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Normative Differentiation and Organizational Prototypicality in Discursive Coalitions: A Hyperlink Network Analysis of the European Bioplastics Field

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Abstract

Bioplastics are recognized as a key component of Europe's sustainability transition, yet the field is characterized by uncertainty and competing interpretations of what constitutes responsible and effective solutions. Organizational actors emphasize different sustainability priorities, producing a landscape of divergent values and normative orientations. In such contested fields, organizations may converge into discursive coalitions when they articulate compatible normative storylines and establish publicly visible relations with one another. Drawing jointly on research on discursive coalitions and on Self-Categorization Theory, this study examines whether digitally mediated organizational coalitions in the European bioplastics field are normatively differentiated, and whether actors who more closely embody their coalition's normative profile occupy more prominent positions within it. Using hyperlink data among organizational websites, we reconstruct a network of publicly visible interorganizational relations and identify emergent digital communities. Organizations' normative profiles are modeled from publicly articulated sustainability commitments associated with the SDGs. Results show that communities exhibit normative meta-contrast, with organizations more similar to their own community's normative profile than to that of other communities. Prototypicality, defined as the extent to which an organization's profile aligns with its community's profile, is positively associated with network centrality, and this association strengthens among the most central organizations. The findings indicate that the formation and internal stratification of discursive coalitions in digitally mediated sustainability fields can be approximated through publicly observable communication and relational linkage, integrating discursive and social-categorization accounts of organizational positioning.

Keywords: Normative Differentiation; Prototypicality; Discursive Coalitions; Hyperlink Network; Sustainable Development Goals; Bioplastics

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Introduction

Normative Differentiation and Discursive Coalitions in the European Bioplastics Field

Organizational research has long examined how shared orientations within organizational fields shape the broader socio-economic environments in which we live. This interest is justified: when a given interpretation of a phenomenon becomes dominant within a field, it does not merely describe how the actors within that field behave; it actively shapes the field's trajectory. This is especially consequential in sustainability-related domains, where the prevailing orientation also shapes the broader trajectory of sustainable development (Delbridge et al., 2024).

Institutional accounts of isomorphism explain why organizations facing ambiguous standards often imitate one another and adopt similar practices to secure legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This logic, however, is less well suited to fields in which uncertainty instead gives rise to normative differentiation, a process through which organizations come to emphasize distinct, and at times competing, value priorities, problem definitions, and courses of action within the same shared domain, rather than converging on a single model. In such fields, the persistence of multiple competing orientations is not simply a background condition: it is actively enacted through how organizations position themselves relative to one another.

According to the social actor perspective, organizations are not passive carriers of an underlying orientation but agents that construct and defend a position within their field through their public communications (King et al., 2010; Whetten & Mackey, 2002). Public positioning is therefore the mechanism through which normative differentiation becomes observable: organizations approximate or differentiate themselves from others through the claims, commitments, and priorities they choose to make public.

When organizations that differentiate themselves in compatible ways reinforce one another's positions, normative differentiation may give rise to discursive coalitions: constellations of actors who converge around shared storylines and narratives that allow heterogeneous organizations, often for different underlying reasons, to articulate a common understanding of a contested issue (Hajer, 1995, 2006). Such coalitions do not require formal membership or coordinated action; they become observable through recurring patterns of public positioning and normative alignment among actors that may otherwise differ in size, sector, or interest (Biddau et al., 2024).

The European bioplastics field provides a useful setting for empirically examining these dynamics. Bioplastics are often presented as a transition from fossil-based plastics to alternative materials, and like other sustainability-oriented transitions, have substantial environmental and societal implications (e.g., Bonaiuto et al., 2024; Milani et al., 2024). Conventional plastics contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, long-term environmental degradation, and microplastic pollution. In Europe, sustainability transitions are strongly institutionalized through initiatives focused on decarbonization and circularity, yet their actual environmental benefits depend on feedstock sourcing, production processes, and end-of-life management; however, organizations disagree on which of these dimensions should define a legitimate transition (Atiwesh et al., 2021; Walker & Rothman, 2020). This disagreement, as in other sustainability transitions, plays out partly through the public positioning of organizations around contrasting storylines about what a desirable transition pathway should prioritize (Delbridge et al., 2024): the field's lack of a single, consolidated development trajectory makes it a relevant case for examining how normative differentiation could catalyze the emergence of discursive coalitions. Whether public positioning and normative differentiation actually play this role in the bioplastics field, however, remains largely unexplored.

The Web as Arena of Organizational Positioning and Categorical Differentiation

The web is widely recognized as a central arena for organizational self-presentation and public positioning. Consistent with the social actor perspective, organizational websites assemble commitments, priorities, and justifications into a coherent, public-facing account of what an organization stands for (King et al., 2010; Whetten & Mackey, 2002), while the hyperlinks among them reflect how organizations reference, endorse, or align themselves with one another (Park & Thelwall, 2003).

Treating such dual information as evidence of positioning rests on a long methodological tradition in the social sciences, which approaches texts and other communicative artifacts not as neutral records but as evidence from which the priorities, values, and orientations of their producers can be systematically inferred (Krippendorff, 2019). Discourse-analytic accounts of discursive coalitions draw on online textual communication in precisely this way, reconstructing underlying storylines and alignments from public argumentation (Hajer, 1995, 2006). More broadly, discursive social psychology has long held that public communication does not merely express pre-formed positions but actively constitutes them, making it a privileged site for studying how actors locate themselves relative to one another and how social reality is co-constructed (Billig, 1987; De Grada & Bonaiuto, 2002; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996).

A publicly visible profile, in fact, does more than signal where an organization stands. Because it is legible to others, it can prompt other organizations to adjust their own positioning, gravitating toward compatible priorities and distancing themselves from incompatible ones. Through this mutual adjustment, individual profiles aggregate into shared orientations and, at the same time, into the boundaries that separate them. Self-Categorization Theory (SCT) offers an account of this very process. Originally developed in social psychology to explain how individuals come to perceive themselves and others in terms of group membership, SCT has since been transposed in organizational contexts (Hogg & Terry, 2000) and adopted as a metatheory in organizational research, where it serves not to attribute cognition to organizations but to interpret patterns of differentiation among collective actors (Pugliese et al., 2024; Vergne & Wry, 2014) treated as social actors in their own right (King et al., 2010; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

A core principle of SCT is meta-contrast, describing how a category becomes a meaningful unit of analysis when

similarity within it is accentuated relative to differences with relevant comparison categories (Hogg, 2001; Turner et al., 1987). Organizational scholarship has long drawn on this categorization logic at the level of fields and markets: audiences penalize firms whose public profile does not conform to a recognizable category (Zuckerman, 1999), sectors function as comparison classes against which individual organizations are judged more or less prototypical (Pugliese et al., 2024), and categorization has more broadly become an established lens for explaining how collective boundaries form and stabilize among organizations (Vergne & Wry, 2014). Applied to discursive coalitions, the same logic implies that organizations aligned with one storyline resemble one another more than they resemble organizations aligned with a competing storyline, so that a coalition's normative coherence and its categorical distinctiveness describe the same configuration from two angles: one anchored in shared meaning, the other in comparative fit.

This is the complementarity that Haslam, Cornelissen, and Werner (2017) trace across three metatheories of organizational identity: framing, characteristic of constructionist and discursive accounts; categorization, characteristic of the social-identity tradition; and personification, characteristic of accounts that treat organizations as social actors in their own right. The personification metaphor is what grounds the social actor perspective adopted here (King et al., 2010; Whetten & Mackey, 2002): organizations figure as bearers of recognizable positions at the scale of the field, the level at which normative differentiation becomes visible to an external observer comparing public commitments, independently of whether or to whom it is subjectively salient.

Once a category is bounded along these comparative lines, prototypicality determines who comes to represent it. The actors who most clearly embody the attributes that distinguish a category from its comparison classes are disproportionately associated with it (Hogg, 2001; Van Knippenberg, 2011). The Social Identity Model of Leadership (SIMOL) extends this principle to recognition and influence, proposing that actors who embody a collective's defining identity are treated as its most legitimate representatives (Hogg et al., 2012; Pierro et al., 2005; Van Knippenberg, 2011). An analogous pattern has been documented at the organizational level, in the relationship between firms and the economic sectors to which they belong (Pugliese et al., 2024). Transposed to discursive coalitions, organizations whose normative profile most closely matches the orientation that distinguishes their coalition should occupy more central positions within it.

Examining these dynamics requires capturing positioning at two levels simultaneously: the symbolic content of each organization's commitments and the relational ties among organizations. The present study approximates the symbolic level by examining organizations' relative emphasis on different sustainability priorities, captured through public references to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a framework that provides a common set of thematic priorities across otherwise heterogeneous commitments (Fiandrino et al., 2022). Reading this symbolic level alongside the relational one follows a precedent set in research on social representations, where thematic content and relational ties have been treated as complementary sources of evidence for how communities are organized (Moliner, 2023; Rizzoli et al., 2024). Computational text analysis and network analysis have likewise been combined to study stakeholder positioning in the closely related fields of sustainable biofuels and energy transition (Ludovico, Esteve Del Valle, et al., 2020; Ludovico, Dessi, et al., 2020). The present study draws on this precedent while keeping the two levels analytically distinct. Communities are identified solely from the relational structure, so that any normative differentiation among them emerges as an empirical result rather than an artifact of how communities were defined.

The Present Research

The European bioplastics field offers an arena in which normative positioning and relational structure can be observed jointly through organizations' online presence. Organizations active in this field publicly articulate their sustainability commitments and connect to one another through hyperlinks, leaving traces of both the priorities they emphasize and the actors they choose to associate themselves with. This makes it possible to ask whether the communities that emerge from these connections are merely structural partitions of a digital network, or whether they correspond to discursive coalitions, that is, clusters of organizations bound together by compatible normative orientations as well as by relational ties.

Two questions follow from the framework developed above. The first concerns the boundaries of such coalitions. If hyperlink communities are normatively meaningful, the organizations within them should converge on a shared sustainability orientation that differentiates them from organizations in other communities. Following the meta-contrast principle, this convergence can be assessed by comparing each organization's normative profile with its own community's profile, relative to those of competing communities (Hogg, 2001; Turner et al., 1987).

H1. Hyperlink communities in the European bioplastics field are normatively differentiated, so that an organization's normative profile is more similar to that of its own community than to those of other communities.

The second question concerns the internal organization of these coalitions. Coalitions are not internally uniform, and some organizations become more prominent reference points than others. Prototypicality offers a principled account of which ones: an organization embodies its community most fully when its normative profile most clearly expresses the orientation that distinguishes that community. Transposing the SIMOL logic (Hogg et al., 2012) to the organizational level (Pugliese et al., 2024), such prototypicality is expected to be associated with greater relational prominence.

H2. Within hyperlink communities, more prototypical organizations, namely those whose normative profile more closely matches their community's profile, are associated with more central positions in the relational network.

To test the two hypotheses, we reconstructed the hyperlink network among organizations in the European bioplastics field, detected the underlying relational community structure, and related each organization's SDG-based normative profile to those of its own and competing communities.

Methods

Data Gathering and Research Sample

The study focuses on public and private organizations operating in the European bioplastics field, including research, industry, advocacy, and media actors involved in bioplastics-related activities.

An initial set of 431 organizational websites was identified and assessed for relevance by a pool of 22 domain experts as part of the EU-funded Horizon Europe NEXT-STEP project (Grant Agreement No. 101157081). Starting from these seed websites, we conducted a web-based snowball sampling up to two degrees of separation, extracting both bioplastics- and polymer-related textual content and hyperlinks pointing to external websites.

The content of each extracted website was analyzed using a keyword-based approach to identify textual references to bioplastics-related concepts (see Supplementary Materials). Websites that did not contain at least one of these keywords were excluded from further analysis.

A classification procedure was then applied to identify each actor's primary country of operation. Only organizations headquartered in, or primarily operating within, Europe were retained in the sample. This restriction ensured that the analyzed actors operated within a relatively coherent institutional environment, given the strong regulatory and normative integration of sustainability policies at the European level.

The final sample consisted of 2,578 organizations connected through publicly visible hyperlinks at the time of data collection in October 2025.

Digital Network Construction and Community Detection

The network of digital relations among bioplastics actors was constructed from hyperlinks between official actors' websites. Each node represents an organization, and each hyperlink between the websites of two organizations is an undirected edge between the corresponding nodes. Hyperlinks are interpreted as publicly observable acts of acknowledgment, reflecting selective visibility and positioning within the digital field (Park & Thelwall, 2003).

The resulting network comprised 2,578 nodes and 11,122 edges and served as the basis for community detection and centrality analyses.

Emergent communities were identified using the Clauset-Newman-Moore greedy modularity maximization algorithm (Clauset et al., 2004), implemented via the *NetworkX* Python library (version 3.6.1; Hagberg et al., 2008). This procedure partitions the network into clusters that maximize intra-cluster connectivity while minimizing inter-cluster connectivity. These clusters were treated as relationally defined groups within the digital field, identified independently of any assumptions regarding their normative coherence.

To ensure reliable estimation of community-level normative profiles, only clusters meeting a minimum size threshold were retained for inferential analyses. Specifically, communities with at least 10 members were included, yielding an analytical sample of 2,382 organizations across the 13 largest communities.

Measures

Normative Meta-Contrast: Each organization's normative profile was derived from publicly available textual references to the SDGs on its official website. SDG references were identified using a transformer-based text classification model (sadickam/sdgBERT; Sadick et al., 2026), which assigns probability scores to each sustainability goal based on the page content. For each organization, page-level SDG scores were aggregated by computing the mean score for each goal across all pages associated with the organization. The resulting SDG score vector captures the relative emphasis placed on different sustainability priorities and was normalized to ensure comparability across organizations.

For an organization *i* belonging to a community *c*, in-group similarity was defined as the cosine similarity between the normative vector of organization *i* and the centroid of its community. Out-group similarity was defined as the average cosine similarity between the organization's vector and the centroids of all other communities identified in the network.

Normative meta-contrast was operationalized as the ratio of in-group to out-group similarity, capturing the comparative differentiation between similarity within the community and that with other communities. This operationalization provides a computational approximation of the meta-contrast principle (Turner et al., 1987), translating its comparative logic into a measure of normative alignment across communities. Consequently, the meta-contrast ratio (MCR) for organization *i* is expressed as:

$$MCR_i = \frac{S_{,i}}{S_{out,i}}$$

where $S_{,i}$ is the similarity between organization *i* and the centroid of its community, and $S_{out,i}$ denotes the average similarity between organization *i* and the centroids of all other communities.

Higher values (i.e., $MCR > 1$) indicate that an organization is more closely aligned with its own community's normative profile than with those of other communities.

Degree Centrality: Degree centrality was computed for each organization as the proportion of network members to which it was directly connected (Freeman, 1978). In organizational networks, higher degree centrality indicates greater relational visibility and embeddedness within the web of publicly observable ties. In the present study, degree centrality is interpreted as a structural indicator of relational prominence, capturing the extent to which an organization occupies a central position within the digital field (Ludovico, Esteve Del Valle, et al., 2020; Park & Thelwall, 2003).

Data Analysis

To test H1, we examined whether organizations exhibited normative meta-contrast as captured by the MCR. Specifically, we assessed whether in-group similarity systematically exceeded out-group similarity using a paired sign-flip permutation test (5,000 permutations).

To test H2, we analyzed the association between MCR and structural prominence. Degree centrality exhibits a strongly right-skewed distribution, with a small number of highly connected organizations and many peripheral actors. To account for this heterogeneity, we estimated quantile regression models (Koenker & Hallock, 2001) predicting degree centrality from MCR. This approach allows the association to vary across the centrality distribution, rather than being restricted to a single average effect.

Models were estimated at multiple quantiles of the degree distribution (q = .25, .50, .75, .90, .95). Community fixed effects were included to account for baseline differences across communities, thereby focusing on within-community variation. Robust standard errors were used to address heteroskedasticity.

Results

Network Structure and Community Detection

The hyperlink network revealed a highly skewed structure, characterized by a small number of highly connected actors and a large number of peripheral organizations (Fig. 1). The network comprised 2,578 nodes and 11,122 edges, with degree centrality displaying strong right skew (sk = 31.79).

To ensure reliable estimation of community-level normative profiles, analyses focused on the 13 largest communities (N = 2,382; 92.4% of the sample), each comprising at least 10 organizations. These communities form the basis for the subsequent analyses.

Test of H1: Normative Differentiation at Community-Level

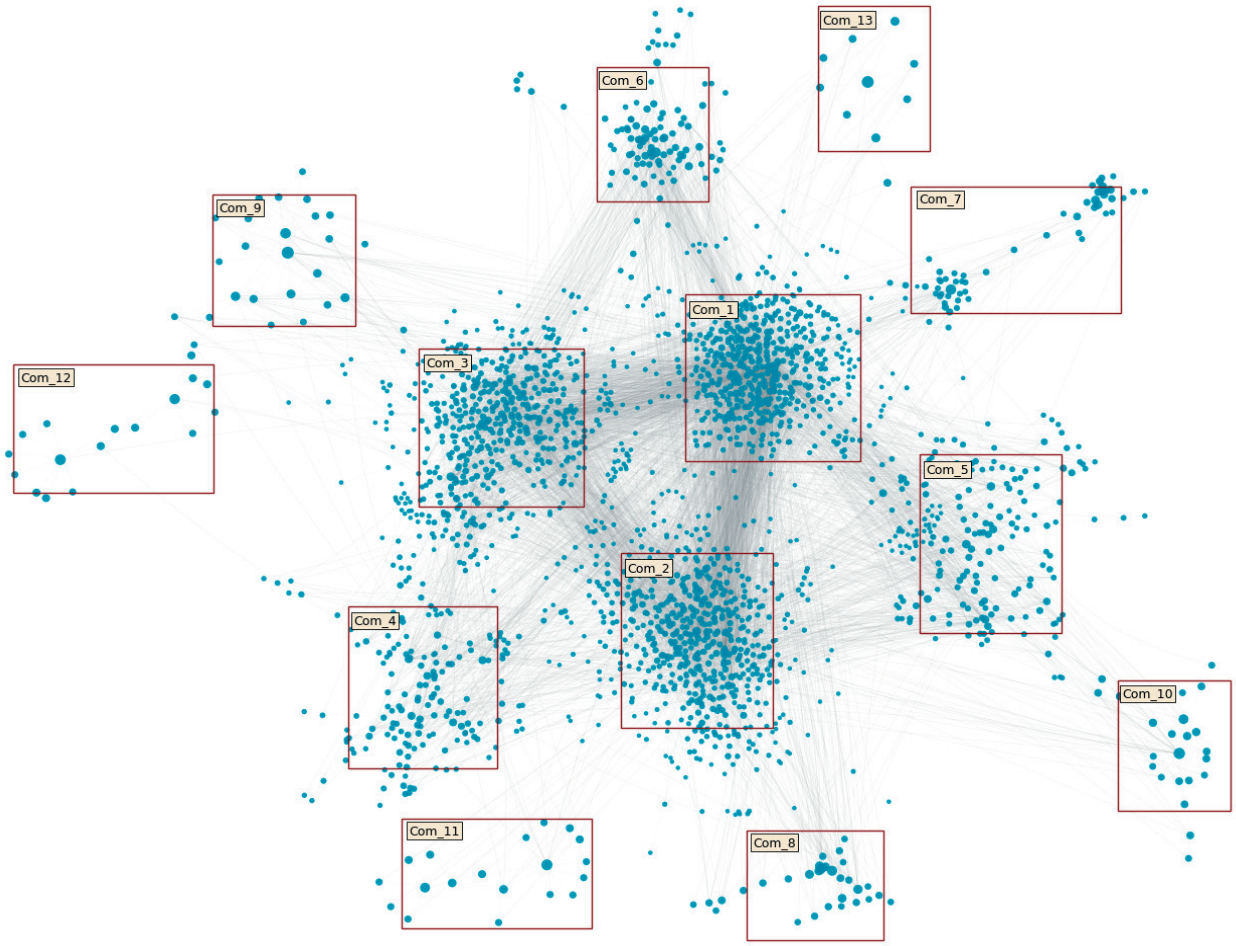
To assess whether emergent communities correspond to normatively differentiated groupings, we compared intra-community and inter-community similarity in organizations' normative profiles.

The meta-contrast ratio was consistently greater than 1 (M = 1.52, Mdn = 1.47), with 99.2% of organizations exceeding this threshold, indicating systematic alignment with their own community relative to other groups.

As shown in Figure 2, organizations were substantially more similar to members of their own community than to those of other communities. The mean in-group similarity was .698, compared to .468 for out-group similarity (Fig. 2a), yielding an average difference of .230 (Fig. 2b). Permutation-based tests confirmed that this difference was highly significant (p = .0002).

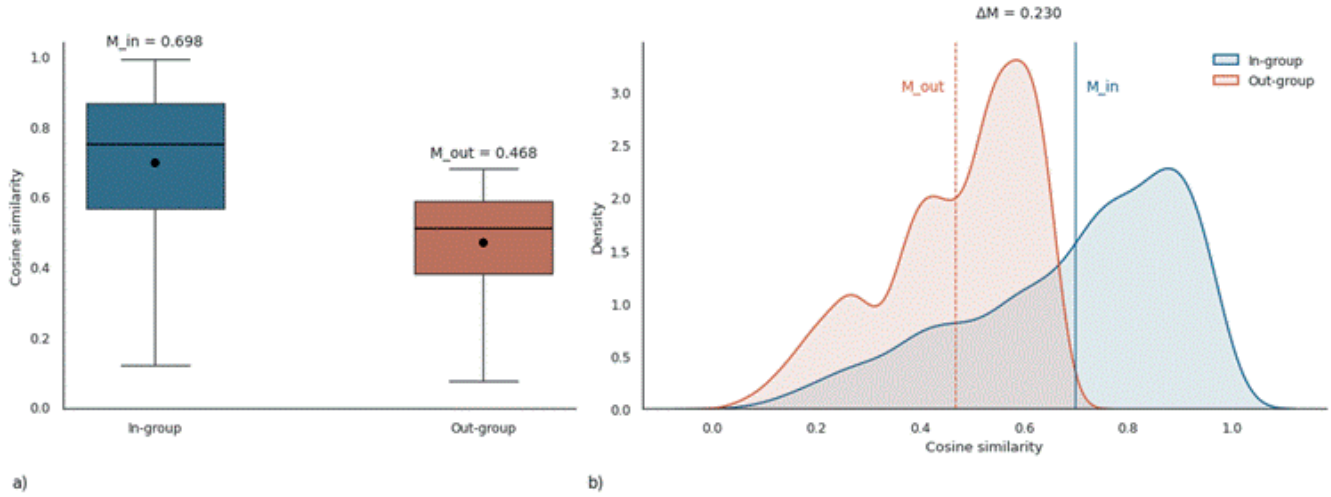
These findings indicate that the digital communities identified through hyperlink structure exhibit normative meta-

Fig. 1. Structure of the Digital Network and Emergent Communities



Note. Nodes represent organizations and edges represent hyperlinks between their websites. Node size reflects degree centrality. Boxes indicate emergent communities (Com1 to Com13).

Fig. 2. Comparison of in-group and out-group similarity



Note. Panel a shows the distribution of in-group and out-group similarity across organizations, with mean values indicated. Panel b displays the corresponding smoothed density distributions.

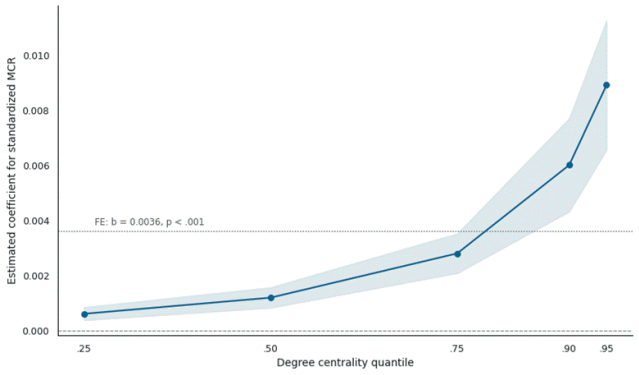
contrast. In line with H1, the emergent relational clusters in the European bioplastics field are not arbitrary structural partitions but normatively differentiated groupings, consistent with their interpretation as discursive coalitions: communities bound by a shared normative orientation and by relational ties.

Test of H2: Normative Meta-Contrast and Actors' Centrality

We assessed whether MCR was associated with structural prominence within communities. Quantile regressions were estimated to account for the right-skewed distribution of degree centrality and to assess whether the association varied across levels of network prominence.

As shown in Figure 3, normative meta-contrast was positively associated with degree centrality across all quantiles. In the fixed-effects specification, the association was positive and statistically significant (b = .0036, p < .001).

Fig. 3. Association between MCR and Degree Centrality across Quantiles.



Note. Estimated coefficients from quantile regression models predicting degree centrality from MCR across quantiles. The dotted line reports the fixed-effects estimate. Shaded areas represent 95% confidence intervals.

Quantile regression results indicate a systematic increase in the strength of this association across the centrality distribution. The estimated coefficient was .0006 at q = .25 (p < .001), increasing to .0012 at q = .50 (p < .001) and .0028 at q = .75 (p < .001). The association became substantially stronger at higher quantiles, reaching .0060 at q = .90 (p < .001) and .0089 at q = .95 (p < .001).

This indicates that normative meta-contrast is weakly associated with centrality among peripheral actors but becomes progressively stronger among more connected organizations. Organizations whose normative profiles more closely match that of their community, that is, the more prototypical organizations, are disproportionately represented among the most central nodes.

These findings support H2: within coalitions, prototypicality is increasingly associated with structural prominence as centrality rises, indicating that the actors who most fully embody a coalition's orientation tend to occupy its most prominent positions.

Discussion

Normative Differentiation, Prototypicality, and Relational Prominence

The findings show that the hyperlink communities of the European bioplastics field are not merely structural partitions of a digital network. An organization's normative profile is indeed consistently more similar to that of its own community than to those of competing communities, so that relational clusters coincide with normatively differentiated groupings. Communities detected solely from the relational structure are organized around distinctive orientations toward sustainability priorities and legitimate transition pathways.

The literature on discursive coalitions offers a natural reading of this pattern. Coalitions form when actors converge on compatible storylines and shared ways of framing a contested issue, without requiring full consensus or formal coordination (Biddau et al., 2024; Hajer, 1995, 2006). What

the present study adds is the scale and the medium of that convergence: it becomes visible across the entire bioplastics field through digital traces alone, since communities derived purely from hyperlink structure turn out to carry distinctive normative profiles. This moves the study of discursive coalitions beyond the close reading of a few storylines toward the relational organization of a whole digitally mediated field, where websites and hyperlinks make alignments among actors, claims, and positions observable at scale (Alaimo, 2022; Powell et al., 2017).

The second set of results concerns the internal organization of these coalitions. Organizations with higher meta-contrast ratios, those whose normative profile most clearly expresses the orientation distinguishing their coalition, tend to occupy more central positions in the hyperlink network, an association that strengthens toward the upper end of the centrality distribution. The most central actors are thus not only the most connected, but also those whose public profile most fully expresses their coalition's normative orientation. This is the association that a prototypicality account anticipates: within a comparatively bounded category, the actors most closely aligned with what distinguishes it tend to occupy its more prominent positions (Hogg, 2001; Van Knippenberg, 2011). The SIMOL extends this logic from category membership to representativeness, linking prominence to how fully an actor expresses a collective's defining orientation rather than to any formal position (Haslam et al., 2020; Hogg et al., 2012). A comparable organizational-level pattern has been observed in the degree to which firms align with the defining attributes of a broader collective entity, such as an economic sector (Pugliese et al., 2024). Read in this light, the meta-contrast ratio serves as an observable indicator of such alignment, and its positive association with centrality shows that the organizations expressing their coalition's orientation most clearly are also its most visible reference points.

This reading shows how a social-categorization lens can be applied to a digitally mediated field without inferring organizations' internal states. The meta-contrast ratio serves as a comparative measure, capturing how distinctive a coalition's normative orientation is only in relation to the other communities present in the field, consistent with the principle that similarity becomes meaningful against relevant alternatives (Turner et al., 1987). What it establishes is an alignment between publicly observable relations and normative positioning. Whether the coalitions revealed by these data are also perceived as categories by the actors themselves is a question these data leave open.

Altogether, these findings speak to the governance of contested sustainability transitions, where organizations compete not only over technical solutions but over the authority to define which pathways count as legitimate (Delbridge et al., 2024). The cross-sectional design does not settle the direction of the association between normative positioning and relational prominence, which likely reflects complex field dynamics, including homophily and circular processes of mutual reinforcement (McPherson et al., 2001). However, the link between normative orientation and the field's relational structure remains meaningful. Relationally bound communities cohere as discursive coalitions, held together by shared meanings and orientations toward specific goals, and this is something that actors seeking to understand or act within the field cannot overlook. What the findings ultimately suggest is that visibility in such a field does not reward the actors who occupy the middle ground between coalitions, but those who most clearly embody their coalition's orientation. This dynamic may reinforce the boundaries between coalitions rather than soften them, and whether a field fragments into competing factions or consolidates around a dominant orientation is likely to shape which transition pathways ultimately prevail. From a theoretical and methodological point of view, such an approach illustrates the heuristic value of SCT, operationalized within a discursive framework (De Grada & Bonaiuto, 2002), for studying how classical social-psychological processes govern new phenomena instantiated through digital data and communities.

Limitations and Future Directions

First, the study relies on publicly available digital data. Websites and hyperlinks are meaningful arenas for organizational positioning, but they do not capture every form of interaction through which the field is organized, and hyperlinks are best read as traces of digital visibility and acknowledgment rather than as direct evidence of influence or strategic alliance. Offline partnerships, participation in policy arenas, and historical ties also shape organizations' relational prominence, and future research could combine hyperlink data with other sources to reconstruct a fuller ecology of field relations.

Second, the cross-sectional design does not support causal inference. The results show that the meta-contrast ratio and relational prominence are systematically associated, but they cannot establish whether organizations become central because they more clearly express their coalition's orientation, whether central organizations help shape that orientation, or whether the two unfold together over time. Longitudinal designs would be needed to disentangle these possibilities and would likely require extending the analysis to other online contexts, such as social media platforms, whose content evolves more rapidly over time than that of organizational websites.

Third, approaching normative orientation through SDG-related references captures one dimension of public sustainability positioning. The SDGs provide a common vocabulary for comparing heterogeneous organizations, but they do not exhaust the thematic and rhetorical richness that studies of discursive coalitions usually examine through issue-specific storylines, argumentative repertoires, and claims. Analyzing this content more directly would offer a finer-grained view of how organizations define themselves within and across coalitions, and a stronger basis for examining the categorization and differentiation processes that the present findings suggest.

Conclusion

The European bioplastics field is marked by competing claims about what a sustainable material transition should prioritize. In this context, the present study examined whether the digital relations among organizations are accompanied by a shared

normative structure, and whether prominence within that structure favors the actors who most clearly embody it. The findings show that communities identified from hyperlink relations are normatively differentiated coalitions, and that within them the organizations whose sustainability profiles most closely match their coalition's orientation occupy the more central positions, especially among the most visible actors.

These findings suggest that the formation and internal stratification of discursive coalitions, usually studied through the close reading of storylines, can be recovered at the field scale from publicly observable communication and relational linkage, to be jointly read through a discursive social-categorization lens. In digitally mediated sustainability fields, organizations appear to gain prominence not only by being well connected but by more clearly expressing the priorities that define their coalition, an indication that digital visibility is part of how some actors come to shape which transition pathways are treated as legitimate.

Ethical Statement
The study relied exclusively on publicly available organizational website data and did not involve human participants, personal data, private communications, or interaction with individuals. For this reason, formal ethics approval was not required under the applicable institutional guidelines.

Data Availability Statement
The data used for this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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Conflict of Interests
The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Author Contributions
Conceptualization: NL, AM, MB; Data curation: NL, AM; Formal analysis: NL; Funding acquisition: MB; Investigation: NL, AM; Methodology: NL; Project administration: MB; Resources: NL, AM; Software: NL; Supervision: MB; Visualization: NL, AM; Writing – original draft: NL, AM; Writing – review & editing: MB, NL, AM

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Declaration about the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process
During the preparation of this work the authors used ChatGPT in order to proofread the grammar and syntax of this manuscript. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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