Here and beyond?

The perception of the European Union as a leading environmental actor in Jordan and Morocco

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Introduction

"We are proud that the European Union is the world's largest provider of development assistance and humanitarian aid and it is also at the forefront of global efforts to protect our planet through the fight against climate change and to promote global public goods." Barroso, 12.10.2012

Protecting the planet is a rather substantial matter in general. Being a forerunner or vanguard in this endeavor is also of great importance for the European Union in particular, as the inclusion of the European Union's accomplishment in the list of virtues in the statement of Commission's president José Barroso following the announcement of the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize illustrates.

Indeed, in recent years the European Union has been representing itself as a vanguard in environmental policy and claims a leading role in global environmental politics. This is - both communicated by the Union as well as assessed by academic scholars – particularly the case in global climate change politics, where the EU displayed and inserted its leadership capabilities to a high, albeit varying degree. Yet, not only is the EU committed by international agreements and multilateral policy regimes, but the claim of the Union's leadership role is supported up by the inclusion of environmental questions in bi- and multilateral agreements, especially in relations with the countries of its 'neighbourhood'.

In line with the general representation of the EU as a leading environmental actor, the countries of the Union's neighbourhood were also addressed regarding this policy field: "The EU has much experience in addressing environmental problems in the Mediterranean [...]. The EU can also share approaches that have been successful in different parts of Europe with all

of the countries in the Mediterranean, adapted to their socio-economic contexts." (European Commission 2006: 6). True to the EU's intentions, it has provided ample support for an environmental cooperation with the southern Mediterranean countries. This policy field as well as European interests, principles and norms in environmental policy have been included in all major macro-structural initiatives (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighbourhood Policy and Union for the Mediterranean) as well as smaller initiatives and programs in both in a regional and country specific approach.

Overall, the European Union's activities and leadership aspirations in environmental policy are rather extensive and of considerable importance for the Union itself due to the centrality of this policy field for the Union's identity and legitimacy (Kelemen 2010, Oberthür/ Roche Kelly 2008) as well as its opportunity to enhance the Union's international actorness (Bretherton/ Vogler 2006). The centrality of EU leadership in environmental policy is also reflected in the vivid academic debate. Two rather significant shortcomings are, however, apparent in the ample literature and research: First, while research is very extensive regarding EU leadership in global environmental politics and multilateral regimes, there is a by and large disregard of possible regional leadership. Second, as the overwhelming majority of research is conducted from an European perspective, the external perspective and its new impetus for the debate on EU leadership is still underexplored.

Addressing these shortcomings and connecting these two neglected aspects, the paper analyzes the European Union's leadership role in the regional context of the Mediterranean by focusing on the perception of the Union by environmental experts from Jordan and Morocco. On a more conceptual note, the paper further argues for the great value the analysis of outsiders' perceptions may provide, as they may complement the dominant EU-perspective.

After this brief introduction, the paper gives an overview of the concept of leadership and discusses the type of directional leadership, which is mainly associated with the European Union. In addition, some conceptual considerations of the proposed external perspective are contemplated and argued, why outsiders' perceptions are particularly relevant to consider in this conceptual frame. The paper then proceeds to the empirical examination of the perception of the European Union as environmental leader in Jordan and Morocco. The analysis of the perception of the four aspects of directional leadership shows the interrelated nature of these aspects. It is also concluded that indeed, Jordanian and Moroccan experts perceive the EU to be a directional leader. Some concluding remarks will follow.

Part I: The conceptual context of leadership and perceptions

The presentation of leadership of the European Union in global environmental policy is rather prominent. Similarly, the debate in the political science academic community about leadership and the leadership capabilities of the European Union is a strong one and has developed particularly in reference to the Union's role in global environmental politics. The concept of leadership was in fact very prominently framed in the context of global climate change negotiations by Gupta and Grupp in 2000. Here the authors distinguished three (ideal) types of leadership: structural leadership, which is linked to the exercise of power from "political strength in the global order and the weight of an actor with respect to the problem at hand" (Grubb/ Gupta 2000: 19); instrumental leadership, which is related to exercising leadership through "skills in negotiations and the closely related question of the instrumental design of the regime to accommodate the needs of different parties." (Grubb/ Gupta 2000: 19); and lastly directional leadership which denotes states leading "by a combination of internal and external initiatives that seek to influence the perception of other countries as to what is desirable and what is possible." (Grubb/ Gupta 2000: 20). Indeed, the latter form of directional leadership was conceptualized by Grupp and Gupta in more or less explicit reference to the European Union and understood as the Union's 'natural role' (Grupp/ Gupta 2000b: 20) due to its general collective structure, its inclination for domestic implementation and institutional set-up. Thus, the two main components of directional leadership - leading by exemplary actions in particular on the domestic level, and influencing perceptions through promotion of visions and ideas (Kilian/Elgström 2010: 265) - fit the EU's description rather closely.

This attractiveness of a fitting concept – especially in the light of the general unsuitability of many IR concepts for the peculiar international actor EU – paired with the increasing attention paid to global environmental politics certainly contributed to the high popularity of the leadership concept in the academic community. Subsequently, the concept was the subject of further conceptual debate (Vogler/ Bretherton 2006, Chaban et al. 2006, Oberthür/ Kelly 2008, Vanden Brande 2008) as well as examined empirically (Yamin 2000, Faulkner 2007, Schreurs/ Tiberghien 2007, Schmidt 2008, Lindenthal 2009, Parker/ Karlsson 2010). Regarding directional leadership which is closely associated with the European Union's international role, many scholars found the EU to exert this type of leadership (xx), while others provided different labels for very similar leadership capabilities, such as soft leader (Oberthür/ Roche Kelly 2008) or normative leader (Chaban et al. 2006: 261). Nevertheless, on the bottom-line there are certain criteria associated with these leadership types. Parker and Karlsson, for example, see credibility, performance and "an actor's past track record" as crucial for directional leadership (Parker/ Karlsson 2010: 937). Furthermore, the authors argue that internal division of the Union may threaten its credibility and effectiveness and in consequence may

threaten its leadership capabilities (Parker/ Karlsson 2010: 936). Similarly, Kilian and Elaström emphasize coherency and credibility as central criteria which need to be fulfilled as leader. The credibility of the Union as directional leader is mainly gained by its perception as a role model in the relevant policy field, thereby "setting examples and inspiring others." (Kilian/ Elgström 2010: 266). This is in line with Chaban et al (2006: 259) findings, in which the Union was perceived as a leader on 'issues of international morality' (2006: 259) and 'normative leader' (2006: 261). The normative dimension is also often emphasized as an aspect of directional leadership. The main overlapping point between the normative power Europe concept introduced by Manners (2002) and directional leadership is certainly the ability and claim to influence and shape others' perceptions and norms. Thus, Manners' proclaimed ability of a normative power Europe to "shape conception of 'normal' in international relations' (Manners 2002: 239) corresponds with the directional leader's ability to "influence the perception of other countries as to what is desirable and what is possible" (Grupp/ Gupta 2002: 20). However, the extent and the direction of this relationship between normative and leadership role of the European Union is not straightforward as Kelemen for example suggests that leadership in global environmental issues is pursued in order to establish the Union as a 'normative power' (2010: 338). Without discussing the concept of normative power in any detail here, the ability to influence and shape others' perceptions and norm is an important aspect of directional leadership and the relationship was rather fetchingly summarized by van Schaik and Schunz as the "EU's normatively inspired leadership" (van Schaik/ Schunz 2012: 183). Altogether, four main criteria can be identified with directional leadership - credibility, coherency, performance and the ability to shape and influence others' perceptions and conceptions of norms.

In sum, the concept of leadership has been analyzed and discussed extensively, albeit mainly in respect to the EU's leadership role and capabilities in global environmental politics and regimes, in particular in global climate change policy within the frame of the UNFCCC. However, despite the active involvement of the European Union in the field of environmental policy in its neighbouring regions and although leadership is not defined in regards to a certain geographical scope, an application of the leadership concept or an examination of the Union's leadership capabilities is still widely missing.

Similar to the dominance of research on EU leadership in **global** environmental policy, another focus in this literature is apparent – the **EU-dominated perspective**. While leadership of the European Union in global environmental policy has been examined and debated extensively in the academic community over the last years, the majority of research has, however, been conducted from the perspective of the European Union or certain policy regimes. This dominance is also reflected to a certain degree in the European Union's own attitude

and claims of leadership, as Faulkner (2007: 509) points out: "EU leaders now routinely claim an environmental leadership role at home and worldwide."

Both the rather one-sided claim of leadership by the European Union as well as the dominant academic focus on leadership from an internal (European) perspective is, however, rather surprising as Gupta and van der Grijp (2000) have early on pointed out one important aspect which has been neglected in subsequent years and has only recently become a topic of some research – the perception of leadership: "A leader is not only a party that fulfills theoretical criteria; a leader is one that is perceived as a leader." (Gupta/ van der Grijp 2000: 69). In the wake of an increasing academic interest in outsiders' views of the European Union, the Union's perceived leadership in global environmental politics has recently been investigated with mixed results. While Elgström (2007) still saw EU leadership as a problematic aspiration since its potential did not transform into perceived leadership – due to disunity, coordination problems and lack of credibility - Kilian and Elgström (2010) argue that the EU is perceived as environmental leader by representatives or third countries in multilateral negotiations, saying that the EU's self-representation is 'echoed' (Kilian/ Elgström 2010: 262). A recent study by Karlsson et al (2011) about the perception of leadership in the COP-15 in Copenhagen saw the EU widely recognized as the primary leader, despite the less than stellar performance in the negotiations and predictions of a loss of exemplary leadership (Kilian/ Elgström 2010, Haug/ Berkhout 2010). In light of the brief overview of central criteria required for directional leadership, these four main aspects are by and large reflected and found in the empirical examination of the perception of the EU as global environmental leader as well.

Before examining the Union's leadership capabilities in a regional context, it is necessary, however, to briefly consider the methodological frame of the external perspective relevant for this paper. In general, the one-sidedness of the dominant EU-perspective has been noted for some time and calls for a change of perspectives have recently been more and more answered in the academic community.

Empirically, studying the Union's external perceptions is very versatile as it is easily compatible with very different conceptual approaches and backgrounds. On the other hand, perceptions are often in danger of being employed solely as tools and instruments of empirical research. While the majority of the available literature on the EU's external perception displays a decided empirical-descriptive focus, there is nevertheless an increasing interest in conceptualizing perceptions.

Based on four different albeit at times interrelated cluster of research in which outsiders' perceptions are increasingly considered (EU international actorness – Rhodes 1998, Hill 1993; role theory – Elgström/ Smith 2006, Kilian/ Elgström 2010; identity formation – Lucarelli 2006/

2008, Lucarelli/ Fioramonti 2009; distinctive/ normative power - Zutter 2010, Zutter/ Toro 2008, Nunes 2011), four overarching functions of outsiders' perceptions of the European Union can be distinguished. First, external perceptions may provide a source of knowledge about the Union, which may complement other sources of information on the EU (Chaban/Elgström/ Holland 2006: 247). Despite the possibly uncertain reliability of others' perceptions as a source of information, in most empirical publications, perceptions as a source of information are highly emphasized. Secondly, outsiders' perceptions contribute to the international recognition of an actor and its internal legitimacy. Thus, analyzing these perceptions can provide insights into recognition and legitimacy of the European Union from a new perspective and redirect some academic debates about whether the Union is indeed an international actor by considering, among other aspects, the de facto recognition or non-recognition by other actors and individuals. A third function is particularly relevant for the formation of a self-image, in which outsiders' perceptions feed back into the understanding and construction of the self. This external mirror function is quite essential in the conceptual approaches of EU identity, role theory and normative power, but is also frequently raised - on a more empirical level - in many other publications. It is often complemented by a differentiation of the own identity, role or image against the 'other' and while outsiders are therefore again central, it is not strictly the others' perceptions that are essential. The process of 'othering' is therefore not directly understood as a function of outsiders' perceptions although the existence of 'others' is acknowledged as crucial in the formation of an identity, image or role. Fourthly, perceptions can serve as a control mechanism for assessing success or effectiveness of the European Union as an actor, its identity or its role (Lucarelli/Fioramonti 2009: 2). This evaluation function is found in most compatible conceptual and theoretical approaches but is also frequently raised, more or less explicitly, in a considerable share of the empirical publications as well.

These four functions of perceptions are obviously interrelated and different research designs emphasize certain functions or aspects more than others. Most elaborated in respect to knowledge gained may be derived from the mirror and evaluation functions, although these are also the ones that pose the greatest challenge to assess empirically. In this respect, the first two functions of information source and recognition are easier to examine in empirical studies.

This paper understands leadership within the framework of role theory and therefore assumes that global environmental leadership is a role¹ for the European Union – while at the same time recognizing the importance of environmental policy for the legitimacy and identity of the European Union (xx). Roles are, however, not simply taken, but the conception of roles

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¹ Role is understood here as "patterns of expected or appropriate behavior (Elgström/ M. Smith 2006: 5)

is a negotiation process, as Elgström (2007b: 448) points out: "Role-taking is, however, no automatic or mechanical process; what role will be played is to a certain extent a result of learning and socialization in interactive processes of negotiation where self-images are confronted with expectations." Expectations of others may therefore affect the behavior of the European Union as they shape role conceptions on the one hand, but are also relevant for the role performance on the other hand. The latter is also influenced by the external perception of how a role should and is enacted (Elgström/ M Smith 2006: 6). It is therefore often assumed, that perceptions of the European Union can shape its role and its identity (Kilian/ Elgström 2010: 258) and even contribute to the development of specific international roles of the European Union (Elgström 2007b: 446).

As the paper's empirical agenda is set in the rather loose frame of role theory, the mirrorfunction of perceptions – and the evaluation function to a lesser degree – is then particularly emphasized.

Part II: Case study of EU as environmental leader in Jordan and Morocco

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Morocco have been long-time partner countries of the European Union. Both were in included in all major cooperation initiatives and were reliable as well as most receptive partners thus highly valued partners of the Union and consequently rewarded with the 'advanced status' (Morocco in 2008, Jordan in 2010). Environmental policy has been a part of the European Union's relationship to both countries and includes cooperation and support on several levels – in particular in the institutionalization and capacity building of the respective government institutions. This is largely in line with the general relation and cooperation objective of the Union in respect to their Mediterranean partner countries as it aims at improving the structures for environmental policy and thus the management of environment, taking action in protecting the environment, and enhancing cooperation on environmental issues, both regionally and internationally (European Commission 2005).

By and large, the cooperation between the respective partner countries and the European Union proceeds quite well as both Jordan and Morocco adhere, at least superficially, to political and economic reforms as was aimed by the Union is in line with this general development as the partner countries carry out reforms in the institutional set-up and legislative frame, which are also supported by the EU. Despite environmental policy still not being a central issue of cooperation, it has increased in importance, which is noticeably reflected in the development of environmental cooperation in the general framework of EU-Mediterranean relations and in bilateral ties with the respective partner countries.

Jordan is often considered a 'best practice' example of the ENP cooperation in environmental issues, while Morocco and the Union have a very strong general relationship. Both countries therefore promise a fruitful base for the assessment of perceptions of the Union's (regional) leadership in environmental policy.

The case study of external perceptions of the European Union is based on field research conducted in Jordan and Morocco in 2011. An integrative methodological approach of qualitative expert interviews and quantitative questionnaires was employed in order to comprehensively analyze the perception of the European Union in the Mediterranean partner countries of Jordan and Morocco. Overall, 51 semi-structured interviews with environmental (29 in Jordan, 22 in Morocco), water and energy experts from administration, civil society and research institutions were conducted. Excluding non-Jordanians and non-Moroccans, there were 45 experts who also filled out a closed questionnaire as complementary data. The participation in the interviews and questionnaire was on a voluntary basis. As the qualitative method of expert interview does require openness, the questions focused mainly on the perception of the situation of the environment and of environment policy in the respective countries, as well as experiences of cooperation with the European Union. The questionnaire, filled out after the interviews, then turned more explicitly to the Union, asking about the EU as an environmental actor in general, about the motivation and impact of the Union's activities and the interviewees' personal views on environmental matters. The analysis and conclusion present preliminary results only.

Analysis of the aspects of leadership

Earlier, four main criteria of directional leadership – the leadership role mainly associated with the European Union – were identified. It was argued that the coherency, credibility and performance affect directional leadership and that this type is also associated with a sort of normative inclination and an ability to shape others' perceptions and conceptions of norms.

Coherency:

Unlike suggested in the academic literature, there is little direct or indirect indication in the qualitative interviews with Jordanian and Moroccan environmental expert which would signal a heightened perception of a lack of coherency or unity of the European Union as environmental actor in their countries. On the contrary, the issue of the Union as a unitary actor is hardly raised at all in the interviews and internal differences are mentioned on very few occasions. In these few cases in which internal differences were mentioned by the experts, these

were mainly in regards to the relationship between the EU in Brussels and the EU delegations in the respective countries. Here, responsibilities were at times unclear, according to some experts: "For example the Europeans are also not so clear - there are many actors and committees to manage a project. For the local NGOs it is unclear who has the decision, the delegation in Rabat, or the commission in Brussels?" (InterviewM022) Similar experiences were mentioned by a few Jordanian experts: "I think at one stage there was a confusion between whose role is it, the Jordanian office or the Brussels office. But it has been clarified later on, so no problem with that." (InterviewJ020). These quotations illustrate that when disunity is perceived, this is more due to the structure and share of responsibilities of the EU and its delegations in partner countries than an internal coherency problem of the Union. And while there may be some issues regarding the responsibilities of the EU delegations, these are consistently – in both Jordan and Morocco – seen as a great asset to the EU's activities in the partner countries.

The European Union is thus seen mainly as one unitary actor, and in the majority of the cases the primary partner of the experts interviewed. Nevertheless, the Union is largely seen as one actor among others which are active in environmental policy in the respective countries. Some of these other actors are European states; in particular notable were Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands in Jordan, and France, Germany and Spain in Morocco. This, however, does not necessarily indicate any disunity of the European Union and its member states per se, and the further comparison to the other major actors – US, Canada and Japan (in Jordan) – suggests no perception of the peculiar internal structure of the EU. Instead, when possible effects of the Union's structure are apparent, such as differences in funding procedures for example – as the process is frequently perceived to be very long – are explained by different approaches and strategies pursued by the donor agencies.

Furthermore, the multilateral character inherent in the EU system often discussed as challenging to coherency is perceived as an advantage when it comes to regional projects and programs. These seem to foster a better understanding of the European Union as actor as some of the misapprehensions of the structure and coordination issues with many member states are decreasing, as a quote by one expert from Jordan illustrates: "The EU has a good reputation in political terms. Also it provides a good example of governance. It's a region that has managed to reconcile within and develop a model of cooperation and introducing new tools and new systems of good governance. And they do it in a friendly way; they don't come in an arrogant way and try to impose things." (InterviewJ006).

The European Union was, in sum, usually perceived as equal to other actors and donors, as neither any particular difference due to the Union's peculiar structure nor a high disunity of EU action was perceived by the majority of the interviewees.

The findings from the interviews are also largely reflected in the quantitative data. Agreement to the EU as a unified actor was rather high (70,2% rather or strong agreement), and about three quarters of the experts disagreed to the Union as a confusing actor ('The different actors within the EU are confusing'). Further, the correlation between the major possible sources of disunity – different actors within the EU causing confusion and other contradictory policies of the EU thus indicating a consistent source or pattern of disunity – is not high, thus essentially supporting findings from the interviews.

Credibility:

The second criterion of directional leadership is the credibility of the leader. This criterion is, similar to the discussion in the literature, very important and heavily represented in the qualitative interviews by proxy of the European Union as an example or a model in environment, water and renewable energy. Although this topic was not directly raised in the expert interview, it was nevertheless raised in more or less direct terms by a vast majority of the interviewees and categorized rather strictly.

There is no outright rejection of the EU as a model in any qualitative expert interview. However, 20 of 45 experts did not – directly or indirectly – perceive the EU as a model in environment, water or renewable energies. Slightly more than half of these expert did not mention the EU as a model in any capacity at all, while a little less than half did mention the EU as a model but as a very general reference with no specification – for example: "On the other hand it is still a model and also the fact that the proximity of Morocco with the EU... because environmental problems - as you know - they do not have borders and therefore if there are environmental problems in Morocco, it also has consequences for Europe and vice versa." (InterviewM004). In a few interviews of the qualitative interviews, the EU as seen as a model in other policy fields - for example the functional integration in the Union or the cooperation between European countries in specific policies. As these policy fields are unrelated to environment, water and renewable energies, they are included in the category of cases, in which the Union is not seen as a model in environment.

A majority of 25 experts (55.6%) mentioned the EU as a model in environment, water or renewable energies either directly or indirectly. A strong majority of these experts perceive the Union as a model on a larger scale or in more topic-specific context – such as the expert in InterviewJ004: "If it is good on one side, the other maybe can utilize it and vice versa. No doubt, Europe has quite an advancement since its establishment as a Union on different sectors, so the environmental bit comes quite high and I believe the integration on that part is being reflected on all development sectors." Although not always clearly indicated, there are

a number of different reasons given when specifying the EU as a model – the most important ones are the experience of the European Union in environment, water and renewable energies, and its performance in the cooperation.

	Example		
Experience	"I think that the Moroccans can profit from the experience of the European Union, because I think the European are well developed and they have a concern. They have already developed a system of recycling." (InterviewM021)		
Performance of the Union in cooperation	"They are realistic and that's what we want. It's not easy, the EU funds some of our projects, it's a really good process, evaluation is perfect, monitoring is perfect. So it's a really good system that I personally like and we all prefer in the organization." (InterviewJ008/9)		
Willingness to share experience/knowledge	"They do know us. If you know the problem, and the European Union has a historical evolution of the problem, we can find a solution and adapt the solution for Morocco. That is an advantage." (InterviewM015)		
Expected impact for partner countries	"There are lots of good experiences that can be applied. When we drafted the renewable energy laws, we looked at the European laws. Now the fee and tariffs can help the energy efficiency, Jordan can learn a lot from those models because our energy consumption is increasing with the economic growth and we need to look more seriously at energy efficiency in Jordan." (InterviewJ016)		
Existence of EU structures in the partner countries	"The advantage is that the EU is always there. It exists, it has programs set up permanently in Morocco. Other projects are individual projects, that is to say three or four years and then we see them, I believe there are a lot of projects in Morocco and these projects are continued in the time level." (InterviewM020)		

Also categorized as perceiving the EU as a model are those cases, in which experts emphasized certain aspects of the Union which are mainly in regards to its specific approach or process, such as the Union's transparency, participatory approach, monitoring and evaluation of projects, cooperation and support for civil society organisations. As these were always mentioned in the context of environment, water and renewable energies, these cases are also considered as consistent with the rather strict categorization of the Union as a model.

Although the categorization above suggests otherwise, the overall perception of the EU as a model is very strong – especially if including those cases, in which the EU as generally referenced as a model or good example. In addition, the cases in which the EU is specifically seen as a model in environment, water or renewable energies are quite strong and experts often stated in detail why they see the EU as an example for environment, water and renewable energies for their respective countries.

This view of the European Union as a model or example is also fostered by the Union itself, particularly on the institutional level through projects where Jordanian or Moroccan governmental institutions are partnered with institutions from EU member states. These twinning programs are described by one expert as follows: "Twinning means a relevant European institution would come to work closely with the relevant Jordanian institution. It's hands-on-job, mutual development of ideas [...]." (InterviewJ004). This largely underlines the exemplary and model-like characterization of the Union which is particularly strong on the institutional level, although in some instances this also applies to non-governmental projects and organizations (InterviewJ008/9). These partnering projects and close collaboration schemes are almost unanimously seen as positive and its impact as rather profound: "And that was a very good involvement, it was deep, it was on a daily basis, it did change a lot." (InterviewJ006). This was mirrored by a Moroccan participant of a twinning project as well: "The system is made in such way that projects or programs go in the right direction and give good results because we already talk of a logical framework with indicators and assessments and postevaluations. In my experience the pairing was successful despite we had problems in the way to implementation problems that are beyond the control of both partners [...]. We were team and despite all, but we did catch up." (InterviewM010)

Generally, in qualitative interviews the perception of the Union as a model, whose credibility is due to their own experience, their performance and willingness to share their knowledge is rather high. This is largely mirrored in the quantitative data: Altogether the agreement to the item 'Because of its environmental activity in Europe the EU's credibility is high' (*High credibility*) is high (51.1% rather and 37.8% strongly agree) as well as to the item 'Concerning the environment the EU is a good example' (*Good example*) is high (55.3% rather and 37.8% strongly agree). Even the slightly more potent item 'The EU should be a model for other countries in regards to its engagement in environmental issues' gets high percentages of agreement (44.4% rather and 46.7% strongly agree). As was suggested earlier, the percentages of agreement are much higher than the categorization based on the qualitative interviews, where only 55.6% of the experts perceived the Union as a 'profound' model or example in environment, water and renewable energies.

Correlations

		High credibility	Environmenta I model	Good example	Expert's perception of EU as model
Spearman's rho	High credibility		,176	,416	,214
			,248	,004	,158
			45	45	45
	Environmental model	,176		,434	,082
		,248		,003	,591
		45		45	45
	Good example	,416	,434		,365
		,004	,003		,014
		45	45		45
	Expert's perception of EU	,214	,082	,365	
	as model	,158	,591	,014	
		45	45	45	

Looking at the relation of the quantitative variables to each other and to the quantitized variable, one variable correlates rather highly will all three: the variable 'good example' correlates rather highly with all other variables. Indeed, the quantitized variable 'Expert's perception of EU as model' has the highest correlation with the variable 'good example' (r_{sp} =.365). Thus, despite the differences in the construction, there is a good indication in the quantitative and quantitized data that the European Union is indeed seen as a good example or model with a high credibility in environment, water and renewable energies in the partner countries of Jordan and Morocco.

Performance:

Different aspects of performance where emphasized in the quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews. Performance is understood here in terms of the process of cooperation and in the impact of the Union's activities. While the assessment of the cooperation with the European Union and the perception of this experience by the experts was a central topic in the qualitative interviews, this was not included in the quantitative questionnaires. Here, on the other hand, the perception of the impact of EU activities on the environment in the respective countries was questioned in more detail.

Based on the qualitative interview data, three variables were quantified. The first variable represents the cooperation experience and is based on the experts' answers to the direct question: 'Do you have any experience in cooperating with the European Union?' and unstructured follow-up questions. 13 experts indicated that they have not cooperated actively with the European Union (writing proposals for the EU without further interaction was included here). The experience of the other 32 experts varied immensely in topic, frequency and

intensity of the cooperation, thus resulting in focusing on the dominant cooperation experience only.

The second variable quantifies the perception of the role the experts saw the European Union dominantly in – strictly as financing or as a donor, or as supporting and sharing a partnership. While 24 experts perceived the EU's role to be financing activities in their respective countries, 21 experts saw the EU's role to be supporting their partners in the countries.

The third quantified variable assesses the evaluation of the European Union as environmental actor by the experts based on direct and indirect reference in the qualitative interviews. Three categories of evaluation were differentiated: Only 6 experts perceived the EU as a cooperation partner negatively, 15 saw the Union neutrally and the remaining 24 experts perceived the Union as a cooperation partner positively.

Evaluation Negative Neutral **Positive** Example "As a country with poor "My personal opinion, ("It was the first time in resources, and we have from our part, there is a 2007 and it was a very many priorities in the of documentation, good process because it field of environment, we processes but a lot of was based on respectexpect the EU to suptimes, the project doesn't ing the current condiport more. Let's comget a lot of attention intions and try to maximpare it to USAid, they land. They are not acise the best of it and to are putting a lot of moncompanying it, well they minimise the problems ey in environmental secare accompanying it in and overcome the barritor and supporting a lot documents. Financing ers. So it did involve all but not beyond. Many the staff in the ministry, of initiatives. We expect the EU to be the second times, the difficulty is to it was based on realistic major donor in Jordan. spend money at the right hopes. It was transpar-We expect more, are time, and we understand ent, it involved many looking for more support that. But it is not impeople. It was not a from them. In funding, portant if we spend it document that comes technical assistence. well. [...] I tell you, the from a consultant. It things like that." (Inter-EU is the best partner. meant much more work viewJ029) We have a very clear from my side but it was cooperation, we have a very enlightening exprojects, we have goals." perience." (Inter-(InterviewM022) viewJ006) n=45 15 24

The variable Dominant role perceived is correlated negatively (r=-.297) with NGO cooperation experience and positively (r=.216) with a cooperation experience in governmental institutions. In other words, there is a medium relation between having a NGO cooperation experience and perceiving the EU's role to be a donor (coded as 0), and a slightly lower relation between having a governmental cooperation experience and perceiving the EU's role to be a

partner (coded as 1). Furthermore, the direction of the relations – though at a lower correlation – is similar when examining the dominant cooperation experiences and the positive evaluation of the European Union as a cooperation partner: While the relation between a cooperation experience in governmental institutions and the positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner is positive (r=.163), the relation between a positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner and a dominant cooperation experience in a non-governmental context is negative (r=-.228). While all of these correlations are on a medium to low level, there is one very notable correlation found in the data: The positive evaluation of the EU as cooperation partner correlates highly positively with the dominant role perceived by the experts (r=.696)

Dominant role perceived * Cumulated evaluation of EU as cooperation partner positive Crosstabulation

			Cumulated evalues cooperation page		
			not positive	positive	Total
Dominant role perceived	financing/ donor	Count	19	5	24
		Expected Count	11,2	12,8	24,0
	support/ partnership	Count	2	19	21
		Expected Count	9,8	11,2	21,0
Total		Count	21	24	45
		Expected Count	21,0	24,0	45,0

The qualitative data then suggests in regard to the cooperation of the European Union – as an indicator of its performance – that the roles of the European Union have a very strong relation with the evaluation of the Union as a positive cooperation partner: the perception of the Union as a donor goes along with a not-positive evaluation, while the perception of the EU as a partner goes along with a positive evaluation. Obviously, many nuances of both the evaluation as well as the perception of the dominant role were lost when the qualitative data from the interviews was quantitized, yet it illustrates very impressively a relation which is indeed characterized in the interviews.

The second aspect of the criterion of performance is the impact of the EU's activities on the environment in Jordan and Morocco. Despite not being posed as a direct question, this topic was often raised by the experts in the qualitative interviews. However, the impact of the EU in the partner countries is rather complex and cannot be discussed here qualitatively in detail. To summarize, the qualitative data suggests several dimensions of the EU's impact on the environment in the partner countries, which are approximately also represented in the quantitative data. Indeed, the correlation of the three items also suggests high relation between the dimensions and thus supporting the relevance of these dimensions generally found in the qualitative data.

Correlations

			Values accepted	Standards raised	New issues	vindeximpact dim
Spearman's rho	Values accepted	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,570**	,504**	,830**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000
		N	45	45	45	45
	Standards raised	Correlation Coefficient	,570**	1,000	,301*	,750**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,044	,000
		N	45	45	45	45
	New issues	Correlation Coefficient	,504**	,301*	1,000	,776**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,044		,000
		N	45	45	45	45
	vindeximpactdim	Correlation Coefficient	,830**	,750 ^{**}	,776**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	
		N	45	45	45	45

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Looking at the exact frequencies of the three variables, one may notice the high percentage of agreement. This might plausibly indicate an overall high level of agreement to the EU affecting the environment in Jordan and Morocco.

Values accepted

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	l rather disagree	6	12,8	13,3	13,3
	I rather agree	25	53,2	55,6	68,9
	l strongly agree	14	29,8	31,1	100,0
	Total	45	95,7	100,0	
Missing	99	2	4,3		
Total		47	100,0		

Standards raised

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	l rather disagree	5	10,6	11,1	11,1
	I rather agree	30	63,8	66,7	77,8
	I strongly agree	10	21,3	22,2	100,0
	Total	45	95,7	100,0	
Missing	99	2	4,3		
Total		47	100,0		

New issues

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	l rather disagree	9	19,1	20,0	20,0
	I rather agree	26	55,3	57,8	77,8
	l strongly agree	10	21,3	22,2	100,0
	Total	45	95,7	100,0	
Missing	99	2	4,3		
Total		47	100,0		

^{*.} Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to examine both aspects of the performance of the European Union in environment in Jordan and Morocco, an additive index is constructed including the three variables which together indicated a rather high perception of the impact of the Union's activities. Unsurprisingly, the index ('vindeximpactdim') correlates highly positively with all three variables. When further correlating this index with the prior variables discussed as the cooperation experience of the experts, the perceived impact of the EU fits rather well with the earlier interpretation scheme: The highest correlation (r=.537) is between the perceived impact and the perceived dominant role. Indeed, when looking at the means of the two groups a significant difference is indeed noticeable: The mean score of the index is significantly lower for those experts who perceive the EU's role to be financing activities (coded as 0) than for those experts who perceive the EU's role to be supporting activities (coded as 1).

Report

vinc	lexim	npac	tdim

Dominant role perceived	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
financing/ donor	8,5417	24	1,31807
support/ partnership	10,1905	21	1,32737
Total	9,3111	45	1,54952

While neither of the dominant cooperation experiences variables correlates highly with the perceived impact, the evaluation of the Union as a cooperation partner is again higher and rather illustrative: While the correlation between the perceived impact and the positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner is highly positive (r=.452), the correlation between the perceived impact and the negative evaluation of the Union as a cooperation partner is moderately negative (r=-.293). Simply put: along with an increase in the evaluation of the EU as a positive cooperation partner, there is an increase in the perception of the impact of the Union in the partner countries. While the last finding is not entirely surprising, the overall importance of the perceived roles of the European Union, however, is and must be carefully considered in the conclusion.

Correlations

	Dominant cooperation experience in NGO	Dominant cooperation experience in GOV	Dominant role perceived	Cumulated evaluation of EU as cooperation partner positive	Cumulated evaluation of EU as cooperation partner negative
vindeximpactdim	-,222	,124	,537	,452	-,293
	,223	,498	,000	,002	,051
	32	32	45	45	45

The perception of the Union's performance – which is compromised of the perception of the cooperation with the Union and its impact on the respective countries – is rather complex. On the one hand, the overall perceived impact of the European Union on the respective countries seems to be rather high, and a high perception of the impact is positively correlated with a positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner. On the other hand, the perception of cooperation with the European Union is less clear. There is a high indication that the role the expert dominantly associates with the European Union is very important, both in regard to the positive evaluation of the cooperation partner EU as well as the perception of the impact. Oversimplified, one could conclude: EU as partner is associated with more positive evaluation and higher perception of impact.

Normativity:

Whereas the normative element in the Union's directional leadership is comprehensive yet hazy to begin with, it is even more so in the perceptions of the expert. Earlier, the normativity of EU leadership was associated with the ability to shape and influence others' perceptions and conceptions of norms, but also acknowledged a certain normative 'difference' of the Union.

In respect to the first aspect of the ability to shape and influence perceptions and conceptions regarding environment in their partner countries of Jordan and Morocco, there is indeed a strong indication that this is the case. This includes on the one hand cases in which a particular rule was mentioned which originates or is promoted by the European Union, for example environmental impact assessments or strategic environment assessment: "If you don't have the direction clear in your mind, like if you say 'I don't know how to do environmental mainstreaming', the EU would come and say 'there is something called SEA and it's mandatory in the European Union." (InterviewJ011). Even stronger is the case of legislation in environment, water and renewable energies, which is often developed in exact or close reference to the EU's legislation. In regards to the ability to shape perceptions of norms, there is - not surprisingly – less direct indication by the experts. An illustrative exception is, however: "For a human being to be healthy it must be in a clean environment. We opted for this policy. You're right, before it was purely technical. Now, there is a new approach. Because we live near Europe, we can see what is going on [...]. We are so close and we are influenced and educated on environmental matters." (InterviewM001/2). In contrast to this lack of direct statements, the issue of European values being accepted in the respective partner countries was included in the quantitative data. Here, the overall agreement is very high which may that experts perceive the Union's values are indeed integrated in the partner countries.

In sum, there is a strong indication both in the quantitative data as well as the qualitative data which is not yet systematically examined to its full potential. Together, this suggest rather consistently that the European Union is perceived to be able to shape and influence conceptions of norms and rules.

Values accepted

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	l rather disagree	6	12,8	13,3	13,3
	I rather agree	25	53,2	55,6	68,9
	I strongly agree	14	29,8	31,1	100,0
	Total	45	95,7	100,0	
Missing	99	2	4,3		
Total		47	100,0		

The second aspect of the presumed normative difference of the European Union is even more vague, both in its meaning and in the representation in the quantitative and qualitative data, which makes any hesitantly formulated findings very preliminary in character. Nevertheless, three themes were found repeatedly in the interview data, which may be related to a normative difference – a normative priority, a normative approach and normative interests. However, no consistency in the perception and evaluation in the qualitative data was found, yet alone in the combination of qualitative and quantitative data. Since there are some reasonable pointers, a more detailed qualitative examination must follow in the future. In the further analysis in this paper, however, only the quantitative variables are cautiously used further.

	'Normative' focus of the EU	'Normative' approach of the EU	'Normative' interests of the EU
Qualitative data	Some indication of perception of EU with 'normative' priority and focus in cooperation: "They are funding many projects in Jordan, especially projects related to gender, to democracy and environment." (InterviewJ005); yet not all experts see this as positive: "And the conditions have to be relaxed. Gender-issues are very important in Jordan and our religion. It's not the best region in the world for the right of women. It's an issue. But it's not good	Highly controversial and not consistent at all, some experts see higher ownership in cooperation, while others see less sustainability and ownership, more double standards.	Considerable number of experts see EU's interests in environmental policy as strategic (especially in regard to migration) or economic; In the majority of the cases, experts acknowledging other, non-environmental and possibly non-normative interests is not negatively evaluated (e.g. "Of course they have interest in this area and I think they are more transparent with it. Of course this is not just charity. Of course the EU as interests in the Middle East."

	to put it as a condition each time. Democracy is the same. We are in the process of democratizing our life but to put is as a condition for projects or cooperation is problematic." (InterviewJ017)		(InterviewJ001))
Quantitative data	High agreement to EU's engagement in environmental policy fitting into its priorities of democracy, human rights and development: 46.7% rather and 40.0% strongly agree		High agreement to EU having genuine interest in environment: 62.2% rather and 24.4% strongly agree Agreement to EU having regular interests and pursuing these in environment: 62.2% rather and 15.6% strongly agree; Correlation however is moderately negative (r _{sp} =246), suggesting that genuine interests and regular interests are not easily compatible – meaning: with higher perception of EU pursuing regular interests also in environmental policy, the perception of the EU having genuine interests in environment decreases.
Conclusion	Not consistent conclusion due to unclear qualitative data, but quantitative data suggests some degree of perception	No consistent perception of normative approach of EU	Although data available in both qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires, no consistent conclusion possible as findings do not match

The short overview above illustrates the problem of working empirically with such a vague notion as the normative difference of the European Union, which admittedly still lacks a more systematic assessment, but which also allows for no consistent conclusion. The further analysis therefore relies to a large degree on the quantitative data rather than the findings from the qualitative interviews. On the other hand, this focus on quantitative data allows the creation of an index (*vnorm*) which includes two of the stronger themes of normative difference of the European Union – the EU's priorities in environment, democracy, human rights and development and the perception of the EU having genuine interests in environment.

Indeed, the correlation between the two aspects of normativity – the ability to shape perceptions and the normative difference of the EU – is rather highly positive (r_{sp} =.458) which suggests a closer connection between the two aspects. The correlation between other criteria of directional leadership and these two aspects of normativity are all positive and in a number of cases encouragingly high.

In sum, the prior analysis of the perception of the main aspects of directional leadership provided an understanding of how interrelated these four aspects in fact are. In regards to the coherency of the European Union no systematic differences due to its unique structure or disunity of EU activities were perceived by the majority of Jordanian and Moroccan experts. The overall slightly lower level of correlation between this variable and the other variables may also indicate the lower importance in the general model of directional leadership.

Regarding the credibility, the perception of the European Union as a credible model or example is not completely consistent in the qualitative and quantitative data, yet is rather well represented by the variable of 'good example'. Based on the solid correlations with the other criteria, it seems to be an important part of directional leadership.

Correlations

					Cumulated			
					evaluation of EU as			
					cooperation			
				Good	partner	vindeximpact		Values
			Unified actor	example	positive	dim	vnorm	accepted
Spearman's rho	Unified actor	Correlation Coefficient		,149	,410	,194	,403	,010
		Sig. (2-tailed)		,328	,005	,201	,006	,947
		N		45	45	45	45	45
	Good example	Correlation Coefficient	,149		,308	,420	,221	,223
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,328		,039	,004	,145	,141
		N	45		45	45	45	45
	Cumulated evaluation of EU as cooperation partner positive	Correlation Coefficient	,410	,308		,459	,489	,246
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,005	,039		,002	,001	,103
		N	45	45		45	45	45
	vindeximpactdim	Correlation Coefficient	,194	,420	,459		,520	,830
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,201	,004	,002		,000	,000
		N	45	45	45		45	45
	vnorm	Correlation Coefficient	,403	,221	,489	,520		,458
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,006	,145	,001	,000		,002
		N	45	45	45	45		45
	Values accepted	Correlation Coefficient	,010	,223	,246	,830	,458	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,947	,141	,103	,000	,002	
		N	45	45	45	45	45	

The performance of the European Union is represented by two variables – performance in regards to cooperation and impact. The performance in terms of cooperation is not completely consistent and more differentiated in the qualitative case studies. The quantitized data then suggests that one can – in a nutshell – distinguish between those experts seeing the EU as a partner with positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner, and those perceiving the Union as a donor with less positive evaluation. Overall, the positive evaluation of the Union as cooperation partner also steadily correlates moderately to highly (positively) with all other criteria of directional leadership. This applies (with some exception) also to the other

aspect of performance as a criterion for leadership – the perceived impact of the Union's activities.

A rather vague normativity is the last criterion of directional leadership and is understood here in two different ways. On the one hand there is the ability to shape and influence others' perceptions and conceptions of norms which was found to be rather high in absolute terms and also in relation to the other aspect of normativity. This other aspect is a normative difference, which relies mainly on the quantitative data as the qualitative data were not very conclusive. Both aspects of normativity correlate highly (with exceptions) with the other criteria of leadership, thus pointing strongly to the perception of a normativity of the European Union as an important part. Although normativity is a bit vague in the concrete analysis, it is a very important aspect of directional leadership and may possibly be an underlying aspect which is also relevant to and featured in the other criteria of directional leadership, which would further underlining how interrelated the perception of the criteria of directional leadership in Jordan and Morocco are.

Conclusion

Following the summary of the relations and possibly the strength of the four criteria of directional leadership above, one last question remains to be addressed: How does the quantitative model of directional leadership developed in reference to the perception of the European Union as a regional actor in environmental policy relate to the perception of the Union as a an important actor in environment on the global level?

Assuming the intervals between the characteristics of the variable "The European Union is an important actor in global environmental politics" to be measurable and thus metric in quality, a linear regression with this variable as dependent is possible. Included in the regression are also all of the variables discussed as the criteria of perceived (regional) directional leadership above.

Overall, the model is not remarkably strong as only 28% of the variation of the perception of the dependent variable may be explained by the criteria of regional directional leadership. Without going into detail, the two variables representing the normativity of the European Union have the strongest influence of the perception of the EU as a global important actor. This supports the findings of the model of perceived regional directional leadership, where normativity was also strong and possibly underlying and influencing the perception of the other criteria.

Coefficients^a

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1,766	,707		2,497	,017
	Unified actor	,115	,155	,119	,744	,461
	Good example	,112	,147	,120	,765	,449
	Cumulated evaluation of EU as cooperation partner positive	,173	,184	,165	,939	,354
	vindeximpactdim	-,024	,107	-,072	-,229	,820
	Values accepted	,164	,232	,202	,708	,483
	vnorm	,124	,089	,247	1,397	,171

a. Dependent Variable: Important actor

This model, which is based on the quantitative and quantitized data on experts' perceptions of the European Union in Jordan and Morocco is not exceedingly strong but presents a hesitant first pointer in a confirmative direction. In particular the normativity of the EU influences the perception of the Union as important actor in global environmental politics, which is also supported by several passages in the qualitative data where the European Union was perceived to induce Jordan and Morocco to a higher commitment to international standards and legislation. Thus, there are some positive indicators – though not strong enough to comfortable proclaim this loudly – that the perception of the European Union as directional leader in environment in the Mediterranean region relates to the perception of the European Union as an important actor in global environmental politics. A certain direction of an influence or even a causation is, however, not possible to state.

Some final remarks must be made on the methodological frame of outsiders' perceptions as the other objective of this paper was the promotion of this perspective as a complement to the dominant EU-perspective. Although the analysis of the external perceptions of the EU as environmental leader in Jordan and Morocco did not turn up any overwhelming surprises, some smaller differences from the expectations can be pointed out – for example the rather uncontroversial perception of the Union as a unitary actor indicating a higher coherency or the relation between the perceived role of the European Union and its positive evaluation as cooperation partner. This highlights – on a very small scale – why a change in perspectives and the inclusion of external perceptions is beneficial and may contribute substantially to the academic debate on leadership of the European Union.

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