climate

MDPI

Article

Indigenous Contestations of Carbon Markets, Carbon Colonialism, and Power Dynamics in International Climate Negotiations

Zeynep Durmaz [1] and Heike Schroeder [2,*]

[1] Apartment 16, Floor 3, Block A, Sara Complex, No: 12, 29/1 Street, Oba Neighborhood, Alanya 07400, Antalya, Türkiye; zeynepdurmaz1996@gmail.com
[2] School of Global Development, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, UK
* Correspondence: h.schroeder@uea.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper examines the intersection of global climate governance, carbon markets, and Indigenous Peoples' rights under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It critically analyses how Indigenous Peoples have contested the Article 6 market mechanisms of the Paris Agreement at the height of their negotiation during COP25 and COP26 by drawing attention to their role in perpetuating "carbon colonialism," thereby revealing deeper power dynamics in global climate governance. Utilising a political ecology framework, this study explores these power dynamics at play during the climate negotiations, focusing on the instrumental, structural, and discursive forms of power that enable or limit Indigenous participation. Through a qualitative case study approach, the research reveals that while Indigenous Peoples have successfully used discursive strategies to challenge market-based solutions, their influence remains limited due to entrenched structural and instrumental power imbalances within the UNFCCC process. This study highlights the need for equitable policies that integrate human rights safeguards and prioritise Indigenous-led, non-market-based approaches to ecological restoration.

Keywords: Indigenous Peoples; Paris Agreement; market mechanisms; Article 6; carbon colonialism; climate negotiations; COPs

Academic Editor: Jack Barkenbus

Received: 18 June 2025
Revised: 19 July 2025
Accepted: 23 July 2025
Published: 24 July 2025

Citation: Durmaz, Z.; Schroeder, H. Indigenous Contestations of Carbon Markets, Carbon Colonialism, and Power Dynamics in International Climate Negotiations. *Climate* **2025**, *13*, 158. https://doi.org/10.3390/cli13080158

1. Introduction

"Vulnerability of ecosystems and people to climate change differs substantially among and within regions, driven by patterns of intersecting socioeconomic development, unsustainable ocean and land use, inequity, marginalisation, historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism, and governance" [1].

This quote marks the first mention by a scientific body such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of colonialism as both a historical and ongoing driver of injustice, highlighting how colonial legacies continue to influence current environmental, social, and economic vulnerabilities. These legacies are especially pronounced in the Global South, where the exploitation of land, resources, and people under colonial rule has left profound structural inequalities that persist today.

These historical injustices are not merely relics of the past; they are perpetuated and even exacerbated by contemporary climate governance mechanisms [2,3]. Within the global framework of the climate negotiations, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has emerged as a central arena where states negotiate the terms

of climate action, with input from corporations and civil society. According to Dehm [4], the UNFCCC's primary objective, to stabilise greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropocentric interference with the climate system, also reflects the tension between ecological limits and the imperatives of economic growth.

The UNFCCC's focus on sustainable development aligns with neoliberal principles that drive the global carbon market and endangers Indigenous livelihoods, bringing to light the issue of "carbon colonialism." This term describes how carbon trading and offset schemes replicate colonial exploitation by commodifying natural resources and shifting the burden of mitigation to the Global South [5]. Such mechanisms allow industrialised countries and corporations to continue polluting by buying carbon credits from projects in less developed regions, often without regard for Indigenous Peoples' (IPs') rights or their traditional land management practices.

Therefore, carbon market mechanisms, such as the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, have been criticised for perpetuating extractivist practices over sustainable, locally led alternatives, often resulting in increased emissions and adverse effects on Indigenous lands and livelihoods [6,7]. IPs, who often act as stewards of vast biodiverse territories, are disproportionately impacted by these market-based mechanisms, which have been documented to cause dispossession, cultural erasure, and environmental degradation [8]. This study focuses on Article 6 (summarised in Section 2.2 below) not only as a technical mechanism, but as a site of political struggle that reflects and reinforces the broader injustices of climate governance—where Indigenous voices have been marginalised, yet have actively resisted bearing the adverse effects. In this context, this research will examine the development of carbon market mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, focusing on the power dynamics between IPs and dominant actors such as states and corporations in carbon market negotiations. The research questions are as follows: (1) How have Indigenous Peoples contested the mechanisms under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which they argue perpetuate carbon colonialism, during the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) negotiations (COP25 and COP26)? (2) What insights do these contestations offer into the power dynamics and socio-environmental conflicts inherent in global climate governance? The contribution we make is that we focus on specific negotiations to document how carbon colonialism is being enacted.

This paper will be organised into several key sections. Following the Introduction, the literature review will explore power dynamics in global climate governance, carbon market structures, and carbon colonialism and Indigenous Peoples. While the methodology will detail the research approach, the conceptual framework will employ political ecology to analyse power dynamics (instrumental, structural, and discursive) affecting Indigenous participation. The analysis will examine historical developments and the crucial COP negotiations—COP25 and COP26—in relation to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. It will end with Discussion and Conclusions Sections.

2. The Carbonisation of Governance, Markets and Neo-Colonialism

2.1. Neoliberal, Market-Driven Climate Governance and COP Negotiations

Global climate change governance has, from its inception, been firmly embedded in a neoliberal paradigm. Emissions trading was already being brought into the negotiations of the UNFCCC treaty text as early as 1991 through the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and its new GHG trading department [9]. The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where the UNFCCC was opened for signature, was also marked by a strong neoliberal sentiment evidenced by its endorsement of an "open economic system"

and continuous economic growth [9]. The chair of the Rio Summit, then-UN Secretary-General Maurice Strong, is known to have had strong personal ties with the corporate sector [10].

The 1997 Kyoto Protocol introduced market-based instruments to carbon mitigation efforts. The US had successfully pushed for the inclusion of "flexible mechanisms" as a non-negotiable condition for accepting binding targets in response to the US Senate resolution from the summer of 1997, making this a pre-condition for US ratification. Indeed, no other country was able to push through anywhere near as much of its agenda as the US [11,12]. Other parties conceded to these demands for flexibility in return for continued support from the world's largest emitter, even though many had favoured an approach based on policies and measures, such as the EU [10].

Following the Kyoto Protocol, significant developments in carbon markets ensued. In June 1999, the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) was set up by UNCTAD [9] with a coalition of international companies and business associations. IETA was the first multi-sectoral business group to focus on trading GHG reductions [13], and this illustrates how readily powerful business interests can shape market mechanisms, whilst undermining environmental integrity [14].

The 2015 Paris Agreement requires all parties to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), reflecting voluntary, country-specific climate goals and measures [15] and shifting the focus from historical emissions to a more universal responsibility for climate action and a more inclusive approach [16]. This lacks strict enforcement but uses a transparency framework to encourage accountability and ambition over time. Article 6 is a critical element, as it provides the foundation for voluntary international cooperation in achieving climate goals. Article 6 includes frameworks for cooperative approaches and sustainable development mechanisms. While often referred to as the "market article," Article 6 allows countries to transfer mitigation outcomes to meet their NDCs elsewhere. Instead of mentioning "markets" [8], the article introduces the concept of "Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes" (ITMOs), giving countries flexibility to set up carbon markets if they choose.

Since COP24 in Katowice in 2018, where most of the Paris Agreement rulebook was adopted but decisions on Article 6 were postponed due to persistent disagreements, negotiations on carbon market mechanisms have been a central yet contentious agenda item. COP25 in Madrid failed to deliver consensus, particularly on issues such as double counting, the transition of Kyoto-era credits, and the integration of human rights protections [17–19]. COP26 in Glasgow marked a turning point with the adoption of the Article 6 rulebook, establishing frameworks for market-based cooperation (6.2 and 6.4) and non-market approaches (6.8), though civil society criticised the weak language on human rights and environmental safeguards [8,20,21]. COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh focused on operationalising these mechanisms, launching a capacity-building work programme, but made little progress on unresolved technical issues [22,23]. At COP28 in Dubai, negotiations stalled amid closed-door "informal informal" meetings and growing concerns over transparency and undue pressure from financial institutions, ultimately failing to reach consensus on implementation details for Articles 6.2 and 6.4—though the Article 6.8 work programme was adopted [24]. Finally, COP29 in Baku in late 2024 delivered the long-awaited conclusion of the Article 6 negotiations, adopting comprehensive guidance on accounting, registries, and methodological standards, including an international registry linked to both centralised and national systems [25,26].

2.2. Carbon Markets

The commodification of carbon involves converting carbon emissions into tradable units, thus treating pollution as a marketable commodity [27] and making privatisation, individuation, and valuation key aspects of commodification [28]. Privatisation assigns exclusive rights to resources, individuation involves isolating commodities from their contexts for sale, and valuation focuses on exchange value, often neglecting social and ecological worth. Additionally, to be profitable, commodities are often modified to meet the demands of capital—namely, the logic of capital accumulation, which prioritises short-term profitability, return on investment, and the expansion of market value over social or ecological concerns. Pollution trading advocates believe it is cost-effective, fosters innovation, and consistently reduces pollution through market incentives, unlike technology-based regulations, which they view as economically inefficient and overly rigid [29]. Polanyi [30], on the other hand, warns that relying solely on market mechanisms can lead to social and ecological destruction, as nature managed purely by market values may undermine societal and environmental wellbeing. Thus, the creation of carbon commodities reflects a complex interplay between global carbon markets and local socio-environmental conditions, highlighting the challenges of global environmental governance [31].

Carbon markets are designed to standardise the creation, trading, and regulation of carbon credits through mechanisms such as emissions reduction crediting, baseline establishment, emission caps, and trading systems [8]. Carbon credits, represented as certificates or permits, are generated by projects that either reduce or avoid GHG emissions, measured in tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e) [31]. This market-based approach aims to incentivise sustainable practices and make climate mitigation cost-effective by integrating carbon trading into capitalist frameworks, thereby creating new economic opportunities and minimising state intervention, in alignment with neoliberal economic principles [14,32].

However, critics like Pearse and Böhm [33] argue that carbon markets are fundamentally flawed and irreformable. They highlight failures in the system, unjust practices, loopholes for polluters, and difficulties in verifying offsets. Additionally, they point out the unrealistic equivalence between carbon sequestration and fossil fuel emissions, and how the reliance on pricing can undermine more effective decarbonisation strategies, such as reducing deforestation and restoring soil health. The international carbon market's utilitarian approach thus focuses on an imagined collective good, rather than addressing systemic sustainability challenges [4].

The Kyoto Protocol marked the introduction of market-based mechanisms to reduce GHG emissions. It established a cap-and-trade system where countries received emissions credits based on their 1990 levels, which could be traded, banked, or used to offset excess emissions [9]. These credits, measured in tCO2e, transformed emissions into tradable commodities. The Kyoto Protocol also introduced two project-based mechanisms: the CDM and Joint Implementation (JI). The CDM was designed to assist developing countries in achieving sustainable development outcomes while enabling industrialised countries to meet their reduction targets through investing in developed countries. JI allowed industrialised countries to earn emissions reduction units by undertaking projects in other industrialised countries [34]. However, these mechanisms have been critiqued for perpetuating inequities by not only allowing developed countries to cheaply offload their emissions reduction responsibilities onto poorer countries [4,35], but having been engineered to secure Certified Emission Reductions rather than deliver real emission cuts, such as in China [36].

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, expands on the Kyoto mechanisms by introducing new international trading mechanisms under Article 6 through cooperative approaches

(Article 6.2), a new market mechanism (Article 6.4), and non-market approaches (Article 6.8). Article 6.2 provides a framework for bilateral cooperation through the use of ITMOs. It allows countries to trade emissions reductions, enabling a host country to sell carbon units to a buyer country in exchange for investments, technology transfers, or capacity-building support. The host country can count these towards their NDCs. Article 6.4 establishes a new mechanism to contribute to greenhouse gas mitigation, replacing the CDM with a focus on environmental integrity and sustainable development. It allows public and private actors to generate and trade high-integrity carbon credits from verifiable emissions reductions. A share of proceeds is to be allocated to fund adaptation efforts in developing countries. Article 6.8 emphasises non-market approaches, including technology development, transfer, and capacity building, to support broader climate goals. It promotes holistic and balanced climate action by enhancing public and private participation and minimising adverse environmental or social impacts [15].

While Article 6 aims to create a more integrated and flexible carbon market, it has been subject to debate. Critics argue that it still perpetuates the reliance on offsets that may not deliver real or additional emissions reductions [4]. Furthermore, the use of carbon markets to achieve global climate targets is challenged by difficulties in verifying the effectiveness of offset projects and concerns about exacerbating global inequalities [33].

2.3. Carbon Colonialism and Indigenous Peoples

Although formal, direct colonial control has ended, some countries, agencies, and corporations continue to wield power over other countries or peoples through disguised means. This phenomenon, known as "neocolonialism", involves maintaining dominance through economic and legal frameworks, thereby sustaining political control indirectly. Local elites often align with the international capitalist agenda, either voluntarily or by incentive or coercion [37,38].

Carbon colonialism is perpetuated by developed countries and corporations, which have historically contributed the most to ecological degradation generally, and climate change through intensive resource extraction and ecological degradation specifically, now imposing restrictive climate policies on developing countries [5]. This dynamic stifles developing countries in their developmental trajectory through resource exploitation and production for global markets [4], thus exacerbating both environmental and economic inequalities and enabling richer countries to sustain their highly ecologically destructive practices while outsourcing the environmental costs to poorer countries [39,40]. Indigenous Peoples are particularly vulnerable to carbon colonialism given their very different worldviews and values. While there is not an authoritative definition of who is Indigenous, self-determination as Indigenous and defining their own identity or membership based on their customs and traditions is a key criterion [41]. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples emphasises that Indigenous communities have a strong connection to their territories and natural resources, maintain distinct social, economic, and political systems, and preserve unique languages, cultures, and beliefs [42]. Although they make up only around 5% of the global population, IPs steward 20–25% of the world's land, which harbours 80% of global biodiversity and encompasses 40% of all protected and ecologically intact areas [43]. This land represents over 300 gigatons of carbon sinks [6]. Since the early 2000s, Indigenous groups have actively sought recognition and a formal role in UNFCCC negotiations. Their advocacy was crucial in highlighting the shortcomings of mechanisms like the CDM or REDD+, which they argued could lead to new forms of colonialism by expropriating their lands, undermining their traditional rights, and allowing industrialised countries to offset their emissions at the expense of Indigenous lands and livelihoods in the Global South [4].

In 2001, the UNFCCC officially recognised IPs as one of nine major groups, and this recognition provided a structured way for Indigenous representatives to engage in the UNFCCC process [44,45]. In 2008, IPs established the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC), or Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, to coordinate their positions, statements, and advocacy efforts during UNFCCC meetings and beyond. Their advocacy led to the creation of The Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) at COP21 in Paris (Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 135), aimed at enhancing the engagement of IPs and local communities in climate negotiations and ensuring that their unique knowledge and perspectives are included in decision-making processes (Decision 2/CP.23) [45]. Organisations such as the Indigenous Environmental Network, Climate Justice Alliance, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, and Forest Peoples Programme play critical roles in these processes by articulating and amplifying the perspectives and arguments of IPs (see Table 1) and by raising awareness for, and advocating for the implementation of, Indigenous human and land rights [46].

Table 1. What the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN) says about carbon offsets.

What They Say	What We Say
Carbon offsets reduce pollution.	- Carbon trading and offsets delay and diminish greenhouse gas emissions phase out, allowing dirty industry to continue business as usual. - Direct emissions reductions through phasing out fossil fuels is the principal and most important way to stop climate change.
Carbon offsets create incentives for Indigenous Peoples.	- Payments are not promised to communities in carbon offset projects, but often depend on various verifications in order to receive payment if it is received at all. - If payments do arrive, misuse and division have been reported. Funds may further undermine land tenure, conservation, and local benefits by driving up prices. - Years of data demonstrate that FPIC and the rights of Indigenous Peoples have not been upheld in carbon offset projects. - While Indigenous Peoples are solicited to sign contracts under the reasoning that it is a "rights" issue for Indigenous Peoples because of the carbon in the forests, we have observed conflict and divisions over the deeper question of how to reconcile the ownership of carbon within the cosmovision (spirituality) beliefs of Indigenous Peoples' communities in participating in the commodification and privatisation of carbon. - Carbon offsets reinforce the privatisation of nature.
We must track greenhouse gas emissions.	- Current carbon accounting frameworks all fail to address essential quality criteria such as additionality, baseline setting, transparency and permanence. - The lack of data integrity and availability, coupled with large margins of errors, uncertainties, and biases in carbon offset outcomes, undermines the credibility and effectiveness of any tracking methods. - Carbon accounting efforts in the service of setting up a carbon market pose a conflict of interest because if emissions are overestimated then companies can claim higher reductions.
The market will take care of reducing emissions over time.	- Carbon markets rearrange emissions on a spreadsheet rather than materially reducing emissions. - Far too often, forest offset brokers and managers have targeted Indigenous Peoples, driven up land prices, and forced Indigenous communities from their territories.

The Kyoto mechanisms have enabled neocolonial practices by giving carbon credits to "managed" carbon sinks like state-run or corporate monoculture plantations, while forests managed by Indigenous communities have found it difficult to receive CDM accreditation given technical and bureaucratic barriers, a structural bias towards large-scale projects, particularly in rapidly developing economies such as China and India, and a lack of secure

land tenure, among others [9,47]. This system disregards traditional land stewards and opens the door for land grabs by powerful interests [7]. Furthermore, the way credits are allocated—based on historical emissions—has benefitted major polluters.

Carbon markets often result in "greenwashing," masking the ongoing exploitation of resources for private profit while deepening social and environmental inequities [48]. Carbon offset projects, promoted as climate solutions, have often violated human rights when local communities and ecosystems were disregarded, and created new problems such as food insecurity, resource depletion, and land grabs [49]. They have not only perpetuated existing injustices but also introduced new forms of exploitation under the pretext of environmental responsibility [50].

Recent developments underscore how carbon market mechanisms can lead to land dispossession and cultural disruption for IPs. In Kenya, the Ogiek were forcibly evicted from their ancestral lands in late 2023 to make way for carbon credit conservation projects [51]. In Thailand, the Pgak'yau (Karen) communities face insecure land tenure and are pressured to abandon their sustainable rotational farming practices due to state land-use zoning tied to carbon offset schemes—policies that contradict their ecological worldview and risk reclassification of their lands as conservation forest [2]. In Peru, members of the Kichwa community report being displaced from the Cordillera Azul national park without compensation, despite a USD 87 million carbon deal involving a major extractive firm [52]. Indigenous leaders across the Amazon, like Fany Kuiru Castro and Wilfredo Tsamash, describe opaque contracts written in inaccessible language, a lack of consultation, and increasing intrusion by "carbon pirates" offering long-term agreements that undermine Indigenous rights and livelihoods [52].

From an Indigenous worldview, the commodification of land and nature through carbon markets directly contradicts cultural and spiritual relationships to territory, where forests and rivers are often regarded as living relatives rather than resources [2]. This ontological divergence reinforces ethical dilemmas that are rarely appreciated by project developers or policymakers.

Table 1 contrasts common justifications for carbon offsets with critical counterpoints, highlighting that carbon offsets often fail to deliver genuine emissions reductions, can disadvantage Indigenous communities, and suffer from flawed accounting and market mechanisms [53].

3. Methodology

This research examines the power dynamics and socioeconomic conflicts within global climate governance. COP25 and COP26 were chosen due to their key roles in shaping the global carbon market framework of Article 6, as part of the development and finalisation of the Paris Agreement rulebook. These COPs are selected as case studies for the distinct opportunities they present to observe stakeholder interactions and power dynamics during the critical phase of negotiating Article 6, rather than to serve as representative examples of all climate negotiations. Looking across two COPs has also enabled us to capture changing dynamics in power relations and interactions across structural, instrumental, and discursive power.

This study relies on secondary data analysis, which involves an extensive review of relevant documentation, including official UNFCCC negotiation texts and decisions, NGO, think tank, and Indigenous organisation reports, newspaper articles, and the academic literature. As highlighted by Yin [54], a systematic search for and analysis of such documentation are crucial for providing a comprehensive understanding of the case study. Although a formal systematic review protocol was not strictly followed, efforts were made to conduct a comprehensive and organised search process. Key documents and academic sources were

identified through targeted keyword searches across multiple databases, and materials were systematically categorised according to emerging themes related to global climate governance, carbon markets, Indigenous participation, and power dynamics. Relevant UNFCCC documents were organised into folders corresponding to thematic elements including Article 6 negotiations, IPs' rights and participation, and the evolving role of non-state actors, facilitating detailed coding and analysis.

This approach enabled a thorough exploration and synthesis of the secondary data to generate new insights on the complex interactions at play in climate negotiations. COP25 and COP26 and nvestigated for examples and illustrations of how instrumental, structural, and discursive power played out among government, private sector, NGO, and Indigenous participants. The results were both narrated to bring the occurring power dynamics to life and synthesised into a table to highlight key aspects of the occurring power dynamics. The selected material was assessed following best practices for evaluating secondary data, including temporal relevance, reliability, thematic coherence, cross-validation across diverse sources, and attention to context and purpose of the original documents, in order to bring forth new interpretations, insights, and conclusions about the power dynamics and conflicts within these negotiations [55].

To structure the analysis of the collected data, this study employs a political ecology framework, which allows for a critical exploration of the intersection between environmental issues and power structures, including political, economic, and social dimensions. This framework is particularly suited to unpacking how global climate governance mechanisms, such as carbon markets, may reinforce existing inequalities and how these dynamics are contested by marginalised groups like IPs. By employing this analytical lens, this research explores the roles of instrumental, structural, and discursive power in shaping climate policy outcomes and stakeholder interactions at COP25 and COP26.

The study employs a triangulation strategy to enhance the reliability of its findings. By cross-referencing three types of data—(1) policy documents and official reports from the UNFCCC, (2) the academic literature analysing power asymmetries, and (3) qualitative insights from interviews and public statements by IP representatives at COPs—this approach provides a more detailed understanding of the complexities in UNFCCC negotiations and ensures that the conclusions are well-supported and credible [56].

We are aware that our data collection was limited to certain types of documentation. We were not able to carry out a systematic literature review but rather limited ourselves to a more ad hoc, bottom-up collection of relevant data on our identified cases and themes. We were also not able to carry out interviews, which would have offered a more in-depth understanding from the perspective of negotiation participants and allowed us to triangulate our findings further.

4. The Political Ecology of Global Climate Governance

A political ecology approach that engages with the literature of the commodification and neoliberalisation of nature, and that seriously considers political economy, the materiality of resources, and power relations, is crucial for developing a comprehensive understanding of global climate governance [57]. By examining how environmental issues intersect with political, economic, and social power [58], political ecology enables a critical assessment of how global climate governance reinforces existing inequalities and exposes broader power dynamics. This framework provides a powerful lens through which to analyse the environmental, social, and political dimensions of climate governance, especially in the context of Indigenous contestations at COP negotiations. It highlights how power relations shape environmental policies, often to the disadvantage of marginalised communities [59].

Power, as defined by Weber [60], is "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests." This understanding of power as a relational force is central to political ecology, where power dynamics are analysed not just in terms of direct control but also through more subtle, systemic, and discursive means. To examine the complex power relations at play in COP negotiations, particularly concerning Indigenous contestations of Article 6 mechanisms, this analysis will focus on the multidimensional concept of power outlined by Never [61]. Never's framework categorises power into three distinct but interrelated forms: instrumental, structural, and discursive power, as summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Three-Dimensional power in COP negotiations.

Three-Dimensional Power in COP Negotiations			
	Instrumental	Structural	Discursive
	Instrumental power refers to the direct use of influence, whether through lobbying, agenda setting, negotiation tactics, or financial leverage, to produce concrete outcomes in climate negotiations. This power is most visible when actors shape decisions, steer agenda items, or secure specific language in treaties.	Structural power operates through the design and control of rules, contexts, and systems, often indirectly. It reflects an actor's embedded position in material, technological, or institutional systems, allowing them to shape the conditions under which others operate, even without direct intervention.	Discursive power is the ability to shape norms, language, and perceptions—to influence how issues are framed, which narratives are legitimised, and whose voices are amplified. It often involves non-material influence, such as appealing to ethics, justice, or tradition.
Actors	States (especially those politically and/or financially strong), negotiators, donor countries, the private sector.	UNFCCC bodies, COP Presidencies, powerful and/or resource-rich countries, techno-scientific experts, global green finance institutions.	Morally positioned states (e.g., LDCs, SIDS), Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, norm entrepreneurs, justice-oriented activists, social and mainstream media influencers.
Tools	Agenda setting; negotiation leverage; financial pressure or incentives; direct lobbying	Institutional design; rule setting; technological dominance; market control; possession of resources; funding systems	Norm promotion (e.g., justice); strategic framing; public narratives; moral discourse
Effects	Shapes negotiation outcomes; Promotes actor's specific interests; Drives adoption of policies	Defines the "rules of the game"; Creates long-term systemic advantages; Limits others' influence	Shifts how issues are understood; Gains legitimacy and moral authority; Introduces new norms

In climate negotiations, instrumental power is often used by influential actors that can set agendas, make decisions, and enforce policies. The Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC) serves as a notable example of instrumental power in action. Launched in Paris at COP21 in 2015, the CPLC is a voluntary initiative aimed at advancing carbon pricing globally [62]. The coalition brings together a broad array of stakeholders, including national and subnational governments, multinational corporations like Shell and HSBC, and NGOs and academic institutions. The World Bank Group administers the CPLC Secretariat, underscoring the initiative's global institutional backing. The CPLC exerts instrumental power by mobilising influential leaders and organisations to advocate for and

implement carbon pricing mechanisms. By uniting high-profile participants, such as the U.S. and UK governments and leading firms like Nestlé and BP, the CPLC helps to shape global climate policy [62]. This coordination emphasises carbon pricing as a key strategy for mitigating climate change, aligning with broader goals of economic efficiency and market-based solutions. According to Wettestad et al. [63], the CPLC's role in the international carbon market web highlights how such initiatives can dominate policy discussions and implementation processes. By leveraging its connections and resources, the CPLC helps maintain carbon pricing at the forefront of climate policy debates. Thus, the CPLC's use of instrumental power illustrates how dominant actors can seamlessly shape climate policy.

In the context of COP negotiations, structural power shapes the playing field by embedding advantage through control over systems, rules, and resources. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) exemplifies this by setting stringent accreditation criteria that require extensive documentation, strong financial management, and large-scale project proposals [64]. These rules disproportionately burden smaller developing countries, such as Small Island Developing States (SIDSs), which often lack the institutional capacity and detailed data demanded by the GCF. For instance, the requirement for co-financing and detailed climate rationales excludes many SIDS projects. While accreditation can build capacity—as seen in the Adaptation Fund where countries improved governance and project design through the process [65]—the GCF's rigid, financialised system favours well-resourced international entities, thus reinforcing unequal access and limiting smaller countries' climate finance opportunities.

Discursive power shapes meaning and legitimacy by controlling how issues are framed and whose voices are heard. For IPs, the ability to assert their perspectives and worldviews within the COP negotiations is a critical form of resistance against dominant discourses that often marginalise or misrepresent their interests [66]. Wallbott [67] highlights how IPs, acting as norm entrepreneurs, have strategically leveraged their knowledge resources and normative power to influence the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) negotiations by integrating Indigenous Peoples' rights language into the Cancun Agreements. This strategy of "importing power" into the UNFCCC demonstrates the effective use of discursive power, where Indigenous actors reframed REDD+ from a technocratic issue to one centred on normative concerns and do-no-harm considerations [68]. However, these discursive interventions are often constrained by the broader structural inequalities embedded within the COP process.

In examining the power dynamics at COP25 and COP26, the concept of carbon colonialism provides a critical lens for understanding how instrumental power, structural power, and discursive power operate to marginalise IPs and states in the Global South. Industrialised countries, multilateral organisations, and multinational corporations wield instrumental power to promote carbon market mechanisms that prioritise economic efficiency over social justice, often at the expense of Indigenous rights. Structural power is evident in the design and control of COP processes, which systematically sideline local communities and IPs. Discursively, Indigenous groups have sought to reshape dominant narratives, challenging market-based solutions as a continuation of colonial exploitation that disregards their rights and wellbeing. By framing these power dynamics through carbon colonialism, this analysis highlights the perpetuation of historical inequalities in climate policies and underscores the need for equitable and rights-based approaches in international climate negotiations.

5. Results

5.1. COP25 in Madrid in 2019

The main agenda item for COP25 was to finalise the remaining elements of the Paris Agreement "rulebook," particularly Article 6. Debates centred around issues such as double counting, the inclusion of Kyoto-era carbon credits, and whether a "share of proceeds" from carbon trading should support adaptation in vulnerable countries [17,69]. The persistent disagreements led to a deadlock, highlighting the broader North–South divide in climate negotiations, where developed countries often prioritised market efficiency and flexibility, while developing countries, as well as several NGOs and Indigenous organisations, stressed equity, fairness, and climate justice. Whilst IPs certainly asserted their presence and demands in international climate negotiations at COP25, their efforts were often constrained by various forms of power dynamics, which played out through a combination of instrumental, structural, and discursive power.

5.1.1. Instrumental Power: Controlling Participation and Agendas

Instrumental power was evident in how the structure of COP25 meetings enabled governments and corporations to dominate the agenda while marginalising Indigenous voices. Indigenous participation in the formal negotiations was limited, often to tokenistic roles. For example, according to Carmona [70], although Indigenous representatives were invited to the Presidential Advisory Committee and later the Climate Action Advisory Committee, they stated that their worldviews were dismissed and their proposals sidelined [70]. One participant described the experience as "David against Goliath," highlighting the unequal power dynamics that favoured corporate and state interests over Indigenous perspectives [70]. This reflects the instrumental power exerted by influential actors within these spaces to direct the conversation and outcomes in their favour. The tokenistic inclusion of Indigenous representatives and the lack of genuine engagement with their proposals can be seen as a form of symbolic inclusion that does not address the underlying power imbalances. This is consistent with the dynamics of carbon colonialism in that there is evidently a superior and an inferior worldview at play, with carbon being the conduit for ongoing political, economic, and epistemological suppression.

At COP25, the final text for Article 6 notably excluded critical human rights safeguards, despite significant advocacy from civil society and several supportive parties (e.g., Switzerland and Tuvalu). Several other parties raised concerns about including human rights, questioned why other rights, such as the right to development, were not addressed, and emphasised that human rights issues fall under national jurisdiction [71,72]. Although initial drafts included provisions for respecting human rights, protecting IPs, and establishing independent grievance mechanisms, hese were progressively removed, leading to a final agreement that only addressed "negative social and environmental impacts" without specific human rights protections or robust safeguards [17,18,69].

The final outcome thus reflects the instrumental power of influential states to shape norms and exclude safeguards. The focus on carbon market mechanisms as the dominant economic approach underscores how wealthy countries exert instrumental power to maintain the status quo. Attempts such as the Indigenous Climate Action delegation directly challenging Canadian negotiators [6], Tom Goldtooth, Executive Director of the Indigenous Environmental Network, criticising net-zero targets as "false solutions" that enable continued pollution and distract from genuine emissions reductions [73], and civil society and Indigenous organisations calling for an extension of the negotiations to avoid repeating past mistakes and potentially harming vulnerable communities [19] are simply ignored. This dynamic is an example of how carbon colonialism plays out today, as it

perpetuates the historical inequalities by shifting the burden of emissions reductions to poorer countries.

5.1.2. Structural Power: Exclusion by Design

The UNFCCC is structurally organised around a state-centric framework, wherein only nationally recognised governments possess formal decision-making power. This architecture inherently sidelines Indigenous Peoples, whose interests are rarely, if ever, represented by the states negotiating on their behalf. As Schroeder [74] notes, the regime's top-down design is more responsive to the vulnerability of entire states than to specific groups or nations within them. In practice, this means that Indigenous Peoples are subject to decisions taken in multilateral arenas that exclude their worldviews, rights, and governance systems [45]. The original 1992 UNFCCC text does not even mention Indigenous Peoples, reflecting a structural neglect that continues today through the "party-driven" nature of the process—where inclusion is contingent on the discretion of state actors who often fail to recognise Indigenous sovereignty [45,75,76]. Moreover, national-level implementation of climate policies frequently treats Indigenous rights as bureaucratic hurdles rather than substantive commitments, offering top-down solutions that restrict meaningful participation [70]. As a result, global climate governance not only sidelines Indigenous Peoples procedurally but actively undermines their self-determination, reinforcing a globalist paradigm of market-based control that is fundamentally at odds with Indigenous values and visions.

Structural power also played a significant role in limiting the ability of Indigenous groups to influence the COP25 proceedings. Indigenous leaders reported feeling instrumentalised; their inclusion allowed the COP Presidency to project an image of inclusivity without genuinely engaging with their concerns. Carmona [70] states that during the LCIPP pre-sessional meeting, Chilean Indigenous leaders presented a "Reflection and Proposal Document" to the COP President, who left the room shortly afterwards without reading it. Furthermore, the rest of the meeting continued in English, which further marginalised non-English-speaking Indigenous representatives.

Indigenous representatives noted that civil society and IPs were often excluded from the actual negotiations. This exclusion meant that protest became one of the few available avenues for expressing dissent. Yet even protests were tightly regulated; participants had to submit detailed protest plans for approval by the UNFCCC Secretariat, and any deviation could result in their exclusion from the event [77]. This regulation of dissent demonstrates how structural power is used to control the scope of acceptable discourse and limit the impact of alternative voices.

Furthermore, the geographical relocation of COP25 from Chile to Spain due to civil unrest shortly before the start of the meeting further compounded the exclusion of IPs and the Global South from participation in greater numbers, as they faced additional logistical, financial, and visa challenges [78]. This move from a previously colonised country to a coloniser country was seen as a symbolic and practical shift that limited access and underscored power imbalances. Big Wind, a member of the all-Indigenous SustainUS delegation, expressed frustration that instead of connecting with IPs on Indigenous land, they found themselves in a European context with minimal Indigenous presence [77]. Indigenous leaders found their rights and voices "muted daily under fascism and racism" in a forum dominated by corporate interests rather than Indigenous concerns [6]. This shift illustrates how structural power operates by setting terms and locations that indirectly exclude marginalised voices.

5.1.3. Discursive Power: Reframing Climate Justice

In response to these instrumental and structural power imbalances, IPs at COP25 sought to exercise their discursive power by reframing the narrative around climate justice and advocating for systemic changes that acknowledge Indigenous rights and stewardship. They articulated how the dominant discourse promoted by powerful governments and corporations (e.g., the emphasis on "carbon market" and "net zero") ignores or undermines Indigenous knowledge and rights, reflecting a form of discursive control that maintains existing power imbalances.

The Indigenous Climate Action delegation, for instance, introduced the concept of "Land Back" as a way to emphasise the importance of Indigenous sovereignty and control over territories for meaningful climate action. The phrase "Land Back" became a central banner during the Climate Strike on 6 December, inspiring other banners like "Oceans Back" and "Forests Back" [6]. As Dorries and Daigle [79] argue, "Land Back" expresses a political vision rooted in the restoration of Indigenous land relations disrupted by colonial dispossession, racialised hierarchies, and extractive capitalism. It calls not only for the return of territory, but for the resurgence of Indigenous governance, ecological care, and place-based freedom across borders. In this way, discursive strategies were used to expose the ideological underpinnings of the prevailing climate regime and push for climate action anchored in justice rather than market logic.

Despite being excluded from official negotiations, Indigenous delegates asserted their political agency through visible acts of resistance. On December 10, Indigenous leaders from Minga Indígena confronted the COP Presidency with a charter demanding more meaningful involvement of Indigenous communities in climate negotiations [77]. Although their numbers were reduced due to the relocation of COP25, their presence became a powerful tactic to make IPs visible and to inspire Indigenous youth activists, such as Big Wind [77]. This highlights a strategic use of both instrumental and discursive power to claim space within a highly controlled environment.

However, discursive power also faced limits. The structural constraints of the UNFCCC—state-centrism, language dominance, and restricted protest—meant that even powerful counter-narratives struggled to influence formal outcomes. This reinforces the argument that without addressing the deeper architecture of exclusion, discursive resistance alone cannot transform the system.

5.2. COP26 in Glasgow in 2021

COP26, held in Glasgow in November 2021, resulted in the "Glasgow Climate Pact," an 11-page document calling for a 45% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2030 compared to 2010 levels and noting that, under current national pledges, emissions would instead increase by nearly 14% by 2030 [20]. The final text was softened to include a commitment to "phase down" rather than "phase out" coal, highlighting the need for lower-income countries to maintain subsidies for fossil fuels for now [20].

A significant outcome of COP26 was the resolution of Article 6 [21] (see Section 2.2 above for details). Decisions adopted at COP26 included the establishment of a work programme to support non-market approaches, helping countries develop clean energy sources and foster cooperation in various areas [80].

5.2.1. Instrumental Power: Controlling Rules

While COP25 showcased entrenched barriers limiting Indigenous influence, COP26 revealed both the persistence of exclusionary power dynamics and emerging opportunities for Indigenous actors to assert more tangible influence within the climate governance arena. In terms of persistent exclusionary dynamics, Tom Goldtooth, an Indigenous activist,

lamented the lack of access to critical negotiating areas, forcing them "to try to grab people in the hallways" [81]. As Edson Krenak of Cultural Survival lamented, "IPs, as guardians of the land, did not sit at the table where negotiations and decisions were made" [82]. Despite their critical insights and the scale of their delegations, their influence was confined to side events, with limited ability to shape final outcomes.

In terms of new opportunities for influence, Indigenous lobbying efforts resulted in some recognition of Indigenous rights in the final provisions of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. While the language included references to human rights and Indigenous rights, it was still deemed vague and insufficiently robust. The Indigenous delegation expressed disappointment that "we wanted to see an independent grievance mechanism [and] the consultation provision in 6.4 is inadequate. It needs to include applicable international standards and ensure compliance with the rights of IPs to FPIC" [82]. Jennifer Tauli Corpuz of Nia Tero noted that while the new rules provide more protections than previous frameworks, they are still relatively weak, emphasising the need for vigilant monitoring of their implementation [20].

Indigenous leaders achieved some strategic gains that demonstrated their capacity to exercise instrumental power and convert it into structural transformation. One notable example was the introduction of the Shandia mechanism by Tuntiak Katan, General Coordinator of the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities (GATC) and Vice Coordinator of the Coordinator of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon River Basin, during a side event panel at COP26. Describing it as a "new dawn," Katan explained that this initiative would enable "greater financing on the ground, direct access to international financial funds by Indigenous organisations and peoples to defend our rights, territorial rights, economic rights, cultural rights, collective rights" [83]. This initiative, launched by the GATC in 2022 and governed by its Leadership Council, represents a concrete exercise of instrumental power—using strategic action within COP spaces to achieve a specific institutional outcome. Shandia also exemplifies structural power, as it reconfigures the financial architecture of climate governance. By supporting the establishment of territorial funding mechanisms, facilitating the flow of funds, and strengthening institutional capacities of Indigenous communities to manage resources effectively, thus enabling Indigenous communities to bypass traditional intermediaries and directly manage climate finance, Shandia challenges top-down funding approaches and reinforces Indigenous autonomy, governance, and self-determination over their territories [84]. In this way, the instrumental power mobilised by Indigenous actors at COP26 resulted in a tangible structural shift, marking a rare but significant success in altering the deeper systems that typically marginalise Indigenous participation in climate policy.

5.2.2. Structural Power: Partial Gains

IPs were highly visible at COP26, participating in multiple event spaces and making powerful interventions. For the first time, an Indigenous Peoples' Pavilion was included in the Blue Zone, the main event area for accredited attendees, providing a platform for Indigenous voices [83]. At the Opening Ceremony of the World Leaders Summit, Amazonian youth activist Txai Suruí delivered a moving speech highlighting the environmental crises facing her community [83].

At COP26, the LCIPP marked a significant moment in the consolidation of Indigenous structural power within the UNFCCC framework. The Facilitative Working Group (FWG), composed equally of self-selected Indigenous representatives and state delegates, successfully co-constructed and secured the adoption of the second three-year work plan (2022–2024), a decision that acknowledged both the progress and future direction of Indigenous inclusion in climate governance [45,82]. Most notably, COP26 hosted the

first-ever Knowledge Holders Gathering within the Blue Zone—an unprecedented event that created a protected space exclusively for Indigenous Peoples, with states explicitly asked not to attend. This gathering included both internal roundtables on topics such as food systems, biodiversity, and intergenerational knowledge, and a participatory dialogue [45,82]. As Graeme Reed (Anishinabee), co-chair of the IIPFCC, highlighted, this initiative demonstrated a growing capacity of Indigenous Peoples to institutionalise their own epistemologies within a system historically dominated by state-centric and technocratic approaches [82]. Additionally, Indigenous leaders secured a seat in the Climate Technology Centre and Network Advisory Body, a modest but symbolically important step in embedding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into global climate technology discourses [45]. These developments exemplify how Indigenous actors, through sustained advocacy and platform-building, are reshaping the governance architecture from within—an expression of structural power that reflects both decolonial resistance and strategic institutional engagement.

The overall experience of Indigenous representatives at COP26 suggests that significant challenges remain. Although the UK government promoted COP26 as the most inclusive summit ever, structural barriers such as visa issues and restrictive travel rules prevented about two-thirds of civil society organisations, particularly those from the Global South, from attending [44]. These barriers reflect broader structural power dynamics within the UNFCCC process that determine who has the ability to be present and participate.

5.2.3. Discursive Power: Reframing Climate Narratives

COP26 saw a further emancipation of the discursive power wielded by IPs. Indigenous leaders not only voiced their critiques of the status quo, but they also advanced a fundamentally different ontological framework, one that resists the reduction of nature to tradable units and reclaims climate action as a matter of relational responsibility, reciprocity, and spiritual continuity. In this sense, their interventions constitute acts of epistemic resistance, challenging the extractive logic at the heart of global climate governance.

For instance, Chief Ninawa Inu Huni Kuin, president of the Huni Kuin People's Federation of the Brazilian Amazon, stated that "Our vision is very different from those who make the decisions at COP. We have ancestral connections to the environment and Mother Earth. These are spiritual spaces that we would never negotiate or offset for money" [44]. This rhetoric underscores IPs' critique of carbon market mechanisms, which are often presented as nature-based solutions. Galina Angarova of Cultural Survival criticised these mechanisms for lacking specific provisions to ensure FPIC, and for potentially commodifying nature in ways that are inconsistent with Indigenous values [82]. Indigenous activists also employed discursive power through direct action and protests to disrupt the narratives around carbon markets and offsetting schemes. For example, about 20 Indigenous members of the Indigenous Environmental Network protested outside an event promoting the expansion of voluntary carbon markets by Shell, BP, and other fossil fuel companies. They held copies of a full-page advert published in major newspapers that read "Carbon offsetting is tearing us apart" [85]. These acts of protest were aimed at challenging the credibility of market-based solutions and bringing attention to the systemic injustices they perpetuate.

Also, these protests gained significant international media attention, helping to elevate Indigenous critiques of carbon markets. For example, The Independent ran the headline "Cop26: Carbon offsetting 'a new form of colonialism,' says Indigenous leader'" [81], while The Guardian published "'A continuation of colonialism': indigenous activists say their voices are missing at Cop26" [44]. Such coverage broadened public awareness and amplified Indigenous demands for climate justice beyond formal negotiations.

6. Discussion

COP25 and COP26 saw the finalisation of the rulebook for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. It illustrated the clash of worldviews and uneven power dynamics between states and multinational corporations supporting carbon markets under neoliberal principles, on the one hand, and IPs seeing it as a form of carbon colonialism, on the other.

6.1. Power Dynamics in Carbon Market Creation in COPs

In terms of structural power, which involves shaping the context, rules, and institutions in ways that align with an actor's interests, there was an asymmetric power relation due to the state-centric nature of the UNFCCC. In the decision-making process, IPs, who hold observer status unless included in a national delegation, had minimal impact and faced marginalisation (See Table 3 below).

Table 3. Types of power and examples of them from COP25 and COP26.

Power Type	COP25 (Madrid, 2019)	COP26 (Glasgow, 2021)
Instrumental Power (Direct influence on rules, outcomes, decisions)	- IPs excluded from Article 6 negotiations, despite their large presence. - Denied access to negotiation rooms; forced to lobby in hallways. - Demanded binding human rights, FPIC, and a grievance mechanism under Art. 6.4. - Final text excluded binding rights language; only vague references. - Resistance from some parties who viewed rights as "outside the scope." - Minimal influence over final outcomes.	- Achieved reference to human and Indigenous rights in Article 6 rules—but still non-binding and vague. - No grievance mechanism, inadequate consultation provisions, and a lack of FPIC compliance standards. - Jennifer Tauli Corpuz: New rules offer more protection than before, but still insufficient. - Shandia mechanism introduced by GATC: Enables direct funding access by IPs, bypassing intermediaries—a major success, turning instrumental power into a structural shift.
Structural Power (Access to institutions, participation rules, systemic inclu-sion/exclusion)	- LCIPP FWG formally operationalised: co-governance model with 7 IP reps and 7 state delegates. - Adopted the first 3-year work plan (2020–2022). - UNFCCC remained state-dominated; IPs had no formal decision-making power in broader negotiations. - COP25 relocation from Chile to Spain severely restricted IP and Global South participation. - Move seen as a colonial reversal, limiting Indigenous presence. - Delegates like Big Wind described how the shift muted Indigenous voices in a corporate, Eurocentric space.	- LCIPP's second 3-year work plan (2022–2024) co-produced and adopted. - Held first Knowledge Holders Gathering in Blue Zone: A protected, IP-only space (states explicitly excluded). - Topics included biodiversity, intergenerational knowledge, and food systems. - An Indigenous representative secured a seat on the CTCN Advisory Board—symbolic structural inclusion. - Despite "most inclusive COP" claims, 2/3 of Global South CSOs excluded due to visa/travel barriers. - These exclusions highlight persistent gatekeeping in participation mechanisms.

Table 3. *Cont.*

Power Type	COP25 (Madrid, 2019)	COP26 (Glasgow, 2021)
Discursive Power (Ability to shape narratives, meaning, values, worldviews)	- IPs framed carbon markets as "carbon colonialism", rooted in extractive logic. - Rejected market mechanisms inconsistent with relational ontologies, ancestral duty, and spiritual connection to nature. - CDiscourse often dismissed or sidelined within state-centric, technocratic spaces. - Viewed as political or ideological rather than legitimate alternatives.	- IP voices reframed markets as colonial impositions: "We do not offset or sell the sacred" (Ninawa Inu Huni Kuin). - Galina Angarova: Carbon markets commodify nature, lack FPIC. - IPs staged direct action protests, including against Shell and BP offset events: "Carbon offsetting is tearing us apart." - Gained strong media amplification (e.g., The Guardian, The Independent)—spreading counter-narratives globally. - Employed epistemic resistance, challenging dominant paradigms with Indigenous cosmologies

While powerful international neoliberal coalitions, including the Partnership for Market Implementation and the CPLC, shaped carbon market mechanisms under Article 6, IPs experienced difficulties even attending COPs. Furthermore, even though the visibility of IPs increased at COP26 [83], the persistent hurdles to participation and inclusion have not changed significantly. This marginalisation and exclusion from decision-making processes result in a form of carbon colonialism where powerful actors dominate carbon governance structures and impose policies in the name of climate change that deny the rights and destroy the livelihoods and ways of life of IPs [5,9].

Due to their exclusion from the structural sphere of the UNFCCC, IPs have limited instrumental power—the capacity to directly influence or coerce others to achieve specific outcomes. Their lack of influence on the decision-making process, coupled with their comparatively minimal economic and political power relative to influential political, financial, and corporate actors such as the US, the World Bank, and Shell, has further deepened asymmetric power relations. For instance, while the US can shape global climate governance and wield its instrumental power by withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement [86], IPs are "forced to try to grab people in the hallways" [81] just to engage in discussions with other actors. At COP meetings, IPs have resorted to methods like protesting to amplify their instrumental power; however, the effectiveness of such actions is questionable when confronted with powerful states and corporations.

6.2. Impact of Indigenous Peoples in This Process

Through the UNFCCC process, the main approach of IPs was their discursive power, which is the ability to shape the identity, perceptions, and preferences of other actors through the control of discourse. In this discourse, the main argument was carbon colonialism. IPs oppose the commodification of carbon due to their spiritual and ancestral connections to the environment, viewing Mother Earth as a sacred entity that should not be negotiated or offset for monetary gain [44]. Therefore, the creation of a carbon market under Article 6 was an attempt to institutionalise a new type of colonialism.

Although IPs opposed the creation of market mechanisms, asymmetric structural and instrumental power relations led to the inevitable finalisation of Article 6. Consequently, the discourse shifted towards the protection of Indigenous rights within the carbon market. In this context, IPs prioritised the concepts of Indigenous rights and FPIC in COP25 and COP26. As a partial success, they utilised discursive power to advocate for the

inclusion of human rights considerations in Article 6. While their demands, such as an independent grievance mechanism and improved consultation provisions, were only partially addressed [82], this advocacy represents a notable exercise of discursive power.

On the other hand, pro-carbon market actors—primarily Global North governments, corporations, and affiliated organisations—exercised discursive power by promoting the concept of "nature-based solutions." While the term lacks a universally agreed-upon definition, it generally refers to the use of natural ecosystems, such as forests and wetlands, to address climate and environmental challenges [87]. Within the Article 6 framework, especially under Article 6.2, nature-based solutions have been presented as a means of achieving emissions reductions through ecosystem protection, restoration, and management [88]. However, IPs and their allies have criticised this discourse for obscuring the market-based logic behind these initiatives. By framing carbon offset projects in terms that sound ecological and cooperative, proponents of nature-based solutions effectively rebrand mechanisms of the carbon market, which Indigenous leaders argue perpetuate colonial dynamics under a different name [82]. Thus, nature-based solutions function not just as technical proposals, but as discursive tools that legitimise carbon commodification while downplaying its socio-political consequences.

Table 4 below provides a synthesised overview of the main institutional, structural, and practical limitations faced by the LCIPP, as well as its most significant achievements at the international, national, and local levels. It highlights unique challenges, concrete impacts, and illustrative examples based on evidence presented by Carmona et al. [45].

Table 4. Summary of key limitations and achievements of the LCIPP.

Aspect	Limitations	Achievements/Impacts
Institutional and Structural	The Facilitative Working Group (FWG)'s newness and evolving procedures caused early delays (e.g., debates over decision-making roles). Political will fluctuates per COP Presidency, affecting momentum. The Secretariat sometimes oversteps, sidelining Indigenous priorities (e.g., taking over work plan tasks). FWG members volunteer, balancing community duties, limiting availability.	The LCIPP is the first formal UNFCCC space recognising Indigenous membership, breaking the state/non-state dichotomy. FWG complies with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Article 18 by letting Indigenous Peoples self-select reps. Integration of Indigenous cultural elements (prayers, circles) into official meetings shifts UN norms.
Language and Accessibility	Dominance of English excludes many Indigenous languages; there is no Portuguese interpretation despite Brazil's active Indigenous presence. Poor internet access limits rural community participation. Complex UNFCCC jargon alienates newcomers.	It facilitates global Indigenous exchanges, strengthening solidarity and visibility. It elevates local Indigenous concerns over land and climate policies (e.g., REDD+ conflicts). It shifts discourse from vulnerability framing to rights-based recognition of Indigenous knowledge and leadership.
Engagement and Representation	The UNFCCC is perceived as secretive and inaccessible by new Indigenous participants. Some states historically ignore Indigenous presence, complicating engagement.	FWG gives the Indigenous Caucus formal recognition, making it easier for them to influence party decisions. Indigenous seats on advisory boards (e.g., GCF's IPAG) institutionalise influence on climate finance. Collaborations with UN bodies (IPCC, FAO, CBD) broaden Indigenous participation in climate governance.

Table 4. *Cont.*

Aspect	Limitations	Achievements/Impacts
Capacity and Resources	Voluntary FWG membership limits consistent engagement. The platform lacks direct funding/support mechanisms, causing frustration locally. There is insufficient translation/localisation of resources (web portal only in English).	The Secretariat supports event organisation and an innovative web portal co-designed with Indigenous knowledge holders. Indigenous advisory groups (e.g., GCF IPAG) publicly report progress, increasing transparency and Indigenous visibility.
Local and National Level	Complex UNFCCC processes are seen as distant by local Indigenous communities. Disillusionment occurs due to a lack of direct benefits or support. Countries are forced to confront previously unrecognised Indigenous populations.	National Indigenous platforms are formed in Peru, Tanzania, Canada, Russia, and the Amazon region, enhancing the local/regional voice. Governments engage more with Indigenous Peoples in climate governance (e.g., Nepal's increased dialogue). The LCIPP influences national policy via platforms like Peru's climate law consultation.

7. Conclusions

This research has explored the intersection of climate governance, carbon markets, and IPs' rights within the framework of the UNFCCC. The development and implementation of carbon market mechanisms under the UNFCCC, particularly those associated with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, illustrate a profound tension between economic efficiency and justice. While these mechanisms were designed to incentivise emissions reductions and facilitate global cooperation with neoliberal values, they have often perpetuated existing inequalities and exploitations of Indigenous lands, giving rise to the concept of "carbon colonialism." This concept is crucial for understanding the power dynamics observed at COP25 and COP26, where IPs and Global South countries have faced significant barriers.

At COP25, the relocation of the conference from Chile to Spain made it much harder for IPs to participate, highlighting the structural obstacles they faced. Despite increased visibility at COP26, Indigenous representatives encountered limitations in access and influence, reflecting broader systemic inequities. Furthermore, the UNFCCC's state-centric structure, which prioritises the interests and participation of states, further compounded these difficulties by structurally sidelining non-state actors such as IPs. These challenges highlight how the structure of COPs reinforces historical injustices.

Instrumentally, the negotiations have often prioritised market efficiency over equitable outcomes, highlighting the persistent legacy of carbon colonialism. Economic and financial organisations have from the start of the UNFCCC negotiations wielded their power and influence to shape the process to their benefit. This demonstrates how, whilst the UNFCCC process is state-centric at face level, powerful interests operate through the state within a global governance framework and using regulatory capture, which has been documented in other domains as well [89]. The real challenge for IPs is thus asserting themselves in a system of norms and values that facilitate financial gain for the already wealthy, rather than maintaining ecological balance and human well-being.

Discursively, as their primary means of influence, Indigenous activists have critiqued market-based solutions like carbon offsets as forms of "greenwashing," arguing that these approaches overlook deeper systemic issues such as the legacy of colonial land dispossession, extractive economic systems, and ongoing exclusion from climate decision-making spaces—the root causes of climate and environmental injustice [90]. For IPs, the real problem is that climate policy often treats land and ecosystems as commodities to be man-

aged, sold, or offset, rather than as sacred ancestral territories with spiritual, cultural, and sovereign significance [91]. As a result, market-driven mechanisms risk reinforcing the same structures that have historically undermined Indigenous rights. IPs have used methods such as protests and emotive speeches during the COPs to influence public perception and decision-making, and to defend their fundamental rights. While they achieved partial success in incorporating human rights into Article 6, they remain dissatisfied with the outcomes, which they believe could still exacerbate carbon colonialism. Meanwhile, nature-based solutions, which are estimated to contribute 37% of the required climate change mitigation by 2030 [92], are promoted by carbon market supporters as a promising remedy. However, this optimistic framing contrasts sharply with the grim reality that deforestation is continuing, soil health is depleting, ecosystems are degrading, and biodiversity is being lost rapidly. This disparity underscores the urgent need for more effective and equitable action to protect ecosystems and human livelihoods, as the current reliance on market mechanisms and nature-based solutions fails to address the fundamental inequities and risks worsening social and environmental impacts.

In light of these findings, it is clear that while carbon markets and related mechanisms are integral to current climate approaches due to the domination of neoliberal policies in global dynamics, they must transform to safeguard the needs and rights of IPs. To counteract carbon colonialism, policy recommendations should prioritise the integration of human rights safeguards in carbon market mechanisms at the very least, ensuring that Indigenous rights and FPIC are fully respected. This should be guided by international standards such as the *ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)*, which affirms the rights of Indigenous Peoples to land, resources, self-governance, and FPIC, and obliges states to ensure their participation in decisions affecting their lives and territories. Additionally, promoting Indigenous-led conservation efforts and embracing alternative, non-market-based approaches to ecological restoration and rebalancing can help shift the focus from commodifying carbon to empowering communities and preserving ecosystems in a just and equitable manner.

Author Contributions: Z.D. designed the research, collected and analysed the literature, and planned and wrote the manuscript; H.S. supervised the research and contributed to planning, revising, and editing the manuscript. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Summary for Policymakers. In *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*; Pörtner, H.-O., Roberts, D.C., Poloczanska, E.S., Mintenbeck, K., Tignor, M., Alegría, A., Craig, M., Langsdorf, S., Löschke, S., Möller, V., et al., Eds.; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2022; pp. 3–33. [CrossRef]
2. Redvers, N.; Chan, J.; Odochao, S.; Pratt, V.; Sim, J.; Gougsa, S.; Kobei, D.M.; Willetts, L. Carbon Markets: A New Form of Colonialism for Indigenous Peoples? *Lancet Planet. Health* **2025**, *9*, e421–e430. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
3. Havemann, P. Ignoring the Mercury in the Climate Change Barometer: Denying Indigenous Peoples' Rights. *Aust. Indig. Law Rev.* **2009**, *13*, 2–26.
4. Dehm, J. Carbon Colonialism or Climate Justice: Interrogating the International Climate Regime from a TWAIL Perspective. *Windsor Yearb. Access Justice* **2016**, *33*, 129. [CrossRef]
5. Bumpus, A.G.; Liverman, D.M. Carbon Colonialism? Offsets, Greenhouse Gas Reductions, and Sustainable Development. In *Global Political Ecology*; Peet, R., Robbins, P., Watts, M., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2010; pp. 203–224.

6. Indigenous Climate Action. COP25—Was It Worth It? What Did We Do? Why Is This an Important Moment? Available online: https://www.indigenousclimateaction.com/entries/cop25-was-it-worth-it-what-did-we-do-why-is-this-an-important-moment (accessed on 23 July 2024).
7. Boyd, E.; Hultman, N.; Roberts, J.T.; Corbera, E.; Cole, J.; Bozmoski, A.; Ebeling, J.; Tippman, R.; Mann, P.; Brown, K.; et al. Reforming the CDM for Sustainable Development: Lessons Learned and Policy Futures. *Environ. Sci. Policy* **2009**, *12*, 820–831. [CrossRef]
8. Cadman, T.; Hales, R. COP26 and a Framework for Future Global Agreements on Carbon Market Integrity. *Int. J. Soc. Qual.* **2022**, *12*, 76–99. [CrossRef]
9. Bachram, H. Climate Fraud and Carbon Colonialism: The New Trade in Greenhouse Gases. *Capital. Nat. Social.* **2004**, *15*, 5–20. [CrossRef]
10. Climate Justice Alliance (CJA); Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). Carbon Pricing: A Critical Perspective for Community Resistance. Available online: https://co2colonialism.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Carbon-Pricing-A-Critical-Perspective-for-Community-Resistance-Online-Version.pdf (accessed on 20 July 2024).
11. Stowell, D. The Carbon Market. In *Climate Trading: Development of Greenhouse Gas Markets*; Ellerman, A.D., Convery, F.J., de Perthuis, C., Eds.; Palgrave Macmillan UK: London, UK, 2005; pp. 194–210.
12. Schroeder, H. *Negotiating the Kyoto Protocol: An Analysis of Negotiation Dynamics in International Negotiations*; LIT Verlag: Münster, Germany, 2001.
13. International Emissions Trading Association (IETA). Our History. Available online: https://www.ieta.org/about/ (accessed on 19 July 2024).
14. Lohmann, L. Financialization, Commodification and Carbon: The Contradictions of Neoliberal Climate Policy. *Social. Regist.* **2012**, *48*, 85–107.
15. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Adoption of the Paris Agreement (FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1). Available online: https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/10a01.pdf (accessed on 14 June 2025).
16. Mills-Novoa, M.; Liverman, D.M. Nationally Determined Contributions: Material Climate Commitments and Discursive Positioning in the NDCs. *WIRES Clim. Chang.* **2019**, *10*, e589. [CrossRef]
17. Evans, S.; Gabbatiss, J. COP25: Key Outcomes Agreed at the UN Climate Talks in Madrid. Carbon Brief. Available online: https://www.carbonbrief.org/cop25-key-outcomes-agreed-at-the-un-climate-talks-in-madrid/ (accessed on 20 July 2024).
18. Newell, P.; Taylor, O. Fiddling While the Planet Burns? COP25 in Perspective. In *Economics and Climate Emergency*; Bohoslavsky, J.P., Goldin, M.R., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2022; pp. 271–283.
19. Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). Report from the Madrid Climate Conference: Promoting Human Rights in Climate Action at COP25. Available online: https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/CIELreportCOP25_HumanRights.pdf (accessed on 20 July 2024).
20. Masood, E.; Tollefson, J. 'COP26 Hasn't Solved the Problem': Scientists React to UN Climate Deal. *Nature* **2021**, *599*, 355–356. [CrossRef]
21. Minas, S. Market Making for the Planet: The Paris Agreement Article 6 Decisions and Transnational Carbon Markets. *Transnatl. Leg. Theory* **2022**, *13*, 287–320. [CrossRef]
22. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Capacity-Building Work Programme for Implementing Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Available online: https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/A6-capacity-building/work-programme (accessed on 14 June 2025).
23. Asadnabizadeh, M. Did the Glasgow COP26 Negotiations Meet or Miss Article 6 (Carbon Markets) of the Paris Agreement? A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Politics Policy* **2024**, *52*, 757–777. [CrossRef]
24. Gilbertson, T.; Goldtooth, T.B.K. COP 28: No Outcome Is Better Than Article 6. Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung. Available online: https://www.boell.de/en/2024/01/09/cop-28-no-outcome-is-better-than-article-6 (accessed on 20 July 2024).
25. Arora, P. COP29: Achieving Net Zero through Financial Sustainability. *Environ. Sustain.* **2025**, *8*, 121–126. [CrossRef]
26. Cassen, C.; Caneill, J.Y. From the Kyoto Protocol to Article 6: The Troubled History of the Cooperation Mechanisms. La Revue de l'Énergie 2025, 676 (Jan.–Feb.). Available online: https://shs.hal.science/halshs-05033809v1 (accessed on 23 July 2025).
27. Descheneau, P. The Currencies of Carbon: Carbon Money and Its Social Meaning. *Environ. Polit.* **2012**, *21*, 604–620. [CrossRef]
28. Castree, N. Commodifying What Nature? *Prog. Hum. Geogr.* **2003**, *27*, 273–297. [CrossRef]
29. Drury, R.T.; Belliveau, M.E.; Kuhn, J.S.; Bansal, S. Pollution Trading and Environmental Injustice: Los Angeles' Failed Experiment in Air Quality Policy. *Duke Environ. Law Policy Forum* **1999**, *9*, 231–289.
30. Polanyi, K. *The Great Transformation*; Beacon Press: Boston, MA, USA, 1944.
31. Bumpus, A.G. The Matter of Carbon: Understanding the Materiality of tCO2e in Carbon Offsets. *Antipode* **2011**, *43*, 612–638. [CrossRef]

32. Ciplet, D.; Roberts, J.T.; Rhan, M.R. *Power in a Warming World: The New Global Politics of Climate Change and the Remaking of Environmental Inequality*; MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 2015.
33. Pearse, R.; Böhm, S. Ten Reasons Why Carbon Markets Will Not Bring About Radical Emissions Reduction. *Carbon Manag.* **2014**, *5*, 325–337. [CrossRef]
34. Yamin, F.; Depledge, J. *The International Climate Change Regime: A Guide to Rules, Institutions and Procedures*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2004.
35. Hickel, J. Quantifying National Responsibility for Climate Breakdown: An Equality-Based Attribution Approach for Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Excess of the Planetary Boundary. *Lancet Planet. Health* **2020**, *4*, 399–404. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
36. Liu, Y. CDM and National Policy: Synergy or Conflict? Evidence from the Wind Power Sector in China. *Clim. Policy* **2015**, *15*, 767–783. [CrossRef]
37. Nkrumah, K. *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*; International Publishers: New York, NY, USA, 1966.
38. Perkins, J. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*; Berrett-Koehler Publishers: San Francisco, CA, USA, 2023.
39. Bumpus, A.G.; Liverman, D.M. Accumulation by Decarbonization and the Governance of Carbon Offsets. *Econ. Geogr.* **2008**, *84*, 127–155. [CrossRef]
40. Böhm, S.; Dabhi, S. Upsetting the Offset: An Introduction. In *Upsetting the Offset: The Political Economy of Carbon Markets*; Böhm, S., Dabhi, S., Eds.; MayFlyBooks: London, UK, 2009; pp. 9–24.
41. United Nations. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. 2007. Available online: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html (accessed on 20 July 2024).
42. United Nations. Indigenous Peoples. Available online: https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups/indigenous-peoples (accessed on 15 July 2024).
43. Masaquiza Jerez, M. *Challenges and Opportunities for Indigenous Peoples' Sustainability (Policy Brief No. 101)*; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Indigenous Peoples and Development Branch, Division for Inclusive Social Development: New York, NY, USA, 2021. Available online: https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/papers/10.18356/27081990-101 (accessed on 15 July 2024).
44. Lakhani, N. 'A Continuation of Colonialism': Indigenous Activists Say Their Voices Are Missing at COP26. The Guardian. Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/nov/02/cop26-indigenous-activists-climate-crisis (accessed on 15 July 2024).
45. Carmona, R.; Canales, M.; Carmen, A.; Cerda, J.; Deranger, E.; Bezerra do Vale, S.; Sherpa, P.D.; Egereva, D.; Gintal, J.P.; Jintiach, J.C.; et al. *Consolidating the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Climate Governance Through the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform*; International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA): Copenhagen, Denmark, 2023. Available online: https://iwgia.org/en/resources/publications/5309-consolidating-rights-indigenous-peoples-climate-governance-local-communities-indigenous-peoples-platform.html (accessed on 15 July 2024).
46. Pentassuglia, G. Towards a Jurisprudential Articulation of Indigenous Land Rights. *Eur. J. Int. Law* **2011**, *22*, 165–202. [CrossRef]
47. Jung, M. The Role of Forestry Projects in the Clean Development Mechanism. *Environ. Sci. Policy* **2005**, *8*, 87–104. [CrossRef]
48. Bakker, K. Neoliberalization of Nature. In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*; Perreault, T., Bridge, G., McCarthy, J., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2015; pp. 446–456.
49. Adelman, S. Geoengineering: Rights, Risks and Ethics. *J. Hum. Rights Environ.* **2017**, *8*, 119–138. [CrossRef]
50. Obergassel, W.; Peterson, L.; Mersmann, F.; Schade, J.; Hofbauer, J.A.; Mayrhofer, M. Human Rights and the Clean Development Mechanism: Lessons Learned from Three Case Studies. *J. Hum. Rights Environ.* **2017**, *8*, 51–71. [CrossRef]
51. Marshall, C. Kenya's Ogiek People Being Evicted for Carbon Credits—Lawyers. *BBC News*, 9 November 2023. Available online: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-67352067 (accessed on 12 July 2025).
52. Greenfield, P. The 'Carbon Pirates' Preying on Amazon's Indigenous Communities. *The Guardian*, 21 January 2023. Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/21/amazon-indigenous-communities-carbon-offsetting-pirates-aoe (accessed on 12 July 2025).
53. Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). COP28 Fact Sheets. Available online: https://www.ienearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/COP-28-Fact-Sheets-ENG-FINAL.pdf (accessed on 15 July 2024).
54. Yin, R.K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed.; Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 2009.
55. David, M.; Sutton, C.D. *Social Research: The Basics*; Sage Publications: London, UK, 2004.
56. Carter, N.; Bryant-Lukosius, D.; DiCenso, A.; Blythe, J.; Neville, A.J. The Use of Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *Oncol. Nurs. Forum* **2014**, *41*, 545–547. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
57. Osborne, T. Tradeoffs in Carbon Commodification: A Political Ecology of Common Property Forest Governance. *Geoforum* **2015**, *67*, 64–77. [CrossRef]
58. Wisner, B. Speaking Truth to Power: A Personal Account of Activist Political Ecology. In *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*; Perreault, T., Bridge, G., McCarthy, J., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK, 2015; pp. 53–63.
59. Bryant, R.L.; Bailey, S. *Third World Political Ecology*; Psychology Press: London, UK, 1997.

60. Weber, M. *Economy and Society*; Roth, G., Wittich, C., Eds.; University of California Press: Berkeley, CA, USA, 1978.
61. Never, B. Power in Global Climate Governance. In *Climate Change: International Law and Global Governance*; Gehring, T., Oberthür, S., Eds.; Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG: Baden-Baden, Germany, 2013; pp. 215–234.
62. Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC). Who Are We? Available online: https://www.financeministersforclimate.org (accessed on 20 July 2024).
63. Wettestad, J.; Gulbrandsen, L.H.; Andresen, S. Calling in the Heavyweights: Why the World Bank Established the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition, and What It Might Achieve. *Int. Stud. Perspect.* **2021**, *22*, 201–217. [CrossRef]
64. Treichel, P.; Robertson, M.; Wilkinson, E.; Corbett, J. Scale and Access to the Green Climate Fund: Big Challenges for Small Island Developing States. *Glob. Environ. Chang.* **2024**, *89*, 102943. [CrossRef]
65. Wang, B.; Rai, N. *The Green Climate Fund Accreditation Process: Barrier or Opportunity?* International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED): London, UK, 2015. Available online: https://www.iied.org/17311iied (accessed on 20 July 2024).
66. Belfer, E.; Ford, J.D.; Maillet, M.; Araos, M.; Flynn, M. Pursuing an Indigenous Platform: Exploring Opportunities and Constraints for Indigenous Participation in the UNFCCC. *Glob. Environ. Politics* **2019**, *19*, 12–33. [CrossRef]
67. Wallbott, L. Indigenous Peoples in UN REDD+ Negotiations: "Importing Power" and Lobbying for Rights through Discursive Interplay Management. *Ecol. Soc.* **2014**, *19*, 21. [CrossRef]
68. McDermott, C.L.; Coad, L.; Helfgott, A.; Schroeder, H. Operationalizing Social Safeguards in REDD+: Actors, Interests and Ideas. *Environ. Sci. Policy* **2012**, *21*, 63–72. [CrossRef]
69. Obergassel, W.; Arens, C.; Beuermann, C.; Hermwille, L.; Kreibich, N.; Ott, H.E.; Spitzner, M. COP25 in Search of Lost Time for Action. *Carbon Clim. Law Rev.* **2020**, *14*, 3–17. [CrossRef]
70. Carmona, R. Climate Change Governance and Indigenous Peoples Participation: An Analysis from the Chilean Case. *Environ. Politics* **2023**, *33*, 114–137. [CrossRef]
71. Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). Integrating Human Rights in the Modalities Related to Carbon Markets Established under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. 2019. Available online: https://www.ciel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/BriefingNote_RightsInArticle6.pdf (accessed on 15 July 2024).
72. International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). Summary of the Chile/Madrid Climate Change Conference: 2–15 December 2019. Earth Negotiations Bulletin. 2019, Volume 12. Available online: https://enb.iisd.org/chile-madrid-climate-change-conference-cop25/summary-report (accessed on 15 July 2024).
73. Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). More than 350 Groups Condemn Corporate Net Zero Pledges as a Dangerous Unjust Distraction. Available online: https://www.ienearth.org/more-than-350-groups-condemn-corporate-net-zero-pledges-as-a-dangerous-unjust-distraction/ (accessed on 15 July 2024).
74. Schroeder, H. Agency in international climate negotiations: The case of Indigenous peoples and avoided deforestation. *Int. Environ. Agreem. Politics Law Econ.* **2010**, *10*, 317–332. [CrossRef]
75. Gustafsson, M.T.; Schilling-Vacaflor, A. Indigenous Peoples and multiscalar environmental governance: The opening and closure of participatory spaces. *Glob. Environ. Politics* **2022**, *22*, 70–94. [CrossRef]
76. Shea, M.M.; Thornton, T.F. Tracing country commitment to Indigenous peoples in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. *Glob. Environ. Chang.* **2019**, *58*, 101973. [CrossRef]
77. Grosse, C.; Mark, B. A colonized COP: Indigenous exclusion and youth climate justice activism at the United Nations climate change negotiations. *J. Hum. Rights Environ.* **2020**, *11*, 146–170. [CrossRef]
78. Lobos Alba, I. *Chile's Cancellation of COP25 Highlights the Social Justice Dimension of Climate Change*; Stockholm Environment Institute: Stockholm, Sweden, 2019. Available online: https://www.sei.org/perspectives/chiles-cancellation-of-cop25-social-justice-climate-change/ (accessed on 15 June 2025).
79. Dorries, H.; Daigle, M. *Land Back: Relational Landscapes of Indigenous Resistance across the Americas*; Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University: Washington, DC, USA, 2024.
80. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). COP26 Outcomes: Market Mechanisms and Non-Market Approaches (Article 6). Available online: https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-glasgow-climate-pact/cop26-outcomes-market-mechanisms-and-non-market-approaches-article-6 (accessed on 20 July 2024).
81. Boyle, J. Cop26: Carbon offsetting 'a new form of colonialism,' says Indigenous leader. *The Independent*, 6 November 2021. Available online: https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/cop26-climate-summit-indigenous-offsetting-b1951289.html (accessed on 15 June 2025).
82. Cultural Survival. States Fail to Adequately Address Climate Change: An Indigenous Peoples' Analysis of COP26 Decisions. 2022. Available online: https://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/states-fail-adequately-address-climate-change-indigenous-peoples-analysis-cop26-decisions (accessed on 15 July 2024).
83. Laing, A.F. Indigenous Peoples' rights and the politics of climate change. In *A Research Agenda for Human Rights and the Environment*; Grear, A., Ed.; Edward Elgar Publishing: Cheltenham, UK, 2023; pp. 31–53.

84. Global Alliance for Territorial Justice (GATC). Shandia 2023 Annual Report. 2023. Available online: https://globalalliance.me/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Shandia-report-2023-web.pdf (accessed on 20 July 2024).
85. Greenpeace. Offsets Taskforce Hit by Protests at COP26. 2021. Available online: https://www.greenpeace.org/international/press-release/50429/offsets-taskforce-hit-protests-cop26/ (accessed on 15 July 2024).
86. Pickering, J.; McGee, J.S.; Stephens, T.; Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, S.I. The impact of the US retreat from the Paris Agreement: Kyoto revisited? *Clim. Policy* **2018**, *18*, 818–827. [CrossRef]
87. Foster, K. "Nature-Based Solutions" to the Climate Conundrum: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. AES Engagement. 2024. Available online: https://aesengagement.wordpress.com/2024/05/07/nature-based-solutions-to-the-climate-conundrum-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/ (accessed on 15 June 2025).
88. Environmental Defense Fund. *Article 6 of the Paris Agreement [Factsheet]*; Environmental Defense Fund: New York, NY, USA, 2023.
89. Li, W.Y. Regulatory capture's third face of power. *Socio-Econ. Rev.* **2023**, *21*, 1217–1245. [CrossRef]
90. Martin, A.; Armijos, M.T.; Coolsaet, B.; Dawson, N.; Edwards, G.A.S.; Few, R.; Gross-Camp, N.; Rodriguez, I.; Schroeder, H.; Tebboth, M.G.L.; et al. Environmental justice and transformations to sustainability. *Environ. Sci. Policy Sustain. Dev.* **2020**, *62*, 19–30. [CrossRef]
91. Schroeder, H.; González, N.C. Bridging knowledge divides: The case of indigenous ontologies of territoriality and REDD+. *For. Policy Econ.* **2019**, *100*, 198–206. [CrossRef]
92. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). *Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*; Díaz, S., Settele, J., Brondízio, E.S., Ngo, H.T., Guèze, M., Agard, J., Arneth, A., Balvanera, P., Brauman, K.A., Butchart, S.H.M., et al., Eds.; IPBES Secretariat: Bonn, Germany, 2019. [CrossRef]