

# **Networks of coproduction.**

## **How journalists and NGOs interact during UN climate change conferences**

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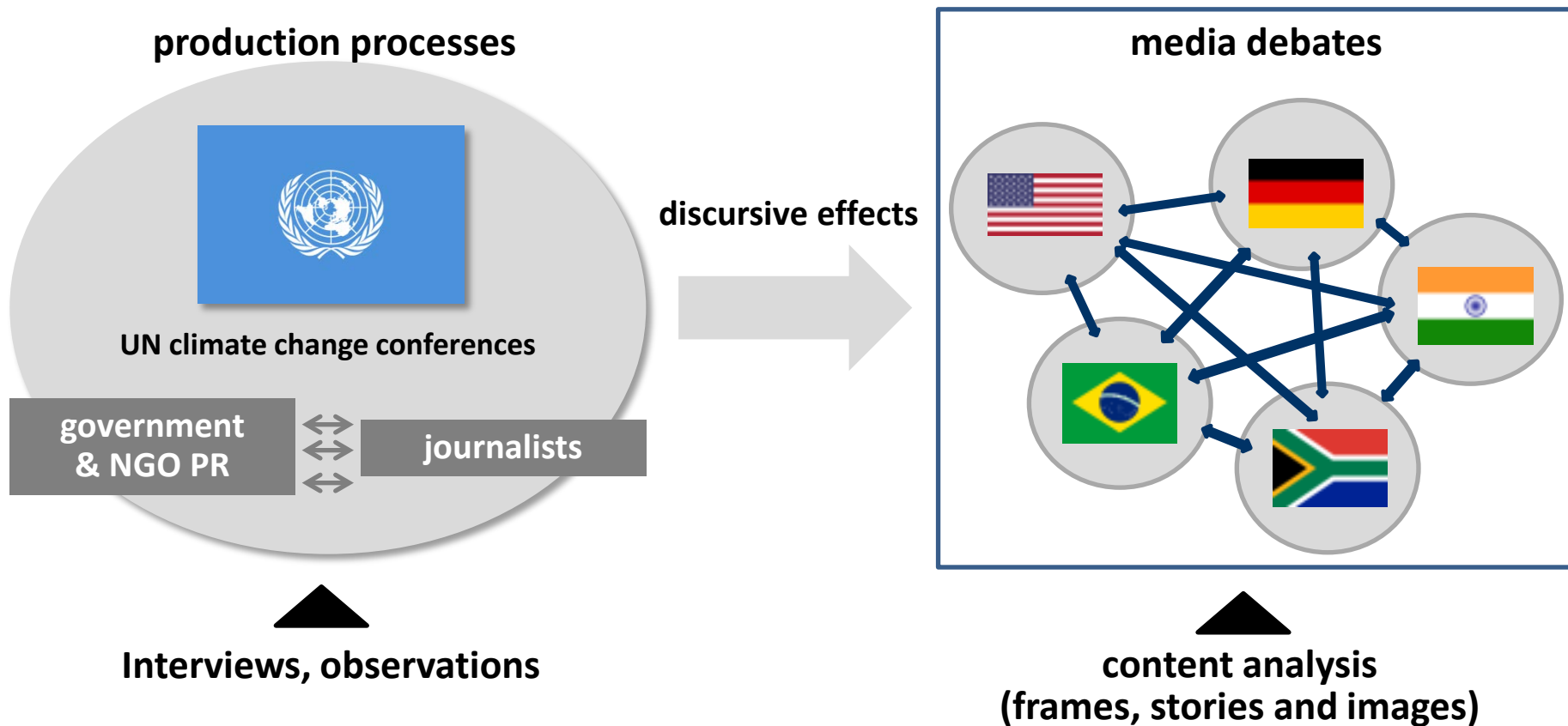
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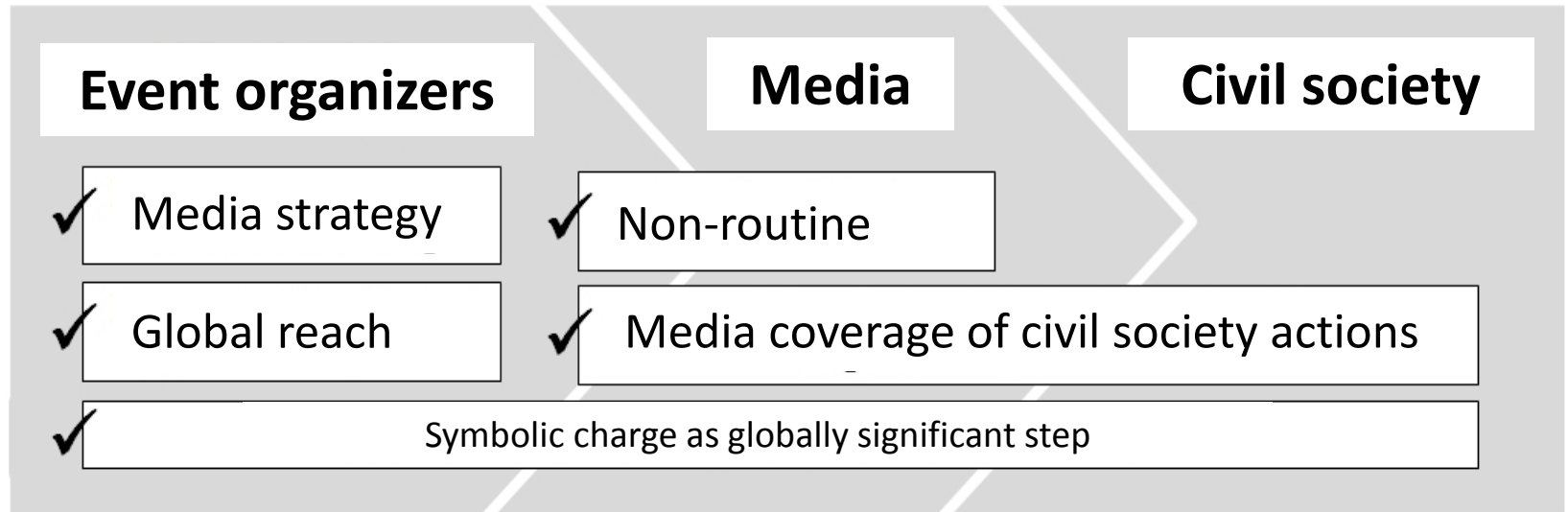
**Based on research jointly conducted with Julia Lück and Antal Wozniak**

**Paris, July 6, 2015**

# Research Project “Sustainable Media Events”



# HIPS: High-level international political summits as staged media events



# Journalism – NGO relations

- NGOs struggle to achieve publicity competing against government & business
- NGOs adapt to dominant news norms rather than challenging them (publicity stunts, photo-ops etc.)
- NGOs partly circumvent traditional media through digital channels

(Powers 2015)

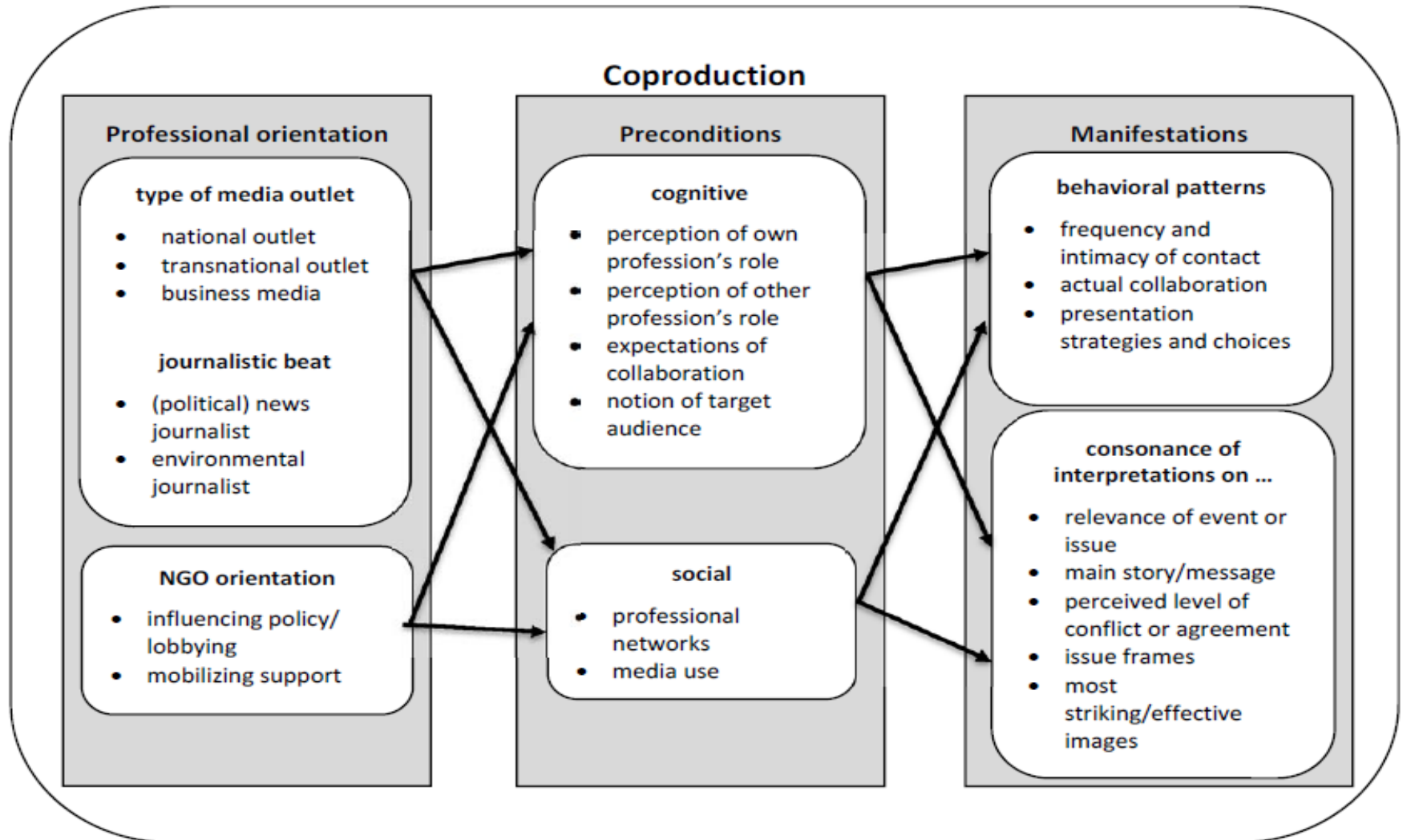


# Coproduction

- Journalism and NGO public relations mutually enable each other (Intereffication Model, Bentele & Nothaft 2008)
- (Some) journalists and PR professionals temporarily suspend their antagonistic roles
- Non-routine circumstances at the COPs contribute to „camp feeling“ and close interaction (Adolphsen & Lück 2012)



# Explaining coproduction: heuristic model



# Method

- Case studies at the COPs in Cancún (2010), Doha (2012) and Warsaw (2013)

- 105 semi-structured interviews

- 51 with journalists from national and transnational media

- most important countries from major continents
- COP host countries
- Transnationally recognized key media sources (Reuters , AP, Guardian, CNN, NYT)

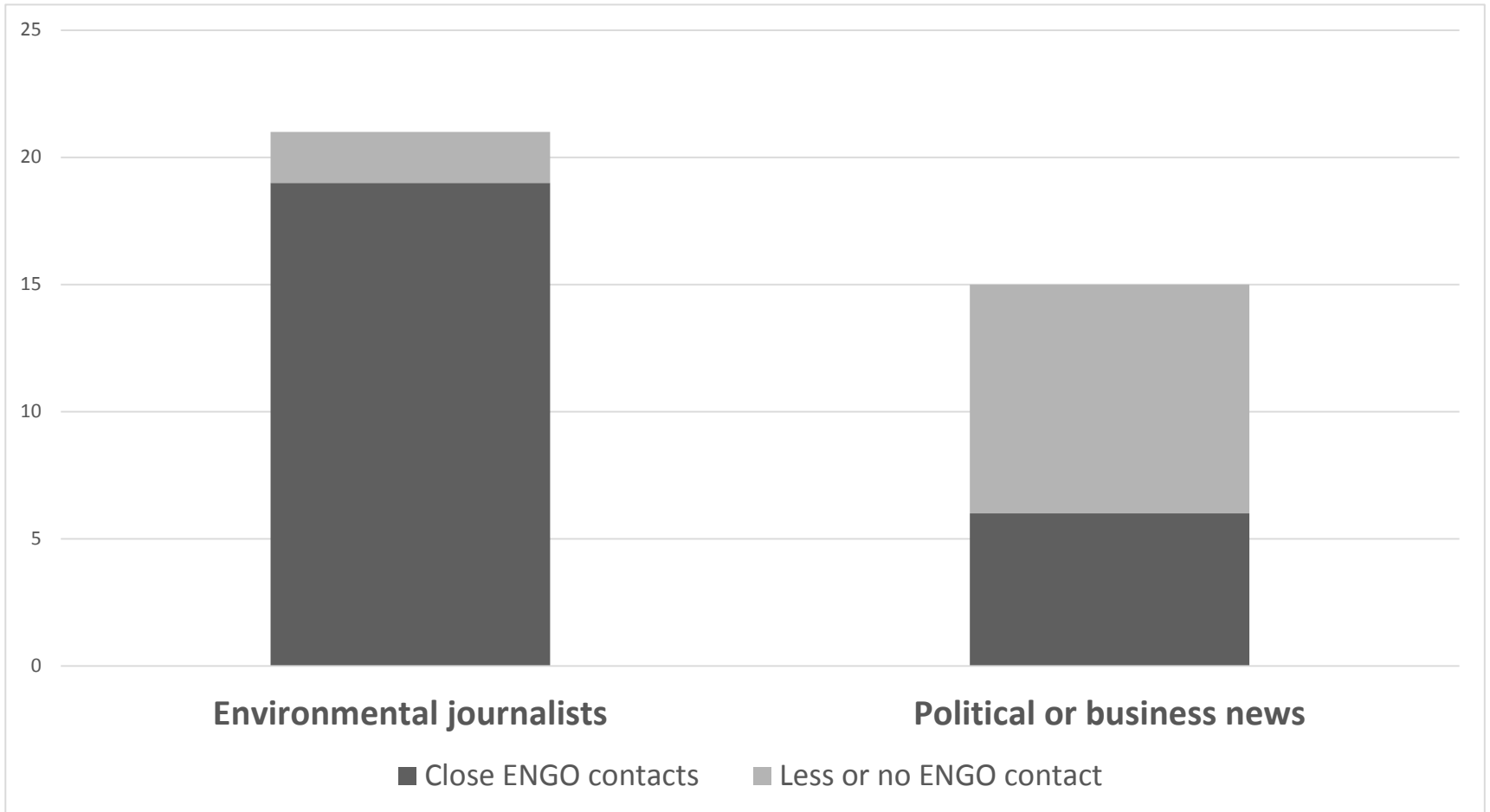


- 28 with public relations professionals from transnational NGOs



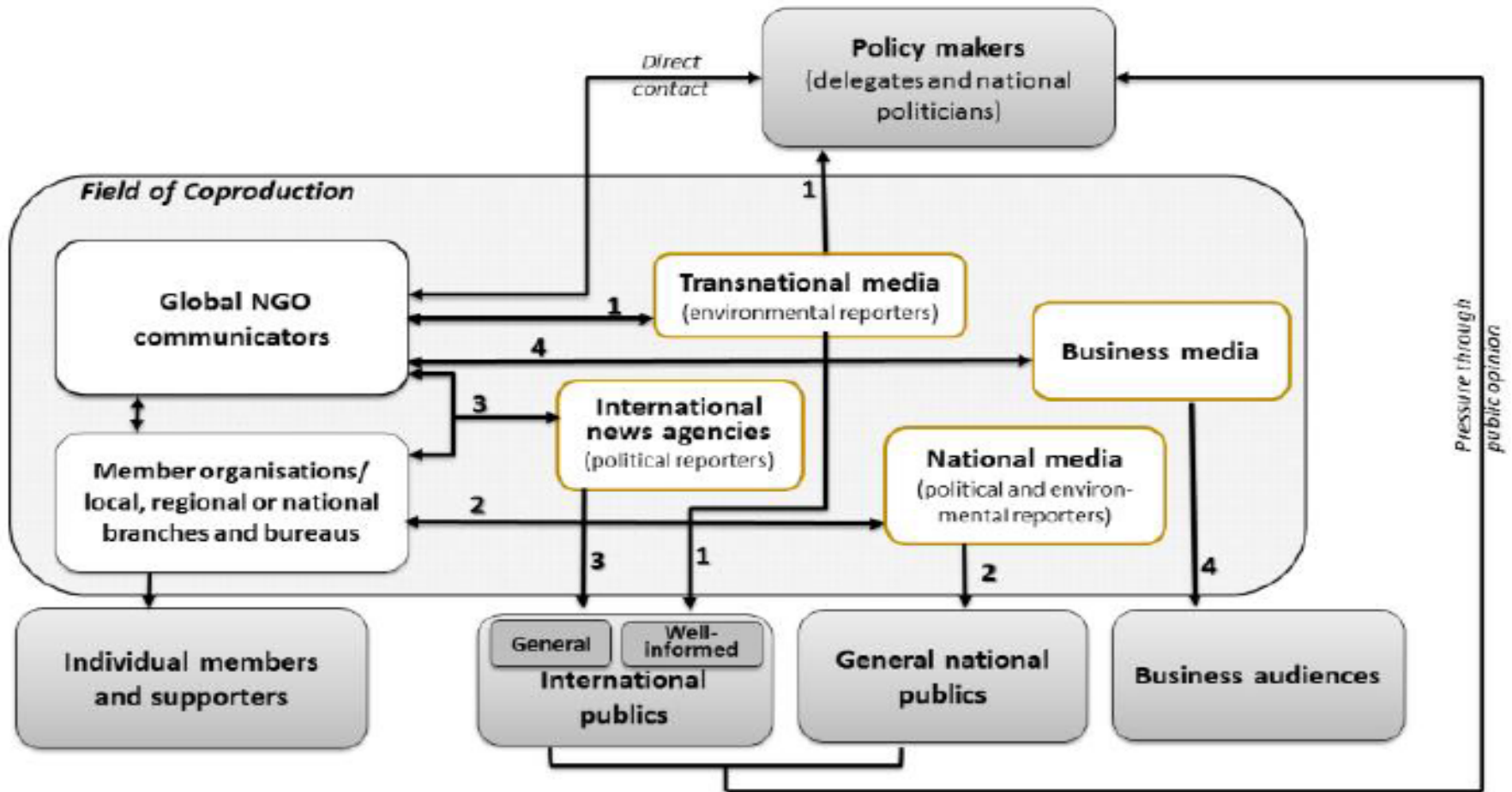
- 26 with national delegations (BRA, DEU, IND, RSA, USA, CHN and host country)

# Journalistic beat and ENGO contact





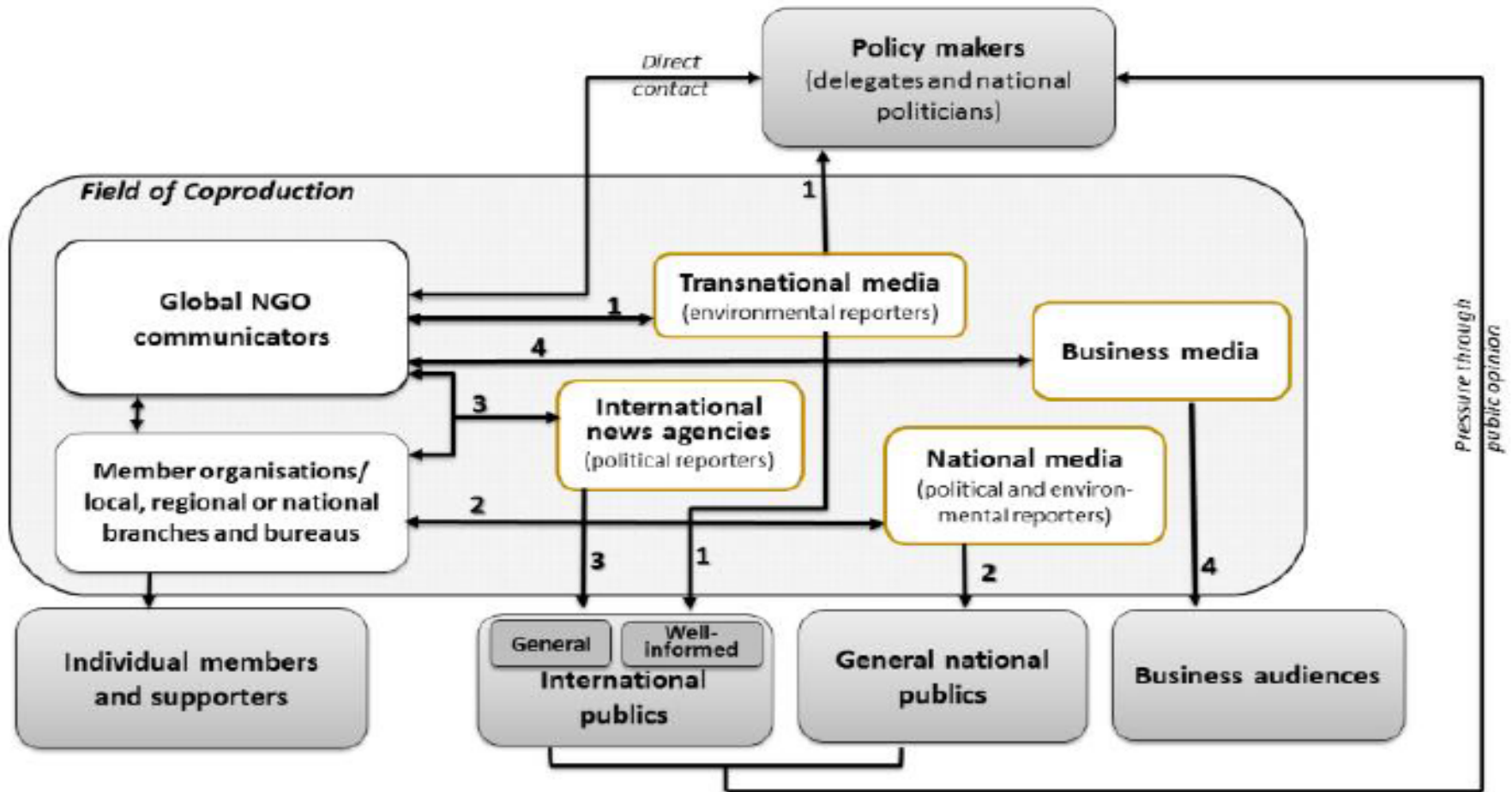
# 4 networks of coproduction at the COPs



# Network 1: Transnational media and global ENGOs

- Environmental reporters from **transnational media and global ENGO PR specialists** focusing on policy and lobbying
- **Long-lasting relationships** and **direct, personal contact**
- **Similarities** in interpretation of the COP between the two groups
- “In some other countries they allow non-profits or students to be part of their delegation and [they] can go inside the closed rooms. A lot of the NGOs, because they work in different countries are very plugged into what ... - you know, say, the Ethiopian delegation is doing a hearing or the Bangladesh delegation, and so we rely a lot on them to tell us, you know, the things that we can't get into.” (transnational journalist 2)
- “I think for the media, more than just giving them a press release that you want to get covered, it is really that long-term relationship-building with them that matters. You know, that credibility is a big factor.” (ENGO 1)

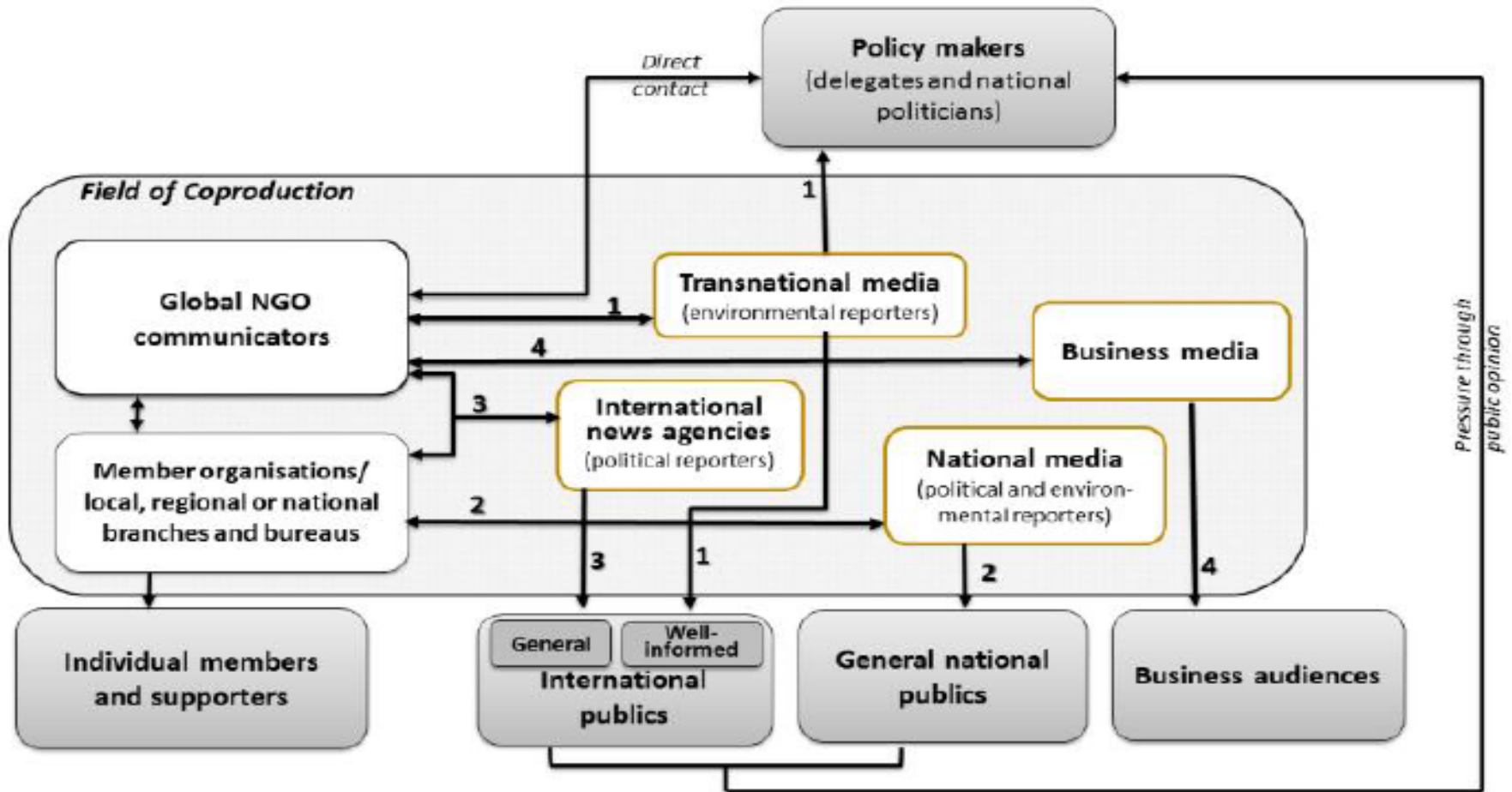
# 4 networks of coproduction at the COPs



# Network 2: National media and national ENGO branches

- Environmental and political reporters from **national media** and representatives from local and **national ENGO member organizations**
- NGOs as **information brokers** who explain the domestic relevance of COP decisions to journalists to reach broad national audiences
- More **formal interaction** through press conferences and press releases
- **Differences and similarities** in interpreting the COP
- “On the one hand, you want to have as much public attention as possible to ensure that there is a lot of pressure to get the most ambitious outcomes, that governments really feel that the public is supportive of strong climate action and all these sorts of things.” (ENGO 6)

# 4 networks of coproduction at the COPs



# Network 3: International news agencies and ENGOs

- **Political reporters** from news agencies and **global as well as national ENGO** communicators
- NGO positions used to **counter-balance** delegations and industry in wire reports
- More **formal interaction**
- **Less overt** manifestations of **coproduction**, but news agencies do value NGO as sources for images and statements

# Network 4: Business media and global ENGOS

- **Environmental reporters for business media and global ENGO communicators**
- **More specialized target audience**
- **Close and trustful relationship**
- **NGOs provide expertise with a spin**
- **Mostly similarities** in interpretation

# Journalists with little NGO connections

- **Diverse group** with different audiences and role perceptions
- **Focused on** first-hand information from **delegations**
- Greater **suspicion** toward NGO spin
- “To be frank, I don’t find the NGOs that helpful at these meetings. [...] Frankly, they come here to see each other and to try and get quoted in newspapers. It’s the delegates even more than their press people that I find most useful. [The delegation press officer from the home country] will sometimes talk with a small group of reporters on background, about what’s really going on.” (news journalist 3)



# Conclusion (1)

- Many journalists and ENGO communicators belong to the same „interpretive community“ (see Brüggemann & Engesser 2014)
- Journalists‘ professional contact with ENGOs varies with their respective audience orientation and role understanding
  - Transnational environmental journalists: long-term trustful relationships, informal contact
  - National journalists: more formal, short-term contact
  - News agency reporters: situational contact
  - Business reporters: trustful relationship with individual NGO specialists

# Conclusion (2)

- ENGOs: strategic orientations determine mode of coproduction:
  - Mobilizing strategy: aimed at setting the media agenda and providing media imagery
  - Lobbying strategy: expert communication toward specialized journalists and national delegations
- Next steps:
  - Bringing delegations into the picture
  - Survey among all journalists and PR specialists at COP 21 in Paris

**Thank you for your attention!**

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