Power Politics, Governance, and Institution-Building in East Asia: An Environmental Case

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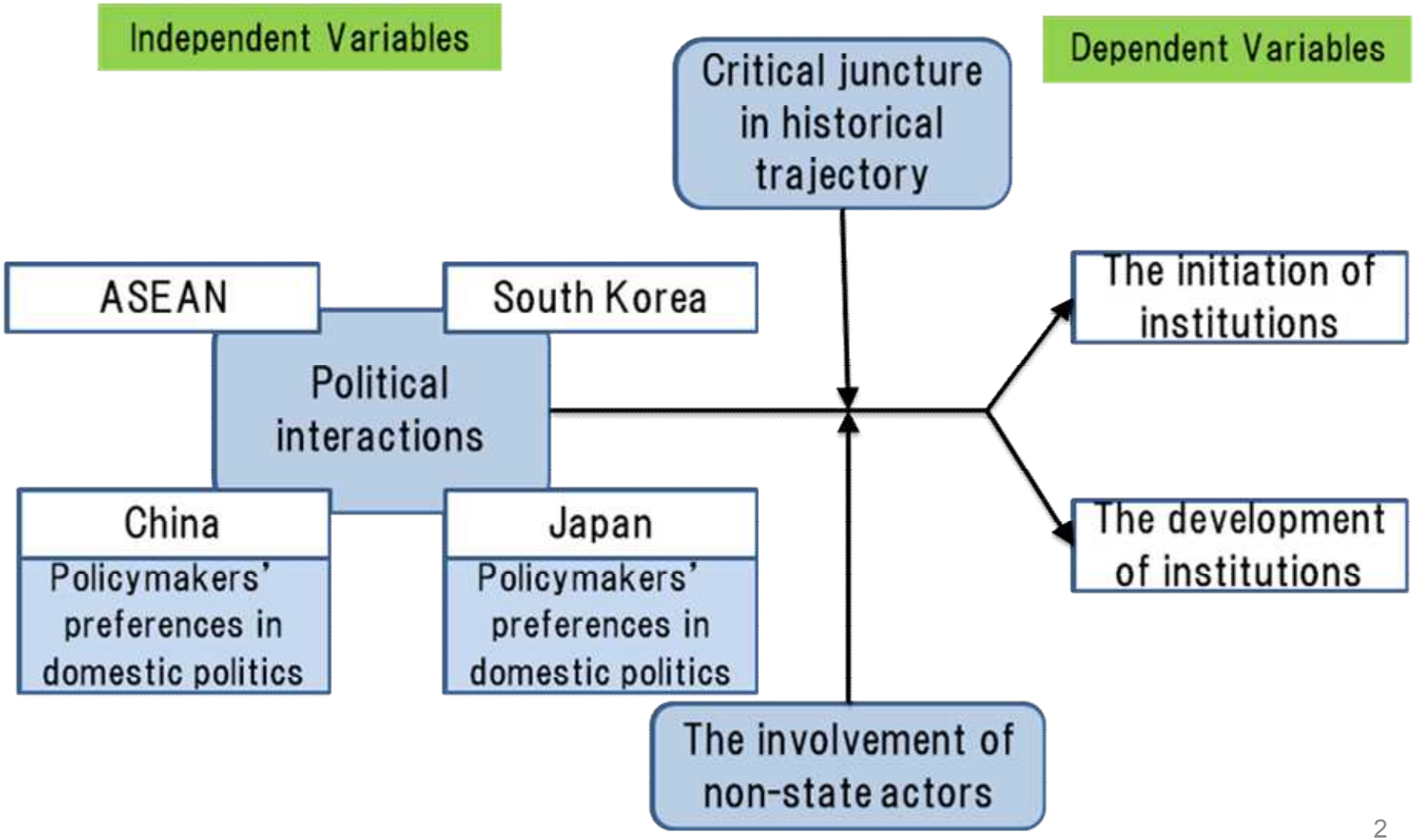
Independent/Dependent Variables in Analytical Frameworks



Objectives of Research

To trace the development of EANET from policy talks before its launching to the adoption of the 'Instrument for EANET'

To analyse political interactions among member countries and motivations underpinning their policy behaviour

To explore likely contributions to regional governance through the incorporation of scientists' knowledge and expertise

What is EANET

- The Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)
- Three objectives
- (1) To create a common understanding of the state of acid deposition problems in East Asia
- (2) To provide useful inputs for decision-making at the local, national and regional levels
- (3) To contribute to cooperation on issues pertinent to acid deposition among the participating countries

The Development of EANET

1993-97, The four expert meetings in Japan

Mar. 1998, The first intergovernmental (IG) meeting (The start of the preparatory-phase activities)

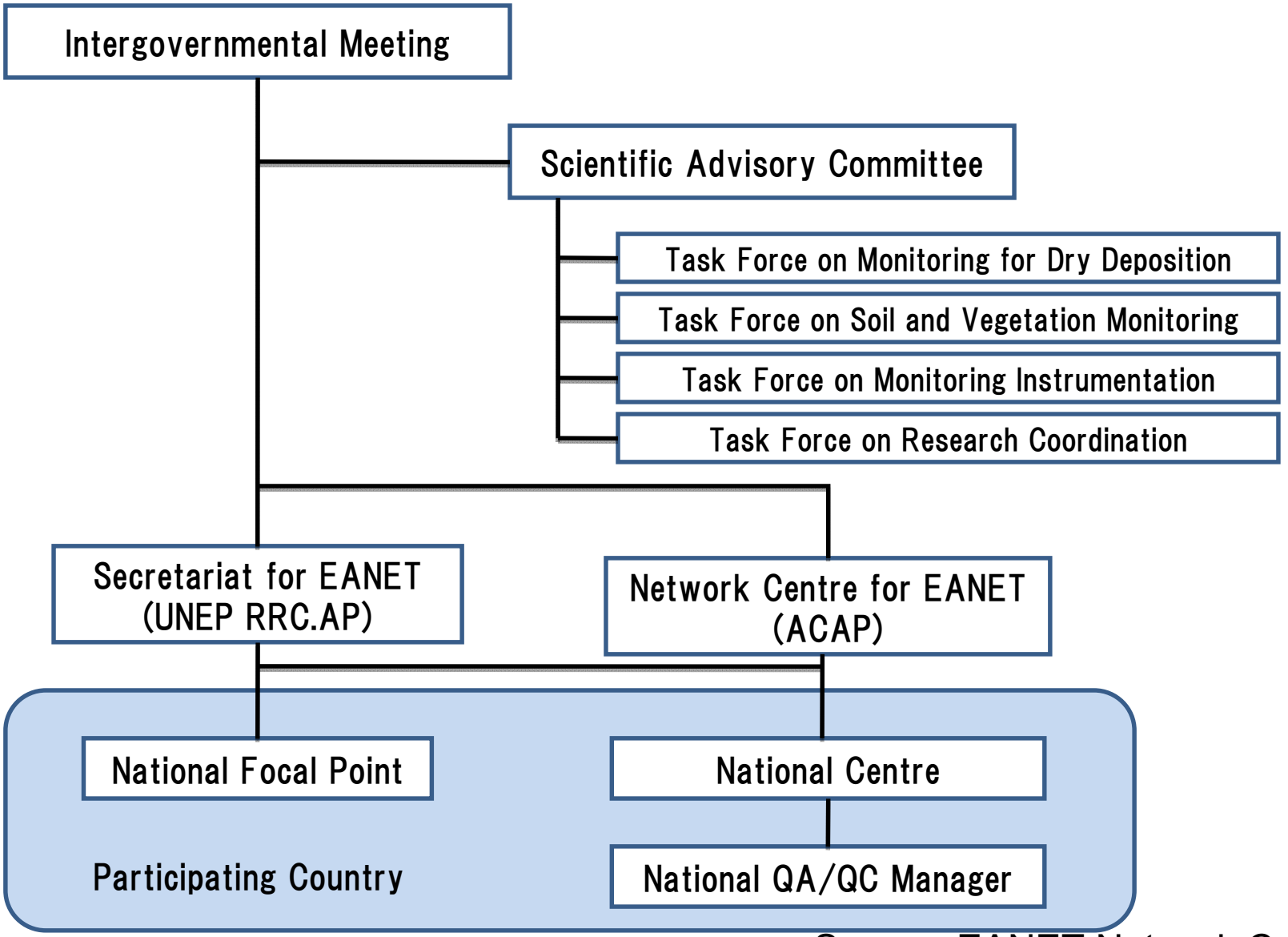
Jan. 2001, The start of regular-phase activities

Nov. 2005, Niigata Decision to begin a process to discuss the adoption of an instrument

Nov. 2010, The adoption of the Instrument for Strengthening EANET

Jan. 2012, The Instrument came into force

The Organizational Structure of EANET



Source: EANET Network Centre

Parties' Stance on the Launching of EANET

Japan

Prepared for a blueprint for cooperation and contributed all operational costs

← Resolve acid rain problems and play a leadership role in East Asia

China

Exhibited unstable and lukewarm attitudes towards EANET

← Avoids being a source country and considers relative costs/benefits

South Korea

The main participant who posed the brake on the EANET initiative

← Rivalry sentiment against Japan and possible negative impacts on the LTP

Scientific Knowledge and the Initiation of EANET

- The deep involvement of scientists
- The scientists played a pivotal role in leading discussions at expert meetings
- They formulated guidelines and technical manuals, which provided the base for the standardised method for monitoring
- However, they did not form a common front on causes, effects, and models of regional acid deposition

Two Challenges in the EANET Development

The burden sharing

To establish a system to share necessary costs for EANET among member countries

The foundation document

To adopt a formal document that stipulates the principles, the scope of activities, etc.

Responses

An agreement on voluntary contribution by using the UN assessment (from 2005)

The result of discussions would be reported to the tenth IG meeting in 2008

Members' Contributions to the EANET Secretariat Budget (thousand $; %)

	2007		2008		2009	
Japan	300.0	87.2	367.4	89.9	382.2	90.3
South Korea	23.6	6.9	18.4	4.5	18.1	4.3
China	15.0	4.4	15.0	3.7	15.0	3.5
Thailand	2.7	0.8	3.8	0.9	3.8	0.9
Malaysia	2.6	0.8	3.8	0.9	3.8	0.9
Total	343.9	100.0	408.4	100.0	422.9	100.0

Three Issues in the Instrument

Legal status

A loose agreement as networks or enhance consolidation with a formal agreement

Scope of substances

To expand from ‘acid deposition’ to ‘regional air pollution’ or not

Scope of activities

To broaden activities from monitoring to emission inventory and simulation modelling

Parties' Stance on the Issues

Japan	• Hoped to make the document a framework agreement
China	• Strongly opposed the expansion of the scopes of substances and activities
South Korea	• Opposed the expansion of the scopes of substances and activities

The Adoption of the EANET Instrument

- The adoption of the Instrument for Strengthening EANET in Nov. 2010
- A short and simple document with just 17 items and non-legally binding power
- It was finally agreed to ‘monitor acid deposition’ in East Asia, not adopting ‘monitor, prevent and control’ and ‘regional air pollution’

Scientific Knowledge and the Development of EANET

The scientific expertise provided by professional networks in the SAC led to the production of objective, scientific data and facts

Some suggestions from experts on the basis of professional and scientific knowledge and insights were not reflected in actual policies adopted by policymakers

Diverse backgrounds disturbed the SAC members from deepening both relationality and common identity
Too close connections to the government undermine independence and the third-party status

Conclusion

- Despite diverse interests and stances, EANET began its regular-phase activities with original ten members
- A failure to coordinate diverse interests among participating countries became the main impediment to enacting a substantial foundation document
- The experts have limitations to influencing policymaking when technical issues are linked to political consideration