

RESEARCH SEMINAR

**HAS THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT CHANGED CORPORATE
BEHAVIOR?**



We are happy to announce the Seminar given by Prof. Dr. Jeff Colgan on **October 2nd 2024, in the Auditorium Silva Casa at the World Trade Institute of the University of Bern, Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern.** This is a joint venture between the Oeschger Center for Climate Change Research, the World Trade Institute, and the Wyss Academy, all three from the University of Bern.

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Has the Paris Climate Agreement Changed Corporate Behavior?

Abstract:

Did firms shift resources to decarbonization in the wake of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, especially in industries where technology permits relatively cheap low-carbon options? The Paris Agreement marked a key moment in climate cooperation, uniting countries towards a common goal. However, achieving this target is largely dependent on the behavior of nonstate actors because companies are responsible for the lion's share of greenhouse gas emissions. Existing research on the effects of international organizations on nonstate actors is mixed, and

little focuses on climate agreements. In this paper, we examine whether the Paris Agreement changed corporate behavior among “convertible” industries, focusing on automobile manufacturers. Using five types of primary source materials such as earnings call transcripts and production reports, we find quite limited evidence that the Paris Agreement shifted business strategy in the car sector. Overall, the evidence should lead dispassionate analysts to revise downward their beliefs about Paris impact. Still, the Paris Agreement might have created an enabling environment for more ambitious domestic policy in the long run.

Speaker Biography:

Jeff Colgan is the Richard Holbrooke Professor of Political Science at Brown University and Director of the Climate Solutions Lab at the Watson Institute of Public and International Affairs. His research focuses on international order, especially as it relates to energy and the environment. His recent book *Partial Hegemony: Oil Politics and International Order* (Oxford University Press, 2021) investigates how countries and other actors have been able to sustain meaningful international governing arrangements to solve tough problems, and uses that history to consider climate change. His previous book was *Petro-Aggression: When Oil Causes War* (Cambridge University Press, 2013). His research has been published in *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *World Politics*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other journals. Prior to Brown University, he worked at McKinsey & Company, the World Bank, and American University. Professor Colgan has a Bachelor’s degree in engineering physics from McMaster University, a Master’s in Public Policy from UC Berkeley, and a PhD from Princeton University.

Registration: for questions, information and registration, please contact Laurie.Durel@unibe.ch

 **16h30, October 2nd 2024**

 **Auditorium Silva Casa, World Trade Institute, Hallerstrasse 6, 3012 Bern.**