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# From Challenging the Limits to the Limits of Challenging: Discussing the Environment in Top-Tier International Relations Journals in Türkiye

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## Abstract

International environmental politics lacks critical engagement. In the discipline of International Relations, environmental issues have long been treated as peripheral. In the limited number of scientific publications addressing these topics, mainstream perspectives utilized neorealist and neoliberal approaches. These perspectives fail to question the structural inequalities hardwired into the international system. In this context, this study examines how Turkish IR scholarship engages with environmental issues. Deploying qualitative content analysis, this study examines environment-related articles between 2004 and 2024 in three top-tier IR journals in Türkiye. Applying the inclusion/exclusion criteria, eligible articles were coded and thematically analyzed using MAXQDA software. The findings reveal that most of environment-related articles are framed within state-centered frameworks with limited engagement in critical and status-quo perspectives. In the case of Türkiye, IR scholarship continues to re-produce theories of Western origin in environmental politics. The study attempts to contribute IR's environmental agenda by underlining the need for a more critical orientation that can build a just and ecological international system.

## Keywords:

International Environmental Politics, Environmental Problems, Non-Western IR Theory, IR in Türkiye, Content analysis.

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# Sınırlılığa Meydan Okumaktan Meydan Okumanın Sınırlığına: Türkiye'deki Üst Düzey Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergilerinde Çevreyi Tartışmak


## Özet

Uluslararası çevre siyaseti eleştirel bir yaklaşımdan yoksundur. Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde, çevre ile ilgili meselelerin uzun bir süredir ikincil planda ele alınmaktadır. Çevre siyaseti ile ilgili sınırlı sayıdaki bilimsel çalışmada, neorealizm ve neoliberalizm gibi ana akım yaklaşımlardan yararlanılmaktadır. Bu yaklaşımlar, uluslararası sisteme ilişkin olan yapısal eşitsizlikleri sorgulamada başarısız olmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, çalışma Türkiye'deki Uluslararası İlişkiler yazınının çevre meselelerini nasıl ele aldığını incelemektedir. Nitel içerik analizinin kullanıldığı bu araştırmada, 2004-2024 yılları arasında Türkiye'deki üst düzey Uİ dergilerinde yayınlanan çevre konularını inceleyen makaleler ele alınmıştır. Dâhil etme ve dışlama kriterlerinin uygulanmasının ardından uygun makaleler, MAXQDA yazılımı ile kodlanmış ve tematik olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, çevre meselelerini ele alan çok sayıda çalışmanın devlet-merkezli analiz çerçevesi kullandığını ve eleştirel yaklaşımlarla sınırlı bir ilişkide olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Türkiye örneğinde, çevre siyaseti alanındaki Uİ çalışmaları Batı merkezli kuramları yeniden üretmeye devam etmektedir. Bu çalışma, daha adil ve ekolojik bir uluslararası sistemin inşasına katkı sunabilecek eleştirel bir yönelimin gerekliliğinin altını çizerek Uİ disiplininin çevre gündemine katkı sunmayı hedeflemektedir.



## Anahtar Kelimeler

Uluslararası Çevre Siyaseti, Çevre Sorunları, Batı-dışı Uİ Teorileri, Türkiye'de Uİ, İçerik Analizi.


## Introduction

It is true that we are living in an age defined by environmental crises. Climate change, pollution, and resource conflicts, which are manifested in forms of water wars, diamond wars, oil wars, have become prominent topics in international affairs (Pereira, 2015). Cross-border environmental issues increasingly serve as the poster image of global diplomacy (Khan, 2016), while drawing attention from scholars, policymakers, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations. In the field of International Relations (IR), the environment has emerged as a critical area of research by gradually climbing the intellectual agenda (Dalby, 2016). Reflecting this trend, several IR theory textbooks now include specific sections

on green theory and environmental politics (Dunne, 2024; Kauppi and Viotti, 2024; Sørensen et al., 2022)

However, international initiatives aimed at addressing environmental degradation have largely failed (Gómez-Baggethun and Naredo, 2015). Although environmental demonstrations and campaigns organized by political parties, non-governmental organizations, and activists are visible (Urry, 2011), there is, in a real sense, no politics of climate change in terms of aiming at the reconfiguration of the international order towards more ecological pathways (Giddens, 2010). Mainstream environmental politics remains inadequate in diagnosing the structural causes of ecological degradation. In result, constructing an alternative outlook that is capable of reversing the inequalities and injustices faced by non-Western societies is failed. In recent times, it can be argued that environmental politics is characterized by post-politics. The term refers to the contemporary configuration of political, social, and economic dynamics shaped by techno-managerial solutions and market-based mechanisms. Post-political explanations operate within the framework of neoliberalism and fail to question the underlying trajectory of economic development that jeopardizes ecological balance (Swyngedouw, 2010). The discipline of IR reflects this broader trend. As a traditionally conservative discipline, IR often places environmental issues to the margins of its agenda given its foundational assumption of the state as the central analytical unit (Smith, 1993: 29). Moreover, mainstream environmental perspectives tend to reproduce the economic orthodoxy of neoliberalism indicated by the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol (Khan, 2016). As a result, environmental studies within IR remain marginal and they are interpreted through the lenses of dominant paradigms such as realism and liberalism without offering any critical or transformative insights.

The motivation for this study stems from three interrelated claims. First, IR as a discipline tends to marginalize environmental issues by assigning them only a peripheral role in shaping its research agenda. Second, the limited number of scholarly publications that address environmental concerns adopt a problem-solving orientation rather than a critical one. Third, non-Western IR scholarship often reproduces the Western theoretical frameworks without sufficiently questioning their applicability. The Western way of economic and consumption patterns is believed to be a universal character in the road of development without acknowledging the environmental impact. Building on these three interconnected claims, this study investigates how environmental issues are addressed in top-tier IR journals published in Türkiye. Although the limitations of mainstream IR theory have been widely acknowledged in non-Western contexts, this paper argues that scholarly publications continue to follow theoretical explanations that are designed to explain the Western experience. The study claims that it is essential for non-Western scholarship to articulate

alternative visions that challenge the dominant structure of the international system in order to offer a more adequate response to the presence of environmental challenges. Reflecting the process of post-politicization marked by the dislocation of alternative imaginaries, I believe a similar dynamic is taking place in IR's discussion of the environment, where scientific discourses revolve around preserving the status-quo.

This study formulates the following research questions to capture a holistic understanding of the literature: (1) What is the publication trend of environment-related research articles in selected top-tier IR journals in Türkiye? (2) In what ways is the environment conceptualized and treated in these journals? The study is structured as follows. The first section provides a critical overview of the discipline of IR, focusing on its historical expansion, increasing theoretical diversity, and limitations. The second section explores how IR theory conceptualized the environment from a historical perspective. A brief discussion of the IR's status in Türkiye is also presented. The third section outlines the methodological framework of the study. Data collection and data analysis procedures are presented in this section. Next section discusses the findings in terms of dividing between the problem-solving and critical standpoints in environmental politics in the field of IR.

## International Relations Passing Through a Looking Glass: Expansion, Diversity, and Limitations

IR as a discipline finds itself caught between two modes of existence. On the one hand, IR has been perceived as an inherently interdisciplinary field that functions as a semipermeable membrane through the scientific ideas exchanged between disciplines since its birth. On the other hand, as Brown (2003) observes, the flow of intellectual exchange has often been asymmetrical and disadvantageous for IR. In addition, IR has historically evolved under the shadow of Political Science (PS) and it has been accused of being a prisoner of PS (Pereira, 2017; Rosenberg, 2016). Over time, IR scholars have sought to liberate the discipline from this subordination by expanding its conceptual and methodological scope beyond that of PS (Buzan and Little, 2001). In the end, IR is widely acknowledged as interdisciplinary, yet it is also frequently criticized for not being interdisciplinary enough. This ambivalent status is not the result of an inherent contradiction but rather a reflection of the discipline's complex intellectual trajectory in three historical phases (Ashworth, 2009:16).

The formative years of IR were marked by a transdisciplinary orientation. This characteristic of drawing on ideas, methodologies, and conceptual tools from a range of scientific and philosophical traditions persisted until the end of

the Second World War. In the second phase, IR's development corresponded with a fundamental reordering of global power. British intellectual leadership gave way to American dominance in shaping international institutions and agreements. In this context, the United States (U.S.) academic community redefined IR by aligning it more closely with political science. This period characterized by gradually distancing the field from its earlier foundations in history and philosophy. As the realist paradigm began to lose explanatory power toward the end of the Cold War, a third phase emerged. In this period, scholars from Marxist, feminist, and postmodern perspectives began to challenge the orthodoxies of the discipline. These critical perspectives expanded the theoretical and empirical agenda of IR with underlining more pluralistic and reflexive orientation for the new millennium (Ashworth, 2009: 17-20).

After the Cold War period, the increasing diversity of global phenomena is reflected in the growing theoretical pluralism in IR. Novel perspectives such as post-structuralism, post-colonialism, and green theory have sought to move closer to the core of IR theorization. Specifically, post-positivist scholarship has gained momentum after the 1990s by drawing insights from other social science disciplines including political philosophy. Amid this theoretical expansion, Robert Cox (1981) proposed a foundational distinction between two strands of theoretical inquiry in IR. The first, problem-solving theories, encompass most of mainstream IR scholarship. These approaches accept the international order as given and focus on managing its inherent problems without interrogating the structures of power that sustain it. In contrast, critical theory aims to historicize the formation of world order by uncovering the unequal power relations that underpin it. Moreover, it seeks to create discursive spaces that allow for the envisioning of alternative socio-political arrangements beyond the existing system (Özekin and Sune, 2022: 11).

As post-positivist perspectives challenged to mainstream theories, IR entered a period of self-reflection. Scholars began to assess the discipline's achievements in terms of ontology, theoretical development, and practical implications. Critical voices called for a more inclusive discipline and implementation of reforms aligned with the vision of a Global IR. Earlier, Acharya and Buzan (2007) identified several reasons for the marginalization of non-Western IR. First, there is a prevailing belief that Western IR theory has already produced the most adequate models for explaining international relations. While Western IR has indeed generated valuable insights, it remains grounded in the historical and geographical trajectory of the West. Second, the hegemonic status of Western IR is reinforced by the broader context of Western dominance in modern world history. Third, although non-Western IR theories are present, they remain at margins due to language barriers and limited global accessibility (Acharya and Buzan, 2007: 293–298). A decade after their influential

article, Acharya and Buzan (2017) noted some progress particularly in the growing visibility of non-Western IR scholarship. For instance, several top-tier IR journals have been founded in Asia. Nonetheless, they maintained that the U.S. dominance continues to shape the intellectual core of the discipline.

The debate over whether the discipline of IR has achieved a truly global orientation in its theories, models, and research agenda still persists. Numerous scholars argued that the discipline suffers from a form of provincialism as evident most notably in Americanism (Strange, 1995; Waever, 1998). As Smith contends, American IR not only occupies the central stage but also plays a significant role in "de-legitimizing alternative perspectives within the discipline" (Smith, 2000: 399). In this context, it can be argued that alternative theories and conceptual frameworks addressing critical issues are increasingly marginalized or treated as deviations from mainstream scientific production. As a result, IR as a discipline has yet to become truly global. It remains largely conservative, especially in its failure to incorporate the scientific contributions of non-Western societies (Acharya, 2014).

The limitations of the discipline are particularly evident in its treatment of environmental politics. As an Anglo-American discipline, mainstream theories and perspectives significantly shape what types of questions that can be asked about environmental politics. More specifically, mainstream theories offered a narrow understanding by emphasizing environmental management approaches that focus predominantly on technical solutions and foreclosing meaningful discussions of global inequality and structural injustice (Sachs and Tilman, 2007). In this sense, the IR scholarship remains far from universal despite growing calls for a more inclusive Global IR agenda. When Western scientific models and theories have been selectively adapted to cultural and geographical specificities in non-Western parts of the world, addressing the deep structural problems of inequality and injustice in a comprehensive manner often fails (Smith, 2002; Walewicz, 2019: 127). The reliance on Western-centric frameworks restricts the discipline's capacity for epistemological pluralism. This failure is especially pronounced in IR's marginalization of non-Western perspectives (Tickner, 2003). These limitations seem all concerning given the increasing awareness that the non-Western world is likely to bear the detrimental consequences of the ecological crisis more than Western nations (King and Harrington, 2018).

Since the establishment of IR as a discipline in the Tanzimat period, the academic study of IR in Türkiye reflected the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy. Only after 1990's, the discipline's status encountered to notable transformation as number of novel research topics, theoretical and methodological frameworks emerged (Bilgin and Tanrisever, 2009; Karamık and Ermihan, 2023). Illustrating the stage of self-reflection, the status of the IR

discipline in Türkiye has been widely debated particularly since the early 2000s (Sula, 2022).

The relationship between Western and non-Western theory is claimed to be the new fault line for great divergence in the IR discipline (Kristensen, 2012). For Turkish IR, it is argued scholars engaged in scientific production often rely on Western-derived theories and models to explain Türkiye's specific historical and geographical context (Aydınlı and Mathews, 2008). This reliance has produced two major consequences. First, some scholars refused to pursue big theoretical questions as considering them futile attempts. Second, others apply grand theories to the Turkish context without engaging in sufficient critical reflection (Köstem, 2015: 62-65). Another point is that the interest in formulation of theory in Turkish IR was lower than average of the world with only 2% according to the TRIP survey (Aydın and Dizdaroğlu, 2019). Also, Turkish IR scored 55%, lower than worldwide, in terms of giving importance to non-Western theories as the Realist school of thought continues to dominate (Okur and Aytekin, 2023). These trends were explained by the division of knowledge production in the discipline (Bilgin, 2005). In other words, theoretical perspectives that are produced in the West are applied without taking into the historicity of a particular country. Scholars warned about the inconsistencies that can emerge in using Western concepts for explaining the non-Western world. The critical orientation of Turkish IR was considered limited as the status of concepts and perspectives produced in the West hardly challenged (Bilgin, 2005: 10).

To illustrate, Ongur and Gürbüz's study provides the evidence of the continued reproduction of Western-centric IR literature in Türkiye by examining university curricula and assigned readings from a critical pedagogical perspective. The study argues that the structure of IR teaching in Türkiye reflects orientalist tendencies. According to the study, the reading materials in selected universities exhibit an uncritical engagement with Western-oriented IR knowledge (Ongur and Gürbüz, 2019). Similarly, although scholars adopted diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives in for their PhD studies, they are rather forced to narrow their scholarly interest to the Turkish foreign policy and EU debates from policy-orientated standpoint. They are expected to be 'native informants' for 'telling the world about Turkey' with applying Western theories (Bilgin and Tanrisever, 2009; Karamık and Ermihan, 2023).

## International Relations Theory and the Environment

Environmental issues remained peripheral to academic debates until the 1980s. However, the publication of Brundtland Report in 1987 and the assembling of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 provided fertile ground for growing

interest in environmental issues across the social sciences. Despite being characterized as open and interdisciplinary in terms of drawing from and contributing to other fields, IR has offered only a limited "understanding of the ecological problématique", which largely remained within the boundaries of realist interpretations of national security and international anarchy (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003: xi).

There are political and academic barriers that contribute to the marginalization of environmental politics and help explain why it continues to remain at the periphery of the IR agenda (Smith, 1993). Political barriers emerge from the general understanding of international relations, while academic barriers arise due to the status of academic theory and the internal organization of the discipline itself. Concerning the former, instrumentalization of the real demands of green movements by political elites to generate domestic support and consolidate electoral power is an example of political barriers (Smith, 1993: 34–36). Illustrating this, environmental governance mechanisms such as the regulation of carbon emission requires technical knowledge. Most of times, the public may not have enough understanding of what these regulations entail. Also, when political parties frame environmental issues with the issue of national interest, it becomes difficult for the voters to decide which political parties actually environmental conscious. As of academic barriers, scholars studying environmental issues within IR tend to form a relatively closed intellectual community by sharing the same theoretical position. In mainstream perspectives, environmental issues downgraded to the realm of low politics, as they are not perceived as part of the discipline's so-called real agenda. Therefore, there is a dominance of state-centric assumptions in the discipline's theoretical core (Smith, 1993: 40-42).

Reflecting the complexity of ecological thought, the conceptual toolbox of different ecological positions is shaped by how they define nature (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003). In a narrow view, environmental thought is traced back to the emergence of ecology as a scientific discipline in the 19th century. In this perspective, nature is framed as a homeostatic system. It is believed that social principles modeled on ecological equilibrium can be applied to the organization of society. A broader view, in contrast, traces ecological thought back to philosophical foundations. In this view, nature is not only an object of scientific inquiry but also a repository of cultural and normative meaning (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003: 22).

There have been various attempts for classification of intellectual positions within ecological thought. Arne Naess' (1973) distinction between shallow and deep ecology, Robyn Eckersley's (1992) enviro-political spectrum containing resource conservation, human welfare ecology, animal liberation, and

ecocentrism, Juan Martínez-Alier's (2002) threefold typology of the cult of wilderness, the gospel of eco-efficiency, and the environmentalism of the poor are notable classifications. Also, John S. Dryzek (2013) devised a typology along two axes through which ecological positions named reformist versus radical toward the nature of political change, and prosaic versus imaginative towards the understanding of nature. In the field of IR, three schools of ecological thought can be identified based on their relationship to political order: the utilitarian, authoritarian, and radical schools of thought (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003). Utilitarian ecological thought approaches nature in an instrumental way. It considers nature as a resource for capital accumulation. Utilitarian view proposes only reformist solutions and does not question the foundational structures of the existing political and economic order. As utilitarians, authoritarian ecological thought views environmental degradation as a side effect of capitalist development. It places stronger emphasis on the role of the state in addressing the environmental issues merged with collective action problems. These problems, they claim, require the involvement of strong state authority (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003: 40–42). Last, there is radical ecology. While containing a range of perspectives, radical ecological thought is unified by its call to fundamentally restructure the social and political institutions of modern society. Radical ecology considers the ecological crisis as a result of the broader exploitative logic in global capitalism. It reflects a deep disillusionment with mainstream IR theory and aligns itself with critical approaches within the discipline (Laferrière and Stoett, 2003: 73).

In its engagement with IR, environmental thought that is crystallized in Green Theory has developed several critiques of mainstream approaches (Pettiford et al., 2022). For example, Green Theory challenges the realist paradigm for its rigid commitment to the state as having the capacity to devise effective solutions in addressing global problems. Also disillusioned with the realist conception of power, Green Theory interprets environmental crises as the outcome of the GDP-oriented development models that prioritize perpetual economic growth (Mathai, 2013). Reflecting a form of dangerous utopianism, Caroline Purdey (2010) criticizes the growth mantra within IR discourse as it sustains the illusion that infinite growth is possible on a finite planet. Another line of criticism targets the role of international institutions in the current global order. Green theorists contend that the reformist solutions promoted by international organizations such as the United Nations fail to address the structural roots and multidimensional nature of ecological degradation. In this view, the reformist outlook of environmental governance obscures deep global inequalities and injustices.

IR theories are not entirely isolated from one another; rather, they continuously engage in forms of intellectual dialogue and exchange (Özekin and

Sune, 2022: 15). Being in a symbiotic relationship with constructivism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, and Critical Theory, for instance, Green Theory challenges Critical Theory's Eurocentric orientation given that Marx's intellectual roots in the Enlightenment tradition and his endorsement of a progressive and linear conception of history tied to capitalist modernization (Hobson, 2004; Saito, 2024). In addition, Green Theory challenges the emphasis given on human security in critical security studies, while advocating the prioritization of ecological security within the broader security agenda (Gülmez and Dikmen, 2022: 29).

The inadequate treatment of environmental issues is also visible in broader intellectual frameworks such as International Political Economy (IPE) and Global Environmental Politics (GEP). For example, scholars working in IPE have limited their analyses to international treaties and institutional regimes. In turn, they overlook the larger structural trends that shape global environmental outcomes (Clapp and Helleiner, 2012). Much of the IPE literature on the environment issues concentrates on the role of international economic institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. These studies tend to prioritize institutional cooperation and regime formation under conditions of international anarchy without examining the structural character of the global economy. Academic studies are dominated by regime theory, which centered analysis on identifying the principles, norms, and procedures for establishing effective environmental governance. Yet, they largely failed to engage with the deeper structural logics of global capitalism (Clapp and Helleiner, 2012: 487–488).

## Methodology

Scientific publications in the form of research articles are the primary medium through which scholars communicate. The global trend in scientific publishing has been growing at an estimated annual rate of approximately 3 percent (Riviera, 2013). As the volume of academic output is expanding, literature review studies have gained increasing prominence. The main objective of literature reviews is to examine, critique, and categorize the existing body of scholarship on a given topic. Although literature review articles are sometimes perceived as less demanding than empirical research articles, they play a vital role in assessing the state of knowledge within both emerging and established fields (Torraco, 2005). For instance, literature reviews addressing matured topics can yield critical insights into the ways scientific literatures have consolidated around dominant theories, concepts, and models. Also, they reveal how alternative perspectives may have been marginalized in the literature. There are number of options for researchers to implement literature reviews. They can be grouped

under three categories namely meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, and content analysis (Çalık and Sözbilir, 2014; Dinçer, 2018). Content analysis refers to systematic examination of studies of a specific topic after deploying the inclusion-exclusion criteria for mapping out general characteristics of the field (Ültay et al., 2021). Although the boundaries are rather blurry, content analysis and thematic analysis are considered two most crucial approaches for examining the data with deploying qualitative descriptive design (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). As a form of literature review, this study utilizes qualitative content analysis as it enables researchers to systematically assess an existing body of literature by coding and categorizing textual data.

### *Data Collection Procedures*

The selection of data sources represents a critical dimension in any research design. Researchers have various options when determining the appropriate means of data collection. In this study, academic journals are considered the primary source for data collection. The decision to focus on elite scientific journals for content analysis is grounded in two reasons. First, top-tier journals possess "the discipline's seal of approval" in terms of legitimizing certain topics, methodological choices, and theoretical frameworks (Crist and McCarthy, 1996: 70). Although it would be inaccurate to claim that academic journals completely represent disciplinary activity across macro and micro dimensions, they nonetheless serve as the primary vehicles through which formal academic communication is guided (Dart, 2014). In this context, academic journals not only publish research to advance scholarly debates but also play a central role in legitimizing emerging perspectives (Heck and Cooley, 1988). Therefore, an analysis of the top-tier journals offers a valuable lens through which to observe the current state of academic discourse on a given subject. Second, analyzing the content of academic journals is particularly important because our collective understanding of the natural and social world is shaped by the knowledge produced within academic institutions (Luke, 1999). Scientific publications, therefore, provide crucial insights into the dominant intellectual positions in a field, as well as those that are marginalized. For instance, Spender (1981) demonstrated how academic journals have historically codified knowledge through predominantly male-centric frameworks, while systematically excluding the voices of women. I argue that examining how the environment is treated in elite scientific journals can offer valuable insight into the current status of the field. In a similar vein, this study contends that an examination of how environmental issues are treated in elite IR journals can offer a glimpse of understanding of the current status of the field. In this way, the study is to

investigate whether the Turkish IR literature presents a meaningful challenge to Western epistemologies in addressing environmental problems.

Based on the research questions, a qualitative content analysis was carried out on environment-related articles published in the highest-ranking IR journals in Türkiye. To identify the most influential academic journals in the field, the Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) platform, developed by Scopus, was utilized. The platform provides comparative metric data for journal rankings within specific subject areas. By selecting the Political Science and International Relations category and applying a filter for journals indexed in the Web of Science (WoS), the platform ranked a list of eligible journals. The journals selected for analysis are *All Azimuth* (AA), *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi* (UI), and *Insight Turkey* (IT). *AA*, *UI*, and *IT* are the only Turkish IR journals indexed in both the Web of Science and Scopus. According to Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) survey reports from 2014 and 2018, *UI*, *IT*, and *AA* ranked first, second, and fifth, respectively, among the ten most influential IR journals in Türkiye (Aydin and Dĭzdaroğlu, 2019). Table 1 presents detailed information on each journal, including their publishers, coverage periods, and ranking scores.

**Table 1**. Selected top-tier International Relation journals in Türkiye indexed in both WoS and Scopus

| Journal | Publisher | Index | Rank JIF1 | SCS2 | ISSN | Date Coverage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Uluslararası İlişkiler-International Relations | Türkiye Uluslararası İlişkiler Konseyi | SSCI/Q3 | 0.8 (2023) | 1.4 (2023) | 1304-7175 | 2004-2024 |
| All Azimuth | Center for Foreign Policy and Peace Research | ESCI/Q3 | 0.7 (2023) | 0.7 (2023) | 2146-7757 | 2012-2024 |
| Insight Turkey | SETA | ESCI/Q3 | 0.6 (2023) | 0.7 (2023) | 1302-177X | 2009-2024 |

**1**Journal Impact Factor **2**Scopus CiteScore

After selecting the journals, data collection was conducted primarily through the Web of Science (WoS), which is one of the most comprehensive scientific databases. In the WoS interface, the search was restricted to three top-tier journal

names using the publication title field. This search produced a total of 1,198 results covering the period between 2004 and 2024. As part of the screening process, publications other than original articles such as editorials, book reviews, book chapters, and letters were excluded from the analysis. Additionally, scientific articles that did not address any of the subtopics in international environmental politics (as listed in Table 2) were also excluded. Each article was screened by evaluating its title, keywords, and abstract based on established the inclusion-exclusion criteria. Following this process, only 35 of the 1,198 articles were selected eligible for further analysis (Table 3). On a journal-by-journal basis, *UI* published 535 research articles between 2004 and 2024, of which 26 were related to environmental issues. The number of environment-related articles was 8 for *IT* and 1 for *AA*. Figure 1 presents the annual trend in the publication of environment-related research articles in the selected journals between 2004 and 2024.

**Table 2.** The subtopics in International Relations and International Environmental Politics

| Topics in International Relations | Topics in International Environmental Politics |
|---|---|
| Energy Politics | Climate Change and Environmental Problems |
| Geopolitics | Critical Environmental Studies |
| Globalization | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| Human Rights | Environmental Justice |
| International Dispute Settlement | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| International Environmental Politics | Environmental Thought |
| International Institutions | Sustainable Development |
| International Law | |
| International Politics | |
| International Relations Theory | |
| International Security | |
| International Terrorism | |
| Non-State Actors | |
| Public Diplomacy | |
| Refugee Studies | |
| Social Movements | |
| Turkish Foreign Policy | |

**Source:** Main themes in IR developed from the Turkish Interuniversity Board's (ÜAK) report on science/art field and keywords. Topics in International Environmental Politics are the author's own elaboration.

**Table 3.** The list of examined articles providing key information and their topics

| No. | Journal | Author(s) | Title | Topic(s) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | All Azimuth 2023-12(2) | Fatih Bilal Gökpınar, Özgür Aktaş | Frozen in Time while Icebergs are Melting: Türkiye's Climate Policy | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **2** | Insight Turkey 2010-12(3) | Füsun Çetin, Hasan Saygın | New Energy Paradigm and Renewable Energy: Turkey's Vision | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **3** | Insight Turkey 2010-12(3) | Mehmet Öğütçü | Turkey and the Changing Dynamics of World Energy: Towards Cleaner and Smarter Energy | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **4** | Insight Turkey 2012-14(2) | Çiğdem Üstün | Turkey between Environmental Protection and Energy Security: A Regional Perspective | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **5** | Insight Turkey 2021-23(3) | Burak Güneş, Bengü Çelenk | The Impasse of International Law on Climate-Induced Migration | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **6** | Insight Turkey 2022-24(1) | Mehmet E. Birpınar, Çiğdem Tuğaç | Climate Security and Migration: An Evaluation for the World and Turkey | Climate Change and Environmental Problems |
| **7** | Insight Turkey 2022-24(2) | Yasemin Kaya | Reconsidering the Effectiveness of International Environmental Regimes in the Anthropocene | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **8** | Insight Turkey 2022-24(2) | İzzet Arı | Türkiye's Climate Policy: Aligned with International Climate Politics | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **9** | Insight Turkey 2022-24(2) | Ayşegül Kibaroğlu | Türkiye's Water Security Policy: Energy, Agriculture, and Transboundary Issues | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **10** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2006-3(10) | Konuralp Pamukçu | Global Cooperation for Global Warming | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **11** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2008-5(18) | Hans Günter Brauch | Reconceptualizing Security: Conceptual Quartet of Peace, Security, Development and Environment | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **12** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2008-5(18) | Simon Dalby | Security and Environment Linkages Revisited | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **13** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2008-5(20) | Joachim H. Spangenberg, Josef Settele | Neither Climate Protection nor Energy Security: Biofuels for Biofools? | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **14** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2011-8(31) | Şule Anlar Güneş | Compliance with the Climate Change Obligations: The Kyoto Protocol Compliance Mechanism | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **15** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2011-8(30) | Yasemin Kaya, Sezgin Kaya | The Issue of Effectiveness in International Environmental Regimes | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **16** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Zerrin Başaran | A Brief Assessment on the Paris Climate Agreement and Compliance Issue | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **17** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Başar Baysal, Uluç Karakaş | Climate Change and Security: Different Perceptions, Different Approaches | Environmental Thought |
| **18** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Mustafa Özçağ, Burcu Yılmaz, Emrah Sofuoğlu | Determinants Of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Industry and Agricultural Sectors in Turkey: Index Decomposition Analysis | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **19** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Yasemin Kaya | Evaluation of Paris Agreement from the Perspective of Climate Justice | Environmental Justice |
| **20** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Hamid Akın Ünver | IR Theoretical Approach to the Paris Climate Agreement: Neo-Neo Debate, Eco-Marxism and Green Capitalism | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **21** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Gürkan Kumbaroğlu, İlhan Or, Mine Işık | Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions with Carbon Tax: The Case of Turkey | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **22** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Levent Kırval, Münir Süner | Reforming the United Nations to Save the Planet: The Threat of Global Climate Change Making Reform Inevitable | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **23** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Volkan Ş. Ediger | The Effect of Energy Geopolitics on International Climate Change Initiatives | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **24** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2017-14(54) | Hayriye Atik | The Transition Towards a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society within the European Union Countries and Turkey: An Empirical Analysis | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **25** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2018-13(59) | Duygu Gülcan Tan | An Ideological Discussion on the Role of the State on the Ecological Crisis | Critical Environmental Politics |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| **26** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2018-15(60) | Özlem Tür | Challenges of Demographic Pressures and Resource Scarcity on the Political Economy in the Levant & MENA Region | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **27** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2020-17(68) | Tayyar Arı, Fatih Bilal Gökpınar | Climate-Migration: A Security Analysis within the Context of Green Theory | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **28** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2021-18(71) | Yelda Erçandırlı | Anthropocene, Posthumanism and a Historical Materialist Critique of the 'Ecological' Promise of International Relations Theory | Critical Environmental Politics |
| **29** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2023-19(76) | Didem B. Gülmez, Bengü A. Dikmen | The Place of Green Theory in International Relations After the Planetary Politics Manifesto | Environmental Thought |
| **30** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2022-19(75) | Göktuğ Kıprızlı | Through the Lenses of Morality and Responsibility: BRICS, Climate Change and Sustainable Development | Sustainable Development |
| **31** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2023-20(79) | Halil Burak Sakal | The Changing Nature of the Natural Gas Trade between Russia and Turkey: The Role of Climate Change and the EU Institutions | International Regimes and Environmental Governance |
| **32** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2023-20(77) | Emel Akçalı, Evrim Gümüş, Soli Özel | Turkey's Green Imagination: The Spatiality of the Low-Carbon Energy Transition within the EU Green Deal | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **33** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2024-21(82) | Esra Akgemci | An Ecofeminist Contribution to the Debates on the Neoextractivist Development Model in Latin America | Critical Environmental Politics |
| **34** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2024-21(84) | Sefa Öztürk | Impact of the Montreal Protocol on Decision-Making Processes for Participation: A Case Study of Türkiye | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |
| **35** | Uluslararası İlişkiler 2024-21(85) | Reşat Bayer, Bıjan Tafazzoli | Politicization, Ratification of International Agreements, and Domestic Political Competition in Non-Democracies: The Case of Iran and the Paris Climate Accords | Energy, Security and Environmental Diplomacy |

**Source:** Elaborated by the author

### *Data Analysis Procedures*

Several methodologies are available for organizing literature reviews, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, meta-synthesis, and bibliometric reviews. The data analysis in this study employs a qualitative content analysis approach. The choice among these methods depends on the primary research questions. For example, bibliometric reviews are typically used to analyze large volumes of scientific literature, while placing emphasis on graphical representations and science mapping. Qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the characteristics of the document's content (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). In this study, the qualitative component involves coding and categorizing the selected environment-related articles. For this process, MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, was utilized. The coding framework was based on thematic topics in international environmental politics. Accordingly, the dataset was examined using seven main codes, with each article (e.g., No.1, No.2, … No.35) assigned to one or more codes that reflect its thematic focus. These codes were used for the main analysis.

## Findings and Discussion

Table 4 presents the publication trends of top-tier journals in the field of IR in Türkiye. As shown in the table, *UI*, *AA*, and *IT* journals published a total of 1,198 scientific articles between 2004 and 2024. The *UI* journal accounts for 535 of these articles, which represents approximately 44.6% of the total number of articles. The *IT* journal published 520 articles (43.2%) and the *AA* journal covered 143 of 535 articles (11.9%).

**Table 4.** The number of articles between 2004 and 2024 in the selected journals.

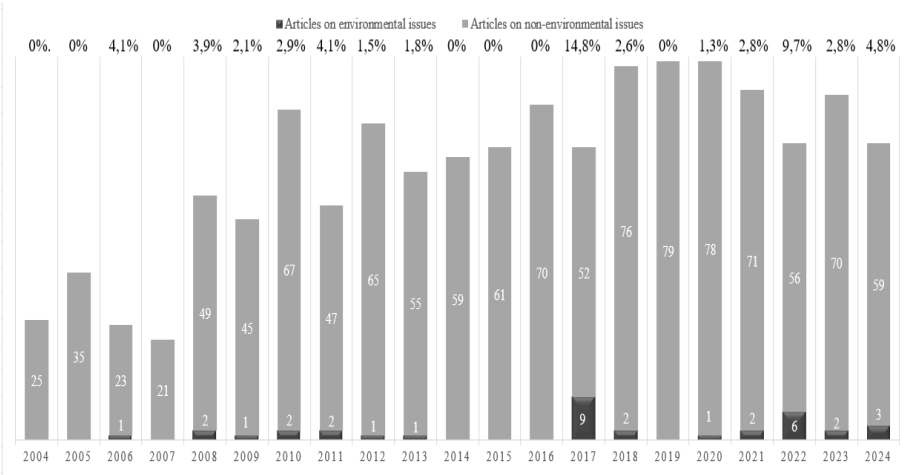
| Years | Uluslararası İlişkiler (UI) | All Azimuth (AA) | Insight Turkey (IT) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2004** | 25 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| **2005** | 19 | 0 | 16 | 35 |
| **2006** | 24 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| **2007** | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| **2008** | 24 | 0 | 27 | 51 |
| **2009** | 23 | 0 | 23 | 46 |
| **2010** | 23 | 0 | 46 | 69 |
| **2011** | 21 | 0 | 28 | 49 |
| **2012** | 27 | 8 | 31 | 66 |
| **2013** | 22 | 6 | 28 | 56 |
| **2014** | 22 | 9 | 28 | 59 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2015** | 27 | 6 | 28 | 61 |
| **2016** | 34 | 10 | 26 | 70 |
| **2017** | 28 | 8 | 25 | 61 |
| **2018** | 34 | 13 | 31 | 78 |
| **2019** | 31 | 18 | 30 | 79 |
| **2020** | 28 | 13 | 38 | 79 |
| **2021** | 25 | 13 | 35 | 73 |
| **2022** | 22 | 13 | 27 | 62 |
| **2023** | 31 | 13 | 28 | 72 |
| **2024** | 24 | 13 | 25 | 62 |
| **Total** | **535** | **143** | **520** | **1198** |

**Source:** Elaborated by the author

Figure 1 further illustrates the publication trend of scientific papers by topic. As the figure presents, the highest share of environment-related articles was recorded in 2017. These publications accounted for approximately 14.8% of the total research output in 2017. This notable increase is primarily attributable to a special issue published by the *UI* journal in the same year, which focused on exploring the multidimensional implications of the United Nations' Paris Climate Agreement. The special issue featured nine environment-related articles within a single volume.

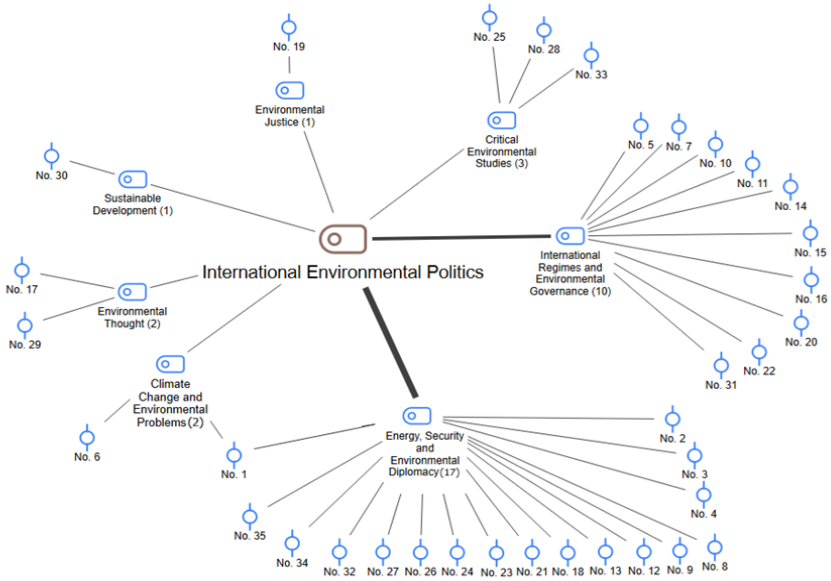
**Figure 1.** The overall trend of the number of papers published on environmental issues in the selected journals between 2004 and 2024.




**Source:** Elaborated by the author

In the data sample, only one article originated from the *AA* journal. In contrast, the *IT* journal contributed eight articles, while the *UI* journal accounted for the majority with twenty-six articles. Thus, the *UI* journal provided the largest share of environment-related content within the sample. Figure 2 illustrates the overall distribution of these articles, which are categorized under seven primary codes. Only one article was assigned to more than one category. The thickness of the connecting lines in the figure represents the frequency of each code. In the dataset, Energy, Security, and Environmental Diplomacy was the most frequently coded theme encompassing seventeen articles (48.5%). This was followed by International Regimes and Environmental Governance with ten articles (28.5%). Critical Environmental Studies accounted for three articles (8.5%), while each of Climate Change and Environmental Problems and Environmental Though categories included two articles (5.7%). Finally, both Environmental Justice and Sustainable Development were represented by one article (2.8%).

**Figure 2.** A code map of thematic clusters in international environmental politics




**Source:** MAXQDA

### *State-Centrism against Planetary Politics*

As Åström (1972) noted, the world system is composed of individual nation-states that are unwilling to give up their sovereignty. Most of the problem-solving literature on environmental issues adopts a state-centric framework in a way how states hold their sovereignty against pressing issues of the 21st century. Mainstream neorealist and neoliberal perspectives consider nature in terms of preservation of state sovereignty and the stability of the world order (Werrell and Femia, 2016).

In the data sample, considering nation-state as a methodological container emerged as a key theme (Gökpınar and Aktaş, 2023; Kibaroğlu, 2022; Kumbaroğlu et. al. 2017). More specifically, Turkish foreign policy is taken as a case for implementing analysis on the grounds of water security, climate change, and carbon taxes. These studies focus on how Turkish foreign policy can achieve optimal outcomes through its diplomatic actions with other international actors. For securing natural resources, nation-states are assumed to operate within an anarchic international system. In this structure, states seek to gain strategic advantages for accessing natural resources to secure potential economic benefits. This dynamic reinforces competition among states and degrades environmental issues to a secondary position.

Several studies also focus on energy geopolitics from the perspective of nation-states. Ediger, for instance, locates the failure of Kyoto Protocol in rising tensions on the geopolitical chessboard. Conceptualized as substitution shifts in energy transition periods, the competition for valuable energy sources among major powers become conflictual. In these periods, states tend to prioritize hard power capability (Ediger, 2017: 49). In the work of Öğütçü (2010), one can infer that geopolitical analysis emphasizes energy resources as central to inter-state competition. By placing the state at the center of analysis, problem-solving studies refer to the uneven global distribution of energy resources. In this context, states are compelled to adopt precautionary measures to secure the energy flow. Therefore, the analytical focus is on how states act in a self-help environment to protect their national interests.

In a limited studies adopting critical approach, the nation-state system is viewed cautiously. For instance, Gülcan's (2018) study found that current state-led interventions are insufficient to manage the ecological crisis. The study contends that the actions taken by state authorities have been enmeshed with market-based mechanisms. In this context, capitalism is able to secure the accumulation of capital, while intensifying its pressure on nature. Also, states increasingly tend to hand over its decision-making capacity to non-governmental actors that prioritizes their economic status. In the end, environmental issues are now often addressed by financial actors who are themselves responsible for

environmental degradation (Gülcan, 2018: 62). In a similar vein, Erçandırlı argues that the contemporary form of the state constitutes a barrier to necessary socio-economic transformation. In capitalist economies, the state is deeply encircled with class relations (Erçandırlı, 2021: 104). Reflecting the hegemony of capital-owning classes, the state is thus ill-equipped to serve as a vehicle for radical social change.

### *Techno-Managerialism against Socio-Ecological Transformation*

The concept of techno-managerialism has gained popularity in the urban planning literature. It refers to the growing influence of economic rationality and managerial principles across diverse spheres of social life (Swyngedouw, 2007). One of these spheres is the environment. It is argued that technological innovation will facilitate a necessary transformation toward a more ecologically sustainable society. Among the key instruments of techno-managerialism are environmental taxes. As environmental degradation is closely linked to $CO_2$ emissions, policies primarily target the reduction of atmospheric carbon levels. The underlying logic is rooted in the principles of economic rationality. Firms are incentivized to adopt cleaner production methods to avoid incurring financial penalties by internalizing the environmental costs of pollution through taxation (Hao et al., 2021: 9).

Aligned with the trajectory of the current neoliberal development paradigm, the implementation of market-based economic solutions to address environmental problems is popular in the policy circles. For instance, Kumbaroğlu et al. (2017) analyze carbon emissions from a sectoral perspective in Türkiye. Emphasizing the deterrent function of taxation, the study concludes that the implementation of a carbon tax could prevent states and businesses from avoiding responsibility for their emissions. In this way, it is argued, fossil fuel consumption would decline and a shift toward cleaner technologies would be encouraged. From another perspective, Spangenberg and Settle (2008) trace the role of bioenergy as a critical substitute for fossil fuels. They link the success of transitioning alternative energy sources to the total energy demand in national economies. In terms of transitioning the low carbon economy, Atik's (2017) study compares the economic performance of Türkiye and 29 EU member states. The study finds that standardized targets and environmental policies within the EU framework often fail due to divergent levels of economic development. From a similar standpoint, Akçalı and Özel (2023) argue that the EU's Green Deal initiative, which aims to transfer environmentally friendly technologies to the partner countries, does not adequately consider the economic constraints faced by less developed nations in adopting green technologies.

On the other side, critical and status-quo challenging perspectives argue that green technologies within the existing development paradigm is not a viable solution. Scholars writing from a Marxist international political economy perspective, in particular, critique the dominance of neoliberal development. Analyzing the development model in Latin America, Akgemci (2024) argues that the current form of neoliberal developmentalism creates a favorable environment for the accumulation of local capital. This model is closely tied to extractivist policies. Neo-developmentalism relies heavily on extractive industries, such as agribusiness and mining and pose a significant threat to ecological balance. Furthermore, the political Left in the region has largely failed to distance itself from the profit-driven dimension of these industries.

Challenging the core assumptions of green capitalism, Ünver (2017) argues that economic growth remains the *sine qua non* for capitalism. Green capitalism attempts to reform the existing economic model without abandoning the growth imperative. It aims instead to reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based development. Adhering to the market-based solutions, green capitalists maintain that advancements in technology will generate cleaner energy sources for securing economic growth. Erçandırlı's (2021) study further demonstrates that believing the power of technological development preserves the ontological divide between humanity and nature. Rather than treating the ecological crisis as a technical issue, Erçandırlı emphasizes the need to historicize it as a product of the current mode of production. Restoring ecological balance, therefore, requires a structural transformation in the global economic and political system.

### *International Environmental Governance against Grassroots Environmentalism*

International governmental institutions are considered one of crucial parts of environmental management with the rise of neoliberal globalization. The term governance reflects a structural transformation associated with the post-Fordist era, which is characterized by declining role of state-based regulatory mechanisms (Himley, 2008). The growing presence of international governance goes coincides with the rescaling of the state. As Jessop notes, "the destatization of the political system" involves a reconfiguration of the public-private divide and delivering more responsibilities to non-state actors. While states have always relied non-governmental actors to some extent, both the scale and intensity of this reliance have significantly expanded in the current era (Jessop, 2002: 199).

Most of studies, therefore focuses on the institutional characteristics of international environmental governance. Scholars argue that the United Nations (UN) is unable to implement the necessary reforms to ensure ecological

sustainability. They call for implementing reforms in the organization of the UN. For instance, Kırval and Süner (2017) claim that the UN largely functions as an instrument for advancing the interests of dominant global actors. It is suggested that if the UN is equipped with strong and binding legislation, it could play a vital role in shaping a sustainable future.

From the perspective of environmental governance frameworks, Güneş (2011) examines the compliance mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. In order to address environmental problems, the UN adopted a framework at the Rio Summit in 1992. The framework was further institutionalized with the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. This sought to establish an international environmental regime to foster cooperation among states. Güneş argues that actors often failed to comply with their commitments. The protocol incorporates market mechanisms and achieving consensus has been proved challenging. More specifically, the protocol suffers from the partiality of commission members and lacking enforcement mechanisms to prevent states from withdraw. Similarly, Kaya (2017) highlights the Paris Agreement's weak enforcement capacity. When there are no sanctions, the framework could not force states to meet their emissions targets. In another study, Kaya further contends that international environmental regimes have largely failed to address global ecological problems due to their inherently state-centric structures. It is because they reinforce "state-centric institutions based on the human/nature dichotomy" (Kaya, 2022: 130). In the similar front, Savaşan (2017: 121) links the possibility of cooperation in the environment regimes to a highly contingent position as in "if the parties can be convinced". Despite these limitations, Pamukçu (2006) argues that environmental regimes play a significant role for developed countries in meeting their emissions targets. The regimes contribute to the expansion of the sustainable development agenda in the Global South through mechanisms that enable the transfer of clean technologies.

Critical perspectives claim that international environmental governance linked to increasing use of the Anthropocene. Erçandırlı (2021) notes the concept of the Anthropocene carries modernist assumptions. It is attached to the belief that environmental problems can be resolved through technological innovation. In this context, international environmental governance regimes function as a platform for aligning national economies around the ideal of green growth. However, such technocratic policy solutions that carry the legacy of modernity are blamed for spreading universalist and Eurocentric implications. As Wallerstein (2006) strikingly argues, this form of epistemic orientalism is often advanced in the name of progress and development. In addition, Erçandırlı (2021) contends that this form of environmental governance tends to focus on individual behavior as the base of social analysis. It focuses on bringing ecological modernization and new environmental consciousness on the individual level as

they consider environmental problems stem from human activities Yet, in doing so, it is believed that the ecological crisis can be managed without fundamental transformation of the international system.

## Conclusion

This study originates from the ongoing debate within IR theory that the discipline is characterized by Western-centric orientation. Although the limitations of IR theory have long been acknowledged, non-Western IR traditions still reproduce Western frameworks in their analyses of social phenomena. I claim that, in this context, discussions on the meaningful transformation of the international system toward a more just and ecologically-sound international society are sidelined.

This study aimed to examine how environment-related articles are framed within the Turkish IR. To address this question, a qualitative content analysis was employed. After identifying three top-tier IR journals, scientific articles that engage with environmental politics were selected for analysis. Using MAXQDA software, these articles were coded into seven main thematic categories. The findings revealed that most of the literature adopts mainstream approaches. Problem-solving literature on the environment focused on international environmental governance, the geopolitics of natural resources, and techno-managerial policies. This is especially significant given that non-Western societies are likely to bear the detrimental consequences of ecological crises. The analysis underlines the need for a transformation in the international system. A limited number of articles that adopts a critical perspective emphasize the necessity of socio-ecological transformation and problematize methodological nationalism.

Although previous studies, such as content analyses and bibliometric reviews, have examined articles, journals, and course syllabi from a broader perspective, the originality of this research lies in its selection of environment-related articles published in top-tier journals within Turkish IR academia to critically assess the limitations of the discipline. For contributing the Global IR and develop non-Western voice in environmental politics, there needs more scientific studies that incorporate critical orientation.

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