

EU Environmental Policies in the Context of Green Theory and Türkiye's Adaptation Process

(Research Article)

Yeşil Teori Bağlamında AB Çevre Politikalarına Türkiye'nin Uyum Süreci

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ABSTRACT

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The Green Theory, encompassing various approaches, in addition to green normative thinking and global political economy currents, emphasizes the safety and well-being of non-human living beings. The alignment of environmental legislation in candidate countries with EU environmental regulations not only benefits these countries in terms of their candidacy but also in many aspects such as quality of life. Türkiye, aspiring for full membership in the EU, has undergone legislative changes within the framework of the harmonization process, prioritizing environmental policies that promote development. This study evaluates Türkiye's EU harmonization process within the context of the Green Theory. Furthermore, considering Russia's occupation of Ukraine and global developments, the aim of the article is to methodologically assess Türkiye's relations with the EU in the framework of environmental compatibility.

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Yeşil Kuram, çeşitli yaklaşımları kapsayan ve yeşil normatif düşünce ile küresel siyasi ekonomi akımlarının yanı sıra, insan dışındaki canlıların güvenliği ve refahını vurgulayan bir teoridir. AB çevre düzenlemeleri ile aday ülkelerin çevre mevzuatının uyumlu hale getirilmesi, bu ülkelerin adaylık süreci açısından değil, aynı zamanda yaşam kalitesi gibi birçok açıdan da fayda sağlar. AB'ye tam üyelik hedefiyle yola çıkan Türkiye, gelişmeyi teşvik eden çevresel politikaları önceliklendirerek uyum süreci kapsamında yasal değişikliklere gitmiştir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'nin AB uyum sürecini Yeşil Kuram bağlamında değerlendirmektedir. Ayrıca, Ukrayna'nın Rusya tarafından işgalinin ve küresel gelişmelerin dikkate alındığı bu makalenin amacı, Türkiye'nin çevresel uyumluluk çerçevesinde AB ile ilişkilerini kuramsal olarak değerlendirmektir.

1. INTRODUCTION

As of today, the role of greenthinking is crucial in the creation of conscious consumer societies. Communities have embraced green as a part of their lives to establish a cleaner and more reliable living space and to pass it on to the next generations. As the world is the only source of life for humanity, every consumption waste made unconsciously brings along ecological damage. Therefore, every approach adopted for green has brought various rebellions. Environmental issues that have become significant in global politics in the late 20th century have been highlighted constantly, and action staken to solve them have been carried out under the name of the Green Movement, which has accelerated its theorization. The movement, which appears as greenpolitics, greenthinking, and green measures, emerged with the establishment of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) when environmental problems globalized in the 1960s and 1970s. It started to spread globally with the emergence of such NGOs as Greenpeace in 1971 and Friends of the Earth in 1969 (Arslan, 2011).

Although environmental problems are addressed within the security frame work in international relations, with the advent of the post-positivist era and critical theories, the Green Theory has emerged as an alternative to security-focused approaches in the international relations system during the 1990s. The approach of the Green Theory to environmental issues differs from that of some environmental movements and focuses on the environment and environmental issues (Tarhan, 2018: 156-164). Due to the constant increase in environmental problems, they have been addressed in international relations and have thus been extensively discussed in the literature. The Green Theory is a marginal theory that is thought to have evolved from normative thinking and global political economy movements, and also contains different approaches while emphasizing the security and life of living beings (Eckersley, 2013).

It can be said that Green Theory emerged as a movement resulting from the awakening reactions of societies. Issues related to the environment, such as global warming, climate change, and depletion of water resources, which were addressed by relevant topics, did not appear in the founding treaty of the European Union. However, the Union began to adopt policies for environmental issues in the 1970s. The environmental problems affecting all countries and the recognition that the most effective approach to addressing them involves collaborative efforts among member countries have led to the formulation of a shared environmental policy. Additionally, the incorporation of environmental issues into the discussions of bilateral agreements has further emphasized the need for a collective response. In 1972, the first environmental action program was developed at the Paris Summit, taking a step towards a common environmental policy (Bilgin, 2012).

According to the environmental policy objectives of the EU, the primary goals include preventing and reducing pollution, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources without compromising ecological balance, and facilitating immediate responses to environmental damage. Additionally, the EU aims to ensure the integration of environmental protection into other sectoral policies, such as energy and transportation, for a harmonized and comprehensive approach. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, EU Presidency, 2022a).

The European Green Deal has been published with the aim of reducing carbon emissions in Europe by 2050. In addition, it will support environmental and climate security in trade with third countries and transform their ecosystems. Therefore, the European Green Deal will facilitate globalization. From this perspective, it can be argued that there is a close relationship between the Green Theory and the European Green Deal (Kakışım, 2022). In order to achieve membership status and maintain stability in EU environmental policies, countries seeking membership draw attention to this issue during the compliance process. This issue, which has become a global problem, is crucial for both states and citizens. Türkiye, which desires EU membership, has accelerated its process of complying with environmental policies after its full membership process to the EU. Türkiye has adopted a vision of the environment that takes into account the economic and social conditions as well as creating a healthy and livable environment. This vision includes harmonizing national environmental legislation with EU environmental legislation and closely monitoring this process to ensure compliance with EU environmental policies (Topkaya, 2010). The implementation of the EU Environmental Acquis needs to be evaluated in terms of institutional structures such as government institutions, private companies, and municipalities. While the majority of environmental investments in the EU are made by the private sector, it can be said that in Türkiye, they mostly consist of public investments (Erdem and Yenilmez, 2017). Türkiye, as a candidate country, can potentially receive a share from the budget allocated by the EU for green transition in order to contribute to its own green transformation. The green transition in question is expected to receive up to 30% of the EU budget. (Georgiou, 2023)

Therefore, according to previous studies, it cannot be said that Türkiye has fully complied with the EU Environmental Acquis in practice, apart from its legislation. Studies on Green Theory in International Relations in Türkiye are generally scarce. In these studies, two different tendencies towards this theory are generally observed. The first tendency is to highlight the differences of Green Theory from "problem-solving" theories. These tendency focuses on the relationship between socio-economic structures that cause inequalities and

actors within the frame work of historical materialist approaches. Positive developments could be achieved in Türkiye if relevant scientific studies and university courses covering environmental issues within the context of green theory are increased. Bringing to get hervarious participants from states, companies, international organizations, and civil society organizations could provide more effective results in adopting and implementing environmental policies by addressing environmental issues more thoroughly (Buhari and Aydın, 2021).

Consequently, the lack of sufficient attention to environmental and climate issues in Türkiye and the absence of academic studies restrict the ability of various scientists, civil society organizations, and government officials to act together in global negotiations, creating a gap both in international relations and in understanding the green policy system. The failure to adopt an approach that places the environment at the center, which forms the basis of the theory, could hinder the process of adapting to EU environmental policies.

2. GREEN THOUGHT-GREEN THEORY

Although green thought is considered a new ideology that emerged in the late 20th century, the first ecological movements can be traced back to the rebellions of the 19th century as a result of industrialization. Modern green thought consists of a mixture of cultures, communities, and organizations. With the emergence of negative consequences such as environmental issues due to industrialization, the idea of protecting the environment has also become effective in the political agenda (Tarhan, 2018:).

It can be said that there are three main reasons for the intensification of environmental actions, especially towards the end of the 20th century. The first reason is the expansion of the environmental movement towards protecting the environment with the contributions of scientific studies through environmentalists. The second reason is the increase in environmental values in countries outside of Europe and America, and the third reason is the change in perspective towards environmental issues, which has led to a broader conceptualization of the environment (Martin W. Holdgate et al. 1983: 2-4 cited in Kaplan, 1999).

It can be argued that the reason for environmental issues not being on the international agenda for a long time is due to the dominance of the realist movement in the discipline (Erçandırlı 2015). Until the 1970s, environmental problems were not evaluated with in the discipline in the high-politic framework (Eckersly, 2016), and initially, they were seen from a low-politic perspective with in the Neoliberalism framework in debates between paradigms (Erçandırlı, 2015). With the intensification of studies on security and the environment, the relationship between these two concepts has deepened. International relations theorist shave drawn attention to this issue, and new approaches to the environment have begun to be adopted.

According to Richard Ullman, among the security threats are resource wars, migration movements, and natural disasters, while Barry Buzan highlights the five dimensions of security, including social, economic, political, military and environmental issues (Engin, 2016). The addition of the environmental factor in these studies has drawn attention, and later, with the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, the previously neglected and low-politic environmental issues were taken into account as high-politic issues in the discipline. The inclusion of environmental issues in international relations is paralel to the period when the environmental problems were seen as a global issue with the thawing phase of the ColdWar (Sümer, 2014).

The main difference of Green Theory from main stream theories such as liberalism and realism in international relations is that it adopts an "ecocentric" approach, which focuses on the environment and environmental issues rather than humans (Çelik and Çoker, 2021). The approach adopted by Green Theory aims to question the economic, political, and social hierarchies within a framework that centers on the environment rather than humans. Green thought is opposed to notions such as security, development, and the traditional state (Eckersley, 2013). Therefore, it can be said that it is the only new movement that emerged as a critique of neoliberal globalization (Eckersley 2007). Green thought initially emerged as a social movement and its impact on politics occurred when the German Greens raised three fundamental questions: "moral, resource, and waste problems" (Üste, 2015).

The report "The Limits to Growth," published by the Club of Rome in 1972, had a significant impact on the world economy and politics. The report suggests that growth harms the world and presents threats that could result from further development. This report marked a turning point for Green Politics and became the starting point for the development of the green movement (Şahin, 2012). In fact, the emergence of green political parties in the late 1980s began to create some points of support. According to Eckersley (2007) these points are comprised of ecological responsibility, the origins and contents of democracy, socialjustice, and non-violentconcepts. Thus, these concepts have taken root on many continents around the world and have created a common platform for green parties (Taqwadin, 2016).

In literature, the theory of greenpolitics can be encountered under different terms. Besides the most commonly used definitions such as "environmentalism" and "ecologism," it is alsoused as environmental political theory and ecological political theory (Dobson, 2003). Most academics working in the field of international relations refer to the two different views of green politics and environmentalism (Dobson, 2007, pp. 28-51). To understand the

dynamics of Green Political Theory, it is necessary to distinguish between green politics and environmentalism. The main difference between Greens and Environmentalists is that Environmentalists argue that the existing political, economic, and social structures of world politics are the framework, and the problems can be solved within these structures. Greens, on the other hand, oppose these structures by claiming that environmental problems need to be addressed. To better understand the difference between Greens and Environmentalists, these two concepts need to be explained. These concepts, "Green Thought" and "Thinking Green," appear as two different approaches in the problematization of environmental issues in international relations. "Thinking Green" refers to environmentalists who deal with problematic ecological issues such as global warming, acid rain, etc. And advocate that these issues can be solved through international cooperation. "Green Thought," on the other hand, is nature-centered and does not prioritize human beings, seeing humans as part of nature. This non-hierarchical approach is called "ecocentrism" and forms the basis of green thinking. In short, while Environmentalists adopt an "anthropocentric" view, Green Political Theorists advocate an "ecocentric" worldview. Considering the Rio Earth Summit, Environmentalists see it as a milestone to "save the world," whereas Green Political Theorists view it differently and criticize UNCED as a failure for environmentalism because it implies final cooperation for the power elite (Arı and Gökpinar, 2019). In this context, there is a contradiction to development in the foundation of Green Politics, and the idea of a socialist tendency in its foundation is quite widespread. Thus, within the context of eco-socialism, the idea that the damage to nature lies beneath the capitalist system is prevalent (Keleş, 2015). In brief, Green Theorists believe that the world has reached its limits in terms of population and economy, and continued growth will result in serious harm to ecology.

As a result, Green Theory aims to make a significant change in the classical perspectives of international relations theories. By adopting a problem-solving approach to global environmental issues, as well as embracing the understanding of being able to achieve change by addressing the source of the problem, it strives to strengthen the normative perspective. According to green critical theorists, the defense of modernization that causes environmental degradation and views nature as a means to an end is unacceptable. Additionally, these theorists criticize the understanding that accepts humanity's dominance over nature and the sustenance of human life as a way to achieve this.

2.1. Environmental Issue in International Relations: The European Green Deal

The common policies adopted regarding environmental policies in Europe do not date back very far in history. After World War II, countries focused more on achieving economic growth and improving living standards. Agreements were signed without any concern for the environment until the implementation of the EU environmental action plans in 1973). Therefore, it was not possible to speak of a common environmental policy until this year. The absence of any mention of the environment in the 1958 Rome Treaty further proves this situation (Erdem and Yenilmez, 2017). The European Union first addressed the issue of the environment in 1971 and published a policy statement on environmental policy by the European Community Commission. In 1972, a new statement was published, including proposals from member states and private organizations, discussing the identification of pollution criteria (such as water and air) and measures to be taken, as well as the harmonization of member states' legislation (Egeli, 1996). These statements influenced the decisions of the European Summit and the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 was a turning point for the EU environmental policy. It can be said that the publication of the report "The Limits to Growth" in 1973 addressed the concerns of science and society (Budak, 2000). As a result of these developments, environmental policies were discussed for the first time at the 1972 Paris Summit, and steps were taken for the Environmental Action Plan, which is the basis of the EU's environmental policy (Erdem and Yenilmez, 2017).

It is observed that the founding agreements signed in 1951 and 1957 by the European Union (EU) did not include relevant issues regarding environmental protection (Budak, 2004). Due to the different policies of the member countries of the EU, the intended free trade will become complicated and cannot be fully implemented. Moreover, it is not desirable for the living standards to be at different levels due to the different policies of the member countries. Therefore, this problem can be overcome with a common environmental policy. In addition, since environmental problems exist at a global level and can affect countries simultaneously, it has become necessary to act jointly. In this direction, the legal framework of the Common Environmental Policy was established under the VIIth Title with changes made to the Treaty of Rome by the signing of the Single European Act on February 17, 1986, which entered into force in 1987 (Ekeman, 1998). According to the Single European Act, the priority given to environmental policies is to prevent the formation of barriers in the mutual trade of member countries by ensuring the measures taken in the "Single Market". Under the environmental heading, the aim is to protect the environment, develop environmental policies, protect individual health, and use natural resources efficiently by being thrifty. Thus, the "Polluter Pays" principle has been accepted (Erdem and Yenilmez, 2017). The Maastricht Treaty, signed in 1992, entered into force in 1993. With this agreement, the name European Community was replaced by the European Union. In addition to the agreement, articles were added stating the need to develop measures for regional or global environmental problems, and for the first time, the sustainability principle of

environmental policies was mentioned (Çokgezen, 2007). The Amsterdam Treaty, signed in 1997, focused on the importance of existing regulations rather than radical innovations, and included environmental basic principles such as complementarity, prevention at source, polluter pays, precautionary and prevention measures (IKV, 2000:). With the entry in to force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the EU's scope in environmental issues has been expanded. Therefore, it has been emphasized that the EU not only needs to take measures but also to finance environmental-related works to enable member countries to take concrete steps towards protecting the environment (Aydn and Çamur, 2017).

Between 1973 and 2020, the EU implemented seven separate environmental programs in seven different periods. In 2019, the EU took a step towards unifying environmental policies on a common platform with the goal of changing the global economy. The European Commission introduced the European Green Deal, which allows countries trading with European nations to transform their resource consumption profile, production infrastructure, and implement environmental and climate policies for a greener future (European Commission, 2019a). The Green Deal is part of the EU's new growth strategy and aims to make Europe climate-neutral, protect natural habitats, and create a sustainable environment for all living creatures and the economy, as well as promote sustainable welfare for the world. By 2050, the EU aims to be climate-neutral, reduce pollution, protect humans and other living creatures, assist specialized companies in creating clean products and technologies, and thus facilitate a comprehensive transition. The European Court of Justice supports the Kyoto Protocol in the past and the Paris Climate Agreement in the present, as well as introducing a new approach to a green economic system. The European Green Deal declares the EU's long-term vision based on its fundamental environmental action approaches, enabling the transformation of the EU economy for a sustainable future (European Commission, 2019b). The Green Deal is not a law but a political movement and even Europe's largest decarbonization commitment. The European Climate Law has been proposed to legalize the targeted commitment. It is emphasized that all sectors of the EU economy must take action to achieve the intended goal. Examples of these actions include investing in eco-friendly technologies, supporting innovation in the industrial sector, promoting clean and affordable public transportation, reducing carbon emissions in the energy sector, improving building energy efficiency, and collaborating with international partners to improve environmental standards. (European Commission).

Within the framework of the EU's new economic model, it is necessary for the EU to utilize its financial resources and expertise to mobilize international communities, engage neighboring countries and strategic partnerships (European Commission, 2019a). In this context, the EU, as a global leader, aims to establish green alliances with G20 countries, the Caribbean, the Western Balkans, Latin America, Asia, and Pacific countries and regions (European Commission, 2019c). At the local level, the "Green Deal Goes Local" group has been formed under the leadership of the European Committee of the Regions. The aim is to facilitate cooperation between EU institutions and regions to achieve climate neutrality goals and ensure effective implementation of policies within the framework of the Green Deal. Therefore, the EU's ability to create a green transformation within the context of the European Green Deal can also be seen as a competency to establish new geopolitics in global competition. The EU is trying to align countries and regions with its green economic model, especially those with commercial relationships, and even creating an opportunity to maintain its economic and political power against China's Belt and Road Initiative. In this context, the EU present ecological democracy alternatives and an economic model that incorporates green ideas to countries within the context of the green theory. Thus, the EU will be able to maintain its transformative and geopolitical power on a global scale.

Circular economy is one of the important components of the industrial strategy of the EU Green Deal. The Circular Action Plan, adopted by the European Commission in 2015, was revised on March 11, 2020, following the adoption of the Green Deal (European Commission, 2020). The circular economy plan sets a future-oriented agenda to enable Europe to achieve a clean and competitive structure with consumer individuals, economic actors, and civil society organizations. The circular plan aims to make services, products, and business models sustainable, institutionalized, and to create a solid product policy by transforming conventional consumption behaviors (European Commission, 2019a). By implementing circular economy practices, the plan aims to increase the EU's GDP by approximately 0.5% by 2030, creating new job opportunities and maximizing profitability. In line with the circular action plan, it emphasizes the importance of cooperation by adopting circular economy not only in theoretical terms but also in consumption and production channels. This will balance the transition from linear to circular economy. Converting the assumed "take-make-use-dispose" model in the linear economy to the circular economy will not be easy. The most recent example of this is the 2019 Covid case. The increase in disposable products (masks, gloves, etc.) during this process has significantly slowed down the transition to circular economy. Therefore, raising consumer awareness is necessary to accelerate the transition to circular economy. The main point aimed in the circular action plan is the durability of the products. This will increase recycled products and provide quality production that can reduce carbon emissions. Thus, sustainability will be ensured (European Commission, 2020). When we look at the EU's environmental and climate policies, it strengthens the relationship

between the green theory that adopts the ecocentric approach by prioritizing nature and offering sustainable development with the EU Green Deal processes.

Countries that are members of the EU are required to not only accept the Union's legislation, but also to refrain from passing any laws that are in conflict with these regulations. As a result, the legislative powers of members are limited to a certain extent. Environmental issues are among the areas of shared competence, as in external relations, in Union rules. However, member states are free to make their own regulations on any issue that the Union has not made a decision on (Yaşamış, 1999). The main objective of the EU's common environmental policies is to ensure free trade within the Union, improve the quality of life in a healthy manner, address environmental pollution that crosses national borders, and prevent non-Union environmental protection activities (Ertürk, 2011). In general, member states have the final say in EU environmental policies. However, differences in internal workings can still be observed among EU countries. While economically prosperous countries such as the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, and Sweden adopt strong environmental policies, countries such as Portugal, Italy, and Greece prioritize economic development over environmental policies, and some countries may be quite reluctant to approach environmental policies (Duru, 2007). Therefore, it can be asserted that the legal instruments crucially contribute to the realization of the EU's environmental and climate goals, playing a pivotal role in achieving these objectives.

3. FROM GREEN THOUGHT TO GREEN POLITICS IN TÜRKİYE

It can be argued that the green movement, which started in countries around the world, is based on a social movement. In Türkiye, as well as in other countries, the beginning of the movement is a resistance against companies and even states that are hostile to nature and based on the capitalist system. From this point, it can be said that the green movement has a strong relationship with resistance against the capitalist system. In 1972, as a result of the publication of the "Limits to Growth" report by the Club of Rome and the Stockholm Conference organized by the United Nations, environmental issues, like in the whole world, also came to the agenda in Türkiye. In this regard, the Environmental Research Unit was established within the Prime Ministry in 1972. The first legal regulation of Türkiye on the environment is found in Article 661 of the Civil Code of 1926. Interest in environmental issues dates back mostly to the 1970s, and the first official document addressing environmental issues in this process is the Third Five-Year Development Plan (1973-1977) (Akdur, 2005).

The initial environmental movements in Türkiye were initiated by the local people in 1975, due to the damage caused by the Etibank Copper Operations in Murgul, Artvin, to agriculture and vegetation (Duru, 1995). In addition to the emergence of the green movement in Türkiye during the 1980s and 1990s, there were also state organizational movements, and the Green Party was founded in 1988. Thus, the green movement became politicized in Türkiye. Environmental issues were addressed in the Green Party's statutes, and basic principles were adopted that went beyond the environment, emphasizing values such as human rights and equality (Sipahi and Dinçer, 2019). The most significant factors in the spread of the green movement in Türkiye were the implementation of relevant legal regulations, the establishment of the Ministry of Environment, the emergence of numerous associations in the field, and the opening of university departments focusing on environmental issues. During this period, developments in media and press have further highlighted environmental issues (Kaya, 2011). Although the first political party, the Green Party, did not last long and was closed down in 1994, it was re-established after 12 years in 2008, aiming to promote green policies to overcome the stagnation of the country's political scene. Its main goal was not to come to power or become a government partner, but rather to be a critical opposition party towards the state and its institutions (Üste 2015). Establishment of the Green Party, like the first one, also had a relatively short life. Currently, "Green and Left Future Party," which has a political party branch of the green ideology, has adopted deeply concerning issues for society such as green future as its main principle (Sipahi and Dinçer, 2019).

Environmental issues that concern society have generally had a political dimension in world countries. In Türkiye, environmental issues have occasionally found their place in the political arena through speeches and proposals. In the 2000s, the relationship between environment and politics was shaped by the increasing number of environmental organizations and political discourses that put environmental problems at the center. In this regard, it has been observed that the number of local organizations opposing the establishment of hydroelectric and thermal power plants has increased significantly during these years (Öztürk, 2017). When looking at Türkiye's history, it can be generally said that green politics could not fully achieve its effectiveness in the political arena, and the life span of political parties has been quite short. Although green politics could not achieve effectiveness in the political arena, it can be said that the number of civil society organizations has continued to increase, and even the number of their members has been on the rise. However, it should not be forgotten that the number of NGOs in Türkiye and the number of people who are members of NGOs are significantly lower than in developed countries.

In Türkiye, it can be said that the adoption of green thinking and green policies as an ideology that focuses on the environment generally comes as a result of promises made before elections. Although environmental and climate

issues are perceived as global problems and evaluated as a whole in Türkiye, the lack of specification on how to implement the mand how to carry out effective activities creates a gap, which means that the green ideology cannot be fully adopted. When the 2019 elections are taken into account, the idea that the Republican People's Party, which embraces left-wing ideology, will move forward with an ecosocialist understanding, has led to contradictory thoughts. The fact that the anti-capitalist views of ecosocialism are not included in the environmental policies presented by the left-wing party can be cited as an example of this situation (Sipahi and Dincer, 2019). It should actually be considered normal that developing countries like Türkiye, which cannot fully achieve growth in the economic-social field, cannot reflect growth to all regions, and where strong organization can be difficult in all fields, do not have a strong green movement. Infact, in developing and less-developed countries, the fact that environmental and climate issues are particularly mentioned in the political arena and presented under an economic development model is an indication of an ideology that does not prioritize the environment.

4. TÜRKİYE'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ALIGNMENT IN THE EU PROCESS

Since its establishment, Türkiye has placed greater emphasis on political elements such as economic and social progress, resulting in the creation of the State Planning Organization (DPT) as of September 30, 1960, and the publication of the First Five-Year Development Plan in 1963. In total, eleven development plans have been published in Türkiye from 1963 to 2021, with the country currently continuing to implement the Eleventh Development Plan. These plans are primarily focused on topics such as the environment, economic and social progress, and public administration, and are designed to take forward-looking steps towards policies that need to be implemented in the future (Presidency of The Republic of Turkey Presidency of The Strategy and Budget, 2019).

With regards to EU relations, the membership process began on September 16, 1986, and Türkiye even applied for full membership. However, the European Commission stated that the Union could not accept any new members before completing its internal market, and also that Türkiye needed to develop economically, socially, and legally and politically. The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1985-1989), which coincided with the third Environmental Action Program of the EU, aimed to reduce dependence on non-renewable energy sources and encourage the use of renewable energy sources and improve energy efficiency. The decisions made in this plan were not included in the Environmental Law (Erdem and Yenilmez, 2017). The Seventh Five-Year Development Plan is observed to be in compliance with the environmental issues of the Amsterdam Treaty. Moreover, the fact that the process of adapting to EU environmental policies was carried out without hindering the country's growth is quite remarkable. Türkiye completed the "Transitional Period" in 1996 and entered the "Final Period" for full membership. However, Türkiye's application for candidate country status was not accepted at the Luxembourg European Council Summit in 1997. In order to improve EU relations, the "European Strategy for Türkiye" was announced on March 3, 1998, followed by the publication of the first "Progress Report." Finally, as of December 11-12, 1999, Türkiye became a candidate country (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, EU Presidency, 2023).

It can be said that Türkiye closely monitors the developments of the "Green Deal" announced by the European Commission in 2019 and put into effect in 2021, with the "Türkiye Green Deal Action Plan" published in the Official Press. The action plan also indicates that it will become a part of national legislation as a result of this agreement (Kenarlı, 2022). With this action plan, Türkiye has explained its changes within the framework of the European Green Deal, while maintaining its relations with the Türkiye-EU Customs Union, by including multiple subheadings in the Action Plan. In total, there are 9 main headings and 32 target plans that aim for sustainability, while climate issues have taken center stage in Türkiye's policies for economic growth (T.C. Ministry of Commerce, 2021: 9). The importance of the Green Deal for Türkiye, a non-EU member, stems from its membership in the Customs Union and its position as a candidate country. Additionally, the creation of a carbon emission market, as well as various topics such as industry, logistics, energy, and trade, will shape Türkiye's trade with the EU (Diriöz, 2021).

As an example of this situation, the rapidly growing trade volume between Türkiye and the EU, which reached 196.4 billion in 2022, suggests that trade partnership will continue. Türkiye conducted its exports to the EU with a share of 3.9% and its imports with a share of 3.3%. In this context, the importance of trade with the EU, which is a major market, will further increase with the comprehensive expansion and updating of the Customs Union (T.C. Ministry of Commerce, 2023). Although not explicitly stated in the Medium-Term Program (MTP), an Emissions Trading System is necessary for the Green Deal and needs to be implemented as soon as possible. The Emissions Trading System, which is a tool for the fight against climate change, is the cornerstone of the EU. Minister Kurum stated that various studies on emission rates will be carried out over the years, the Emissions Trading System will be implemented by the end of the year, and even application will begin by 2023. By providing financial support to producers who fight against climate change and invest within the framework of circular economy, it is emphasized that an easy and powerful way to finance investors will be provided in line with the development plans (Kalyoncuoğlu, 2022). The dynamism in Türkiye's relationship with the EU regarding its full

membership negotiations has become particularly uncertain in recent years, with a series of ups and downs. Although Türkiye has become a member of the Customs Union, which is a step close to membership, the prolongation and uncertainty of the membership process will bring some problems in free trade agreements. With the process becoming delayed, focusing on adaptation studies for the Green Deal resulted in the Paris Climate Agreement, which was held in 2015, being accepted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on October 6, 2021. As a supporter of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Climate Agreement, the agreement requires some obligations for the adaptation process.

There are positive thoughts that a rise regarding the dynamism of Türkiye's relations with the EU within the framework of the steps taken by Türkiye for environmental protection. However, there is a belief that it may remain limited politically. The notion that the political impasse in Türkiye-EU relations will be resolved through high-level contacts based on mutual interests is generated through the "Türkiye-EU High-Level Dialogue on Science, Research, Technology and Innovation." The meeting held on November 15 discussed the topics of "European Green Deal, cooperation under the EU Unity Programs, and cooperation in the future industry," and ultimately, a joint declaration was adopted (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, EU Presidency, 2022b)

4.1. Türkiye's Position in the Framework of International Environment and Climate Conventions

The "UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)", the world's first climate agreement, is one of three agreements reached by 172 countries under the auspices of the United Nations from June 1-14, 1992 to combat climate problems (Dunne et al., 2016). UNFCCC is a forward step in the fight against climate change. As the increase in green house gas emissions became a global problem and countries that became parties to the Convention strengthened its content, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted after lengthy negotiations in 1997 (under COP3). The Protocol came into effect in 2005 (Dunne et al., 2016). If the implementation of this treaty did not produce the desired results in reducing carbon emissions, the Berlin Mandate and Conference of Parties (COP1) were established to take more concrete action. The Kyoto Protocol has two different periods: the First Commitment Period (2008-2012), where countries under took obligations to reduce or limit green house gas emissions based on 1990 levels, and the Second Commitment Period (2013-2020), which differs from the first period with the "Doha Amendment" and allows for emissions reduction based on a certain level by 2020, with developed countries like Japan, the United States, New Zealand, and the Russian Federation declining to participate in this period. In this context, Türkiye, which generally participates in climate change meetings and summits, did not quickly become a party to the Kyoto Protocol, as it was waiting to see the stance of developing countries with developing industrial industries. The commitment to emission reduction was left to some countries, including the European Union, in the fight against climate change (Erk, 2017).

The applications of the European Union to this protocol and Türkiye's steps in line with these policies, which require full membership, have not achieved the desired progress in the world due to the reluctance of developed countries. Kyoto also provides the ability to institutionalize and store an important innovation. Türkiye has achieved a large majority of the required regulations related to institutionalization and reporting when it was neutral to the Kyoto Protocol. The UNFCCC was signed to make it more comprehensive in the international relations environment. Türkiye, which was not a party to the UNFCCC at that time, did not under take the reduction/limitation obligation in the First Commitment Period included in the protocol and was not on the Annex B list (DSI General Directorate, 2022). The Kyoto Protocol is important in terms of being a global agreement to reduce carbon emissions. Without such an agreement, reducing/limiting carbon emissions will not be easy. Although the 1990 level of limitation could not be achieved in the fight against climate change, the Kyoto Protocol has created a foundation and brought intense efforts in this field in the international system (Sümer, 2014). Therefore, when we consider the Kyoto Protocol in the context of green theory, its relationship with it becomes highly open to criticism due to its weak relationship. Ignoring the environment and climate change by not disregarding the economic development model, even by developed countries, is an attitude that contradicts the ideology that forms the basis of green theory. Although the Kyoto Protocol is a binding agreement on green house gas intensity, it can be said that it did not fully achieve its desired goal due to countries that focus more on economic growth and industrialization in competitive conditions and limited commitment periods.

It can be concluded that not every common solution can be achieved with the globalization of environmental issues. The global fight against global warming and climate change has been replaced by the Paris Agreement, which is actually the most important two legal regulations of the international climate regime, the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. The Paris Climate Agreement appears as a binding and legal regulation. It can be said that a new process has begun for the international climate regime with the Paris Climate Agreement. It has gained a more comprehensive framework compared to the Kyoto Protocol as a result of being accepted unanimously by countries around the world in a short period of time. The United States, which was not a party to the Kyoto Protocol, has demonstrated an important attitude by wanting to participate in this agreement and to ensure a rapid process for the entry in to force of the agreement (Şahin, 2017). The aim of the agreement is to develop the implementation within the framework of the UNFCCC by preventing sustainable development and poverty. The most important

point in the agreement is to limit the average atmospheric temperature to below 2°C, and even to 1.5°C, covering a long period. If these target rates cannot be achieved, it is predicted that in countries with high humidity, the humidity rate will reach very high levels as a result of temperature fluctuations, while the opposite will occur in arid regions. Another aim of the agreements to reach "net zero emissions" especially in developed countries after 2050 (Turkes, 2021).

According to this agreement, the participating countries are required to assess their progress every five years, with the starting point planned for 2023. In line with this approach that forms the basis of the agreement, countries will show how quickly they can make decisions on emission reduction by setting their own targets. The "Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC)" should be used to realize their commitments to reduce emissions (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2015). Türkiye declared on September 20, 2015, that it aims to increase its "Intended Nationally Determined Contribution" (INDC) by no more than 21% by 2030. Although the target in the agreement is set at 2°C, assessments indicate that even if countries implement their national contributions, the 2°C target will not be achieved. In this regard, the Paris Agreement provides for a periodic review of the Nationally Determined Contributions and an increase in targets (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, EU Presidency).

It can be argued that Türkiye has experienced the processes related to climate change in a very difficult and challenging manner since the Rio meeting held in 1992. At the Rio meeting, the countries that were obliged to reduce green house gas emissions were listed by the UNFCCC. Türkiye's inclusion in Annex I caused concerns and led to a difficult process. Furthermore, as an OECD country listed in Annex II, Türkiye was required to provide technological, financial and capacity building support to developing countries. After objections were raised, Türkiye was removed from Annex II in 2001 but remained in Annex I as a "specially designated" country. As a result, Türkiye has not been able to make significant progress in combating climate change both nationally and internationally. The difference between the legislation of Türkiye and the UNFCCC is that the former does not make country-specific classifications such as Annex I, Annex II, and Non-Annex I, but rather classifies countries as developed and developing. Therefore, a list has been prepared that includes both developed and developing countries. Since Türkiye was listed in Annex I and Annex II, it faced the same problem in the Paris Agreement and was included in the list of developed countries. As a result, Türkiye will not be able to benefit from the aid fund established in 2020 (T.C. Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change). However, like all other countries, the Paris Agreement, which is a global agreement, encourages Türkiye to focus on green transformation. Environmental and climate issues should not only be regulated and implemented by the government but also by various institutions such as ministries, public organizations, private sectors, academic community, and relevant NGOs. The agreement can have both positive and negative effects on energy and resource-intensive sectors. Therefore, instead of making this process difficult, green transformation can be achieved through strong organization and solidarity.

5. CONCLUSION

Environmental issue becoming a matter of concern for all societies and bringing with it a global crisis, it is crucial for governments to act together against this problem. However, even collective efforts can sometimes be insufficient in the face of this crisis because countries are at different levels in many areas. Therefore, they either advocate an understanding that prioritizes the environment or an understanding that prioritizes humans in the direction of economic development interests. Although economic interests for countries sometimes occur as a result of a crisis or political turmoil, the EU is making progress with in the framework of common policies with its sensitivity towards the environment. When looking at the implementation of the EU's environmental policies within the context of the Green Theory in world history, each development has actually strengthened the relationship between theory and practice. In the legal dimension, the EU has made its presence felt through the Paris Summit, the First Environmental Action Programme, and the European Single Act, which took important first steps in the field of environment. The Green movement is actually a form of awakening for society and a rebellion. Therefore, this movement has also made its presence felt in the political arena in the direction of the Green Politics in Europe, and political party ideologies have been adopted accordingly. It is possible to see the discourse and emphasis of the Green Theory, which focuses more on the environment, in the policies that the Union has formed almost from the very beginning. Although Türkiye has made positive progress against its legal regulations, its approach to environmental protection has been limited, and it has clearly stated that it cannot bear extra environmental costs that contradict its economic development model. In this context, in determining the policies for environmental protection, priority has been given to economic development and the benefits that will be provided. Actually, this situation has also been clearly stated in progress reports. Since the beginning of the environmental chapter negotiations, little progress has been made. Türkiye's attempts to create legislation within the frame work of the adopted *acquis* for the EU's environmental policy actually demonstrate its efforts towards compliance.

One of the reasons why Türkiye values regional and international negotiations against climate change is due to the Mediterranean climate zone it possesses. Thus, the region, which is highly sensitive, prioritizes environmental issues as negative characteristics of climate change will have an effective impact on the area. In this context, it strives to engage in development-focused bilateral collaborations and international efforts in order to prevent disasters that could occur and leave a livable area for future generations. Therefore, important developments have begun to occur with regard to Türkiye's fight against climate change, which is an important issue in the international system. Strengthening Türkiye's integration in to the global arena is crucial in order to attract serious investments towards green initiatives. In this direction, it is an undeniable fact that all sectors need to act jointly during the implementation process of environmental-focused policies. Although Türkiye has wanted to keep the development welfare high for years and has formed development plans in the political, social, and economic areas, inconsistencies in the union's actions and sometimes Türkiye's inability to achieve the desired results have reduced the impact of dynamism in bilateral relations. The 2022 progress report published by the EU stated that Türkiye was prepared to a certain extent in the horizontal legislation area, but it still could not make any progress. Although Türkiye has adapted to the environmental policies in the legislation area, it cannot change this result due to the short comings in the implementation. Türkiye's adoption of environmental policies within the green theory context will actually allow for momentum in the adaptation process to EU environmental legislation. In this direction, the creation of a Türkiye model that embraces green will be achieved as a result of being able to feel it in various sector groups, regional and international trade networks, and even in educational fields. Sustaining EU relations based on mutual interests with a rational approach is necessary. Some concerns may lie beneath the EU integration process. Political problems, such as maritime border problems, may pose a threat to negotiations. In fact, the ability to achieve full membership in the EU is mostly due to political blockages. Although Türkiye has been able to carry out the adaptation process to environmental policies, it will not yield sufficient results for membership to some extent. The Union constantly puts forward reasons such as Türkiye's insufficient situation in various areas, its geographical location, its excess population, and its different cultural characteristics. The membership process has become a knot that has turned into a gangrene-like condition. Although there is a difference in culture, such as religion and language, developments can occur if a balanced relationship between the EU and Türkiye can be established. Given the strategic importance of Türkiye's foreign policy, a comprehensive assessment is needed.

The EU needs to improve its relations with Türkiye due to issues such as these security concerns regarding energy supply resulting from the war between Russia and Ukraine, and migration. Türkiye's undeniable role in energy, migration policies, and the Russian-Ukrainian War should not be overlooked. In the context of these factors, the EU's ability to handle all of these situations will depend on working with influential actors like Türkiye. Rather than being seen as a threat, Türkiye's successes in fulfilling its roles should be utilized for the mutual benefit of both parties, which points to a direct process.

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