climate policy as more important than did participants having less COP experience (Table 4.23). For participants who had attended one to three previous COPs, there were no differences at all in reasons for side event participation.

**Table 4.23.** Reasons to participate in side events according to COP experience.

| | *1* | *2–3* | *3–5* | *>5* | *All* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Obtaining information on international policy process* | No diff | No diff | No diff | Lower | 1 |
| *Obtaining information on scientific research* | No diff | No diff | No diff | Slightly higher | 2 |
| *Monitoring the work of competitors* | No diff | No diff | No diff | No diff | 5 |
| *Influencing climate policy* | No diff | No diff | No diff | Higher | 4 |
| *Networking* | No diff | No diff | Slightly higher | No diff | 3 |

## 4.5 The world map of side event participation

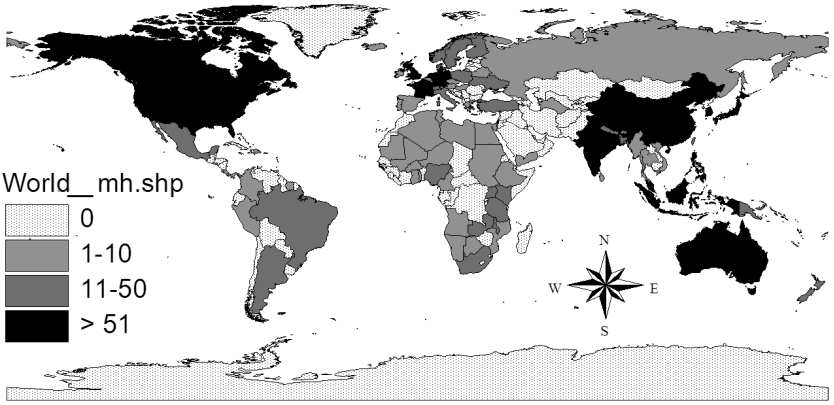
This section presents world map of total side event participation as well as participation of negotiators, government and NGO representatives, and researchers in side events.

### *4.5.1 Number and proportion of side event participants*

The estimated total COP side event participation by country and the share of side event participants per million inhabitants are presented in Figures 4.6 and 4.7. We estimated, conservatively, that a total of 2,800 people attended side events, so the figures and shares reported should be understood as the bare minimum.[6] The number of side event participants ranged from four from approximately 30 countries to 370 from Indonesia, the host country. The number of side event participants per million inhabitants in a country ranged from 0.04 for Ethiopia and 0.05 for India to 110 and 180, respectively, for two countries with very low populations.

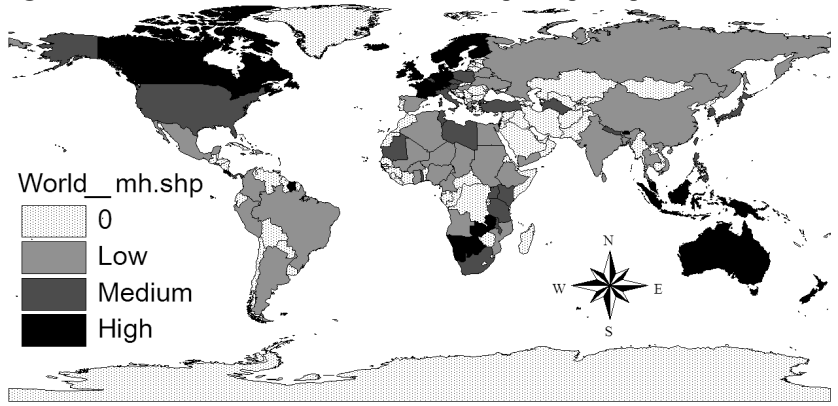
[6] This is a very conservative estimate, since there were many participants who only took part in a few side events. We chose this so as to be on the safe side.

**Figure 4.6.** The estimated number of side event participants at COP 13.




Key: The estimated number of side event participants per country divided into three size categories.

**Figure 4.7.** The estimated number of side event participants per million inhabitants, 2007.




Key: The estimated number of side event participants per million inhabitants per country were divided into three categories. Below 0.5 participants per million = Low, 0.5 to 2.0 = Medium, above 2 = High.

The total number of side event participants per country divided into three size categories is presented in Figure 4.6. In total, the study found that participants came from 91 countries in all parts of the world. More than fifty side event participants came from populous, high-income countries, such as the USA, Japan, the UK, France, and Germany, but also from lower-income countries near the COP location in Bali, Indonesia, such as the Philippines and China, and from Australia, a less populous but relatively rich country very near Bali, and from Canada.

A medium level of participation was found for populous countries in all parts of the world, but also for the less-populous Nordic countries, several countries in Southern and Eastern Africa, and certain countries near Bali, Indonesia. The numbers of side event participants were low from several countries in Africa, eastern South America, and Southern Europe. The study was unable to find any side event participants from most countries in the Caribbean, Western and South–Central Asia, Middle and Western Africa, and Southern Europe; participation was also fairly low from South and Central America.

Figure 5.7 shows *high* side event participation per million inhabitants from:

- countries near Bali, Indonesia, for both high- and low-income countries,
- all five Nordic countries,
- six Western and Northern European countries,
- small island states, such as Kiribati and the Comoros,
- two LDCs, i.e., Bhutan and Zambia,
- two sub-Saharan countries, i.e., Namibia and Botswana, and
- two countries with very small populations, i.e., Monaco and Suriname.

Naturally, there is great uncertainty, particularly if one participant comes from a country with a small population, giving it a very large share compared with countries with large populations. For example, one side event participant from Monaco represents 77 side event participants per million inhabitants.

The *medium* side event participation category contained:

- industrialised, populous countries, such as the USA and Japan,
- newly industrialised countries, such as the Republic of Korea and Republic of China (Taiwan),
- European countries, such as Italy, Belgium, Austria, Poland, and the Czech Republic, and
- sub-Saharan countries, as well as Tunisia and Libya, many of which are highly vulnerable to climate change.

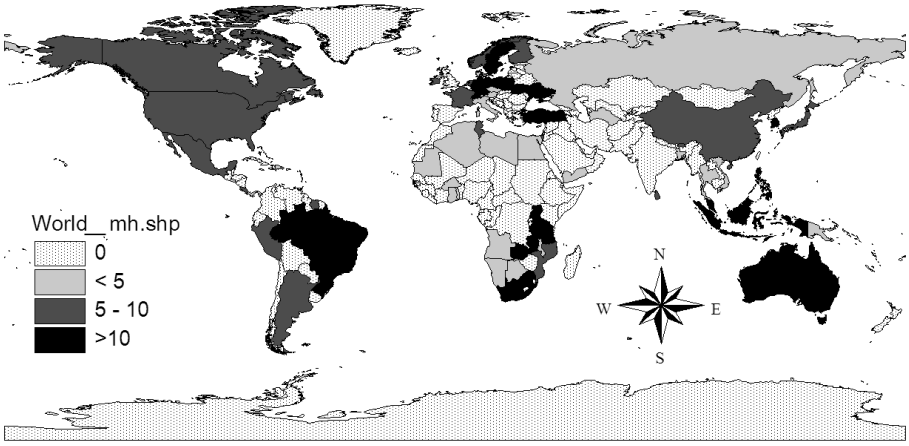
The study found populous developing and industrialised countries, such as India, China, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Sudan, Egypt, Thailand, Algeria, Bangladesh, Mexico, and Russia, among countries with a low participation level. Our survey would have needed to include approximately 1,000 Chinese respondents to reach the high category.

To conclude, our study indicates high side event participation per million inhabitants for high-income (OECD) countries, except for the most populous ones, countries near the COP venue, and countries in southern (sub-Saharan) Africa.

### *4.5.2 Number and proportion of negotiator participants*

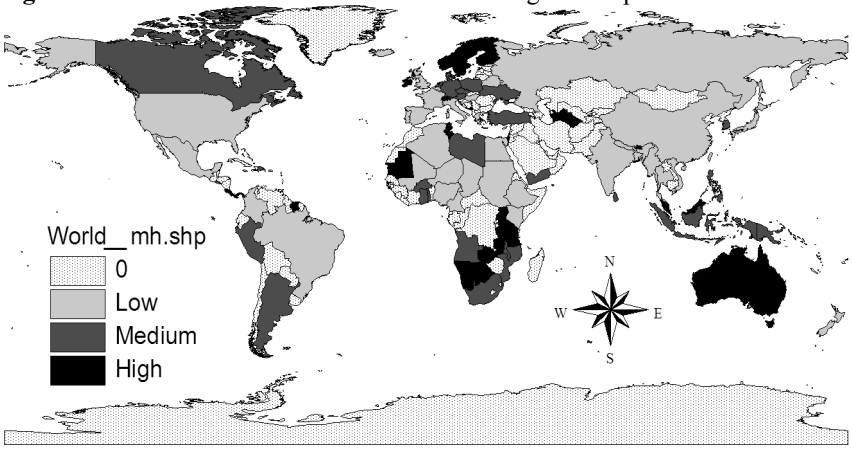
According to the side event organisers, the most sought-after target group was the negotiators, in particular negotiators from the G77 plus China Party grouping. Figures 4.8 and 4.9 present the (estimated) numbers and shares per million inhabitants of negotiators and government representatives attending side events per country. The number of negotiators ranged from zero to approximately 100 (from the host country), while the *shares* of negotiators (per million inhabitants) ranged from zero to approximately 80. The pattern was harder to discern for negotiators attending side events. The relatively small number of negotiators taking part in the study results in relatively few countries being represented. Negotiator participation should therefore be interpreted with caution.

**Figure 4.8.** The estimated number of side event negotiator participants by country, 2007.




Key: The estimated number of side event negotiator participants per million inhabitants per country were divided into three size categories.

**Figure 4.9.** The estimated number of side event negotiators per million inhabitants, 2007.




Key: The estimated number of side event negotiator participants per million inhabitants per country were divided into three categories. Below 0.3 participants per million = Low, 0.3 to 1.0 = Medium, above 1 = High.

The presence of over ten negotiators from a country attending side events indicates high negotiator presence and is likely to provide a good basis for amassing new knowledge and sharing ideas. Figure 4.8 shows that more than ten negotiators came from:

- countries near the COP location,
- countries in Southern and South East Africa, and
- countries in Northern Europe.

For the North and South American countries in the study, the Nordic, Northern, and Western European countries, and China, we estimated a medium negotiator presence, which also would provide a relatively good basis for amassing new knowledge and sharing ideas. Most of these countries are populous. The vast majority of the world's countries, however, sent fewer

than five negotiators; this group includes Southern Europe, Middle Africa, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Central America, and Western and South–Central Asia.

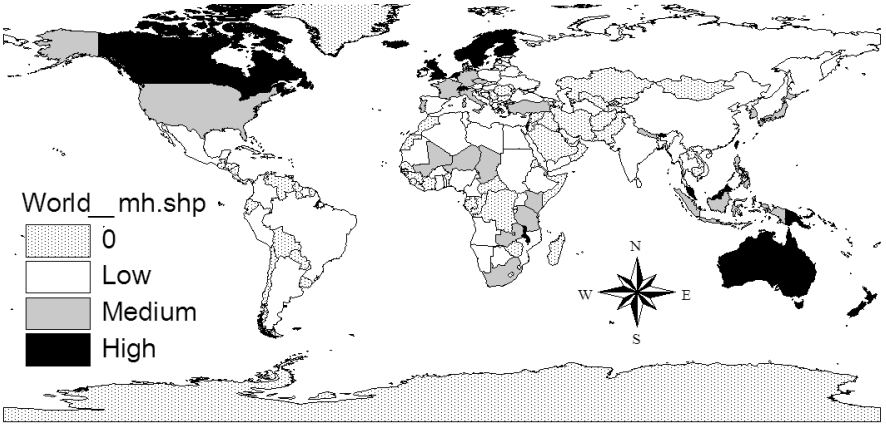
High shares of negotiators (per million inhabitants) attending side events came from countries near Bali, Indonesia, from five countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and three Nordic countries (Figure 4.9). A medium level of negotiator participation was found in countries near Bali, Indonesia and in Western Europe and Southern and Western Africa.

These discrepancies can be somewhat explained by smaller countries having larger shares of negotiators and government attendees relative to their populations. However, the map shows that smaller countries were not excluded from side events. Several informants from European Party delegations and the secretariat expected that negotiators from smaller and poorer countries would be unable to attend side events, since, with smaller delegations, they simply would not have the time, particularly at a high-pressure COP such as the one in Bali. This was also our pre-understanding. Our study demonstrates, however, that the opposite was true. This can be explained by the fact that the Bali negotiations moved rather swiftly to contact groups and then on to informal meetings, for which the Party groupings selected a limited number of participants. This freed up time slots for many Party delegates, in particular, from the large Group of 77.

### *4.5.3 Number of side event NGO participants per million inhabitants*

NGO participants made up the largest subcategory in our study. Figure 4.10 presents the shares of NGO representatives attending side events, per million inhabitants, by country.

**Figure 4.10.** The estimated number of side event NGO participants per million inhabitants, 2007.



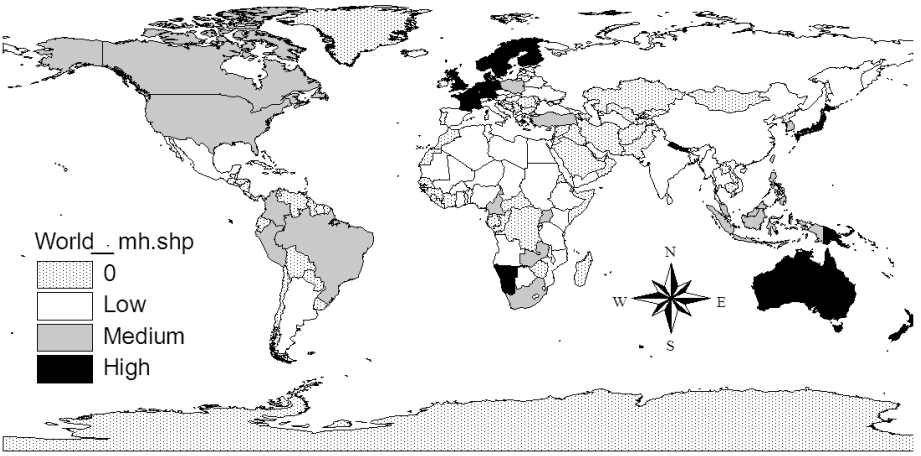

Key: The estimated number of side event NGO participants per million inhabitants per country were divided into three categories. Below 0.3 participants per million = Low, 0.3 to 1.0 = Medium, above 1 = High.

The study found a high level of NGO participation from countries near Bali, Indonesia and from the Nordic countries, the UK, and Canada. There was a medium level of NGO participation from several countries in Southern and Western Africa, Western Europe, and the USA. For many other countries, the study suggested, the level of NGO participation was low, and for thirteen, mainly poor countries, we only found NGO representatives at the side events.

### *4.5.4 Number of side event researcher participants per million inhabitants*

Many researchers attended side events. Figure 4.11 presents the (estimated) shares of researchers attending side events per country per million inhabitants; these shares ranged from zero to approximately 2.1 per million inhabitants.

**Figure 4.11.** The estimated number of side event researcher participants per million inhabitants, 2007.




Key: The estimated number of side event researcher participants per million inhabitants per country were divided into three categories. Below 0.05 participants per million = Low, 0.05 to 0.25 = Medium, above 0.25 = High.

The study found high researcher participation from Northern and Western Europe as well as from countries near Bali, Indonesia. Relatively high researcher participation was also found for countries in North America, northern South America, and Southern Africa.

### *4.5.6 Testing hypotheses for negotiator and government representative participation*

The total number of negotiators and government representatives per side event was estimated assuming a response rate at least equal to that of the average side event participant. Observations at the side events suggested that the negotiators were less likely to reply than members of other primary role categories, so these estimates are likely to systematically underestimate the number of negotiators.

We tested whether the number (and share) of negotiators and government representatives differed between *adaptation* or *mitigation* events. A Mann–Whitney U-test indicated that *adaptation* events generally attracted more negotiators than did *mitigation* ones. There was, however, one exception: a very highly attended *mitigation* event organised by the FAO.

The type of side event organiser, i.e., NGO, Party, UN and IGO, may also affect the number of participating negotiators. The results of our study suggest that UN and IGO events in general attracted many negotiators. Furthermore, side events *can* attract many negotiators, regardless of the type of organiser. No Party-organised event, except the network of female environmental ministers, attracted more than seven negotiators. Only two of eleven NGO events attracted a large number of negotiators, and both these dealt with *adaptation*. The

seven side events with the lowest negotiator and government representative presence were all NGO organised.

Generally the second week was perceived as more intense for negotiators, suggesting less negotiator participation in side events in week two. Our results support this view, as only two of seven side events held in week two attracted many negotiators. These were one event organised by the WTO – the first ever at a COP to the UNFCCC – and a meeting held by the network of female environmental ministers.

Time of day is also believed to influence side event participation by negotiators, and indeed, by all participants. The design of our study cannot statistically demonstrate any such effect, because too few events were surveyed in each of the five time categories. In our study, the lunch (1–3 pm), early afternoon (3.30–5.30 pm), and early evening (6–7.30 pm) time slots all contained events that attracted many negotiators. We surveyed three late-evening slots and only one morning slot, and all four of these events were estimated to have been attended by fewer than 3.5 negotiators.

# 5. Discussion and conclusions

This study assesses the extent to which side events effectively: a) provide input to the negotiations and b) contribute to the construction of the climate regime. Through surveys of the organisers of and participants in side events as well as of COP delegates, we have analysed: *i)* who attends side events, *ii)* why they attend them, *iii)* why organisations arrange side events, and *iv)* the outcomes of side events.

In this section we will sum up the conclusions under four headings: Side event objectives, Attendance, Outcomes, and Recommendations:

## 5.1 Side event objectives

We have concluded that the side events we investigated fulfil the broader official objective of benefiting the participants at Conferences of Parties. The overall assessment of participants, be they negotiators and researchers or UN, government, NGO, and media representatives, is that they found these events useful. Overall, 55% of COP participants rated side events as very valuable for their work. Only 5% rated them as not very valuable or of negligible value. In particular, government, NGO, and UN and IGO participants rated side events as significantly more valuable than did the average participant. African COP participants rated side events as more valuable than did the average participant, while Latin American participants found them less valuable. G77 participants rated side events as more valuable than did all other Party groupings.

Researchers, the media, and UN/IGO representatives were the most likely to find the side events not very valuable or of negligible value. Even so, at the most, only 13% of the researcher participants expected a meagre outcome of the side events.

A common conception is that the side events also should provide a forum for input to the actual negotiations. Wide participation in side events is expected to increase the legitimacy of both the negotiating process leading up to agreements and the results achieved at COPs. By involving a wider range of stakeholders and perspectives, side events can be said to legitimise climate governance through fostering inclusiveness – i.e., engaging a range of major stakeholders in the process leading up to multilateral decisions on climate change. This study has not traced the diffusion of ideas and inputs into the actual negotiations. We can conclude, however, that one requirement for side events being an integral part of the procedural framework for the diffusion of ideas into the negotiations is fulfilled. The extent to which side event input affects the negotiations over time cannot be assessed based only on our survey. We can, however, conclude that it might do so, since the negotiators attended side events to a fairly high extent and also ranked their value high. It would thus be worthwhile to consider a follow-up study, which includes the role of side events in the diffusion of ideas into the negotiations.

## 5.2 Attendance

The total number of side events has varied significantly since the first COP in Berlin in 1995. The numbers, however, have generally been on the rise, COP 13 in Bali 2007 hosting the most such events yet, with over 200 organised side events in the UNFCCC programme and

several arranged in parallel fora. NGOs usually organise between 50 and 60% of the side events and Parties generally organise between 20 and 30 of the side events. Based on the head count by the UNFCCC secretariat, the estimated average number of participants at UNFCCC-organised side events was 64 in Buenos Aires (II), 116 in Montreal, 48 in Nairobi, and 84 in Bali. In relation to the total number of participants (9,400 in Montreal and close to 11,000 in Bali), the side events in Montreal 2005 had 60% higher proportional attendance. Assuming that the UNFCCC events were similar in attractiveness, we can identify three possible explanations: distance between the negotiation and side event venues, proportion of negotiators and government participants, and number of side events and other events.

1) The distance between the negotiation and side event venues can make a difference. In Montreal, the side event and negotiation venues were in the same building, whereas in Bali they were five minutes away by bus and fifteen minutes away on foot. 2) Bali had relatively more negotiators and government participants. Since such COP attendees were less likely to participate in side events than were those in other primary roles, their greater number might have affected the relative proportions of side event attendance. 3) In part, the lower attendance per side event in Bali can be explained by the greater number of events, spreading the number of visits among more occasions. 4) Other factors, such as tourism, might also explain the lower proportion of side event participants at Bali than in Montreal, relative to the total number of COP participants; we have, however, no data with which to test such an assumption.

One of ten COP 13 participants did not intend to participate in any side events. All researchers and UN and IGO representatives planned to participate in side events, whereas 16% of negotiators and government representatives stated that they did not plan to participate in side events.

In terms of geographical origin, Indonesian COP participants were significantly more common among those not intending to participate in side events. However, other Asian participants planned to participate to the same extent as did average and European COP participants. Almost all the African COP participants intended to participate in side events. North American, Latin American, and Oceanian COP participants planned to participate to a somewhat lower than average extent. More participants from the EU, the Umbrella Group, and the EIG planned to participate in side events than did participants from G77 plus China Party grouping.

Our study suggests that younger COP participants are generally more inclined to participate in side events than are older ones. Approximately 39% of the respondents were women. There were higher percentages of women among NGO representatives and researchers than among COP participants in general. According to primary role at the COP, there was only one significant difference between male and female side event participants: there were fewer female negotiators. In real numbers, the difference was 17 female versus 55 male negotiators. Over half of the responding side events participants, both men and women, were attending a COP for the first time. One of ten respondents had participated in more than five COPs before Bali.

Negotiators and UN representatives likely attended more COPs than did those in other primary roles. Few government representatives had experience of more than five COPs. This perhaps reflects the rising number of representatives from a greater range of government ministries and departments. Media representatives fall into two dominant groups: first-time

attendees and those with experience of over five COPs. The high proportion of first-time journalists is in line with the rising numbers of media representatives.

More than half of the side event participants planned to attend over seven side events at COP 13. Only 10% planned to participate in just one to three side events. Female side event participants planned to participate in more side events than did the men. Negotiators, as well as UN and IGO representatives and government representatives planned to participate in fewer side events than did those in other primary roles. Media, research, and business representatives planned to participate in more side events than did those in other primary roles.

About two thirds of the side event participants belonged to the NGO, research, and business categories, three of eight being NGO representatives. About one quarter of the participants were either national delegation negotiators or government representatives (national and local). In each side event, seven negotiators and 14 government representatives participated on average. According to our study, seven participants from UN and other IGOs as well as three media representatives were present at an average COP 13 side event. Business representatives came mainly from the *power and energy*, *manufacturing industry*, *business services*, and *flexible mechanisms* sectors.

The average number of side event participants was 82. The attendance at *mitigation* side events was 42% higher than at *adaptation* events. However, more negotiators and government representatives attended *adaptation* side events, whereas there was very little media or business presence. There was also a smaller NGO and researcher presence at *adaptation* side events than at either *mitigation* or all side events. If we up-scale the results of this survey, assuming that other the side event categories have similar attendance patterns, we find that approximately 1,400 of the 3,500 Party participants attended side events. This is a very rough estimate, but provides an indication of the potential reach of side events. In follow-up studies, this will be explored in more detail.

Asia was the most common geographical origin of side event participants, even after compensating for the geographical proximity of countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia. Africa was the second largest geographical origin of negotiator participants followed by Europe. Only one negotiator from Oceania returned a questionnaire in our studied side events.

The largest Party grouping by far was G77 plus China, and even the number of LDC negotiators was almost twice as high as the number from the EU or EIG Party grouping. Altogether, about five negotiators from AOSIS and the Umbrella Group participated in all the studied side events. Contrary to expectations, more negotiators from all geographical categories except Africa participated in *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events. For European negotiators, the number participating was about the same in the *adaptation* and *mitigation* events. According to Party group adherence, more negotiators from all Party groupings, except the EIG, participated in *adaptation* than *mitigation* side events.

## 5.3 Outcomes

Our main finding was that COP side events are important for *capacity building*, and the importance of this function cannot be overstated. Side events bring together a wide range of highly qualified people that it would be very costly to gather elsewhere or at other times.

Consequently, side events represent a very efficient way of gaining exposure to currently pressing issues in climate policy and science, and hence attract many developing country negotiators and those in other primary roles.

The most important information source at the COP was official UNFCCC documentation. Negotiations, i.e., plenary sessions, contact groups and informal meetings, as well as side events, were the second most important information sources. Side events were rated as the most important source of information by UN and IGO as well as by NGO representatives, the second most important by researchers, the third most important by media, and the fourth most important by business. Negotiators and government representatives rated side events as the fifth and sixth most important information source, respectively. Interestingly, all observer roles rated informal communication as relatively more important than information from national delegations (i.e., negotiators and government representatives). Respondents who had participated in more than five COPs before Bali tended to value side events less as a source of information on climate policy.

The most important reason to participate in side events, according to those who attended and those who planned to, was to inform oneself about international climate policy. The second most important reason, all answers taken together, was to inform oneself about scientific research results. For researchers, it was as important as being informed about climate policy. Perhaps less intuitively, negotiators also ranked being informed of current research as important.

Networking/establishing contacts was considered the third most important reason for side event participation. This reason was ranked as relatively more important by business, NGO, and UN and IGO representatives.

The fourth most important reason for attending side events was to influence climate policy. Among COP delegates, NGOs considered this reason as relatively more important, whereas at the side event venue, government representatives and negotiators considered this reason relatively more important. The least important reason was to monitor the work of competitors. As expected, business representatives ranked this reason as relatively more important than did those in other primary roles at COP 13.

The purpose of organising a side event was primarily to inform, raise awareness, or foster understanding. Less common reasons cited were to stimulate debate or dialogue, gain political support or influence agenda setting, and establish networks. This study suggests that side events, from the viewpoint of the organisers, are held primarily to serve as meeting fora and to spread information on particular issues.

Negotiators were by far the most important target audience for all categories of side events, followed by representatives of UN organisations and researchers. There was a slight difference between *adaptation* and *mitigation* side event organisers. *Adaptation* organisers targeted environmental NGOs and researchers to a greater extent than did *mitigation* organisers, who largely targeted IGO representatives and the media. Organisers considered the G77 plus China as the most important Party grouping to reach in all categories of side events. The EU Party was considered the second most important target audience for all side events combined and for the *mitigation* category. For *adaptation* side events, least-developed countries were considered the second most important Party grouping, followed by the EU.

More than half of the organisers who responded had no plans for spreading information or did not answer the relevant question. When such plans did existed, they often relied on people finding their own way to the organisers' websites. Publications and presentations at other meetings and fora were the other two major ways of spreading word of the side events.

In contrast, more than half of the side event participants had a formal responsibility to report back to their organisations. The most common formats for doing this were *a)* written reports, *b)* oral reports, *c)* articles (newspaper, web, and scientific), *d)* e-mailing lists, *e)* lectures and presentations, and *f)* memos and summaries (short written format).

## 5.4 Recommendations

This was the first in a series of surveys. Several areas need further study and continued analysis if we are to arrive at a deeper understanding of the functions of side events. We have concluded that, although the side events fulfil their broader official objective of benefiting the negotiations, there is good reason to consider ways to improve them further. Six areas can be considered in improving their role of benefiting COP participants.

1) *Recognising capacity building and attendance of negotiators and government officials*
The side events play an important role in capacity building. In addition, one quarter of the participants were negotiators or officials from government agencies. If organisers take note of the extent to which side events reach their primary audience, they will probably prioritise spending more time planning, implementing, and documenting side events. This will both improve the quality of the side events and further develop them into a collective ongoing process rather than a series of unrelated snapshot events. Awareness of side events' important capacity-building role and potential to reach out to climate policy officials may increase the number of organisations wanting to arrange side events. Informing national delegations of this finding will likely further increase their participation, which is important as they comprise the most sought-for target audience.

*2) Recognise their highly qualified audience*
Our study demonstrates that side events are attended by a highly qualified audience. In addition to an average of more than 10 negotiators and government representatives per event, various NGO and business executives, journalists, and highly skilled climate researchers also attended side events. Communicating this fact to side event organisers, national delegations, and COP participants may be a way to increase participation even more; perhaps more importantly for the future role of side events, it may provide a strong incentive to arrange well-prepared side events.

3) *Side events should be brought closer to negotiations*
The side events should be organised as to be more closely related to the negotiations. If this were done, more COP delegates would deem it worthwhile to attend side events, also making it more productive to organise side events. "Close relationship" should not only be understood as implying physical proximity between the negotiation rooms and the side event venues – as was suggested by negotiators and other primary groups – but also as entailing more systematic documentation of side event outcomes and a clearer process for how side events can contribute to ongoing and future negotiations.

*4) Fewer side events*
The optimal number of side events depends how their purpose is framed. Reducing the number of side events would, on one hand, facilitate participant selection of what events to attend (through decreased supply); on the other, it would increase the importance of the selection criteria used by the secretariat. It might be worthwhile to consider hosting fewer side events, mainly because some of them overlap and also to attract more participants to each side event. Organising over 200 side events, as was done in Bali, is also time and resource consuming. On the other hand, a more selective selection process may impede the legitimacy of the overall process. It is therefore crucial to formulate transparent selection criteria that do not systematically discriminate against resource-weak groups; for a start, organisers should demonstrate a track record of information dissemination, keeping to the subject, and adhering to time limits.

5) *Request plans for information dissemination*
There is definitely a weakness in how side event outcomes are disseminated by event organisers. In contrast, the vast majority of side event participants have an obligation to communicate the results of the side events they attend in various forms and via various media. One way to strengthen the role of side events as promoters of the climate change regime is to request that all organisers present plans for how to spread the information and outcomes from their events to a wider audience. This could be included in the web-based application and information on best practices or common ways to disseminate information made available to facilitate organisers' planning. Side event participants have frequently demanded access to the event presentations. Yet, the option to post background material and PowerPoint presentations on the UNFCCC side event website was rarely made use of. At a bare minimum, side event presentations should be made available to participants. The secretariat could create incentives for making presentations available, by making future selection to organise side events conditional on the organisers' track record of making information accessible. Considering their capacity-building role, we believe that improved access to information from side events should be prioritised.

*6) Prioritise presenters who have kept to the subject and adhered to time limits*
It seems to be a general problem that presenters who have not adhered to time limits in the past are still invited back as organisers. Since the number of side events is large and events dealing with similar or overlapping themes are often held concurrently, it is also crucial that organisers stick to the subject. Participants often have very good alternative options as to what side events to attend, which makes disappointment great when the side event title does not reflect the content. Some delegates were frustrated at not getting accurate information on event content, so they could have weighed their options better. Posting brief abstracts on the UNFCCC side event website would help attendees prioritise among the many side events.

The results of this study will be elaborated on in two papers to be submitted for publication in Autumn 2008. The first paper, Hjerpe *et al*. (forthcoming a), assesses the extent to which side events effectively provide input to the global climate change negotiations. The second paper, Hjerpe *et al*. (forthcoming b), analyses two dimensions of inclusiveness – across countries and across major stakeholders in society – based on the survey results.

# Appendix. Figures and tables

**Table A.1.** Number of side event participants by gender and response rate.

| Side event | Women | Men | Total | No. of responses | Response rate, % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A1 | 29 | 43 | 72 | 61 | 83 |
| A2 | 26 | 23 | 49 | 37 | 76 |
| A3 | 14 | 27 | 41 | 34 | 83 |
| A8 | 23 | 32 | 55 | 26 | 47 |
| A9 | 37 | 79 | 116 | 67 (8 done) | 62 |
| A10 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 15 | N/A |
| A11 | 1 | 23 | 24 | 8 | 33 |
| A12 | 34 | 58 | 92 | 55 | 60 |
| A5/M2 | 64 | 24 | 88 | 28 (20 done) | 43 |
| A6/M3 | 35 | 47 | 82 | 41 (30 done) | 79 |
| A7/M4 | 50 | 64 | 114 | 74 (16 done) | 77 |
| M0 | 20 | 33 | 53 | 27 | 53 |
| M1 | 41 | 64 | 105 | 60 | 57 |
| M5 | 35 | 26 | 61 | 36 (13 done) | 75 |
| M6 | 25 | 44 | 69 | 33 (15 done) | 61 |
| M7 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 14 | N/A |
| M8 | 25 | 49 | 74 | 40 (9 done) | 62 |
| M9 | 45 | 60 | 105 | 50 | 48 |
| M10 | 31 | 63 | 94 | 37 (20 done) | 51 |
| M11 | 24 | 59 | 83 | 20 (19 done) | 44 |
| M12 | 57 | 118 | 175 | 97 | 55 |
| Ad only | 164 | 285 | 449 | 288 (303) | 64 (65) |
| A & M | 149 | 135 | 284 | 143 | 50 (66) |
| Mit only | 303 | 516 | 819 | 400 (414) | 49 (54) |
| **Tot** | **616** | **936** | **1552** | **831 (860)** | 54 (59) |

Key: The parentheses in the "No. responses" column contain the number of participants who stated they had already answered the questionnaire and thus were excluded from the study. The parentheses in the "Response rate" column contain the response rate after having subtracted those who were excluded. We could not complete head counts for two events, which were excluded from the analysis of number of participants; the responses for these events were included in the analysis of the surveys.

**Figure A.2.a.** COP and side event participants by age, gender, and issue category, %.

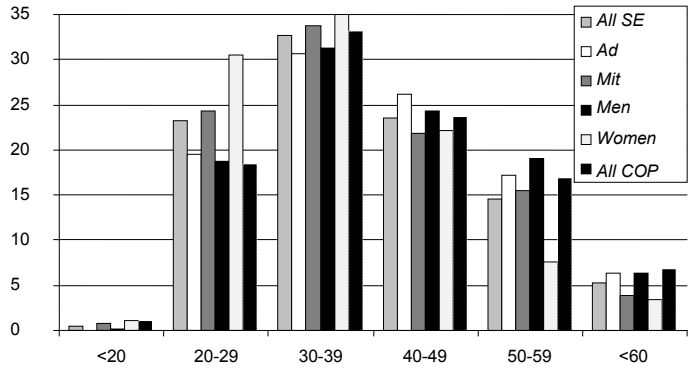
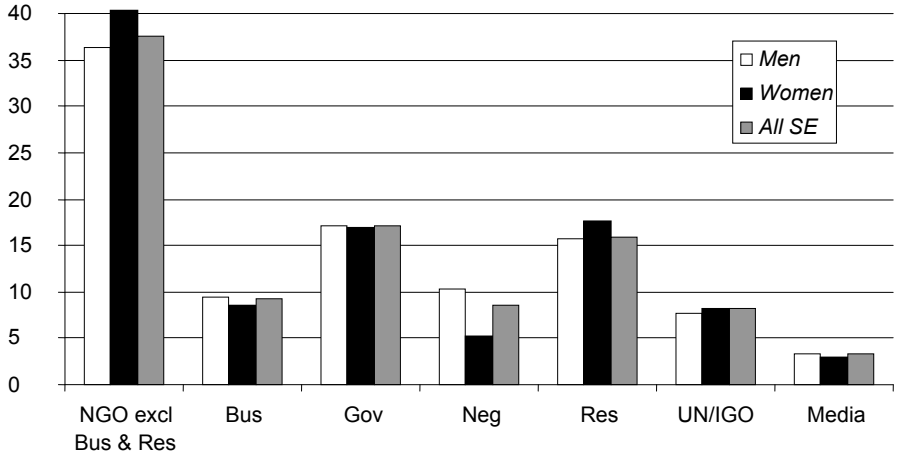


**Figure A.2.b.** Side event participants by gender and primary role at COP 13, %.



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