

## **Abstract**

The Paris Agreement represents a landmark international environmental agreement that received extensive political, journalistic, and academic attention, and the United States played a key role in the negotiation process. This thesis presents a comprehensive overview of determinants that can impact the U.S. approach to international environmental politics, and it focuses on a detailed discourse analysis of U.S. federal political elites' rhetoric on the Paris Agreement, comparing two time periods – the second term of the Obama presidency and the Trump administration. The analysis demonstrates a strong alignment of political ideology with partisanship, dividing the Democratic and Republican argumentation into rhetorical opposition, and proves the significant influence of the highly polarized two-party system on the U.S. environmental rhetoric. However, applying Putnam's two-level game framework, the case study also demonstrates that even Democratic politicians approached pragmatic rhetoric on topics such as the U.S. economy, economic growth, or U.S. leadership, and employed creative narratives that addressed the pragmatic concerns of the American public to gain support for their progressive foreign policy agenda represented by the Paris Agreement in the end result. The paper presents the rhetorical approaches in which the partisan and ideological polarization transforms into how the topics related to Paris Agreement are framed, not what topics are covered, because no matter if Democrat or Republican, presidents have to be responsive to the same audience – the American public. The thesis brings a new insight into the rhetorical strategies of the U.S. federal political elites on international environmental politics, pointing to the differences but also similarities between Democratic and Republican approaches.