



A Critical Analysis of the Norwegian Climate Discourse in Light of Global Fast Policies

A discourse analysis of Norwegian climate policy (1995-2018) and critical discussion regarding the implications of discourses and the fast policy condition for national climate policy development.

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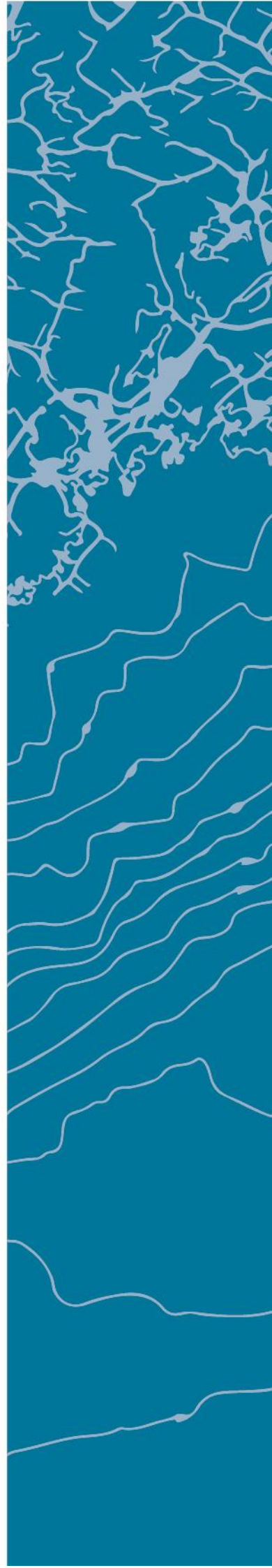
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ABSTRACT

The climate change problem has been given increasing attention over the last few decades spurring a variety of policy approaches worldwide. The reports from the international panel on climate change (IPCC) have brought the tremendous consequences of climate change on societies to the attention of policy makers all over the world. This paper addresses the urgent task of increasing knowledge regarding climate policies as an integral part of development studies. It presents a study of Norwegian climate policy through discourse analysis and reflexive interpretation of these insights in light of critical research on policy development and mainstream policy approaches addressing climate change. By analyzing Norwegian climate policy through identifying key values and principles guiding policy choices and using these as a basis for analyzing the Norwegian climate discourse in relation to Dryzek's (2013) environmental discourses, it is demonstrated that economic rationalism dominates the strategic approach within Norwegian climate policy although there are connections to other discourses as well. The consequences of this is debated, and challenges related to this approach highlighted. The discussion demonstrates that the focus on cost-effectiveness might be both ineffective when it comes to dealing with climate change, as well as bad for socially just development due to the negative social consequences experienced in several projects being implemented as Norwegian climate policy. Furthermore, the concept of fast policy is introduced in order to further the understanding of how policies come to be and start a process of reflecting on how fast climate policies move across the globe. It is suggested that further attention should be paid to the complex nature of fast policies and how the process of policy-making is being influenced by discursive framings pushed by powerful interests.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CICERO - The Norwegian Institute for Interdisciplinary Climate Research

EEA – European Economic Area

ETS – Emission Trading System

EU – European Union

HLPF – High-Level Political Forum

NGO – Non-governmental organization

NMBU – Norwegian University of Life Sciences

NOU – Official Norwegian Report

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UN – United Nations

WWF – World Wildlife Fund

1 INTRODUCTION

This research is a result of several years of interest in global development and the factors that determine countries' paths to where they are now. Learning about the severity of the negative consequences of climate change for all factors important for development, realizing that the most important issue for ensuring a positive future for all is dealing with climate change, led me to the world of climate policies. This first section gives a brief overview of the main elements inspiring my curiosity regarding the role of climate policy for sustainable development.

1.1 THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of globally agreed upon goals which is a part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. There are 17 different goals representing the most important aspects of sustainable development, according to the United Nations (UN) and its member states. The adoption of the resolution by the general assembly in 2015 means that all member states should mobilize resources to achieve each goal, although the agreement is not legally binding and there are no formal sanctions if countries do not follow up on their commitments. The goals are based on the former Millennium Development Goals, but are unique in scope and applies to all member states as opposed to only focusing on developing countries (United Nations, n. a). One important reason for that is the recognition that developed nations also need to contribute and change their ways for the sustainable development goals to be achieved, especially when it comes to issues such a sustainable consumption and climate action.

The United Nations development system is a complex system that builds on various ideas within the development paradigm. Some ideas are based on empirical data collected and verifiable facts, some are based on the relationship between proposals and outcomes, and some are inherently normative in nature. The latter might be the most important endeavor going on in the UN system, and it is arguably the normative ideas which make the UN system so important in the world of development. The Sustainable Development Goals has been criticized for being too technical without expressing the norms and standards that the UN system advocate (Browne, 2017). The reasons for this are complex, but it is not so surprising given that the goals are global. Expressly stating norms and standards which could go against the values and principles of member states might hinder the adoption of the goals.

The Norwegian Government has stated that "The 2030-agenda confirms a global agreement on the fact that fundamental changes are necessary to secure global stability and the sustainability of the earth" (The Norwegian Government, 2016a [author translation]). Furthermore, it is stated that this

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agenda will guide both national and international policies, and that there are several challenges that needs to be addressed nationally (The Norwegian Government, 2016a). This is in line with the intention of the goals, to provide goals and indicators which nations can use to guide policy development. The historical responsibility of developed states when it comes to releasing greenhouse gases that caused global warming means that goal 13 Climate action is especially important in the context of developed countries, even though developing nations now also contribute substantially to climate change.

SDG 13 regarding climate action states that countries should “Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries”, “Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning” and “Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation adaptation, impact reduction and early warning” (United Nations, n.a). However, it is important to note that there is an asterisk to goal 13 which refers to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the “... primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change” (United Nations, n.a). These three goals stated above are broad and subjected to a variety of interpretations. The reference to the UNFCCC does suggest that even though the sustainable development goals includes action against climate change, it is still mainly considered to be the mandate of the UNFCCC. Norway is involved in both processes. There is an inherent assumption in both processes that climate action and sustainable development is closely interlinked, but it is unclear if this interlinking is manifesting in practical policy-making or is reflected in the values and principles guiding Norwegian climate policy.

1.2 NORWEGIAN CLIMATE POLICY

To clearly understand how climate politics became an issue in Norway, it is useful to look at what has been happening globally with environmental and climate issues over the preceding decades.

Environmental issues really started to get a hold globally already in the 1970s. The report of the Club of Rome entitled “The Limits to Growth” used modelling to show the dramatic consequences of increased exploitation of the world’s natural resources and raised concerns regarding the desirability of perpetual economic growth. In 2012, the same year as the RIO+20 summit, there was a commemoration of The Limits to Growth in Washington DC arranged by the Club of Rome (Dryzek, 2013). The two parallel events demonstrate the separation of two environmental discourses and gives us an idea of which discourse that has had the biggest impact on global environmental efforts. Most actors concerned with environment and development know the RIO+20 process and outcome quite well, while the Club of Rome report and its commemoration are much less well-known today.

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Sustainable development and climate change mitigation were not successfully put on the agenda until it was clearly stated that economic growth would be reconcilable with, or even necessary for, anthropogenic climate change mitigation. This was one of the main messages from the Brundtland report from 1987, and one important reason why the Club of Rome report has been largely ignored over the last few decades (Gómez-Baggethun & Naredo, 2015).

Attention towards climate change by the policy-making community really took hold after the famous Brundtland Report, the often-cited origin of the term sustainable development as we know it today. Gro Harlem Brundtland was the Prime Minister of Norway for several periods, and the second Brundtland government immediately started working on a white paper on how Norway should work towards reducing CO₂ emissions, which was the first time this was mentioned in national policies (Nguyen Berg, 2015). The famous fee on CO₂ was introduced in 1991 and has later been expanded. In 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was established, which marks the beginning of the international climate change negotiations.

The first ambitious goal made by a government to limit CO₂ emissions was dropped by the third Brundtland government in 1995, due to it being unrealistic in combination with increased oil exploration (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995; Sæther, 2017). Cost-effectiveness was highlighted as an important instrument by the Brundtland Government in 1995 as well as the first Stoltenberg Government in 2001, and the flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto protocol were put forward as the best way to reduce emissions since it would be three times as cheap as cutting emissions nationally. In 2007, Stoltenberg announced the beginning of the rainforest initiative, which essentially pays various stakeholders for avoiding cutting down rainforests and to protect them. White papers on climate and climate settlements made by parliament parties have become significant parts of Norwegian climate politics. They are documents expressly stating Norwegian climate policies and are thus important documents telling the stories of Norwegian climate policy. The newest climate settlement came in 2012, and was followed up by a climate white paper in 2015 (Nguyen Berg, 2015).

With the right-wing coalition of 2015, it was announced that Norway would reduce emissions by 40% by increasing its collaboration with the European Union (EU). This was a big shift as Norway would no longer set national targets, but rather cut emissions through the EU framework (Nguyen Berg, 2015). 2015 was also the year when the international climate deal called the Paris agreement was signed, creating a new international regime for emission reductions. In 2017, the government published another climate white paper which was approved by the Parliament in May 2018. In addition to

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official documents explaining Norwegian climate policy, there has been a significant amount of research on Norwegian climate policy and related discourses.

Researchers from the Norwegian Business School (BI) did a qualitative analysis that revealed 10 differentiated but interconnected climate logics visible in public literature between 2007 and 2013. They found that there has been a break up between what the voices in the public debate say about climate policies and what the actual policies of the Government have been. The Government tends to focus on offsetting and market logics, while the public debate has increasingly been centered around research on what is good for the climate and technological development. The width experienced in the Norwegian climate policy debate shows that there is a range of perspective in the Norwegian society (Haugseth, Huseby, & Skjølsvold, 2016). Furthermore, there is an ongoing lawsuit between Greenpeace Norway and Nature and Youth against the Government regarding the fact that new licenses for oil exploration has been issued even though the protection of the environment is a part of the Norwegian constitution (Doyle & Solsvik, 2018). What is clear from these issues is that there is a plurality of opinions on what Norwegian climate policy should be.

1.3 CHALLENGES FOR NORWEGIAN CLIMATE POLICY

Norway is the world's 7th largest exporter of oil (Holden, 2017) and the greatest contributor to the REDD+ forest conservation project (Norman & Smita, 2014). It is celebrated for environmental policies and renewable energy supply, while economic growth and national consumption is causing severe environmental degradation in other parts of the world (WWF, 2016). It might therefore not be surprising that the Norwegian government gave licenses for new oil exploration missions in controversial areas of the coast of Norway, almost simultaneously as Norwegian representatives signed the Paris agreement. Norwegian politicians keep insisting that there is nothing inherently contradictory in these simultaneous acts, while civil society is working actively together with a minority of politicians to increase the degree of coherence between policies for sustainable development and Norwegian politics at large (Forum for utvikling og miljø, 2017).

It is an undisputed fact that climate change is a challenge for sustainable development, and goal number 13 specifically calls for "... urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts" (United Nations, n.a). All aspects of the SDGs are important for sustainable development, but the issue of climate change is the one aspect where a failure to adequately address the problem will without a doubt cause tremendous challenges to reach the other goals. What are the prominent features of Norway's climate policy in a time where the international and national pressures to act on climate change are higher than ever? The answer is most surely complex. Different actors in society will have different ways of framing reality, and these are often talked about as discourses. A central question

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to ask is how Norwegian climate policies are framed, and what the objectives of this way of framing reality is. This is important because “The degree to which someone’s way of framing reality gets to dominate at the expense of others, is an expression of power” (Sæther, 2017, p. 234 [author translation]). In the Norwegian context, there has been a lot of discussions regarding the dominance of the oil industry’s power to frame the reality within which Norwegian politicians work. However, a holistic approach to analyzing Norwegian climate discourse needs to take a broader look at the fundamentals for climate policy, how they have developed over the years, what institutional mechanisms influences policy options, how national policies are affected by international cooperation and much more. Looking closely at the political-economic context is a useful point of departure.

2 STUDY AREA

2.1 NATIONAL CONTEXT AND ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The context for this research is the Kingdom of Norway. The Democracy Index 2017 ranked Norway with its highest score of 9.87 out of 10 points and which means Norway be considered the most democratic country in the world (The Intelligence Unit of the Economist, 2017). Norway also currently enjoys the number one ranking of the Human Development Index from 2015 and was also the sixth least corrupt country in 2016 according to the Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International, 2017; UNDP, 2016). It is very important to keep in mind that all international rankings like these are subject to substantial critique (Håskoll-Haugen, 2018). These rankings can be criticized for being biased due to the subjective nature of what is measured and how. These might not adequately reflect issues related to climate change and fair distribution of resources because these issues are difficult to quantify.

Contrary to what lies implicit in the dichotomy of developed and developing countries, development is not a static or an objective state that a country can reach at a certain threshold of economic development. This is certainly true when considering the fact that our common wellbeing relies on a healthy and productive natural environment. The inclusion of an environmental component does something in the way of including this factor into the measure of human development. However, this only incorporates a few out of many factors that are influencing our natural environment.

This research takes an alternative view of development and argues that the realization of the importance of effective climate policies in the so-called developed countries to achieve sustainable development makes it a pivotal task to research climate policies and their effectiveness in

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transforming wealthy societies to low emission societies. This is not suggesting that one should not recognize the vastly different points of departure for climate policies. However, it can be argued that we need to flip the situation on its head and call developed countries like Norway a developing country when it comes to how to ensure environmentally sustainable development. An important factor to consider when it comes to the institutional context in Norway is its relationship with the European Union.

2.2 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Much of Norwegian economic, foreign and national policy is highly influenced by the European Union. Even though Norway is not a part of the EU, they are closely connected through geographic location, economic integration and bilateral deals. The EU does not have the right to claim taxes directly circumventing nations, so most supranational guidance is given through the legislative system. Norway, as well as Lichtenstein and Island, are following the same laws through the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement with the EU (T. Christensen, Egeberg, Larsen, Læg Reid, & Roness, 2010). Furthermore, there are 70 bilateral agreements between Norway and the EU (Søreide, 2018). The laws of the EU do not automatically apply in Norway through the EEA agreement without the approval of the Norwegian parliament. However, because using their veto right might cause unwanted conflict with the EU, over 6000 laws and amendments have been implemented in Norway without using the veto right once. This is why the EU is often viewed as the most important supranational entity for Norway (T. Christensen et al., 2010). This integration with the EU is an important aspect of Norwegian climate policy, a connection which has its possible strengths and weaknesses which is reflected in the continuous debate between various environmental discourses.

3 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Popular responses to climate change have been criticized because they have been created within the framework of the neoliberal political economy with powerful actors playing a key role in the neoliberalization of international climate policy (Bailey, 2007; MacNeil & Paterson, 2012). The Norwegian state and its Scandinavian neighbors are often used as examples of how a state can be developmentally successful without following the neoliberal model or discourse which has dominated the international agenda over the last decades (Naomi Klein on Global Neoliberalism, 2012). However, Norway is one of many countries pushing for these neoliberal approaches to climate emission reduction, such as putting a price on carbon and trading emission quotas through markets. Putting a price on carbon has received a lot of attention during the last decade, but even its strongest

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advocates recognize that there are challenges to this approach such as the differentiated context within which this approach needs to be accepted and adapted for it to be successful (High-Level Commission on Carbon Prices, 2017). The trust in neoliberal policy when it comes to climate mitigation in Norway is interesting since most of Norway's successful fiscal, education- and healthcare systems historically have not been based on neoliberal principles such as privatization and market mechanisms. The diverse policy approaches to these different components of sustainable development has been put in relation to each other through the Sustainable Development Goals.

The purpose of the goals is to ensure that development is both socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. The evolution from the millennium goals to the sustainable development goals have been criticized for incorporating critiques which does not challenge the dominant economic and political hegemony, largely ignoring critical voices such as those coming from the World Social Forum (Briant Carant, 2017). Others find that the document adopted by the UN represents a continued domination of the techno-scientific-economic discourse within the global policy community (Cummings, Regeer, de Haan, Zweekhorst, & Bunders, 2017). Combining the issue of climate policy and sustainable development has been a fundamental goal for the SDGs. However, as the critique of both points to, there are important questions to ask regarding the transformational capacity of global goals and neoliberal approaches to climate change mitigation.

The notion of the neoliberalization of climate policies can simply seem as a yet another area in which the neoliberal model has spread and achieved significant influence. This might not be the case, as Theodore and Peck (2015) suggest that there is a significant change in the speed and mechanisms through which modern day policies are spreading. They characterize this situation through the concept fast policy. The concept describes a condition "... characterized by the intensified and instantaneous connectivity of sites, channels, arenas, and nodes of policy development, evolution and reproduction" (Peck & Theodore, 2015, p. 223). Furthermore, a recent study suggests that the notion of neoliberal climate policies as an imposing policy formula is not necessarily accurate. Alternatives are being taken seriously and are creating space for a new kind of climate policy (North, Nurse, & Barker, 2017). This is in line with Theodore and Peck's (2015) findings that policy travels and might be pushed by powerful actors, but context and locality can have a significant say in adapting policy and creating new mutations of the original idea.

What might be the consequences if the fundamental principles determining the success of climate policy are challenged by a reality where convergence on climate policy issues is not the case and market-based approaches do not suffice? The worst possible scenario is a world where our political response to climate change and the need for sustainable development does not materialize. We end

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up living in a world almost everyone has agreed (through signing the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda) that we do not want. This is why there is a need to look at the values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policies in order to critically discuss these, discuss if the concepts of fast policies change how we think about policies and consider the critique presented by advocates of alternative approaches to climate change mitigation.

Climate change is an issue where there is broad agreement that international cooperation is needed in addition to national efforts. This means that policies connected to climate change operates in a space between and in both global, regional, national and local politics and can be the subject of research in a variety of fields. One point of departure for researching this complex issue is to investigate to which environmental discourse Norwegian climate politics adheres. How one defines a problem and subsequently the solution to this problem has a significant effect on climate policies (Dryzek, 2013). Discourse analysis can be an important tool in identifying those narratives and actors with considerable power in a society, since discourses are closely connected to political practices and power (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005a). Using discourse analysis rests on the idea that "... language matters, that the way we construct, interpret, discuss, and analyze environmental problems has all kinds of consequences" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 11). By identifying which discourse, or discourses, Norwegian climate policy relates to, one enables any interested party to critically engage with the paradigm in question and discuss to what degree it is contributing to a more sustainable future. Furthermore, using the concept of fast policy as a theoretical tool in order to consider the context in which climate policy operates can shed light on how climate policy is created in a space between national and international discourses.

Based on these reflections, my research objective is:

To investigate the Norwegian climate discourse by identifying key values and principles in Norwegian climate policy and relate these to Dryzek's classifications of environmental discourses in order to engage in a critical discussion of the findings in light of the fast policy concept and critical literature.

3.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has Norwegian climate policies evolved over time?
2. Which values and principles form the basis of Norwegian climate policy, and how do they relate to the principles of Dryzek's discourse classifications?

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3. How can the fast policy concept contribute to an understanding of the Norwegian climate discourse and what challenges does the Norwegian climate discourse face?

I will answer these questions by separating the analysis in three parts following the questions chronologically, while constantly reflecting on the interconnection between questions throughout the paper. Before that, relevant literature will be presented before the theoretical framework and the methodological choices that follow.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review consists of similar research focusing on different aspects of Norwegian climate policy. This literature is pointing out a knowledge gap as well as represents different varieties of approaches which has provided new knowledge regarding Norwegian climate policy. Climate policy is investigated at various levels, from the global to the local. The Norwegian Institute for Interdisciplinary Climate Research (CICERO) currently has a project regarding how international policies are affecting Norwegian climate policies. The project CONNECT is focusing on the climate policies of the EU and the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC and their influence on national policies. The project itself is based on the premise that climate governance in Norway is «...conditioned by the international climate policy context» (CICERO, n.a). This has been an important feature of climate governance in Norway since the Kyoto protocol came into action, and it is no less true now that the Norwegian government planning on increasing their collaboration with the EU to reduce emissions (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a).

Another research project from CICERO entitled “Revising the national renewables policy mix in Europe” published a report by Lina Christensen (2017) based on her master thesis. She found that Norwegian climate policy has shifted focus from global to European cost-effectiveness by connecting the national climate goals to the EU’s climate policies. Current negotiations are ongoing, working out the details of a possible bilateral agreement between Norway and the EU on the conditions for a joint effort to reduce emissions. The objective of the research was to answer the question “what can explain the Norwegian Government’s wish to fulfill the climate target for 2030 together with the EU?” (L. Christensen, 2017, p. 57 [author translation])

The answers she found was that the shift towards deeper integration with the EU was a result of internal political processes as opposed to something pushed by the EU or even national bureaucrats, a result of earlier approaches’ focus on cost-effectiveness and the fact that the actors involved were working towards maintaining the status quo as opposed to challenging the current thinking about

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climate policies. She identified various actors involved in the choice of increasing collaboration with the EU. These were the political parties in government and their supporting parties in addition to central political-administrative entities such as the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Climate and Environment, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The insights from interviewing key informants involved in this process revealed that the change was initiated due to the changing international regime. When it comes to the national context for decision making, she identified the Ministry of Finance as a central actor owning much of the structural power, while the Ministry of Climate and Environment was more of a coordinator when it comes to climate policy.

Finally, she noted that none of these entities are mainly responsible for climate initiatives taken within specific sectors. She concluded that theories on historical institutionalism, path dependency and political entrepreneurship can help explain why actors got involved with the new climate goal, increased cooperation with the EU and why the new policy with the EU became what it is today. The entrepreneurship in this situation was not used to alter the status quo, but rather to find a way to keep the status quo in Norwegian climate policy by choosing to cooperate with the EU (L. Christensen, 2017).

Although this research has a different theoretical approach than the one used in this paper, these insights are highly relevant to this research. Christensen has taken into consideration theoretical insights about actors at different levels and produced knowledge about the relationship between the very local (individual) through the national and the global level. The report comments on how the new Paris-agreement has had an influence on climate policy in Norway, by highlighting that there has been changes in how national and global emission reduction is treated in the Paris agreement. This was an important reason for the need to connect national emission reductions to the EU through their effort sharing mechanism. Furthermore, this choice was influenced by the fact that cost-effectiveness has been a central principle in Norwegian climate policy since its initial stages.

Another area which has received a lot of attention in addition to this increase in the integration with the EU, is the Norwegian climate and forest initiative. A master thesis by Camilla Skar from the Department of International Environment and Development Studies at the University of Life Sciences (NMBU) entitled "The Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative - an analysis of the process and motivations of policy-making" has explored the motivation for the international forest related climate policies in Norway. The research focused on the motivations for helping create and support the forest initiative REDD+. She identified three main factors that are guiding for Norway's commitment to this initiative. These are self-interest, normative obligation and the special status Norway has as a rich small nation. One of the possible self-interested motives for supporting

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mechanisms such as REDD+ is the possibility for creating market mechanisms which enable offsetting, a key instrument to reach climate related goals in Norwegian climate policy (Skar, 2012).

Another study from the same department entitled “In Oil We Trust” conducted a discourse analysis of environmental and oil policies specifically concerned with the Northern areas of Norway. This research identified three discourses supporting increased oil exploration which was also supported by the Government. These discourses were “...‘drilling for aid’, natural gas as a ‘bridging fuel’ and ‘drilling for the environment’” (Bjørge Slee, 2015, p. v). Drilling for aid is based on the idea that the world’s poorest people will need energy in the future which means that Norway has a moral obligation to produce oil, while natural gas as a bridging fuel highlights the environmental benefits of burning gas instead of coal, and drilling for the environment represents Norway as a responsible steward of the Arctic which takes better care of nature compared to other nations like Russia. The researcher argues that the tendency to view the warming climate in an opportunistic fashion should be nuanced by adding perspectives such as those focusing on the negative impacts of a warming climate for human security to create a more nuanced picture of oil exploration in the Arctic (Bjørge Slee, 2015).

All these research projects have one thing in common; to understand the mechanisms and motivations behind Norwegian climate policies. Other literature highlighting other aspects of climate policy discourses will be presented in the following section in order to place this literature review within a broader scientific debate regarding climate policy options and the factors that influence them. The literature review and the following perspectives will form the basis for a critical discussion on Norwegian climate policy in part three of the analysis.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSES AND CLIMATE POLICY

Much has been written about influential discourses and climate policy from a variety of perspectives within the social sciences. The point of departure for this research centers around critical discourse analysis. However, the literature reviewed in this section has their origin from a variety of approaches, chosen based on the insights provided to the problem formulated above. The literature presented here is in no way exhaustive, but it is carefully selected due to its relevance to the problem formulation. The idea behind the selection is to draw on these insights in part three of the analysis section of this paper in order to critically discuss Norwegian climate policy in light of competing frameworks for interpreting the challenges that climate change provide and the policies needed to overcome these. While this section will focus on studies which have provided insights that can help shed light on the Norwegian climate discourse, the theoretical framework will show how different

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frameworks for interpreting the challenges connected to climate change yield different prescriptions for policy. The dominant responses to climate change has either been a strong focus on technological solutions or market approaches (Dryzek, 2013). This is why the following paragraphs will present theories regarding climate change, technology, and neoliberalism before presenting literature regarding the specific Norwegian context.

5.1 TECHNOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

An important part of environmental policies overall is technology development. It is often assumed that efficiency increases will reduce human impact on the environment, and that new energy technology is a pivotal part of a sustainable future. While this may be true, there are also critical voices who point out that technological development does not always reduce the total impact on the environment as suggested by the theory of the IPAT equation. Impact in this setting means increased environmental pressure due to land use, CO₂ emissions, energy production and mineral extraction. The IPAT equation stands for Impact = Population * Affluence * Technology, where the development of technology, specifically efficiency gains, will reduce the impact of population growth and increased affluence. However, research has suggested that the opposite has been true for many important technological developments. Many revolutionizing technologies have actually increased impact on the environment from population and affluence, due to increases in living standards. The resulting impact of land use, mineral extraction, CO₂ emissions and energy production has thus increased due to technology even though there have been efficiency gains (Huesemann & Huesemann, 2008). This insight is important because it questions the consequent technological optimism which is inherent in the neoliberal approach to climate change mitigation.

5.2 CLIMATE CHANGE AND NEOLIBERALISM

Critique of the close relationship between neoliberalism and climate policy in many parts of the world is not only being challenged due to its technological optimisms. The use of markets and offsetting mechanisms can be criticized for transferring the governance of decarbonization to the markets and thus away from nation states to non-state actors and the market (Bumpus & Liverman, 2008). Others have suggested that the marketization of carbon emissions and related mechanisms have produced a new kind of colonial relationship between the North and the South. This means that emission trading schemes are providing developed countries with a new arena in which exploitative relationships can be upheld and expanded (Bachram, 2004; Svarstad & Benjaminsen, 2018). These offsetting mechanisms support an attitude towards fossil fuel emissions where it is regarded as ethically defensible to emit greenhouse gases as long as it is mitigated by the creation of sinks or by

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investing in renewable energy in other countries. This is being commercialized and there is increasing evidence that these projects are upholding existing exploitative relationships as well as causing environmental and social damage. This is happening in projects where the Norwegian Government is heavily involved (G. Benjaminsen & Kaarhus, 2018; T. Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2018). One example put forward by Bachram is a case where a Norwegian company leased land in Uganda which resulted in 13 villages with 8000 people being evicted in order to create a carbon sink project (Bachram, 2004). The concept of “green grabbing” is often used to describe such situations, where either governments or business dispossess’ land from local people in the name of nature preservation, such as wildlife management (Green & Adams, 2015).

These practices are closely related to green market mechanisms that are advocated by powerful actors in society, such as many companies, governments and some multilateral institutions. This neoliberalization of nature share similarities with the concept of land grabbing, where companies buy the right to cultivate land for commercial purposes. Green grabbing is now incorporating a wide variety of “... new actors, political-economic processes and forms of resistance, constructed through new discursive framings. While there are many echoes of past interventions in the name of the environment, green grabbing operates often virtually through novel legal and market mechanisms, suggesting new methodological and analytical challenges, as well new dilemmas for action” (Fairhead, Leach, & Scoones, 2012, p. 254). These critiques of the neoliberalization of nature has received special attention in certain scientific circles such as within political ecology, as well as through one particularly popular book questioning the logic behind using neoliberal approaches to drastically turn the trend of increasing greenhouse gas emissions.

The highly praised book entitled *This Changes Everything* by journalist Naomi Klein offers a political analysis of the current economic system and how it is incapable of tackling the challenges associated with climate change. The main argument is a compelling one which has received a lot of attention in journalistic and scientific circles alike, although some of the claims in the book can be criticized for generalizing situations which might not be generalizable (Gunster, 2017). The work is based on many years of investigating the spread and effects of neoliberalism and argues conclusively that the instruments needed to curb greenhouse gas emissions does not exist within the current hegemonic ideology of neoliberalism. The ideology of neoliberalism is one based on the forces of good that follow with basic principles of free markets, individualism, private property rights and close to no regulation by the state.

However, this strand of thinking has received criticism for focusing too narrowly on the relationship between neoliberalism and carbon markets as the main instrument in climate policy. It has been

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demonstrated that other factors than neoliberalism also influence the policy choices directed at greenhouse gas emissions, such as "... the growth of sub-national regulation; the use of executive authority; and in particular the deployment of a dense network of research and development infrastructure through which the development of new energy and environmental technologies is supported" (MacNeil & Paterson, 2012, p. 230) in the United States. These insights in the relationship between neoliberalism and climate change policy will be used to critically discuss the Norwegian climate discourse in part three of this paper. Furthermore, these issues are related to the next case focusing on how policy is created and influenced by both national and international discourses, institutions and other contextual issues.

5.3 THE POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSE: ECOLOGICAL MODERNIZATION AND THE POLICY PROCESS

One of the first studies looking at how discourses might influence environmental policy was conducted by Maarten A. Hajer and focused on the acid rain problem in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. The purpose was to investigate the influence of the ecological modernization discourse on national environmental policy-making and affected practices. The main idea underpinning his work was that the ecological modernization discourse has had a significant effect on environmental policies. This rested on the idea that "... environmental politics depend critically on the social construction of environmental problems" (Hajer, 1995, p. 264).

5.3.1 Pragmatism vs. modernism

Hajer (1995) identified two distinct story lines in the United Kingdom representing two different views on the reality of the acid rain problem, based on either traditional-pragmatist or eco-modernist principles. The two discourses formed broad coalitions between various actors in society, from politicians to scientists and NGOs. The storyline based on the traditional-pragmatist views had its roots in the air pollution discourse which kept insisting that they had been very successful with environmental regulation in the past using a pragmatic approach based on scientific evidence. Acid rain was treated as a serious pollution issue not fundamentally different from any other, effectively defining it within an existing frame of reality. Actors focusing on eco-modernist solutions and principles defined acid rain as something very different from other pollution cases, defining it within "... a different and wider context" (Hajer, 1995, p. 117). This approach was less concerned with accumulating scientific evidence, and more concerned with acting now. While the former discourse focused on acid rain as a national issue, the latter placed the United Kingdom in an international perspective, focusing on its role as the biggest SO₂ emitter in Europe (Hajer, 1995).

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The debate took many different paths and encompassed disagreements on many other areas than just science and the facts. Going beyond the facts, it would expand to themes such as the existence and plausibility of an environmental crisis at all, how science and policy should interact, how well regulation can cope with these issues and what could be considered a just and responsible reaction based on certain moral principles (Hajer, 1995, p. 120). However, it is important to note that these discourses are ideal-typical, which means that reality is more complex than what these ideal types suggest. Furthermore, discourses are "... inherent in certain social practices in which specific social relations are defined" (Hajer, 1995, p. 123). Actors can draw on different storylines, these are not fixed boxes from which one cannot escape. Storylines maintain structures, but actors are free to move between them to remain credible. That is why the specific attitude of an actor in specific situations are not the most interesting for discourse analysis. Finally, these social practices as well as institutional practices are not permanently fixed. There is room for change through influencing cognitive commitments, and discourses are constantly reproducing through debates over the meanings of practices (Hajer, 1995, p. 125).

The separation of the two storylines reflects an important connection between environmental discourses and policy practices. The traditional-pragmatist discourse focused on the need to know all the facts before acting or regulating, while the eco-modernist discourse can be associated with the use of the precautionary principle. This is something which separates a country like the United States and Norway, where the latter say they put the precautionary principle at the forefront of environmental policy and the former asks for the burden of proof that harm is being done before regulations should be considered (Dryzek, 2013). The situation in the Netherland was characterized by a different relationship between discourses and practices.

5.3.2 Discrepancy between problem formulation and solutions

The Netherlands had, according to Hajer (1995), conducted the most comprehensive attempt to incorporate ecological concerns into government practices and was thus a very interesting case regarding ecological modernization. The case study showed how the ecological modernization discourse interacted with the development of regulation regarding acid rain. While the abovementioned example from Britain shows how the storylines affected policy options, the Dutch case showed the possibility of limited influence of dominant narratives on institutions where certain power relations prevail and can prove to be counteracting the desired implications of a new discourse. The adoption of the acid rain problem as a fundamentally different issue than pollution quickly gained ground and facilitated an eco-modernist discourse focusing on the need for new regulatory instruments. However, a defining characteristic of the Dutch system was a severe mismatch between an apocalyptic storyline generating marginal policy instruments which did not

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match the description of the necessary actions. This was largely due to the separation of institutional units where one unit puts environmental concerns above all while the regulatory unit put feasibility and economic consideration at the center (Hajer, 1995). This helped explain the paradox between the dominant discourse and actual policy implementation.

The work of Hajer is relevant to this research due to the focus on environmental discourses and its influence on policy, and the possible similarities or differences with today's climate discourse in Norway. It is considered a quite typical act within social constructivism and discourse analysis in particular to show how one actor in society is successfully or unsuccessfully imposing their world view upon others. Focusing on this, social constructivism has laid the foundations for the "... theory of organization as mobilization of bias" (Hajer, 1995, p. 42). This is a key issue for the Anne Karin Sæther in her book where she investigates and uncovers the rather successful attempts of the oil industry to influence the debate regarding oil and climate policy in Norway using various rhetorical and communicative tools.

5.4 FRAMING REALITY THROUGH DISCURSIVE MEANS

The book by Anne Karin Sæther entitled *The Best Intentions* [author translation] investigated the influence of the oil industry on politics in Norway. She asked why Norwegian politicians are not acting towards making Norway the renewable energy nation it could be, and instead started giving out new licenses to look for oil in vulnerable areas outside the Norwegian coast. When tracing Norwegian oil and environmental policies since their initial stages through interviews with key actors, she identified what she calls the fight for reality. This is closely related to the idea of powerful discourses since she identified prevailing concepts and ideas among powerful actors, such as politicians, bureaucrats and businesspeople connected to the oil industry. She observed a continuous fight between different discourses, actors and narratives in gaining credibility regarding their prescription for the future of Norway's number one income sector – the oil industry. What she found are important issues to consider when looking at Norwegian climate policy. Actors construct certain truths in order to advance their cause, the media has limited power and influence is expensive (Sæther, 2017). This work builds on several other researchers concerned with similar issues, such as the work of Øyvind Ihlen (2007).

His book analyzed the Norwegian oil industry's strategic communication and reputation building practices and the frameworks it constructed. He found five different frameworks of interpretation which has been used to form a picture of the oil industry as a socially responsible actor, with high ethical standards who extracts oil and gas sustainably since emissions have been reduced and makes sure that everyone benefits when it expands and are given lower taxes (Ihlen, 2007, p. 174). The

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most influential framework for interpretation is the one he calls the accountability framework which centers around the idea that the industry is responsible and take into account both economic, social and environmental factors in their operation. A central problem with this framework become apparent in situations where there is a conflict of interest between society and the industry (Ihlen, 2007).

Others have also suggested that the strong tie between government and the oil industry in Norway makes it easier for the corporations to gain access and influence over environmental policy-making in Norway compared to the EU (Gullberg, 2011). Research has been done regarding the influence of the oil industry as a vested interest crowding out other policy initiatives regarding alternative sources of energy in Norway (Singh, 2012). It seems that money still talks through policy, which is an important perspective to remember when identifying and discussing Norwegian discourse on climate issues due to the interconnection of energy and climate policy. The insights presented in this section will we used in part three of the analysis in order to critically discuss Norwegian climate policy and its relation to the fast policy concept, after the Norwegian climate discourse has been presented by using Dryzek's (2013) environmental discourses.

6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the theoretical framework I have chosen to focus on discourse analysis as a means towards analyzing the Norwegian climate discourse. This will build upon the identification of values and principles found in key policy documents which form the basis of this discourse. In this section, I will first describe why discourse analysis is a useful tool to increase our understanding of climate policies. Then I will describe the theoretical framework created by Dryzek (2013) and the different environmental discourses he has identified. Some of his work is based on the work of Hajer presented in the foregoing section. Dryzek's environmental discourse analysis will be used in part one and two of the analysis in this paper in order to analyze the Norwegian climate discourse by comparing the empirical materials with the discourses identified by Dryzek (2013). Finally, I will present the concept of fast policy, which says something about how policies travel between places and levels of policy-making and are adapted to local and international contexts. I believe using this concept as an analytical tool in the discussion in part three of the analysis in this paper will improve the understanding of Norwegian climate policy-making, adding a new layer of understanding to the discourse analysis approach.

6.1 WHY DISCOURSE ANALYSIS?

The locus of this research is climate policies. All environmental issues are inherently complex, to a large degree due to the many ways ecosystems and the natural world interacts and is connected to different social spheres and human actions. This complexity is the main reason there exists many ways of framing the problems and solution to issues, because it is difficult to prove any of them entirely wrong (Dryzek, 2013). Climate mechanisms are complex, not fully understood, and human influences on the system are many and differentiated depending on context. Global value chains and their relationship with greenhouse gas emissions is a poignant example. Pollution and greenhouse gas emissions are occurring outside national borders, difficult to measure and embedded in the complex and interconnected global political economy and system of supply and demand. Like in a complex global value chain, there are actors at all levels involved in climate politics, from the UNFCCC at the international level, to governments and individual consumers who influence these levels through actions, both politically and through the lives they lead.

Analyzing climate policy through the lens of discourse analysis enables critical reflection regarding the factors influencing climate policy at different levels. This is an important issue for researchers focusing on the neoliberal hegemonic discourse, although investigating policies and how they are connected to certain discourses can yield variegated results. In their book *Fast Policy*, Peck and Theodore (2015) discussed the spread of two widely used policy practices and how they were translated and adapted in line with, but also often in opposition to, the hegemonic discourse of neoliberalism as practiced by powerful international policy agencies such as the World Bank. It would have been difficult to discuss policy mobility without insights and knowledge about knowledge paradigms as identified by discourse analysis.

Discourses often have the power to guide policy, such as when market-oriented globalization stipulates that free trade is good and this principle spreads and becomes a part of powerful international organizations. Discourses might thus influence the choice of policy or the range possible solutions to the problem at hand. By identifying which discourse, or discourses, Norwegian climate policy can be identified as, one enables any interested party to critically engage with the paradigm in question in the way most conducive to one's own convictions. Fundamentally, discourse analysis will be instrumental in order to critically discuss the Norwegian climate discourse after answering questions regarding what Norwegian climate policies are and what values and principles they are based on.

6.2 DRYZEK'S ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSES

The work of John S. Dryzek on environmental discourses is much cited and an important analytical tool for understanding the world of environmental issues. His book *The Politics of the Earth* (2013) tries to categorize approaches to environmental problems into various discourses separated by certain characteristics. A discourse is formed by commonalities in the way people treat an issue using "... common definitions, judgments, assumptions and contentions", "... a shared way of looking at the world" (Dryzek, 2013, p. v). Anthropogenic climate change is a highly contested topic where there exists a plethora of various definitions of the problem and the desirable or possible solutions.

The fact that environmental issues are complex does not mean that there is no practical consensus regarding the problem operating in certain areas of the world. An important argument presented in his book is that liberal capitalist states legitimizes and reinforces certain discourses which are in line with the current political economy and are able to operate within existing structures. This is the essence of path dependency and the power of hegemonic discourses, ideas in line with the notion of "there is no alternative". Discourses do not need to be articulated in order for them to have an influence on peoples actions and beliefs, since they can be so integrated into people's mindset that no one even thinks about questioning them (Dryzek, 2013).

According to Dryzek (2013), all environmental discourses depart from industrialism. They do that either in a reformist or radical way, but the essential idea is that industrialism in its original form cannot be sustained. This necessary departure can be either prosaic or imaginative. The prosaic approach does not seek to alter how humans live and take the current political economy as a given. Imaginative approaches seek alternatives to the societies of today in a more or less radical way.

Dryzek (2013) distinguishes between four main environmental discourses which are:

1. **Global Limits and Their Denial:** Limits and survival and prometean
2. **Solving Environmental Problems:** Administrative rationalism, democratic pragmatism and economic rationalism
3. **The Quest for Sustainability:** Sustainable development and ecological modernization
4. **Green Radicalism:** green consciousness and green politics

The table below illustrates where some of these discourses are placed within the spectrums from prosaic to imaginative and reformist to radical:

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	Reformist	Radical
Prosaic	Problem Solving	Limits and Survival
Imaginative	Sustainability	Green Radicalism

TABLE 1. "CLASSIFYING ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSES" (DRYZEK, 2013, P. 16)

Norwegian climate policies will be analyzed by comparing its main elements to the various discourses identified by Dryzek (2013). In order to do that it is necessary to present the various discourses in brevity. Further details will be highlighted in the analysis, but the following paragraphs present the main ideas associated with each discourse.

6.2.1 Limits and survival

As mentioned earlier, there was a movement in the 1970s associated with the Club of Rome and their report *The Limits to Growth* which projected that continued economic growth would lead humanity into a state of crisis where the essential resources upon which our societies rely will be depleted. In relation to theory, the popular phrase "the tragedy of the commons" put forward by Garret Hardin as well as Malthusian ideas of overpopulation and its consequences for the earth has often been cited by actors within this discourse. This approach to environmental problems is often related to measurements such as ecological footprint and other measurements of human made pressures on the environment. The concept of planetary boundaries is a modern day version of these initial ideas, which is a more moderate approach to the idea that there are certain thresholds such as nutrient depletion which might set the earth system out of balance (Dryzek, 2013).

6.2.2 Promethean

The denial of the existence of limits was articulated as a response to the limits and survival discourse. The name Promethean stems from Greek mythology where Prometheus increased the human's ability to control and manipulate the world, not being limited by any natural limits. Responses are often based on economic arguments related to prices and scarcity. If there is a limit to a resource, the price will go up and someone will discover or invent a new technology to solve the problem. In effect, humans do not need to limit their impact on the earth system because people's ingenuity will create solutions to any physical obstacles one might meet. This is not the same as letting the markets find solutions to problems necessarily, since large scale technology development and implementation could be a part of the solution which would need substantial governmental involvement.

6.2.3 Administrative rationalism

The discourses under the problem-solving umbrella all recognize the need for some sort of governmental influence. The role of governments is most strongly associated with the administrative

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rationalism discourse, where the role of institutional structures and scientific expertise is at the forefront of solving environmental issues. This approach is a "... public policy tradition that accorded substantial status to scientific expertise harnessed by administrative structures" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 75). It is the most common approach found among governments, and there are many practices and institutions all over the world which is considered to be the manifestation of this discourse. Agencies controlling pollution levels, managing natural resources, policy approaches aimed at managing pollution, requirements such as environmental impact assessments and expert commissions advising policy makers are all widely used instruments associated with administrative rationalism (Dryzek, 2013). This is often referred to as a technocratic approach to governing, where scientists should have a significant role in policy-making.

6.2.4 Democratic pragmatism

Democratic pragmatism is less focused on scientific expertise and more focused on the value and usefulness of democratic structures to enable interactive problem-solving. The complexity of environmental issues means that this should not be centered around a few people in the administration, but rather be inclusive and open for many perspectives in order to produce the best possible outcome. Institutional characteristics associated with this discourse are public consultations, alternative dispute resolutions, policy dialogue, public inquiries, right-to-know legislation and lay citizen deliberation and many other less formal structures. The latter is an important part of this approach as well as institutional arrangements, because there often exist many informal ways of influencing policy in democratic societies which are not easily detectable (Dryzek, 2013).

6.2.5 Economic rationalism

Economic rationalism departs from the two other discourses under the problem-solving umbrella in a fundamental way because it focuses on the power of market mechanisms as a means to achieve public ends. The idea is that market mechanisms can solve environmental problems more effectively than administration or democracy centered approaches. The mechanisms associated with economic rationalism is privatization, marketization through pollution rights and green taxation aimed at making the polluter pay for the damages. Getting the prices right is an essential task for this strand of thinking. This is associated with the idea that polluters, be it companies, individual or governments will always maximize profits and stop polluting if the cost exceeds the benefits (Dryzek, 2013).

6.2.6 Sustainable development

Advocates for all the discourses here might have used the term sustainable development when characterizing their approach to environmental issues. However, this specific discourse is fundamentally different from the abovementioned discourses because it gives considerably more

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attention to imaginative approaches to sustainable development. Departing from the idea that we already have the solutions or the most effective approaches to deal with environmental issues, this strand of thinking has roots in more radical discourses originating the global south. Dryzek (2013) argues that when identifying signs of this discourse, one should look for a "... discourse that will inspire experimentation with what sustainable development can mean in practice" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 161). This is because "Sustainability, like democracy, is largely about social learning, involving decentralized, exploratory, and variable approaches to its pursuit" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 161). It is more than the term associated with the Brundtland report. While recognizing limits, it also recognizes the possibility of stretching these. However, the fundamental principle of the discourse is that the way the world works right now must be transformed using more environmentally sound practices which could come from a variety of sources from bottom-up to top-down. The concept sustainable development, as opposed to the discourse, is a contested concept with no common definition which is accepted by all actors operating within the discourse. What connects the different actors operating with different definitions is their strong connection to the discourse (Dryzek, 2013).

6.2.7 Ecological modernization

Another imaginative approach to environmental issues focus on environmental policy innovation, placing a great deal of importance on environmental issues. Dryzek (2013) focuses on the history of seven modern industrialized countries which have adopted innovative solutions to environmental issues, and Norway is one of these countries. The spread and use of green taxes is one of these solutions that are highlighted, as well as the corporatist nature of environmental decision making. Other characteristics of this discourse is the use of the precautionary principle and the trust in technological innovations as catalysts for change. There is room for restructuring within the political-economic system through innovative policy and technology, and environmental issues receive considerable attention by policymakers and are also thus awarded resources to implement measures to address such issues. Even though it might cost money, there is a conviction that these measures also enable businesses to thrive and develop (Dryzek, 2013).

Dryzek (2013) separates different versions of ecological modernization, from weak to strong. Weak ecological modernization is characterized by "... an emphasis on technological solutions to environmental problems; a technocratic/corporatist style of policy-making monopolized by scientific, economic and political elites; restriction of the analysis to privileged developed nations, who can use ecological modernization to consolidate their economic advantages and so distance themselves still further from the miserable economic and environmental conditions of the poorer nations of the world" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 176). Strong ecological modernization is characterized by "... consideration of broad-ranging changes to society's institutional structure and economic system, with a view to

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making them more responsive to ecological concerns; open, democratic decision making maximizing not only participatory opportunities for citizens, but also authentic and competent communication about environmental affairs: concerned with the international dimensions of environment and development” (Dryzek, 2013, p. 176). The term reflexive ecological modernization is consistent with the latter viewpoint. This entails “... political and economic development that proceeds on the basis of critical self-awareness” (Dryzek, 2013, p. 178). Nothing should be taken for granted, and decision making should be inclusive rather than elite or expert driven.

6.2.8 Green consciousness

This radical approach to environmental issues focuses on changing the way people think about the relationship between people and nature. It has many varieties such as deep ecology advocated by Arne Næss, ecofeminism, bioregionalism, ecotheology and lifestyle greens. The latter of which is the most widely known approach which is often supported (at least seemingly) by certain businesses, marketing their products by appealing to its contribution to sustainable production and consumption. Common characteristics of the various approaches is the way they all seek to change the way humans interact with the natural world by appealing to human sensibilities. The idea is that if humans become humbler and less manipulative, then harmony between humans and nature is achieved (Dryzek, 2013).

6.2.9 Green politics

Green politics is a variety of green radicalism which is more focused on politics, emphasizing the need to engage with political structures to create real change. These approaches are found in political parties as well as radical political oppositions such as eco-anarchists. There is a variety of approaches in between, such as the environmental justice movement, anti-globalization movements, environmentalism of the global poor and many others. Common among all is the presentation of environmental issues as complex social and environmental systems that need structural change initiated by political action at various levels. It goes beyond green consciousness, although these approaches usually are welcomed alongside political action. Implicit in this strand of thinking is the fact that all other approaches to environmental issues are inadequate when it comes to create the sort of change necessary for an ecologically sustainable and just future (Dryzek, 2013).

The distinction between four overarching discourses based on common principles with smaller variations can be helpful in order to analyze the way policymakers operate within the political economy and specific institutional structures of Norway. This framework can help identify the principles and values underpinning Norwegian climate policies. One approach to identifying a distinct climate discourse influencing Norwegian climate policy could be to use the same approach Dryzek

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did when identifying discourses. He identified these different discourses by analyzing four different elements he believed is defining for a discourse, and these are (Dryzek, 2013, p. 20):

1. Basic entities whose existence is recognized or constructed
2. Assumptions about natural relationships
3. Agents and their motives
4. Key metaphors and other rhetorical devices

These elements can be seen as a breakdown of elements used in the articulation of values and principles guiding the work of different actors engaged in policy-making. Several of the official documents regarding climate policy, such as white papers on climate, have a specific section describing the principles underpinning Norwegian climate policies. These can be directly analyzed and reveal to which discourse it adheres to according to Dryzek's characterizations. Furthermore, the various discourses also represent different levels of action, where the green consciousness discourse focuses on the individual, the administrative rationalism discourse focuses on the nation state and the sustainable development discourse largely relates to multilateral institutions. Since this work is based on already existing analysis of different discourses, it can prove to be fruitful to compare the values and principles together with institutional characteristics. This is because incorporates the work done by Dryzek (2013) and takes it a step further by comparing these discourses to an empirical example in a comprehensive manner. This will be done in the analysis section of this paper.

There is a need to define what values and principles are in order to analyze which principles and values are underpinning Norwegian climate policies. In the words of Pike, Rodríguez-Pose and Tomaney regarding local and regional development (2017), "A principle refers to a deeply held or fundamental truth that provides the foundation for individual and social behaviours, belief systems and frameworks of logic and reasoning. A value is a belief or ideal held in high regard as important, worthwhile and meaningful" (Pike, Rodríguez-Pose, & Tomaney, 2016, p. 39). Values and principles form the foundation from which ideas of development emerge and evolve. There is always a plurality of values and principles existing in every society, but the degree to which some form the basis of policy at the expense of others says something important regarding the power relations at play and which voices are heard in the policy formation process. This may be a more or less divisive issue in society and will evolve over time and create new bases for consensus or contestation. The way in which these debates and discussions are structured and accommodated in society is largely dependent upon power relations and the nature of politics (Pike et al., 2016).

The values and principles underpinning policies are not something given, but rather socially determined and based on normative judgements regarding what is of value and importance in

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society. As Pike et al points out; “Principles often reflect the relations and balances of power between the agency of the state, market, civil society and public” (Pike et al., 2016, p. 39). This balance of power frames and often restricts the possible influence of agency due to the structural or institutional context in which the range of possibilities for agents is determined. This context and the values and principles which determine a development path has geographical dimensions, whether it be based on class or territorial issues. This is an important aspect because this largely influences the perception of what is fair and appropriate in the context (Pike et al., 2016). When talking about discourses then, this is highly relevant in order to determine which discourse or discourses that gain acceptance by politicians, businesses and people in specific regions. It is also an important starting point for critically discussing the nature of politics in a certain area at a specific time and highlight the fact that the desirability of certain development paths and specific policies will vary across time and space. The fact that climate policies have evolved over a relatively short amount of time and are present in one way or another in most countries of the world, suggest that this topic also needs a theoretical approach through which one can understand how policies move and are adapted in various places at different point in time. The following concept will not be used in order to analyze the Norwegian climate discourse, but it will rather be discussed in part three of the analysis as a concept which can add another analytical level to the climate policy debate.

6.3 POLICY MOBILITY AND THE FAST POLICY CONDITION

Climate policies are not created in a political or economic vacuum detached from other areas of policy-making or the global economic and political context. It is thus important to consider how policies can be influenced by and contribute to national and international policy-making. Policy mobility is “... concerned with how policy is formed and modified through policy techniques and actors in situated and mobile locations and emphasizes the study of politics and power as they relate to policy” (McKenzie, Bieler, & McNeil, 2015). It offers a starting point from which one can understand and investigate national policy adaptation and creation as something “... both relational and territorial; as both in motion and simultaneously fixed, or embedded in place. Rather than merely seeing this as an inherently contradictory process, however, what matters is to be able to explore the ways in which the working through of the tensions serves to produce policies and places, policies in place” (Cochrane & Ward, 2012, p. 6). Simply put, places and people matter, but policies are necessarily formed in a wider political, social and economic context that lies outside the repertoire of a specific place.

Policy movement happens within “... a socially structured and discursively constituted space, marked by institutional heterogeneity and contending forces” (Peck & Theodore, 2015, p. xxiv). Policies

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spread through networks, each with their own specific characteristics and relevant discourses. They are relational constructs which evolve through interaction between spaces through various networks influenced by discourses which give them meaning and purpose. Nevertheless, power is at the core of policy-making issues, manifesting in the hegemony of discourses which most often serves those most powerful in society (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005b). Even when deeply diving into specific issues of climate policy mobility or creation one must not forget to take a step back and consider how power relations in a society or between societies are playing a more or less direct role in the formation of policy. This might be happening directly through lobbying or indirectly through the development of a hegemonic discourse driven by someone with an interest in its spread and legitimacy.

An interrelated concept, which I find very interesting in this case, is fast policy. This is because it focuses on what happens when policies travels at comparatively high speeds across political and geographical context. The relative newness and globally interconnected nature of climate policy makes it an interesting case for the concept of fast policy. The book *Fast Policy* by Theodore and Peck (2015) presents two very interesting cases where the complex interrelationship between top-down and bottom-up initiatives and policy formation processes that produce complex and specific outcomes are investigated. While there are a variety of approaches to policy mobility, the fast policy approach practiced by Theodore and Peck (2015) is relevant to this research because this approach has a connection to theories regarding political economy, and it focuses on how policies are both created and adopted based on local and global power relations.

Since the Norwegian political context is one characterized by a possible contradiction between national economic development and climate change mitigation because of the perceived importance of oil and gas extraction for the economy, this approach to climate policy adaptations seems fitting. While this theory will not provide a framework for understanding the empirical material analyzed in part one and two, this will be used in part three to discuss what this theory can shed light on regarding the context in which Norwegian climate policy is formed. It is now time to go through the methodological approach used to gather, analyze and interpret data in order to answer the questions posed in the problem formulation using the theoretical approach outlined in this section in combination with the literature previously presented.

7 METHODOLOGY

7.1 TYPE OF THESIS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis is the kind where a research objective and related research questions are posed, and answers considered based on data collected seen in relation to the theoretical framework and other scientific literature sources. The research design is qualitative, more specifically a case study design focused on a single case. The nature of the problem formulation and research question reveals that the purpose of the research is to investigate the "... complexity and particular nature of the case in question" (Bryman, 2016, p. 60). In this research, climate policy in Norway is the case which warrants attention, and the research questions seek to highlight different aspects of the case which are considered important in order to provide answers to the research objective. This could be identified as an idiographic approach (Bryman, 2016).

The problem formulation and research questions will be answered through a qualitative content analysis and reflective discussion. The process of sampling has followed the qualitative tradition of purposive sampling, where "... sampling is conducted with reference to the research questions, so that units of analysis are selected in terms of criteria that will allow the research questions to be answered" (Bryman, 2016, p. 410). This has been done through a non-sequential approach where a few units for analysis were chosen as the starting point of the research and other documents and sources of data were added to the sample as the research evolved. The sampling approach has also been contingent, meaning that the criteria for selecting documents and sources of data changed during the research process. It was not deemed appropriate to put fixed criteria at the onset of the research since it was likely that new information could reveal a necessity to investigate other kinds of data. Using new kinds of data at a later stage would possibly expand the knowledge base and create a broader data set, thus strengthening the empirical base upon which conclusions would be drawn.

7.2 DOCUMENTS AS DATA SOURCES

Using official documents deriving from the state as sources of data can be highly interesting and relevant to a variety of social research. The language used in the document and the specific content can be analyzed in order to detect regularities or changes over time as well as to identify a dominant discourse at one point in time. An example of this comes from the United Kingdom, where scientists collected documents for nine years and found that a specific narrative about east London was used to justify locating the Olympic games in London. Similar research has focused on official governmental documents to identify certain values and interests in the evaluation of medicine

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safety. The cases found that interests play a central role in cases such as those studied (Bryman, 2016). Before describing the documents collected to answer this specific research objective, it is important to say something about what these documents represent and how they are evaluated.

When it comes to the standards concerned with the quality of documents, there are four criteria which should be highlighted: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. These are extremely rigorous criteria according to Bryman (2016) and should be considered when it comes to the selection of documents as sources of data. Official documents are usually both authentic and have meaning as long as the collector knows that the documents are indeed official and relevant, but an important issue with such documents is the question of bias. As shown by the examples above, the bias can reveal different representations of interests and values or possibly reveal inconsistencies. This is often the expectation rather than a problem in cases where the documents are not treated as an objective representation of reality (Bryman, 2016). When it comes to the degree of representativeness for this qualitative case study, it is what the documents represent that makes them interesting, as opposed to the generalizability of the findings based on the choice of data sources. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) appropriately highlights; "... the sources of bias are data in themselves" and "... as important as the accuracy or objectivity of an account is what it reveals about the teller's interests, perspectives, presuppositions, and discursive strategies" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 124).

Other documents which might not be as easy to identify as official will be excluded if there is a question regarding its authenticity or credibility. Furthermore, time and capacity constraints will mean that there will be a limited number of documents analyzed. For instance, amendments or other resolutions related to white papers will not be considered, other than the official climate settlements because these formally represent the basis for Norwegian climate policy. Timespan will also be considered. Climate policy has existed since the 80s in Norway, but only a handful of white papers has been published. This made it possible to go through them all, focusing on the logic behind the strategies presented. The most recent documents will be given special attention, because it is based on the most up to date facts and current policy trends.

There are several kinds of official documents which serve various purposes. Which documents one chooses to include in the research should say something about what it is one wishes to highlight. I have mainly chosen three kinds of official documents to answer the research questions put forward by this research. These are Official Norwegian Reports (NOUs), white papers and international communicative documents, which will be described through the following three paragraphs. In part three where the interpretation of the findings is seen in relation to the chosen literature, opinions on

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Norwegian climate policies are identified by using information from newspaper articles where different actors clearly state what their issues are with Norwegian climate policy. This is because it is the easiest way to identify opposition in the public debate. The content of the public debate regarding climate policy has been analyzed by researchers who identified a plurality of views represented in the Norwegian media (Haugseth et al., 2016). It would therefore be a weakness if current debates represented in the media was not considered. Nevertheless, white papers, international communicative documents and NOUs are at the center of this research.

Official Norwegian Reports are public studies conducted by a group of experts in the relevant field which are given the task to present the knowledge basis on a specific subject and relevant policy options that might solve challenges in society. These are often the first step in a larger process to form national policies in a specific area and often subjected to inputs through hearings. Sometimes these undergo a political process where they can end up as a white paper (Hansen, 2017). This means that both the NOU and the following white paper can be open to input from relevant parties that are not directly involved in the NOU or a part of the government or public management. Sometimes it can be clearly stated in the mandate of the commission that they must involve relevant parties and arrange meetings with civil society. This was the case for the low emission commission in 2006, but it was not an important part of the work of the quota commission or the green tax commission (NOU 2000:1; NOU 2006:18; NOU 2015:15). This means that civil society might have had varying degree of influence over NOUs and the white papers based on them.

White papers are documents which serve as "... information from the government to the Parliament regarding various cases which the government wishes to discuss in Parliament" (Norwegian Parliament, n.a [author translation]). These are communications from the Government to the Parliament when there are no suggested resolutions or decisions to be made yet. It is common to produce white papers on issues regarding government businesses or international issues. As mentioned above, they can be a result of an NOU or other changes. The white paper on increased collaboration with the EU from 2015 is an example of a white paper produced due to changes internationally combined with changes in policy that warranted a debate in the Parliament.

Finally, Norway reports to a number of international conventions and organizations due to membership or other engagements at the international arena. These communications are more or less voluntary and are important strategic documents in foreign policy. These documents are included because there might be differences in content between national and international communications. Furthermore, these international communications are specifically addressing the connection between Norwegian climate policy and international commitments such as the 2030

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Agenda for sustainable development and the Paris agreement. Not considering these communications would mean ignoring potential documents with key information regarding Norwegian climate policy.

Furthermore, white papers are meant to inform a constituency which is more likely to understand the context and need a less explicit explanation regarding Norwegian circumstances. When addressing the secretariat to the UNFCCC, more detail and elaboration are needed, and more aspects of Norwegian climate policy need to be expressly stated. Furthermore, the international nature of Norwegian climate policy means that it is important to consider both national and international communications in order to gather data which covers both national and international information sources. This is also why a small document coming out of the Ministry of Climate and the Environment is considered. Norway provided a communication to the Talanoa-dialogue at the intersessional before the 24th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC. This is a strategic document clearly stating Norway's position when it comes to international climate negotiations and says something about which climate policies Norway would like to be associated with. This, in combination with other reports to the UN, are important documents when identifying core policies, values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy. This research is also informed by gathering data from observation and an interview with key informants. Informal observation is an important part of the methodology of this research because it shows that the research was not conducted in a vacuum, and that informal observation was also considered an important part of the reflective process.

7.3 INFORMAL OBSERVATION

The choice of topic and study area pose challenges and opportunities when it comes to data collection and analysis. The choice of including observation in the methodological design was necessary due to the voluntary work I was committed to at the time of the research. Due to my responsibilities and opportunities as a central board member in Spire and a member of the climate committee, I was actively engaged in debates and meetings regarding climate policies, thus embedded civil society's role in climate politics. This setting is not the subject of the research per se, it is rather the context in which the subject is being debated and disseminated to a certain group in society of which I am a part. The perspectives and the information that is being disseminated to the group by the government is relevant to the subject matter of this research.

This is also important due to the theoretical framework chosen for this research. I believe that discourse analysis works best if data can be collected from a variety of sources to detect discrepancies or continuity in the language and terms used. Isolating myself from civil society reading

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white papers and reports would not be constructive since a discourse also manifests outside of official documents and permeate everyday routines and practices of the participants. Dryzek (2013) believes that a person and a discourse must be separated, since one can be an administrative rationalist at work and a green consciousness advocate in one's spare time. However, diversifying sources of data can inspire critical thought through exposure to other people's points of view and will help to reduce the risk of pitfalls in the data material (Beyers, Braun, Marshall, & De Bruycker, 2014).

There are various ways of defining the role of the observer. The use of both interviewing and observation calls for reflection regarding the role of the researcher. When combining a role in civil society with research, it might be necessary or practical to observe a situation without making everyone in that setting aware of the research. An example of this is when I got to participate in a closed meeting between employees of the Ministry of Climate and Environment and selected organizations considered relevant to the topic being discussed. This kind of observation might be defined as a situation where the researcher has a covert role in a closed setting (Bryman, 2016). A covert role will also be natural in cases where government officials are attending public events.

In another setting where access to particular people is necessary in order to conduct interviews, the covert role would be more difficult. This might also be counterproductive, since there might be a greater chance of gaining access to employees one on one as a researcher as opposed to anything else. In the case where I met an employee at an event about the climate white paper, I did not know who I was talking to at first and introduced myself as someone from Spire. Had I known that this was someone very relevant to my research who was working in the Ministry, I would probably have introduced myself as a master student initially in order to avoid potential biases that might come from my organizational affiliation. However, I was also recognized as someone from Spire by one of the other people I interviewed when I met them, which means that this would have been unavoidable in that setting.

The purpose of this research is not to identify values and principles of actors related to Norwegian climate policy, or to identify the social practices in which policy and public policy documents are produced. The existence or dominance of certain discourse does not work as a prison for an actor's mind and behavior, and actors can say what they feel is appropriate in different settings without that necessarily having an impact on the discourse within which one usually operates. This is why observation done in this research is focusing less on who is saying what in a specific social setting, but rather using informal observation as supplementary data to shed light on my own analysis of policy documents and which discourse they might represent. This increases the validity of the

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conclusions made by using supplementary data from interviews and observation to strengthen an argument or to rule out alternative interpretations.

7.4 INTERVIEWS

An interview was conducted with key informants who worked on the latest white paper on climate to explore different questions that came up during the first phase of the research. I needed to have a proper understanding of the process behind the formation of white papers and how climate policy is dealt with at the ministerial level before I settled on a theoretical framework. I therefore chose to have an interview with key informants in the initial phase of the research in order to start off on the right foot having the necessary information available.

The approach to the interview setting was the interview guide approach. The characteristics of an interview guide approach is that the topics and issues as well as questions are constructed and arranged in advance, but there is still room for flexibility in the interview situation. The strengths of this approach are that you ensure that data collection is fairly systematic and comprehensive while it is possible to close logical gaps during the interview and keep the interview open and conversational. Weaknesses related to this approach are connected to the challenges that arises when each interview ends up being qualitatively different and can thus also yield very different responses which might not be comparable. This was not an issue since I only conducted one formal interview with three employees from different sections in the Ministry of Climate and Environment. However, there is always a danger that important topics were omitted (Mikkelsen, 2005). Luckily, I had access to these contacts later through email and was thus able to get additional information or clarifications if needed. This access was considered important due to the reflective process of the research.

7.5 REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity is an important aspect of this research. "Reflexivity entails a sensitivity to the researcher's cultural, political, and social context. As such, 'knowledge' from a reflexive position is always a reflection of a researcher's location in time and social space" (Bryman, 2016, p. 388). The concept of reflexivity receives criticism for being a slippery concept with similar but different meanings. It should be noted that the most important meaning of the concept in this context relates to "Methodological self-consciousness" which refers to the act of "... taking account of one's relationship with those whom one studies" (Bryman, 2016, p. 388). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) sees reflexivity as the recognition that "... all social research takes the form of participant observation: it involves participating in the social world, in whatever role, and reflecting on the products of that participation" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 15).

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Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldbberg (2009) argues for a reflexive approach to empirical research. Their approach is a particular form of reflexive methodology which warrants reflection at several levels of the research. Reflexive research is characterized by “... careful interpretation and reflection” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 9). Simply put, this means that the empirical data presented are inherently a result of interpretation and should not be interpreted as an attempt to create an objective presentation, such as might be advocated by researchers from positivist approaches to social research. This research will follow certain reflective levels and principles as put forward by Alvesson and Sköldbberg in order to follow this strand of reflexive methodology. It is based on the idea that “The research process constitutes a (re)construction of the social reality in which researchers both interact with the agents researched and, actively interpreting, continually create images for themselves and for others: images which selectively highlight certain claims as to how conditions and processes – experiences, situations, relations – can be understood, thus suppressing alternative interpretations” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 10).

There are four levels of interpretation: interaction with empirical material, interpretation, critical interpretation and reflection on text production and language use. “Reflexivity arises when the different elements or levels are played off against each other” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009, p. 272). This research will deal with the empirical material in part one of the analysis section where the first level of interpretation occurs. Critical interpretation regarding ideology and power will be discussed to some degree in part two and explicitly in part three. Reflection regarding own text, selection and claims to authority have been and will be dealt with in this section on methodology.

To try to avoid a bias which limit the researcher to a particular philosophical position, I will follow the reflexive methodological framework where thoughts are confronting each other in a systematic way. This is what Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009) calls reflexive interpretation. While they do present an example of a four-step approach to reflexive interpretation, this specification will not be included here. Rather, the main idea of reflexive interpretation at different levels will lay the foundation for the structure of this thesis. The methodological part of the research clearly states the selection criteria and defines the empirical material. This is done to clarify why certain documents are at the core of the research and what they are meant to represent. The first part of the analysis is a presentation, or interpretation, of the content in the data material. The second part analyses this in combination with information regarding the institutional context in which the documents and related policies adhere and its connection to different environmental discourses. Finally, the last part calls for another phase of interpretation and critical analysis of the material presented. Not only will the findings be discussed as an interpretation of data, but it will take a step further and use this

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information to critically engage with the Norwegian climate discourse keeping in mind research presented previously in this paper.

“It is thus not so much that objective data talk to the theory (data are after all constructions and dependent on perspective); rather that the theory allows the consideration of different meanings in empirical material” (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 272). This conviction specifically informs the second part of the paper, whereby the specific theory regarding environmental discourses allows the researcher to analyze the material in relation to different ways of giving meaning to environmental policies. However, this also limits the repertoire of interpretations. It is therefore important to recognize that other interpretations outside this researcher’s use of theory and specific frames of interpretation should not be dismissed. It merely means that the work presented here is not some objective truth which cannot be expanded or improved by new research.

7.6 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

7.6.1 Observation

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that it is much more difficult to detect and remove one’s own preconceptions in familiar settings, a situation which means that the researcher needs to be even more aware of the possibility of confirmation bias. As a member of a youth organization actively participating in events and meetings, I also face challenges relating to my organizational affiliation. The challenge is to be able to “... to suspend for analytical purposes precisely those assumptions that must be taken for granted in relations with participants” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 82). Reflexive methodology is considered to be a tool which enables this challenging analytical process.

Furthermore, there are certain challenges when taking on a covert role in research. Bryman (2016) highlights four main disadvantages where one is relevant to this research. That is the ethical challenges with covert research. If employees of the Ministry of Climate and Environment are talking to a group of people at an event, this ethical challenge is less important. The point of these events is often to invite anyone who is interested in a topic to come and listen. However, it is different when employees of the Ministry invite civil society organizations to a meeting. This situation is a closed setting, not meant to provide the members with public statements, but to invite relevant parties to a dialogue where all parts get a chance to present their opinion. None of the participants at these meetings know that there is someone carefully following the Ministry’s response to the questions and advice presented by civil society. These challenges were possible to overcome by not including any quotes or naming any party unless their specific opinion has also been expressed outside the

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room. This did not create any practical challenges, possibly due to the careful attention given to this issue. Before diving into the material in the analysis sections, some ethical considerations and constraining factors should be mentioned.

7.6.2 Ethical evaluation and constraining factors

This research does have important ethical issues to consider. As any other research, informed consent on the behalf of informants is important. It is unlikely that a research topic of this kind will induce harm on individuals or groups of people. Issues of exploitation should not be a problem when collecting written data, since these are made public in order for people to make use of them. It has been a continuous process in which significant consideration has been given to the circumstances. A significant benefit with research like this is that it is easily replicable and could hopefully inspire further research.

It should also be made clear that I am active in a Non-Governmental Organization for youth in Norway called Spire. The organization is based various principles, but it is clearly related to the environmentalism of the poor discourse. This "... involves seeking agency for the world's poor and marginalized at the expense of the large emitters and global market capitalism" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 215). This is visible through the organizations adopted policies and political demands such as their adopted policy to work towards a fundamentally different and a more redistributive economy and political demands to increase funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. Simultaneously, green consciousness is an important part of many of the activities arranged by local chapters.

Because of this affiliation I had to consider to which degree it was ethically defensible to use this affiliation to get answers to particular questions more relevant to the research than the organization I was representing. This has been an issue which I have struggled with to some degree initially. After talking with members and the leader of the organization regarding my concerns I concluded that as long as I did not say anything which would put the organization in a bad light when gathering data, it was considered a mutually beneficial situation for the organization that I get the information I need for my research. There is an assumption here that what I learn through my research will in the end be beneficial to the organization as well, since much of the organization's politics are based on social science research.

In addition, the fact that there was a deadline to consider meant that certain interesting routes for further research had to be suspended. There is just so much one researcher can go through when it comes to data material in a limited amount of time. However, whenever I felt that this limited the scope of this research I took note of it and wrote it down as a possible way forward for further

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research. The financial capacity was a related issue in cases where I would have liked to join an international conference or meeting which could have highlighted some of the issues I have considered during the initial stages of the research. Time and money are two central issues as to why fast policy is not a more fundamental part of the theoretical framework because I believe that it would have necessitated access to international arenas to gather data, which would also take time and require funds not available within the given timeframe. Issues regarding the selection bias of documents have been considered above when discussing documents as data sources. Finally, I move on to critically reflect on the text production and language used in this paper.

7.6.3 Contextualizing text and language

The presentation of the findings from the empirical data in the analysis section below tries to contextualize the documents selected in order to place these documents within the wider context within which they were produced. It must be recognized that this contextualization is limited by the fact that some texts are over a decade old, and the fact that I have not had time or saw it as necessary to interview all the people involved with all the documents. However, the most recent white paper is informed not only by an interview, but also by a recent master thesis mentioned in the literature review, which is concerned with the process of decision making around the change in policy that happened in 2015 (L. Christensen, 2017). The documents themselves most often try to contextualize the situation at the time of production, but it is important to recognize that this presentation of context is the writer's interpretation and others might contextualize these texts from other points of view which could give them new meanings. However, since the purpose of this research is to identify values and principles in Norwegian climate policy, this contextualization is a valuable tool to understand the logic behind the choice of policy as they are interpreted by the respective governments. Furthermore, the educational background of this researcher also represents a new approach to contextualization, where the perspective on history comes to a large degree from the field of development studies, often inspired by fields with a critical view towards governments and environmental stewardships through such fields as political ecology.

Another important aspect to consider when reflecting on the production of text and contextualization is sub-interpretation. Sub-interpretation happens on the basis of certain conceptions already formed by interpretation, when one decides between different possible interpretation by using the conceptions formed. There are a few criteria one can use in order to assess the plausibility of interpretations; how narrow the scope of subjects is, how frequent the instances on which the interpretation is based on are, and how many entities one has chosen to focus on (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). The sub-interpretations are closely related to the general pattern of interpretation, and if one changes then the other changes too. These considerations,

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while originally created as intended objective criteria within hermeneutics, have been utilized when considering the plausibility of the interpretations created here, without referring to an ideal of objectivity within the social sciences. This aspect of hermeneutics is what informed the level of interpretation approach advocated by Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009) through their reflexive methodology.

This approach to the empirical data and the analysis has intended to increase the plausibility of the findings. However, some challenges remain regarding the possibility of ambiguous language and alternative interpretations of data in combination with other choices of scientific literature which would highlight different aspects of Norwegian climate policies. This would not invalidate the findings here, and they should be welcomed as contributions to the knowledge base through which we understand Norwegian climate policy. With that, I now turn to my interpretation and analysis of the Norwegian climate discourse.

8 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The first part of this section will present an analysis of the values and principles informing Norwegian climate policy by going through the relevant documents presenting them. This will be analyzed by first presenting the NOUs which form an important part of the scientific basis on which white papers and subsequent policies have been constructed. After that, international communicative documents and the white papers regarding Norwegian climate policies will be analyzed in a similar fashion. The most current communications are interpreted in light of the historical development of values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy. Conclusions are drawn based on the interpretation of the empirical data presented. This is done in order to build upon these insights when comparing these findings and Norwegian institutional practices with the various environmental discourses identified by Dryzek (2013). These two parts form the basis for discussing the Norwegian climate discourse and the historical development and structural premises which influence it in part three of the analysis.

8.1 PART ONE: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND LAYOUT OF CLIMATE POLICIES

The following documents refer to basic values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy both directly and indirectly through policy choices. The following sections outline the mandates given to the commissions creating NOUs, and the first table provides a list of the most relevant NOUs referenced in white papers on climate and how they are connected.

8.1.1 Mandates in NOUs related to climate white papers

NOUs and their original title:	Referenced in:
NOU 1992:3 Mot en mer kostnadseffektiv miljøpolitikk i 1990-årene.	(1995) Om norsk politikk mot klimaendringer og utslipp av nitrogenoksider (NO _x)
NOU 2000:1 Et kvotesystem for klimagasser	(2001) Norsk klimapolitikk
NOU 2006:18 Et klimavennlig Norge	(2007) Norsk klimapolitikk
NOU 2015:15 Sett pris på miljøet	(2017) Klimastrategi for 2030 – norsk omstilling i europeisk samarbeid

TABLE 2: NOUs AND THEIR CONNECTION TO WHITE PAPERS ON CLIMATE

There has been several NOUs over the years which have been important parts of the knowledge basis upon which Norwegian climate policies have been created and established. The very first white paper on climate refers to an NOU by the environmental fee commission which published its report in 1992 entitled *Towards More Cost-effective Environmental Policies in the 1990s* [author translation]. The work of the commission was initiated in 1989 and was a part of the knowledge basis leading to the introduction of a fee on CO₂ in 1991 (NOU 2009: 16). The purpose of the commission was to establish the academic and professional arguments behind the use of taxes, present concrete suggestions and conduct a macroeconomic analysis of the possible consequences of taxes in relation to two scenarios. The two scenarios were regarding the establishment of an international climate deal (NOU 1992: 3; NOU 2009: 16). This work analyzed the cost-effectiveness of the use of fees for environmental policies in general, which was also considered relevant to climate policies although this was not the specific focus of the commission.

The next NOU referred to in a white paper was by the quota commission and it was published in 2000 entitled *A Quota System for Greenhouse Gases* [author translation]. This work was based on a mandate asking the commission to examine the possibility of a national quota system in Norway based on the Kyoto protocol. The guidelines for the work of the commission focused on specific characterizations of a quota system as envisioned by the Government. The mandate is thus quite specific and highlights some of the core principles behind a national quota system, stating that all new businesses must base their emissions on buying quotas through the national system or through flexible mechanisms, and that the national system must be connected to international systems for emission quotas, joint implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism (NOU 2000:1, pp. 28-29).

The white paper on climate from 2007 refers to the work of the low emission commission, whose mandate focused on investigating possible trajectories for Norway to transform to a low emission

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society with substantial reductions in emission towards 2050. There are many ways of envisioning a transition to a low emission society, but the mandate of the commission clearly stated that the focus of the report should be possible technological improvements and policies needed to trigger these initiatives. Costs and consequences should also be assessed, including comparing the costs and consequences of reducing emissions nationally as opposed to in other countries (NOU 2006:18, p. 15).

The most recent white paper on climate from 2017 refers to the work of the green tax commission, whose mandate was to evaluate if and how increases in fees justified by environmental concerns, and reductions in other fees and taxes, can produce lower greenhouse gas emissions, a better environment and sound economic development. It is based on the idea that an unregulated market causes overconsumption of environmental resources due to the lack of an appropriate price for the good or cost related to environmental damage, as well as the idea that economic growth can go hand in hand with the lowering of greenhouse gas emissions (NOU 2015:15, p. 9).

The NOUs presented here are not exhaustive when it comes to the NOUs mentioned in white papers. In the white paper from 2012, there were references to an NOU regarding Norwegian climate policy which could be considered here. However, due to its focus on public decision processes and not climate policies per se, this and other NOUs mentioned have been considered less relevant for understanding which values and principles are guiding Norwegian climate policies. NOUs mostly concerning adaptation have not been included because they do not directly deal with climate change mitigation. Before considering the international documents such as the report to the UNFCCC, the white papers on climate will be presented.

8.1.2 White papers on climate

There have been six white papers on climate published between 1995 and 2017. All papers refer to common principles of Norwegian climate policy. The following paragraphs will explore the content of the papers looking for expressed values and principles, as well as the main policies presented in the papers.

White papers on climate listed with their original title
(2017). <i>Klimastrategi for 2030 – norsk omstilling i europeisk samarbeid</i> (Meld. St. 41)
(2015). <i>Ny utslippsforpliktelse for 2030 – en felles løsning med EU</i> . (Meld. St. 13)
(2012). <i>Norsk klimapolitikk</i> . (Meld. St. 21).
(2007). <i>Norsk klimapolitikk</i> . (Meld. St. 34).
(2001). <i>Norsk klimapolitikk</i> . (St. meld. nr 54).
(1995). <i>Om norsk politikk mot klimaendringer og utslipp av nitrogenoksider (NOx)</i> . (St meld nr 41).

TABLE 3: WHITE PAPERS ON CLIMATE IN THEIR ORIGINAL TITLE

8.1.2.1 *The very first white paper*

The very first white paper entitled *About Norwegian Policy Against Climate Change and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) Emissions* [author translation] was published under prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland's third government. This place in time was a particularly interesting one where it was becoming clear that climate policies and oil policies were being treated in two different realms, and the oil industry's opposition to certain climate policies was increasing. The first ambitious stabilization goal was dropped and considered unrealistic and not cost-effective, mostly due to the continued expansion of the oil industry offshore Norway (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995; Sæther, 2017). At the same time, the principles guiding climate policy was presented together with strategies for reducing NOx emissions specifically (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995).

It is stated that something needed to be done to the way economic growth was done, that production and consumption needed to become more environmentally friendly. Economic growth had to be detached from its connection to an increase in environmentally damaging energy use and that had to happen within the limits of nature. Furthermore, the international nature of greenhouse gas emissions was highlighted and supported the argument for the need to contribute to international solutions. In addition, there could be potentially damaging effects to business competitiveness if some countries introduced much stricter climate regulation than others. Another important factor when considering climate policies was the need to weigh the costs to society against the damage to nature that will be avoided. Implicit in this statement lay the idea that some damage could be tolerated if the cost to society averting the damage was too high. However, the precautionary principle was introduced as a primary concern when setting ambitions for climate goals nationally and internationally, which meant that the lack of definite knowledge or a degree of uncertainty should not enable inaction or less ambitious goals (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995).

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Furthermore, the Government attached great importance to cost-effectiveness in international cooperation to reduce emissions, to get the largest amount of emission reductions for the least amount of money. Norwegian politicians working on climate issues in 1995 were highly focused on working towards an international deal that would enable cost-effective measures based on the precautionary principle and the principle of just distribution of burdens between countries.

Throughout the paper it is made clear that a just distribution of burdens and the cost of transitioning economies to more environmentally sound activities were primary concerns in Norwegian climate policy development. The idea was that one would be able to change production and consumption patterns and the way economic growth influenced emissions in a just way by introducing fees and other cost-effective instruments.

8.1.2.2 White paper on climate 2000-2001

The second white paper on climate was published during the first Stoltenberg social democratic coalition government. This came a few years after the Kyoto protocol was introduced, while the final arrangements were being negotiated and when the American government decided to withdraw from the Kyoto protocol. It is clearly stated that Norwegian climate policies at the time were based on the assumption that the Kyoto protocol would come into force, which would give Norway binding emission reduction commitments as well as opportunities to offset emissions through flexible mechanisms. It is important to note that Norway had been working internationally to make sure the international climate agreement would contain mechanisms that would enable internationally cost-effective instruments (Sæther, 2017). These are often termed flexible mechanisms and are seen as an important part of the term joint implementation. An inclusive national quota system in which the relevant actors get quotas within the Kyoto protocol system from 2008 to 2012 was highlighted as the main instrument in Norwegian climate policy for the relevant period (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2001).

At the time of publication of this white paper, the fee on CO₂ emissions was considered the most important instrument of Norwegian climate policy. In addition to this, the government wanted to expand current climate initiatives to include businesses that were not subjected to the fee on CO₂ through agreements to reduce CO₂ or through regulation through the Pollution Act. The polluter pays principle was said to be fundamental in the formation of policies to protect the environment and was at that time gaining international acceptance and importance. This principle was not expressly stated in the previous white paper, although it could be considered a continuation of previous policy due to the importance of the CO₂ fee from the very beginning. Both cost-effectiveness and management efficiency were seen as the main guiding principles when it came to choosing policies to reduce emissions (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995).

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It seems that the answers to the challenge of greenhouse gas emissions in Norway, according to the official policies of the time, were technology development and investment in cost-effective instruments that would yield the largest reductions in CO₂ emissions per dollar (or krone) invested. Emissions were expected to increase the most in the transport and petroleum sector, which was seen as a reason to focus on technology development. There was no sign of questioning this development or considering policies which could keep this increase from happening. The fee on CO₂ was seen as an important instrument driving technology development and innovation in these sectors. It would increase efficiency and reduce CO₂ emissions.

8.1.2.3 *Climate white paper 2006-2007*

This paper was also published during a social democratic government, prime minister Jens Stoltenberg's second government. It was published one year after the infamous *Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*, which is also mentioned in the paper. This is the first climate white paper where the targets are clearly pronounced. The goals were:

- Norway will be carbon neutral by 2050
- Norway will until 2020 take on a commitment to reduce the global emissions of greenhouse gases equivalent to 30 percent of Norway's emissions in 1990.
- Norway will increase its Kyoto commitments by 10 percentage points to 9 percent below the 1990-level (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, p. 5 [author translation]).

In this white paper, the technical potential from various sectors are evaluated and it includes policies that the Government intended to implement. Before this paper was presented, the Ministry of Environmental Protection ordered an analysis from what was then called the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority [author translation] regarding possible measures to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. It was clearly stated that only technical measures were to be evaluated, and that measures resting on greater societal, behavioral or production related measures were not evaluated (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, p. 6). This was followed up by a statement saying that they were particularly focused on measures that would be cost-effective in a scenario where the price of carbon increases over time. Furthermore, measures aimed at technology development was given special attention. Finally, special measures directed at changing consumption patterns to create further emission reductions *could* be considered to enhance the effect driven from the expected increase in carbon prices alone (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007).

Under the section on principles underpinning the goals of the Government, it was clearly stated that Norwegian climate policies build on acknowledged and established principles and criteria (Norwegian

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Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, p. 36). The primary principles mentioned were management efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The polluter pays principle was mentioned as another important element in Norwegian climate policy. Furthermore, the carrying capacity principle and the precautionary principle were mentioned as critical to the concept of sustainable development. These two principles were seen as operationalizations of the concept of sustainable development, which was seen as fundamental to the Government's climate policies (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007). The carrying capacity principle as described in the paper means that policy makers should consider the carrying capacity of the earth as a whole, and not just consider different ecosystems separately. This idea has later been made well-known through research coming out of the Stockholm Resilience Center, research that attempts to determine a safe operating space for human to thrive within certain limits one cannot pass if a safe operating space is to be secured (Steffen et al., 2015). There was a considerable amount of focus on the need to limit greenhouse gas emission from developing countries and the necessity to help this transition and contribute to climate change adaptation (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007).

Furthermore, there was a specific section regarding the use of instruments in Norwegian climate policy. It stated that "... general instruments are key for national climate policy..." and that "Overreaching sectoral economic instruments form the basis for decentralized, cost-effective and informed measures, where the polluter pays" (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, pp. 5, 46 [author translation]). Furthermore, «In areas which are affected by general instruments, the Government's starting point is that as a main rule one shall avoid additional regulation" (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, pp. 6, 46 [author translation]). As will be shown in the next paragraphs, these phrases are repeated through several white papers. It was also stated that for sectors where these overreaching instruments would not be appropriate, other measures should be considered.

These could be direct economic incentives directed at technology development that might not be economically sustainable in the short run, increasing benefits to sectors such as renewable energy, the creation of new regulations in areas such as construction, or increased focus on improving infrastructure for public transport projects such as railway development. The overreaching instruments listed as the most important in Norway's climate policy were the international climate quota system (in order to meet the targets under the Kyoto protocol), taxes and fees (in particular the tax on CO₂ emissions), the Pollution Act and the climate campaign (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007). The latter was a particular campaign called the "Climate Promise", which aimed at increasing knowledge among the population and various actors in society in order to

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create an understanding of the importance of greenhouse gas emission reduction and engagement around the issue. This project came to an end in 2014 (Klimaløftet.no, n.a).

8.1.2.4 *Climate white paper 2011-2012*

The climate white paper from 2012 was also published during a government led by prime minister Stoltenberg. One thing to notice is that it refers to the national budget from 2008 regarding the principles upon which climate policies are built.

Sustainability should be a fundamental principle for all development in Norway and in the rest of the world. The Government's sustainability strategy, which was presented in the national budget for 2008 (St.meld. nr. 1 (2007-2008)), states that policy for sustainable development has to be based on the main principles fair distribution, international solidarity, the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle and the joint effort principle (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2012, p. 8 [author translation]).

What is striking is that although fair distribution and international solidarity was mentioned as key principles in Norwegian climate policy, it is not clear how these principles were operationalized. It might mean that the policies and other principles presented and highlighted throughout the document were considered to represent just policies that represent international solidarity and fair distribution. It is also worth noting that neither the word fair nor solidarity appears in the climate settlement document which this paper also refers to. Under the section regarding overreaching principles, attention is given mostly to the agreement regarding the polluter pays principle, cost-effective instruments to reduce emissions and the cost-effectiveness of acting now instead of in the future while referencing the Stern review (Innst. S. nr. 145, 2008).

The national budget for 2008 describes the necessity for sustainable development as an issue of increased wealth for everyone and especially the poor populations of the world without crossing the boundaries of the environment. Furthermore, it is explicitly stated that some boundaries are already crossed and that the poverty and environment related challenges of that time necessitated a change in production and consumption patterns to reduce the environmental impact of economic activity. In addition to using an ecosystem approach to natural resource management, there is a need to incorporate social, economic and environmental concerns throughout all sectors of politics and at all levels. The instruments listed as important for the Norwegian Government's approach to sustainable development are international cooperation, economic instruments, administrative instruments, research and development, public procurement, environmental impact assessments and licensing procedures and facilitation and dissemination of information (Norwegian Ministry of Finance, 2008).

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Reading the white papers uncover a practice of copy-pasting certain phrases from earlier reports. These phrases might be considered particularly important due to the direct repetition in the later white papers. The following quotes from the white papers from 2007, 2012 and 2015 are key examples of either directly copy-pasted or almost directly copied statements regarding climate policies which clearly favors market instruments:

«General instruments are central to national climate policy. Sectoral overreaching economic instruments form the basis for decentralized, cost-effective and informed measures where the polluter pays” (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2015, p. 23; Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, pp. 5, 45; 2012, pp. 8, 95 [author translation])

«In areas which are affected by general instruments, the main rule shall be that additional regulation should be avoided” (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2015, p. 23 [author translation]; Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2012, pp. 8, 87, 95)

« In areas which are affected by general instruments, the Government’s starting point is that as a main rule one shall avoid additional regulation” (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2007, p. 46 [author translation]).

8.1.2.5 White paper on increased cooperation with the EU in Norwegian climate policy from 2015

This paper bases its policies on the climate settlement from 2012, and the conservative right coalition government’s political platform named the Sundvollen declaration. This white paper is different from the other white papers on climate because it is significantly shorter, and its purpose was narrowly targeted. The purpose of the white paper was to present Norway’s national commitments to the international climate agreement and the new plan to increase cooperation with the EU to the Parliament. Furthermore, this is the first climate white paper coming out of a conservative right coalition government led by prime minister Erna Solberg. It is mostly concerned with the new Paris agreement and presenting Norway’s initial Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) which states that Norway will reduce its emissions by 40% by 2030 compared to the reference year 1990. Additionally, the concept of joint implementation with the EU means that Norway will get a binding target related to emission reductions. By doing this, Norwegian climate policy took a step further in the direction of regional integration by aiming to connect non-quota emission reduction instruments to the EU. This could enable flexibility for the sectors not already included in the European Emission Trading System (ETS) (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2015).

It is necessary to say a few words regarding the climate settlement from 2012. The targets set in that settlement are the same as those presented in the 2008 settlement, but this settlement mentions that the necessity of a new climate law will be considered. Just like the white paper the settlement is

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based on, this document refers to the budget from 2008 when it comes to the principles guiding sustainable development. Carbon pricing is highlighted as the most important instrument, emissions are considered highly dependent upon technological development, and the need for additional instruments in some sectors is also mentioned (Innst. 390 S, 2012). While the climate white paper from 2017 shows a continuation of the path started in 2015, it also represents a linguistic shift whereby restructuring towards a low emission society becomes a more common phrase regarding the purpose of Norwegian climate policies.

8.1.2.6 *Climate white paper 2016-2017*

In the white paper on climate of 2017, cost-effectiveness, fee, technology and market are key words repeated in almost every section of the document. The word transition is suddenly used 137 times compared to maximum 23 times in previous white papers, and terms such as green transition and green competitiveness are introduced and repeated. The document is significantly shorter than the previous white papers but continue the trend of focusing Norwegian climate policy around central themes such as quota systems, technology development and regulation through fees or laws. For instance, it is stated that it is likely that between 5,5 and 11 million tons of CO₂ equivalent reductions will be possible to reduce by using available quotas from the European emission trading system, an opportunity that the Government intends to use. Furthermore, an analysis coming from the Norwegian Environment Agency exploring the possible options for emission reductions in the transport sector is highlighted. This analysis divided the measures into categories depending on the projected costs, which are largely determined by technology development that does not happen in Norway (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a). There is no doubt that the focus on market mechanisms and flexibility, fee on CO₂ and cost-effectiveness still dominates Norwegian climate policy. These frequently used phrases illustrate the centrality of fees and the possible room for maneuver, which should equally focus on incentivizing action:

“If fees are not considered to be a sufficient or appropriate instrument, other instruments, which will provide an equivalently strong incentive, shall be considered» (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a, pp. 43, 81, 83 [author translation])

“If the fee on CO₂ is considered to be insufficient or inappropriate instruments shall other instruments be considered, which would give equivalently strong incentives, including direct regulation through the Pollution Act or voluntary deals” (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a, pp. 7, 40, 44, 82 [author translation])

Twelve other varieties of the same message can be found on several pages of the document (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a, pp. 24, 25, 39, 43, 53).

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These positions have been connected to the climate settlement and show similarities with earlier white papers and is thus showing a consistent climate policy with broad support among politicians. A new report from an expert commission focusing on green competitiveness appointed by the Government produced a report in 2016 which is referred to in this white paper. The mandate of the commission was to produce a strategy to increase the competitiveness of businesses in a greener future. Green competitiveness was defined as “... the business sector’s ability to compete globally in a time where stronger instruments are utilized in climate policy” (Norwegian Office of the Prime Minister, 2015 [author translation]). Furthermore, the commission was to discuss what characterizes a “... proactive and growth-oriented policy for strengthening green competitiveness inside the frame of efficient use of resources” (Norwegian Office of the Prime Minister, 2015 [author translation]). The main findings in the report point to the need for green innovation and research, the role of the Government as a risk bearer and the importance of competitiveness in the Norwegian business sectors in order to ensure employment and value added (Hedegaard & Kreutzer, 2016). The focus on green competitiveness is another aspect of Norwegian climate policy which is not necessarily most concerned with cost-effectiveness of a specific climate policy, as much as it is concerned with using cost-effective measures which incentivizes the technology development and innovation which will increase the global competitiveness of Norwegian industries. This does not mean that cost-effectiveness has become less important for Norwegian climate policy.

The new cooperation with the EU regarding emission reduction in the non-quota sector of climate emission regulation represents something new which is based on the old principle of cost-effectiveness. The new goal does not represent fundamental shifts in values and principles other than shifting the focus of cost-effectiveness from the global to the regional through closer collaboration with the EU through a legally binding deal (L. Christensen, 2017). This is evident since it is stated that the choice of policies depends on calculations regarding cost-effectiveness, the future deal with the EU and the subsequent room for maneuver through flexible mechanisms (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a). Analyzing how international communicative documents present the essence of Norwegian climate policies might produce similar results or possibly challenge the findings here. The next sessions will present the main content regarding Norwegian climate policy in key international communicative documents published during a conservative right coalition coming from the Ministry of Climate and Environment as well as other governmental sources.

8.1.3 International communicative documents to the United Nations

International communicative documents
Norwegian Ministries. (2016). <i>Initial steps towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Voluntary national review presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF)</i> .
Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment. (2018). <i>Status report as of January 2018. Norway's Seventh National Communication Under the Framework Convention on Climate Change</i> .
Norwegian Ministry of Finance, & Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2016). <i>One year closer. Norway's progress towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</i> .
The Norwegian Government. (2018a). <i>Talanoa-dialogue Norway</i> .

TABLE 4: INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIVE DOCUMENTS IN THEIR ORIGINAL TITLE

8.1.3.1 *Norway's Seventh National Communication Under the Framework Convention on Climate Change*

The communications under the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) are extensive documents which says a lot about Norwegian climate policy, and the Seventh National Communication is the most current document regarding Norwegian climate policy. The very first sentence under the section on policies and measures defines the major framework and institutional influence over Norwegian climate policy: "Norway's climate policy is based on the objective of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement" (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2018, p. 10). The latest developments and most important measures and instruments are listed. The target of 40 % emission reduction by 2030 in collaboration with the EU is stated, and the future implementation of the climate law is presented. In addition, five priority areas of Norway's climate policy is defined: "... reducing emissions from the transport sector, strengthening Norway's role as a supplier of renewable energy, the development of low-emission industrial technology and clean production technology, environmentally sound shipping and carbon capture and storage" (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2018, p. 11).

These priority areas are also mentioned in the latest white paper on climate as priority areas for emission reductions. While priority areas by governments will change over time, these are still based on common principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy. The policies concerning action towards emission reduction are interesting because the framing of the solution is closely connected to the problem definition and thus the discourse to which it's connected. The five main priority areas all focus on technology and clearly supports technological solutions as the main instrument to achieve emission reductions. Furthermore, another aim mentioned is to "... lay the foundation for new industrial development and a forward-looking business sector" (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2018, p. 11). This document is an extensive statement of action taken by the

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Norwegian government, but there are also smaller reports on Norway's climate action in relation to the SDGs.

8.1.3.2 Norway's report to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2016 and the One Year Closer report

The voluntary national review to the UN HLPF is a direct report from Norway to the UN regarding the national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The report points to the instruments and efforts the Norwegian Government is doing in order to reach the goals. On climate action, the Norwegian target of reducing emissions by 40% is highlighted. The main instruments mentioned are taxation, participation in the ETS and regulation through the pollution act. Regulation, standards, agreements and grants for emission reduction are mentioned as additional instruments to the overreaching taxation and ETS (Norwegian Ministries, 2016).

The report *One Year Closer* also mentions the emission reduction target of 40%, including the related goal of transitioning to a low emission society by reducing emissions by 80 to 95 percent by 2050 as stated in the Climate Act. Furthermore, the strengthening of the national climate and technology fund, green taxation, the ban on the use of fossil fuels for heating, the ambitious national transport plan and electric car policy is highlighted as important tools for achieving the targets of SDG 13 climate action. Like the seventh national communication to the UNFCCC, also this report mentions Norwegian efforts to develop carbon capture and storage technology. Other instruments mentioned are restoration of wetlands and forest projects aimed at increasing CO₂ sequestration.

When it comes to international efforts, the climate and forest initiative is highlighted as well as the financial contribution to the Global Climate Fund, contributions under the Clean Development Mechanism, multilateral cooperation regarding climate issues and promoting mechanisms aimed at putting a price on carbon through multilateral collaborations such as the Transformative Carbon Asset Facility. Finally, the report also mentions the challenge to sufficiently cut emissions nationally to meet the target set out by the Paris Agreement, expressly stating the interlinking between the Paris Agreement, Norwegian climate policies and the SDGs (Norwegian Ministry of Finance & Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). These reports to the UN do not present policies which are not already connected to the values and principles of Norwegian climate policy, but it is worth noting that the centrality of market mechanisms to achieve the national climate goals is downplayed while its importance for international cooperation is maintained. This seems to be the case in Norway's submission to the Talanoa-dialogue under the UNFCCC as well.

8.1.3.3 Submissions to the Talanoa-dialogue

Norway provided a submission to the Talanoa-dialogue in April 2018 before the international climate negotiations which was held in Bonn, Germany. This dialogue under the UNFCCC process had a

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mandate to “... take stock of the collective efforts [...] and to inform the preparation of nationally determined contributions...” (The Norwegian Government, 2018a) under the Paris Agreement. In this submission, Norway focused on 7 areas which they wanted to highlight and present to other nations. These were carbon pricing, the role of tropical forests, zero-emission transport, market-based cooperation, near-term climate change, just, inclusive and participatory transition to a low emission future and policy and institutional arrangements. Furthermore, it is stated that putting a price on carbon “... is generally the most effective way to reduce emissions” (The Norwegian Government, 2018a, p. 2).

Reading the section on carbon pricing also gives me a sense of *déjà vu*, recalling the quotes which were copied in the white papers when it says that “Putting a price on emissions creates a basis for flexible, decentralized and informed actions” (The Norwegian Government, 2018a, p. 2). Here putting a price on carbon is mentioned directly instead of calling it general instruments, or sectoral overreaching economic instruments, and flexible is highlighted instead of cost-effective. The next topic in the document is about how cooperation between parties can raise ambition, focusing on the work of the Transformative Carbon Asset Facility to operationalize market-based cooperation mechanisms. The part about the Zero-emission transport initiative focuses on how Norway has created incentives for buyers to choose electric cars. The role of tropical forest and the Norwegian climate and forest initiative is highlighted, in addition to a general statement regarding the co-benefits of initiating measures which will be beneficial for near term and long-term climate change as well as the importance of a just transition to a low emission society where public participation is key. It is also worth noting that the policy and institutional arrangement put forward as an example of how to align the Paris agreement to domestic processes is the new climate law, which has not yet been operationalized in Norway.

8.2 INTERPRETATION OF THE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF NORWEGIAN CLIMATE POLICY

These documents are strategic documents which support the actions taken by the Government, aimed at different constituencies. That the way Norwegian climate policy has been presented over the years to the Norwegian parliament has changed should not come as a surprise given the changing context within which they were created, made by different governments under a changing international regime. The changes in focus as well as the persistency of certain values and principles are interesting because they say something about the discourse to which Norwegian climate policy has been and is related to as well as the changing aspects of policy which might be influenced by internal as well as external discourses and institutional structures. The following sections present the

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main changes and consequent aspects of Norwegian climate policy over the years and the difference between national and international communicative documents.

8.2.1 The difference between national and international communicative documents

Before going deeper into the values and principles of Norwegian climate policy, it is worth noting that there is a noticeable difference between the national and international documents. For instance, the centrality of the cost-effectiveness principles seems to be toned down in the international communicative documents. There is a narrower focus on the specific technical solutions, such as in the five main priority areas highlighted in the Seventh National Communication to the UNFCCC. While these areas are also stated in the white paper on climate of 2017, they are not mentioned in the summary and highlighted in the same way. Furthermore, other communicative documents to the UN does not focus on the cost-effectiveness of Norwegian climate policy, suggesting that there might be a strategic consideration behind the choice of focusing on specific current policies considered successful instead of referring to the principles they are judged by. This might not be surprising given that considerations regarding strategic communication are common among governments and NGOs alike (Adolphsen, 2014).

The difference could also be attributed to the different nature of the documents, where shorter international communications are supposed to focus on success stories and longer ones are more technical in nature. It seems that flexible mechanisms and emission trading are not highlighted as much in international communicative documents as in the white papers on climate. This might also be because these international communications are focusing on how Norway is contributing and might therefore downplay what is considered necessary international mechanisms in order for Norway to meet their emission reduction goal. These observations need further research which is beyond the scope of this paper, but the findings here suggest that there is a difference which warrants further attention. The following section will focus on the differences observed over time by reading the white papers on climate.

8.2.2 The persistency of cost-effectiveness, administrative instruments and technological solutions

The foundation of the framework for logic and reasoning in Norwegian climate policy is clearly stated in the white papers on climate. The focus and description of the international nature of climate change, coupled with principles of cost-effectiveness, management efficiency, the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principles are key guiding principles in the formation of climate policy. In certain papers there is also a clear reference to principles and values such as international solidarity and just distribution of responsibilities, but they are not commonly used through the white papers or climate settlements which suggest that they are not central to Norwegian climate policy.

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Management efficiency is not mentioned often, although it is stated that this should guide climate policy. The dominance of the concern of cost-effectiveness does suggest that there is a hierarchy between the principles, which is also supported the findings by Lina Christensen (2017) regarding the shift from global to European cost-effectiveness as a dominant principle in Norwegian climate policy. A possible reason for this might be the widespread use and importance of cost-benefit analysis, which are highlighted throughout the papers and have been important parts of the NOUs. It seems that management efficiency and cost-effectiveness as principles are closely linked, and cost-benefit analysis is seen as an important tool to be able to judge the cost-effectiveness of differing instruments, such as cutting emissions abroad compared nationally.

The mandates for the NOUs focusing on cost-effectiveness, quota-systems, taxation and technology also demonstrate the specific orientation of Norwegian climate policy. The NOUs from 1992 and 2015 were both delivered to the Ministry of Finance, while the others were delivered to the Ministry of Environmental Protection. These NOUs as well as the report from 2016 on green competitiveness demonstrate the persistent interconnection between the macroeconomic concerns of the Government and climate related concerns, showing an important rationale for focusing on cost-effectiveness as the most important guiding principle for Norwegian climate policy.

There are also principles which are not expressly stated that are nonetheless fundamental for Norwegian climate policy. The most obvious principle is that technological development is the most desirable and effective instrument to mitigate climate change. The fact that all the priority areas of Norwegian climate policy aims to incentivize technological development supports this finding. This is closely connected to the principle that economic growth is necessary and desirable. The fact that the desirability of economic growth is not questioned, not even when it is driven by the petroleum sector, supports this finding. These principles have been a part of Norwegian climate policy since the very first white paper until the most recent political documents, as demonstrated by the historical development of Norwegian climate policies presented above. The very first white paper stated clearly that these technological solutions were the vehicle for making economic growth sustainable and would enable the economy to depart from its dependence on fossil fuels. These fundamental truths have not been challenged through any of the subsequent white papers.

Moving on from principles in Norwegian climate policy, values are ideals or beliefs that are considered very important and meaningful. These are often closely related to principles, such as when economic growth is seen as necessary and desirable. That action towards the mitigation of negative human impact on the climate system is worthwhile and meaningful is an inherent value underpinning climate policy. The efforts are extensive and resource consuming, and the problem

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formulations have been situation analyses which recognizes the importance of climate policy for sustainable development. Furthermore, climate policy is seen as important due to the possible cost and consequences from climate change for the Norwegian society, recognizing that the government has a responsibility to act to ensure positive outcomes for the society. However, the idea that some cost to society can be tolerated if it is not outweighed by the benefits in the form of economic benefits, jobs or other consequences deemed beneficial to society, is also present. Furthermore, that modernization is desirable is also a value which is closely connected to the principles that underpin climate policy.

8.2.3 The values and principles' relation to the environmental discourses

From the texts analyzed in the foregoing sections it seems that the values and principles of Norwegian climate policies are closely related to the economic rationalism discourse, although clear signs of administrative rationalism and ecological modernization are also present. Pricing carbon and focusing on offsetting and market mechanisms is closely related to the economic rationalism discourse. However, sector specific approaches and the focus on adjusting instruments based on the shortcomings of economic tools highlights the connection to administrative rationalism. Furthermore, the focus technology and the benefits to businesses in the Seventh National Communication to the UNFCCC creates a picture of the Norwegian climate discourse as one adhering to the ecological modernization approach. It is clear that government documents are excluding viewpoints that would not follow the fundamental values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy, but are otherwise showing elements of different discourses and demonstrate how they can be connected. Although documents such as the climate white paper might place policies related to economic rationalism as the forefront of climate policy, there are also elements from all the variations found within the problem solving and sustainable development discourses, in addition to references to the limits discourse through the recognition of limits in several of the white papers. Furthermore, the connection between climate policy and the sustainable development discourse through international communications are weak, but nonetheless present through references to central ideas which will be elaborated on in the following part. In addition, the focus on technological solutions, innovation and technology development fits well within the ecological modernization discourse. These overlapping discourses present in the Norwegian context do question the universality or relevance of the discourses identified by Dryzek (2013). The existence of different discourses could possibly suggest that the climate policy strategy incorporates aspects of different discourses as long as they are compatible or desirable with the values and principles underpinning Norwegian climate policy. What is clear is that the identification of values and principles alone do not provide a clear answer to how Norwegian climate policies are related to environmental discourses,

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and that discourse analysis could be supplemented with another theory regarding how policy is created in order to broaden the understanding. The latter will be explored in part three of this paper by discussing the Norwegian climate discourse in relation to the concept of fast policy. I will now turn to discuss various elements associated with the environmental discourses proposed by Dryzek (2013) in order to further analyze the Norwegian climate discourse.

8.3 PART TWO: ANALYZING NORWEGIAN CLIMATE POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES USING DRYZEK'S DISCOURSE CLASSIFICATIONS.

The analysis of documents in the foregoing section has provided the base for a discourse analysis of Norwegian climate policy. Initial thoughts based on the values and principles identified have been presented. These documents are products of an institutional system and a political economy that influence policy and represent the most important frameworks within which policy is formed. The degree to which institutions influence policy is the subject of heated debate. The basic assumption here is that institutions are the human made formal context in which human actions are restrained and enabled, and that they matter for development pathways (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2013). This is why it is necessary to consider the institutional arrangements in order to further the discussion initiated above. Furthermore, Dryzek (2013) makes distinctions between how much certain discourses are connected to institutional arrangements, which necessitates the following analysis going through each of the discourses starting with the one most concerned with formal institutional structures.

8.3.1 Administrative rationalism

The essence of administrative rationalism "... can be captured by looking actual practice in the development of policies, institutions, and methodologies" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 76). It is relevant to investigate to what degree the administrative rationalism discourse fits in the Norwegian context because "... it captures the dominant governmental response to the onset of environmental crisis..." (Dryzek, 2013, p. 74). At first glance, the situation characterizing Norwegian climate policy development does seem similar to the administrative rationalism discourse due to the importance and use of information from expert commissions and relevant expert agencies, like the low emission commission and the technical report on emission reductions ordered from the environment agency. The rationalistic techniques associated with administrative rationalism such as cost-benefit analysis and risk analysis are central tools in Norwegian climate policy. This is evident in the newly appointed climate risk commission (Norwegian Ministry of Finance, n.a), and previous commissions such as the low emission commission from 2007, quota commission from 2000 and the green tax commission

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from 2015. These were conducting socioeconomic analyses with different purposes. The climate white papers themselves can also be viewed as large cost-benefit analysis. This is especially evident in the climate white paper from 2007 which is influenced by the famous *Stern Review*. All papers mention the projected costs of greenhouse gas emissions and are based on the idea that it will be beneficial to initiate some cost-effective measures to reduce emissions now as opposed to doing nothing and thus having to bear the costs to society later.

Furthermore, shadow pricing, which is a central component of cost-benefit analysis, has a central place in Norwegian climate policy. This is due to the centrality of carbon pricing as an instrument to reduce emissions and its importance for private sector decision-making. Today, more than 80% of national emissions are subjected to a CO₂ fee. Norway is also participating in several international coalitions concerned with putting a price on carbon and developing market-based techniques to reduce emission (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a). It is important to note that this particular area of Norwegian climate policy raises some interesting predicaments regarding Dryzek's (2013) discourse classification. Cost-benefit analysis as a fundamental part of administrative rationalism is thought to have an "... implicit faith in the welfare maximizing virtues of government officials, which true economic rationalism lacks, preferring instead that market mechanisms be utilized wherever possible" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 86). The focus on flexibility and market mechanisms in Norwegian climate policy can surely be associated with economic rationalism, while the cost-benefit analysis on which the market-based approach derives from is associated with administrative rationalism.

The institutional structures which enables cost-benefit analyses and deals with environmental issues in Norway are substantive. Norway has a significant pollution control agency, and there are several laws and amendments meant to guide the management of various factors that put a pressure on the environment. The Pollution Act also covers CO₂ and is thus often mentioned as an important tool in climate policy together with the Planning and Building Act as well as the Nature Diversity Act. The latter has only been mentioned in the climate white paper from 2012, while the Climate Change Act is included in the most recent white paper on climate. These laws and amendment are extensive and complicated. However, they may not be the regulatory policy instruments envisioned by the ideal coming from administrative rationalism as described by Dryzek (2013) due to the possible influence of politics. This is closely related to the institutional planning mechanisms concerned with environmental issues.

Planning in the context of administrative rationalism has, to debatable degree, a home in Norwegian climate policy. In the simplest of terms, Norway is a unitary state where policies are derived from the

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national level and delivered to the regional and local municipalities. However, power can be delegated from the national level to the regional or local level. This right is not manifested in the constitution, and the debate regarding national, regional and local autonomy is ongoing in the Norwegian context. The municipalities have to provide services as decided by the state, but are also free to go beyond what is required and take on additional tasks (T. Christensen et al., 2010).

There are several climate and environment related policies determined at the national level that greatly influence various sectors of society from the national to the very local. Clear examples of top-down regulations coming from the national level are the overreaching tax on carbon and national regulations (Pollution Act and Planning and Building Act). In addition to this, there are guidelines developed at the national level which are distributed to the various municipalities to guide action on climate issues. However, there is also room for local decision making and many central government functions are delegated to the regional and local levels. Some municipalities do take on additional tasks and go further in climate policy implementation, such as Arendal Municipality when they became the country's first climate neutral municipality in 2008 (Arendal Municipality, n.a). Furthermore, the white papers stipulate that the overreaching principles are meant to guide decentralized measures, which suggests that climate change policies are relatively free to take on context specific approaches as long as the involved parties work within the national regulations regarding taxes and quota systems.

Softer regulations, such as guideline and regulations which could be defined as nudges, are common. Nudges can be defined as a policy that does not wish to "... tell people what to do, but to change the context in which they act so as to induce them to make different decisions" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 80). Providing people with recycling opportunities, making it more difficult to pollute and many other mechanisms are in effect in the Norwegian society. Some examples are often highlighted as good examples of environmental policy, specifically policies concerning electric cars making it cheaper to choose electric (Vaughan, 2017) and the bottle recycling arrangement where you get a few kroner back per bottle when you deliver them to the recycling machine in your local supermarket (Cockburn, 2018). All stores must accept these bottles, making it easy for users to get their money back with minimal effort without any prohibition regarding plastic bottle pollution necessary. However, these nudges have an economic and incentivizing component, which could be associated with market-based approaches following the polluter pays principles. The bottle arrangement is focusing on avoiding local pollution, while the electric car incentivizing system is focusing on emissions and global consequences for the climate in addition to local pollution issues.

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There are several issues which separate Norwegian climate policy from environmental policy and regulation in general. For instance, climate policy is largely goal-oriented at the national level. Most other kinds of environmental regulation are in place in order to prevent a certain kind of pollution at the local level, or to ensure a certain standard when it comes to energy efficiency which would be difficult to regulate simply by setting a national target. This can often be attributed to the nature of the issue in question, nitrogen levels in local waters necessitate a different kind of regulation than net CO₂ emissions at the national or international scale. It might seem that the Norwegian governing style is a somewhat hybrid version of the classic Weberian government and the concept of governance, the latter of which focuses on decentralization, networking and informal structures. The fact that Norwegian climate policy is focused around market mechanisms and carbon pricing supports this argument because the idea behind this approach is that these mechanisms will give incentives for businesses to implement desired environmental initiatives which will reduce emission. This is a fundamentally different approach than the one guiding more traditional forms of environmental management, where regulation is more common. The complex and widespread sources of greenhouse gas emissions present new challenges which seem to be difficult to handle with traditional administrative approaches, calling for market-based approaches in order to meet emission reduction targets without fundamentally changing practices.

The common practice in environmental management is that environmental considerations are weighted against other considerations such as those of businesses or society. The environmental laws in Norway are thus authorization legislations where there is considerable room for managers to use their discretion in the various types of cases. This also leaves room for a significant influence of politics on management. However, new and more precise laws have been implemented the years, so that there is a higher number of specific regulations regarding certain pollutants. This is largely due to the increase in number of directives coming from the EU and an increased judicialization of environmental law. The requirements for environmental impact assessments through the Planning and Building Act is also contributing to this development (Bugge, 2015). It is interesting that the environmental management system in Norway is largely controlled by experts, but that there is at the same time obvious room for discretion and political influence. The combination of expert management and political influence makes it difficult to identify this practice as a sign of administrative rationalism. It might rather be considered as a mechanism found in democratic pragmatism. Furthermore, there are several key elements in Norwegian environmental management that can be considered atypical for the administrative rationalism discourse which will be highlighted in the following sections.

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8.3.2 Democratic pragmatism

Another discourse placed within the problem-solving umbrella is democratic pragmatism. The democracy aspect of democratic pragmatism is not defined as a certain institutional structure, but rather an approach to problems (Dryzek, 2013). This is a way of solving problems within the current political-economic structures based on the foundations of liberal capitalist democracy. Key concepts are cooperation, discussion and networking. The idea of democratic pragmatism as a foundation for policy-making resembles that of policy mobility when reading about the social condition of policy-making as presented by Theodore and Peck (2015). However, the concept of fast policy does not necessitate a democratic pragmatism discourse and transgresses the diffuse and complex boundaries and interconnection between discourses. However, this discourse does go some way in identifying structures which would resemble the mechanisms described as important for the fast policy concept. There are many arenas for actors to meet and influence each other, some of which are easily identifiable.

Public consultation is a prominent feature of policy-making and natural resource management in Norway and is often related to environmental impact assessments. The most controversial of which might be the environmental impact assessment related to exploration for oil and gas on the Norwegian continental shelf. There have been regulations regarding impact assessments related to the petroleum sector since 1985, and in 2009 an impact assessment amendment was added to the Planning and Building Act that covers impact assessment criteria regarding other laws concerning larger interferences in nature, such as the Watercourse Regulation Act. These impact assessments are supposed to evaluate environmental and societal consequences, but another important aspect is to make sure that affected parties are heard in the process and given a voice. This is also a part of our EEA-commitment regulations (Sander, Braadland, Reusch, & Fladmark, 2017). Other public consultations frequently used in Norway are hearings, and it is normal to have a hearing regarding larger processes in parliament impacting sector specific climate initiatives such as budget plans or national transportation plans presented through the issue of a white paper.

Public inquiries like hearings are a common feature of national policy development regarding environmental and climate issues. However, it is important to note that "The terms and their interpretation can be narrow and biased toward the project proponent" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 106). It is also well known in the environmental movement that certain ideas will not be taken into consideration, and that the members of the committee and their constellation and political priorities set the scope for influence from civil society. In addition, it is common practice to think somewhat pragmatically about these hearings, and stick to presenting smaller, concrete ideas that are less

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radical in order to increase the chances of influencing policy¹. Other forms of policy dialogue do happen, for instance when actors such as the Ministry of Climate and Environment arranges meetings with relevant parties when preparing a certain policy, or when employees of businesses or environmental organizations meet policymakers in person. To which degree this process really influences policies is varied and subjected to debate. There are also legal instruments related to democratic participation in addition to inclusion through participation.

Another important characteristic of democratic pragmatism is the right to information and the importance of widespread knowledge to enable pragmatic deliberation. The climate promise initiative was specifically directed at increasing peoples' knowledge about climate change for instance. The new Climate Change Act can be an important new instrument when it comes to right to know legislation, which ensures people's access to the best available information. The law includes "... an annual reporting mechanism. The Government shall each year submit to the Parliament updated information on status and progress in achieving the climate targets under the law, and how Norway prepares for and adapts to climate change" (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2018). This is mentioned in the latest white paper on climate, although this mostly focuses on flexible mechanisms and issues related to the marketization of emission reduction.

8.3.3 Economic rationalism

Several social democracies have been pioneers for policy instruments associated with economic rationalism, and Norway is no exception. The tendency to privatize has been somewhat on the rise, even though the degree depends on the political forces in power. Privatization discussions often revolve around public services or publicly owned companies and can sometimes be affecting natural resource management. However, regulations like the law which ensures public access to all nature areas in Norway regardless of the owner is rarely questioned. A doctoral thesis by Froukje Maria Platjouw from 2015 entitled "Environmental Law & The Ecosystem Approach. The Need for Consistency and Coherence in Environmental Law for the Maintenance of Ecosystem Integrity" points to flaws in Norwegian natural resource management (cited in Aarseth, 2015). She argues that because the current ecosystem based approach and environmental legislation leave substantial room for discretion, one should develop a clear system in order to put a price on nature (Aarseth, 2015). However, the Right to Roam approach to nature receives a considerable amount of attention from the Environment Agency who works continuously to preserve this right against privatization interests (Norwegian Environment Agency, 2018).

¹ Based on conversations with several environment and development organizations and personal experiences through several years engagement in civil society organizations.

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This highlights an important difference between climate and environment management. When it comes to both privatization and marketization, there is a clear difference between natural resource management policies and those specifically directed towards climate mitigation. While nature conservation and management exhibit signs of administrative rationalism and democratic pragmatism, climate policies heavily favor marketization. The tax on carbon and flexible mechanisms such as quota schemes and offsetting are key mechanisms in Norwegian climate policy. This is evident in all the climate white papers and related policy documents such as the various Official Norwegian Reports on climate issues and the climate settlements. Even though there are regulations regarding maximum levels of pollution, these are not marketed in the same way as emission quotas. They are rather decided through administrative structures with various degrees of involvement from affected stakeholders. Flexible mechanisms are a central part of the Kyoto protocol, and has been highlighted as important tools in climate policy since the very first white paper. The carbon tax is meant to put a price on carbon so that the market will incentivize technological improvements and low emission businesses, showing that the government has faith in the market to solve environmental problems if we get the right price. Some measures directed at the consumer has also been implemented, and various kinds of eco-labelling occurs to encourage consumers to choose environmentally friendly products. One example also highlighted by Dryzek (2013) is the “Nordic Swan”. This might resemble the initiatives desired by the green consciousness discourse, although initiatives like these can also be considered greenwashing business as usual.

It is not surprising that climate marketization has become a pillar in Norwegian climate policy since the idea has dominated the international politics of climate change over the years (Dryzek, 2013). International cooperation has been highlighted as an important aspect of climate policy since the first climate white paper, and this area of politics is closely related to the global arena. Furthermore, international cooperation and flexible mechanisms have made it possible to meet ambitious climate goals without lowering national emissions. This international connection should also suggest that the sustainable development discourse might have had some effect on the Norwegian climate discourse, due to its prominence in the United Nations system and Norway’s stable and significant involvement in this system.

8.3.4 Sustainable development

The sustainable development discourse can arguably be seen as the “... dominant global discourse of ecological concern” (Dryzek, 2013, p. 147). Dryzek (2013) argues that the best way to determine the existence of the sustainable development discourse is not to look at the practices or paths taken by certain countries as has been done with the problem-solving discourses. It is the strong connection to the discourse that ties together the various meanings and interpretations of sustainable

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development, and it is its commitment to plurality, exploration and decentralized experimentation that defines the sustainable development discourse (Dryzek, 2013).

For many, the global discourse of sustainable development is "... an antidote to governments increasingly under the sway of market liberal ideas and committed to reducing environmental controls, expanding trade, and promoting economic growth at all costs" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 162). It is at this level where it becomes increasingly difficult to separate discourses, at arenas where ideas related to the sustainable development discourses are intertwined with the ideas from problem-solving discourses promoted by many of the major governments and businesses at the global arena. Since "The success and failure of sustainable development rests on dissemination and acceptance of the discourse at a variety of levels, followed by action on and experimentation with its tenets" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 163), one should ask to what degree this discourse is being accepted in Norwegian climate policy. It is possible to go further and look for signs of this discourse outside policy documents on climate, but that is beyond the scope of this research.

Due to the abstract nature of the sustainable development discourse, it could be fruitful to look for the given meaning of the term sustainable development in the white papers. From the white paper from 2012 we saw that there was a reference to a definition of sustainable development from the national budget from 2008. Key characteristics for sustainable development was increased economic growth for the poor, considering economic, social and environmental factors in development, operating within the limits of nature and using an ecosystem approach for natural resource management. This is not far from what was written in the very first white paper on climate. It is stated that "The Government believes that a continuation of the economic policy to increase employment and increased welfare, in combination with continued active environmental policy work nationally and internationally, will create a good basis for sustainable development» (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995, p. 21 [author translation]).

Furthermore, it is stated that sustainable development is not zero growth, but rather growth occurring within the boundaries of nature. It was believed that most future growth would occur in the services sector, and that this would contribute to a necessary change in production and consumption pattern which would create sustainable development. This illustrates that the understanding of the term sustainable development has a long tradition which focuses on economic growth within the limits set by nature. The term has broad acceptance at the governmental level, but it is difficult to argue that this term has created any alternative pathways or exploration aimed at changing the status quo, although decentralized efforts are encouraged. The papers regarding the SDGs do not suggest any departure from this interpretation of sustainable development.

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The SDGs are the most obvious connotation to the term sustainable development today. However, they do not fit perfectly with the discourse of sustainable development as proposed by Dryzek (2013), due to its goal orientation. These are the manifestation of the sustainable development community connected to the UN's attempt to "... impose a common definition replete with an associated set of precise goals (which is what administrative rationalists would do)" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 161). Even though these goals and other ideas related to sustainable development are often cited as important by politicians and in governmental documents, the critique of this adoption is extensive. The fact is that this framework enables the inclusion of various critical voices into the existing framework which enables governments to continue on the same path without making any substantial changes (Briant Carant, 2017). While sustainable development has been adopted as growth within the limits set by nature in Norwegian climate policy, this does not relate to the imaginative nature that the sustainable development discourse represents. Furthermore, this prominence also speaks to the business-friendly variety of sustainable development.

The critique of the SDGs highlights important aspects of the sustainable development discourse which problematizes the connection between Norwegian climate discourse and the sustainable development discourse. It regards the fact that the goals are a continuation of colonial discourse and enables lip service to the sustainable development agenda (Briant Carant, 2017; Gärde, 2016). If one takes this into account and consider Dryzek's (2013) comment on goal orientation, then the connection made between the goals and Norwegian climate policy is no evidence for significant influence of a sustainable development discourse on Norwegian climate policy. It might, however, be the case that there might be evidence for this in Norwegian aid policies, and this could be investigated further by others. For the time being, the focus remains on Norwegian climate policy and its market oriented and technology driven climate policy. The findings highlighted in this section might resemble the characteristics associated with the ecological modernization discourse more than the sustainable development discourse although there is clear evidence of an attempt to maintain a strong connection to the sustainable development discourse.

8.3.5 Ecological modernization

Ecological modernization has been identified as one of the most widespread mainstream approaches within market environmentalism as sustainable development, in addition to corporate social responsibility. Ecological modernization goes further than believing in the social responsibility of corporations and recognizes the limitations of free market mechanisms and advocates for regulation of the market in order for the system to "... deliver environmentally and socially optimal outcomes" (Adams, 2009, p. 125). It is a reformist strand of thinking which focuses on innovation, greater competitiveness and technological change as instruments to force the current political economy to

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transform to a more environmentally sustainable capitalism. The report on green competitiveness referred to in the white paper from 2016 can be associated with this approach.

Recalling the theoretical framework, there are various interpretations of ecological modernization. Ecological modernization can be techno corporatist, soft, hard or reflexive. Dryzek (2013) points to the importance of the choice between versions adopted by society, and it is therefore important to consider which of these interpretations Norwegian climate policy is most similar to. If one agrees with Dryzek (2013), identifying Norwegian climate discourse as weak or techno-corporatist ecological modernization means that it is believed to be "... just a rhetorical rescue operation for a capitalist economy confounded by ecological crises" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 178). This warrants an analysis of the versions of ecological modernization.

A key characteristic of the Norwegian environmental policy-making system is that it is corporatist, where important segments of society is represented by their leaders in conversations with the governments. These can be unions, business sectors and environmental organizations among others. This is considered productive and constructive because the differences and conflicts between actors are small enough to be overcome by cooperation, meaning that there is consensus among key actors regarding principles underpinning policy (Dryzek, 2013). The various versions of ecological modernization are corporatist to a greater or lesser degree. Technological innovation and its importance for sustainable development, ecologically sound business development and economic growth also suggests that Norwegian climate policies represent a discourse closely related to weak ecological modernization.

This is another area where other environmental concerns might depart from issues related to climate policies. Surely, a country that increased its emission by 10% from its very first emission stabilization goal from 1989 to 1995 when it also got rid of the initial goal (Sæther, 2017), cannot be considered a successful climate policy initiator as it has been identified as through the ecological modernization discourse. Emissions have shown no signs of significant reduction during the time Norway has had official climate policies, although expected increases have been avoided. This is not ignored in the white papers on climate, but the solutions do not differ very much from previous policies and exhibit clear signs of technological optimism and belief in business initiatives to reduce GHG emissions. This is evident in the Seventh National Contribution to the UNFCCC, and as well as the white papers on climate. However, it can also be argued that there are elements of both strong and reflexive ecological modernization. There is no doubt that there is a strong concern for the international dimension of environmental issues associated with strong ecological modernization, and there are elements of critical self-awareness in the white papers which relates to the reflexive approach. This is

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present in statements regarding unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and the problem of increased emissions from the petroleum sector.

Dryzek (2013) argues that strong ecological modernization can only be seen in Germany and has argued that Norway is a corporatist state with weak oppositional social movements such as those in Germany. I would also argue that when it comes to climate policy it is not fitting to speak of strong ecological modernization in Norway today. However, I would also disagree that Norway as one of seven countries "... eschew both adversarial policy-making and unbridled capitalist competition" (Dryzek, 2013, p. 169). Norwegian climate policies do not reflect this characterization of countries where ecological modernization has a strong foothold. Although technological innovation plays an important role, it is sidelined by the focus on market mechanisms when it comes to meeting the targets for climate policies. These findings question the elements and categorizations of ecological modernization since this case shows a complex and difficult to determine relationship with ecological modernization and the Norwegian climate discourse. Much like how Dryzek (2013) argues that people can move between discourses in order to remain credible, it seems like Norwegian climate policies also incorporate a plurality of approaches to climate policy in order to maintain credibility and achieve its targets. However, not all discourses have a substantial impact.

8.3.6 Green radicalism and Limits and their denial

It is worth mentioning the discourses evaluated as less relevant to the Norwegian climate discourse. The denial of climate change is nowhere to be found, and it is effectively excluded by the reference to the limits discourse when describing the earth's natural limits. All white papers except the ones from 2001 and 2017 mentions critical limits regarding what nature can handle, and the importance of staying within these limits. Furthermore, the impact of population is mentioned several times as an important factor contributing to climate change even though policies related to controlling this component are not considered. This inclusion does not mean that this strand of thinking is particularly influential in Norwegian climate policies considering the policy options presented. The same goes with the green radicalism discourse, which sometimes can be connected to smaller elements of Norwegian climate policy without having a significant influence.

The term radical has radically different meanings to various actors in politics and society. What are considered radical environmental policies differ substantially between contexts, also when it comes to environmental discourses. While it is possible to suggest that some aspect of Norwegian climate policy has been radical at some point, like introducing a fee on CO₂ before other countries did, it is a stretch to call any main characteristics of Norwegian climate policy today as rooted in any radical environmental thinking as characterized by Dryzek's (2013) environmental discourses. The white

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papers show no clear sign of changing current political structures validating the logic behind many of the approaches within green radicalism or the limits discourse.

According to Dryzek (2013), there are certain criteria which can be used in order to determine the importance and success of an environmental discourse. These criteria are related to how the discourse has influenced policies and institutions as well as the arguments of its critics and social and cultural impact. This section has looked at institutions and policies, and it seems that the discourses which can be considered to have a significant influence on Norwegian climate policy are the problem-solving discourses and to some degree a weak version of the ecological modernization discourse.

8.3.7 Environmental discourses and Norwegian climate policy

How appropriate are the distinctions between different discourses in the case of Norwegian climate policy? It has been difficult to pinpoint to which discourse the Norwegian climate discourse adheres. It seems that economic rationalism dominates due to the importance given to the policy instruments attached to it. This is something which to some degree separates the other environmental issues from climate change action. While issues such as local pollution and other issues of environmental management is largely managed through administrative means often in combination with stakeholder involvement, the issue of greenhouse gas emissions is being solved using market mechanisms where regulation outside of this should only happen in areas where this is not possible.

Furthermore, the focus on technological solutions and innovation could place certain areas of Norwegian climate policy within the ecological modernization framework, although it would be considered weak ecological modernization in relation to Dryzek's (2013) distinctions. In addition, environmental policy in Norway has a long history with administrative rationalistic and democratic pragmatic mechanisms which also influence climate policy. The next and final part will consider other sources of influence on Norwegian climate policies as well as critical voices questioning the Norwegian approach.

8.4 PART THREE: CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of identifying the Norwegian climate discourse was to enable a critical discussion of the findings. The following sections will address the main policies and their values and principles as identified in part one, keeping in mind the issues raised in part two. Beginning with theoretical concept fast policy, this section will discuss key issues concerning the Norwegian climate discourse ,drawing on the insights from the other sources of literature presented in this paper. The following does not attempt to be prescriptive when it comes to what Norwegian climate policy should be. The

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purpose is to critically discuss the Norwegian climate discourse by including perspectives coming from other sources than the Norwegian government, attempting to create a basis for further research and enable a pluralistic and open debate.

8.4.1 The world of fast policies and differentiated values and principles

It is widely recognized that global policies “...cannot deliver a universally applicable template” (Cochrane & Ward, 2012, p. 5). However, similar policies addressing climate change are found all over the world. Policy mobility theory is a good place to start in order to understand where policies come from and how policy is created and travel in various ways between places, because it is not only concerned with the national context but also the wider context in which policy is developed (Cochrane & Ward, 2012). Climate change policies are operating in this space between the local and the global, and the fast policy theory provides an approach to analyzing how different source of power at various levels and other factors influence policy decisions. Although agency is not the focus of this research, it should be noted that this approach does not ignore the potential of agency, a factor deemed important to create social transformation necessary to sufficiently act on climate change (O’Brien, 2018). The ideas put forward by Peck and Theodore (2015) suggest that the existence of certain dominant approaches to climate change as suggested by Dryzek (2013), while certainly influential, cannot alone be the reason for climate policy taking the path it has done in Norway. It is highly relevant to investigate local circumstances when one is seeking to explain Norwegian climate policy. Christensen’s (2017) finding that the Ministry of Finance owns much of the structural power framing Norway’s approach to climate policy is important in this regard. The oil-dependency, or oil-dependency narrative, which will be discussed later is also relevant.

Secondly, international cooperation and active engagement therein is an important arena that might have been very important for certain policy adoptions, possibly strengthening or weakening the legitimacy of policy options within specific sectors. Christensen’s (2017) research finding regarding the fact that the Ministry of Climate and Environment has less to do with specific climate policy choices happening in other ministries adds further complexity to this issue. This is a point which has not been possible to investigate in depth during the process of this research, but it is safe to say that international cooperation matters and that there are complex interconnections between the local and the global, as well as within the government structures. The interview with key informants working at the Ministry of Climate and Environment revealed that there is significant international cooperation with a varying degree of contact and influence depending on the specific section of climate and environmental policy. At the same time, it was stated that ideas and choices for policy can come from a variety of sources, both nationally and internationally, also often depending on the specific characteristics of the work process of the sector in question. The climate and forest sector

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was presented as a typical example where there are many international arenas that Norway is involved in, with many different actors in a global network comprised of private entities, other governments, development banks and so on. This initiative is not only a significant part of climate policy, it is also fundamentally connected to development policy which adds further complexity to the network of international and national cooperation between actors.

A possible case to illustrate the complex interconnections between the local and the global could be the new Climate Change Act in Norway. This was first championed by the Norwegian strand of WWF. When the idea was gaining momentum, there were several political parties as well as many environmental organizations backing the idea. It is strongly inspired by the Climate Change Act adopted in Great Britain in 2008, and it is a part of a larger movement where climate acts are being adopted in many different countries all over the world (Globe International, 2015; WWF, 2011). Although the Climate Change Act was inspired by others, it has different characteristics than the original idea adopted in Great Britain as well as other countries with similar legislation. It has been criticized by Norwegian civil society for being too weak (Fröberg, 2017). The international nature of the phenomenon and regional interconnectedness is visible in the law proposition itself since it references the Climate Change Act in the United Kingdom, Denmark, Finland and Sweden (Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017b). It has similar functions as the laws of other countries as well as national uniqueness because it specifically takes into consideration Norway's cooperation with the EU and the necessity of cooperation in order for Norway to become carbon neutral and reduce emissions as significantly as stated in the law.

This example contests the idea that hegemonic frameworks for policies spreads easily throughout the world without being fundamentally transformed. Thirdly, another issue to consider is the possible implications of this for the realization of Norwegian climate policies. The idea based on markets as the global solution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions rests on the idea that the actors will collaborate and move their climate policies in the same direction of marketization which will enable market-based cooperation. The theory behind the fast policy concept challenges this idea directly. The World Bank is often pointed out as an actor ideologically imposing a preferred version of a policy such as Conditional Cash Transfers within the field of development, with Theodore and Peck (2015) showing variation in policy implementation due to mutation, contestation and mobility in this policy area.

Norway might be following the same flawed assumption regarding the spread of climate policy, underestimating the potential for mutation, contestation and mobility that might yield a wide variety of climate policy worldwide and might not serve Norwegian interests and possibly create problems

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for the implementation of policies. The Sustainable Development Goals does create a framework where all signatories are supposed to work towards the same goals, and so does the Paris Agreement. However, none of these determine a path to travel, and there is substantial room for local policy responses. The caveat introduced in the Climate Change Act regarding Norway's cooperation with the EU illustrates this insecurity well. It is not unlikely that political circumstances might change which could have implications for Norwegian climate policy because it largely rests on friendly relations with other nations and their wish to cooperate in order to reduce emissions. The values and principles of climate and development policy in general are not universal and might change over time without Norway being able to influence this to a significant degree.

Finally, the process of monitoring, reporting and accounting involved in climate policy shares a characteristic with other fast policies in that the product and process end up being more of "... an art than a science" (Peck & Theodore, 2015, p. 132). In a way similar to how the World Bank chooses ways of monitoring and evaluating Conditional Cash Transfers, so too is demonstrating the effects of climate policy an act that is based on certain values and principles such as value for money, cost-effectiveness or if the location of emission reductions should influence how it is accounted for in climate accounting schemes. An empirical result of a policy approach might simultaneously be considered a success or failure depending on the values and principles of the judge. This will be illustrated later in this part when it comes to the climate and forest initiative. This complexity is another issue which might become a source of contestation in the future.

To follow in the analytical footsteps of Theodore and Peck (2015), policy moves through unpredictably through political networks and discourses. Fast policy builds on the premise that the actors engaged in policy-making help shape, transform and uphold current practices. This could be done through the formation of certain discourses. When it comes to Norwegian climate policy, there are several possible discourses which have both enabled and limited policy options. One financially powerful actor that is doing just that is the oil industry.

8.4.2 The influence of the oil industry

From the discussion regarding the Norwegian climate discourse in the first and second part of this analysis, it is clear that Norwegian climate policy is influenced by a variety of factors. The nature of the issue at hand, international discourses and institutional structures have been introduced in this paper so far. In addition to this, a lot has been written about the influence of the oil industry on the Norwegian society. This issue is of importance when discussing the constraints and opportunities for policy arising from the political economic structures of a country. Although analyzing the relationship between the political economy and climate policy exhaustively is beyond the scope of this research,

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it can be fruitful to consider the arguments concerning the significant influence of the oil industry on the public debate and on policies.

The arguments favoring increased oil exploration forms a national discourse framing an idea regarding the relationship between oil and climate change. The communications department in Norway's largest governmental oil company has had, at certain points in time, as many employees as the non-governmental environmental organizations combined (Sæther, 2017). This work has led to many pro oil exploration arguments spreading through the media and influencing politicians as well. If it is so that many discourses can influence Norwegian climate policy as previously argued, then it is certainly likely that this work has had its influence. It is visible in the very first white paper on climate, which expressly mentions gas as a climate friendly alternative to coal. This is an argument developed by oil companies which is speculative at best. The white paper states that "«Globally and regionally Norwegian export of gas can cause significant environmental improvements if it replaces existing or stops new developments of other energy sources like coal or heavy oil» (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 1995, p. 9 [author translation]). This is one example that Sæther (2017) highlights as a truth which has been created to serve the interest of the oil and gas industry and is lacking scientific evidence.

Furthermore, the concept of energy realities has been identified as a term developed by Statoil, an often-utilized argument since 2008. Essentially, the argument starts with the statement that the world needs more energy and ends up with Norway having to produce more oil and gas. People concerned with climate change should also support this, because Norway extracts oil emitting less greenhouse gases on average than the global average (Sæther, 2017). This argument is still highly relevant and was recently repeated in an online article as a reason for developing a new oil field called Johan Castруп (The Norwegian Government, 2018b). The problem is that the "clean oil" argument has repeatedly been debunked. Norwegian oil extraction can emit less greenhouse gases than others, but there are also many fields which emit more than the international average (Sæther, 2017). To put it bluntly, no causal relationship between nationality and emissions has been proven. This argument is not explicitly used in any of the climate white papers, except indirectly through a few statements regarding how carbon capture and storage technology development can be important in order to secure the world's energy supply since most of the energy supply comes from fossil fuels (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2001, 2007).

The impact and importance of oil and gas on the Norwegian economy is highlighted in the white paper from 2001 (Norwegian Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2001). While it might be considered less relevant for climate policy to consider the income from the oil sector, this is in line

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with the general approach to environmental management through cost-benefit analyses. Throughout the white papers, the emissions from oil production is recognized and sometimes projected in reference to emission reduction strategies for the sector. These strategies are based on the fee on CO₂ and technological developments, or electrification of the energy sources used for extraction. Implicit in these considerations is the fact that the extraction of oil is seen as more beneficial to society than reducing emissions or avoiding increased emissions by not permitting more oil and gas extraction. This is in line with the most important arguments present in the oil and gas discourse as investigated by Sæther (2017). However, the electrification of oil extraction (not using gas turbines to produce power) is a costly measure and might not be considered cost-effective. This did not stop politicians from demanding it in spite of vocal opposition from the oil industry itself, a confrontation of a rare nature in Norway (Sæther, 2017). This might suggest some influence from the environmental movement, which has been calling for national emission reduction policies for years.

The fact that also environmental organizations can have an influence on policies should not be ignored, although Dryzek (2013) points out that the corporative system in Norway might not actually give much power to environmental organizations. He writes that “One hazard accompanying the inclusion of greens and environmentalists in corporatist government is depletion of the public sphere, as former activists are attracted into government, and accept moderation as the price to be paid. This situation characterizes Norway, a top performer in cross-national environmental comparisons, but with no social movements or oppositional public sphere to push the country further” (Dryzek, 2013, p. 239). While moderation as the price to be paid is something which I have also pointed out from my own experience from an environmental NGO, it is not appropriate to say that there is no oppositional public sphere in Norway today. The ongoing lawsuit against the Norwegian government is a poignant example. This lawsuit is essentially a battle over how reality is framed, with the plaintiffs claiming that oil exploration and protecting the environment for future generations are incompatible, while the Government claims that there is no contradiction between drilling for oil and protecting the environment. This lawsuit is a confrontational attempt to “push the country further” as it were and challenge the powerful framing of reality which benefits the oil industry.

Øyvind Ihlen (2007) has conducted research on how Norwegian oil industry uses strategic communication and image building to create frames of interpretation which are beneficial to their industry. While pointing out the fact that all actors use frames of interpretation to address certain issues, it is still highlighted that these become problematic when they create interpretations which is rarely questioned by the actors involved. Sæther (2017) builds on Ihlen (2007), and both find that there are several such frames of interpretations which are rarely questioned within and outside the

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oil industry. The concept of energy realities is one of them, and environmentally friendly oil production is another. However, while money can be a key component determining actors influence over the public debate, it is also important to connect this to their institutions, networks, rhetoric and knowledge (Ihlen, 2007). The network consisting of politicians and others working in the oil industry as identified by Sæther suggests that the oil industry has a cocktail of all these factors working in their favor. Not only are there close connections between the oil industry and the Government today, this close relationship was established when oil was first produced in Norway and have been a central component of the institutional framework ever since. Given that the need for oil production is not questioned in any white paper on climate, it is clear that these influential frames have had an impact on the Norwegian climate discourse. The cases studied by Hajer (1995) show how discourses can have a significant amount of influence over policy as well as being challenged by particular institutional structures working against the narrative.

8.4.3 Ecological modernization, fast policy and power relations

The work of Hajer (1995) can highlight the connection between the two foregoing topics on the influence of the oil industry and the concept of fast policy. The fact that emblematic issues are identified by Hajer as a key factor influencing definitions of environmental crises supports the argument that certain frames for interpretation will have an impact on environmental policy. That powerful actors are successfully producing frames for interpretation in Norway has been demonstrated, and these efforts will interact with other discourses through international cooperation and influence from relevant international discourses as described through the concept of fast policy. Furthermore, even though a discourse can spread internationally and significantly influence the framing an environmental issue, the policy resulting from this will be adapted to the local circumstance. These local structures can be found at various levels, recalling that Christensen (2017) found that specific climate policies are often decided within sector specific departments as opposed being instructed by the Ministry of Climate and Environment. Parts one and two of this analysis showed that there are signs of a weak ecological modernization discourse in Norwegian climate discourse. The clear difference in context and the nature of the issue at hand might explain the different degrees of influence over policy. This might be important in order to understand why economic rationalism seems to have had a greater influence over Norwegian climate policy compared to ecological modernization or other alternatives. The following paragraphs will compare the Norwegian climate discourse with the two cases investigated by Dryzek (2013) in order to identify similarities and differences which might highlight influencing factors.

The ecological modernization discourse forming in the United Kingdom had several similarities with the Norwegian discourse. Norwegian emissions are frequently put in a wider context but differs

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significantly from the acid rain case because Norwegian CO₂ emissions are relatively modest when compared to larger polluters in the region and globally. While the SO₂ emissions from the United Kingdom was the greatest in Europe, Norwegian emissions were a small fraction of the emission produced by countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany and Poland in 2014 (World Bank, 2018). The picture drastically changes if one chooses to look at emissions per capita. This issue does not receive attention in the white papers on climate, where most attention is paid to the need to reduce global emission and the urgency of reducing total emissions through international cooperation. While these were fundamentally different framings of the problem, the focus on acting on the issue over the importance of accumulating scientific evidence could be compared to the Norwegian focus on the precautionary principle.

The Dutch ecological modernization case researched by Hajer (1995) shows many similarities with the Norwegian context. Firstly, Norwegian politics is less antagonistic and more inclusive through socio-corporatist practices which creates space for a plurality of opinions such as in the Netherlands. The environmental discourse in the Netherlands was more pragmatic and socially inclusive as opposed to the discourse in Britain. However, this has not created a convergence between the open debate going on in the media and the Government's climate policy. The same might have been true for Norway, because ecological modernization seems to have received more attention in the media than given by the Government (Haugseth et al., 2016). Secondly, Norwegian economic and political discourse share similarities with the Netherlands in regard to the perceived fragility of its economic success. This is often connected to the importance of the oil industry in Norway, a storyline that might arguably be characterized as apocalyptic in the same way as the storylines presented by Hajer when it comes to economic concerns. The importance of the oil industry for Norwegian economy is not only highlighted by the industry itself, it is stated on the Government's website and highlighted by several unions (Industri Energi, 2017; The Norwegian Government, 2016b).

Hajer identified institutional characteristics as crucial for the discrepancy between the dominant narrative and policy implications in the Netherlands. Given that powerful actors are working to maintain and expand Norwegian oil and gas exploration, and that this is combined with the structures which were also challenging for the ecological modernization discourse in the Netherlands, it is not surprising that economic rationalism in climate policy has been maintained over ecological modernization. Both institutional structures such as the contextual power of the finance ministry and the dominant narrative presented by Government, unions and the oil industry alike are supporting this development. Furthermore, this approach contributes to maintaining the status quo as well as enables substantive climate policy that serves Norway's interest (L. Christensen, 2017; Skar, 2012). This goes a long way in explaining the economic rationalistic approaches to climate

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policy and the unwearied thrust in technological solutions as a means to solve the challenges climate change presents. These foregoing paragraphs and sections highlight the limitations and frames influencing Norwegian climate policy, raising the question if climate policy in Norway is focusing on providing solutions to the climate change problem which serve powerful actors in society.

8.4.4 The impact of economic approaches and technical solutions

The foregoing sections have dealt with discourses, institutions and fast policy and their relationship with Norwegian climate policy. This section will go beyond this and present literature which highlights issues regarding the fundamental truths that are taken for granted in Norwegian climate policy. The concerns regarding the use of market-based approaches to reduce emissions or reduce deforestation has received little attention in the White papers on climate. As mentioned before, concepts such as solidarity have been mentioned a few times in official documents on climate policy and the cost-effectiveness principle is being routinely used as validation for the policy strategy chosen. No significant downsides to using the cost-effectiveness principle as one of the main guiding principles of climate policy are debated. However, there have been substantial scientific critique of this approach based on its ability to produce actual emission reductions substantial enough to limit global warming, as well as empirical evidence of negative social impacts coming from initiatives funded by Norway (T. Benjaminsen & Svarstad, 2018).

Initiatives that commodify forests can go against local norms and practices of forest protection and produce new patterns of dependency (G. Benjaminsen & Kaarhus, 2018). If there is anything that the history of aid and development assistance has taught us, it is that intervening in developing countries' policies directly is a risky endeavor which does not necessarily produce positive outcomes or address the underlying causes of poverty or environmental degradation (Adams, 2009; Banerjee, Benabou, & Mookherjee, 2006; Potter, Binns, Elliott, & Smith, 2008). Wanting to intervene in other countries does not necessarily produce a beneficial outcome for either party in the long run, and might enable new forms of colonialism and green-grabbing or the neoliberalization of nature (Fairhead et al., 2012; Victor, 1991). Even though a policy might be cost-effective it does not automatically align with other principles such as solidarity, the precautionary principles or the local values and principles held by communities affected by Norwegian climate policies. In line with the findings presented by Skar (2012), there is a self-interest motive for initiating these policies with global implications. It is certainly so that the focus on cost-effectiveness, technological improvements and the polluter pays principle enables a continuation of the status quo with smaller adjustments.

The possibility that Norwegian climate policy is continuing a trend of rich countries colonizing land and people of the South should not be ignored. The substantial scientific evidence for the existence

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of these relationships of dependence and their negative impacts on local communities are causes for concern. The fact is that these concerns have not received attention in the Norwegian climate discourse. Although solidarity is mentioned, this is not operationalized in the way cost-effectiveness has been through the focus on marketization. The precautionary principles deal with being precautionary regarding acting now instead of later when it comes to mitigating emissions, but it does not explicitly concern social consequences. The concerns of the economy are manifested through the cost-effectiveness principle, the polluter pays principle, the management-efficiency principle and the focus on fees and technological innovations which are good for business. As previously stated, this represents a value and a principle that what is good for the economy is inherently good and that technological solutions are desirable and effective. Although the fast policy concept says that dominant approaches to climate change does not automatically manifest in a particular way in different nations, it is clear that neoliberal responses to climate change have found a home in Norwegian climate policy and that the consequence of this is not necessarily positive for the recipients of Norwegian climate policy.

Furthermore, the degree to which flexible market mechanisms produce actual emission reductions is the subject of much debate (Klepper, 2011; Nordeng, 2015). Theoretically, setting a cap on emissions is an approach which could make sure that emissions are reduced and do not exceed a politically determined volume. Empirically, however, it has been hard to prove that current mechanisms actually reduce emissions (Nordeng, 2015). Furthermore, carbon credits such as those generated by projects involved in the Clean Development Mechanisms do not generate additional emission reductions when the developing country does not implement significant emission reduction targets (Klepper, 2011). Challenges relating to using emission trading to reduce emission are being addressed at the regional level in the EU (Wettestad & Jevnaker, 2017). While the forest initiative is not a part of a quota trading system now, the Government has signaled that they will push for this to be a possibility in the future (Ekeberg, 2016). The latter is problematic not only based on the challenges highlighted in the foregoing paragraphs, but also the recent substantial critique by the Office of the Auditor General of Norway regarding the initiative's effectiveness and the danger of corruption (Røst, 2018).

There are other radical strands of thinking which are not considered in Norwegian policy-making. For some, there is no technical or problem-solving fix which will transform the world into one where human economic activity does not harm the climate or contribute to climate change. The fundamental fact driving radical green politics is that human activity is driven to a large extent by the economic system within which we operate, which is the main driver of human made emissions to the atmosphere due to the economy's dependence on fossil fuels. This is a defining characteristic of the

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industrial society now driven forward largely by the dominant economic paradigm of deregulated capitalism (Klein, 2014). Negotiations on climate change mitigation produced an international deal in 2015, the Paris agreement, where it was agreed that countries will take action to limit global warming to 2 degrees above preindustrial levels, in a best-case scenario limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. As highlighted by Klein (2014), this is a political decision with the aim of avoiding economic disruption. Although one could argue that economic disruption might also cause harm to the climate, the premise regarding the avoidance of economic disruption holds ground. The climate negotiations do not represent a forum where the economic system is questioned. Economic concerns (sometimes referred to as social concerns) are used as excuses to avoid taking expensive actions towards reducing climate change. This is one of the reasons why you would want to put a price on the consequences of climate change, but that cost is highly uncertain and the fact that it is relatively far away in time hinders its relevance for today's politicians.

The issue of economic development and CO₂ emissions require further attention at this point. Although evidence has been produced which indicate that economic growth can have a positive impact on environmental pressures (Shahbaz, Mahalik, Shah, & Sato, 2016), there is also evidence to the contrary, specifically when focusing on CO₂ emissions (Antonakakis, Chatziantoniou, & Filis, 2017). A recent study also showed that the relationship between CO₂ emissions and economic growth at the regional level depends on the sources of growth and the definition of the relationship between variables. In Norway, this relationship between the oil industry as an important source of growth and CO₂ emission increases are clearly admitted and pointed to in the white papers on climate. Furthermore, the issue of a possible environmental Kuznets curve for certain sectors and the possibility of a spurious negative relationship between economic growth and CO₂ emissions is questioned due to possible instances of leakages where the polluting factor has been moved out of the jurisdiction (Cui et al., 2017).

The central argument in Klein's book centers around the interconnection between the fossil fuel industry and the drivers of our economy. This system fueled by fossil fuel provided us with the challenges we face today and cannot provide the solutions. This argument fundamentally contradicts the approach taken by developed countries such as Norway. Looking at all the different environmental discourses as presented by Dryzek (2013), and considering the approaches adopted by Norway, it is difficult to know the outcome due to the uncertainty regarding the emission reducing capacities of carbon offsetting. A central issue here is that these approaches largely excludes each other. Both sides have their own significant advantages. The hegemonic approach is just that, it has broad and often democratic support for their work. It is easier to say that the current system is not delivering on the needed changes and suggest alternative approaches with unavoidably uncertain

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results. What is certain, however, is that it is possible to choose other approaches than the path taken by Norway. New Zealand is one example, a country with oil reserves who is going to ban oil exploration due to climate change concerns (Smyth, 2018).

The critique focusing on the problems of the economic system can be placed within the green radicalism discourse, most often related to green politics. It is believed that technological innovations and initiatives using market mechanisms will not produce the necessary emissions. Furthermore, it is argued that technical solutions represent a continuation of the status quo and will thus produce similarly harmful outcomes. This is a structural approach where a variety of actors are acknowledged, although large emphasis is put on corporations and governments. Critique of dominant climate or environmental discourses often focus on the values and principles underpinning current paradigms, calling for action to ensure environmental sustainability through placing greater focus on equality and wellbeing outside capitalist structures. Much like the identification of discourses and their relevant influences on climate policy, so too does this strand of thinking engage in a “... Battle of Worldviews” (Klein, 2014, p. 58).

While it is difficult to predict if carbon markets and offsetting might reduce emission, the assumption that technological innovation will reduce CO₂ emissions and reduce human impact on the environment is flawed. What is often not considered is the fact that efficiency gains in the production of a product also tend to lower prices and increase consumption. This has also been true at the macro level, and it is visible every time the CO₂ emission per produced unit goes down while total emissions from the total number of units goes up (Huesemann & Huesemann, 2008). This fact is a strong argument calling for the inclusion of consumption policies as a part of climate policy, by stabilizing economies instead of growing them and introducing policies which discourage wasteful consumption and center an economy around services instead of extraction industries (Huesemann & Huesemann, 2008; Jackson, 2017). This can be aligned with different discourses, where limits might open up for production and consumption modesty and green radicalism could focus on de-growth approaches. However, these approaches are not considered in Norwegian climate policy. Reading the white papers and climate settlements it is easy to believe that there is almost absolute consensus regarding Norwegian climate policy although there are signs of various discourses. While certain discourses are more influential than others, considerable disagreement regarding policy options and principles guiding policy is visible in the public debate.

8.4.5 National opposition

The most recent white paper on climate has been the subject of debate through a parliamentary process and in the Norwegian media. It is important to recognize that the views expressed through

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media are not necessarily reflecting the discourse to which the different organizations and parties adhere, since actors can shift between discourses in order to serve a specific purpose (Dryzek, 2013; Hajer, 1995). However, these expressions of opinions show that there is considerable disagreement regarding the effectiveness of the policies and strategies highlighted in the white paper. The most vocal opposition is coming from NGOs such as Greenpeace, who argues that the focus on cost-effectiveness and flexible market mechanisms is redirecting the attention away from national emission reduction, especially from the petroleum sector. They argue that countries such as Denmark could have used the same principles to argue that it is more cost-effective to close down coal power plants in countries where the price is lower, but they are instead choosing to close down their own coal power plants by 2030 (Martiniussen, 2018).

Furthermore, the social left party is arguing that the white paper should be withdrawn by the liberal party currently in government. The liberal party has a climate friendly profile and reputation, arguing for the importance of climate policy. The opposition party firmly believes that the current climate strategy does not live up to expectations on climate policy coming from the liberal party. The main critique is also centered around the focus on market mechanisms, focusing on the need for policies which will yield concrete emissions cuts in Norway. This is essentially critiquing the dominance of the cost-effectiveness approach to climate mitigation, arguing that a principle concerned with national responsibility for national emission should be given attention in Norwegian climate policy (Kristiansen, 2018). This is in line with others pointing out that there is a lack of concrete instruments to reduce emissions and too much focus on creating flexibility through emission quota trading. However, the Government insists that this white paper is ambitious, and that the opposition is misunderstanding the purpose of the cooperation with the EU, which is meant to increase ambitions through cooperation. It is pointed out that the paper is a strategy, not a list of instruments (Hovland, 2018).

There has been a signal from the labor party that there should be a shift from mainly focusing on cost-effectiveness through paying for emission reductions abroad to focusing on local emission reduction as a means to stay competitive in the international market (Gullestad, 2018). However, it is important to note that this is related to emissions which are not already covered by the ETS. This has been the strategy of previous social democratic governments, but the labor party has not until now been vocal regarding the new developments in climate policy towards opening non-ETS sectors to international emission trading or transfers between sectors. This position towards the new developments in Norwegian climate policy was revealed through the treatment of the most recent white paper on climate in the Parliament. This development has been welcomed by some actors in

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the environmental movement who believes that this might create a shift in Norwegian climate policy towards increased responsibility to reduce emissions within the nation state (Gullestad, 2018).

Much of the critique of the current government's climate reduction strategy is that it focuses too much on reducing emissions abroad and call for a focus on national emission reductions instead of using market mechanisms (Fjellberg, 2018). The argument is that these mechanisms enable countries like Norway to continue increasing emissions or minimize their national emissions reductions, which would hinder the radical emission reductions needed on a global scale. Furthermore, if all countries would do what Norway is doing, the targets set by the Paris agreement would not be met (Kvåle, 2018). It is worth noting that the opening paragraph of the white paper on climate of 2017 says that the Government's strategy aims at reducing most emissions nationally, with the use of necessary flexible mechanisms. The ambiguity of the statement that the emission reductions will happen nationally, while simultaneously stating that they will use the available flexible mechanisms, is questionable.

These mechanisms enable Norway to meet their targets of emission reduction even when national emissions rise or moderately goes down. Flexibility is the main vehicle for Norway to meet the requirements of the Kyoto protocol. This is not controversial, and the only logical conclusion when looking at Norway and its increasing emissions numbers 1990 (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). The goal related to climate neutrality is also based on the possibility of flexibility between nations. The increase in emissions has mostly been attributable to oil and gas production. Climate policy and oil and energy policy is intrinsically interconnected, but the two areas are rarely treated jointly politically. A new report from the Agency for Development Policy (NORAD) reveals that there is little political will to address oxymorons or the lack of coherence in Norwegian policy. This is especially true for the relationship between the oil industry and climate policy (Speed, 2018). My wish is that even more students and researchers will be willing to address this in the future, so that the scientific basis upon which one can evaluate climate policy is expanded.

8.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In order to enhance the understanding of the policy-making processes and how it is connected to the fast policy concept, it could be fruitful to conduct case studies regarding specific climate policies and how they come to be. The power structures between different policy-making entities might show that certain areas of Norwegian climate policy take on different characteristics than what would be assumed based on the climate discourse present at the Ministry of Climate and Environment. Alternatively, it might be the case that certain environmental discourses have a stronger presence in certain sectors. It could be possible to get a better understanding of the fast policy concept and

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identify the social condition by conducting field research with in-depth interviews, following in the methodological footsteps of Peck and Theodore (2015).

Another question which needs elaboration is the degree to which democratic mechanisms in Norway enable meaningful participation by critical voices, as opposed to it enabling the cooptation of opposition into government structures as suggested by Dryzek (2013). While formal structures have been identified here, a comprehensive understanding of the democratic mechanisms should also include different arenas for participation and to what degree these arenas allow for differences of opinions on climate policy. Furthermore, this research has introduced the concept of fast policy in combination with discourse analysis of climate policy. Generally, it is my impression that more research coming from the field of development studies should focus on the complex nature of climate change policy, given the urgency of the problem and the current inadequacy of policies when it comes to producing necessary emission reductions fast enough to ensure a safe climate for all (UNEP, 2017).

9 CONCLUSIONS

This study of Norwegian climate policy using discourse analysis, reflective interpretation and critical discussions has created new knowledge regarding how Norwegian climate policies are constituted by several and dominated by particular environmental discourses. Although specific policies have changed over time, largely due to a changing international regime, certain principles have been and continues to be central. The cost-effectiveness principle has guided an economic rationalistic approach to climate policies focused on achieving specific emission reduction targets. However, the identification of elements relating to various environmental discourses does suggest that policy options connected to different environmental discourses can become a Norwegian climate policy, as long as they are based on the fundamental values and principles which enable a continuation of the status quo.

The existence of fast climate policies characterized by influences from a variety of actors at the national and international level has been suggested. Climate policy is constructed by many different entities outside of the Ministry of Climate and Environment, and many areas of policy-making are connected to complex webs of actors at different levels engaged in different aspects of policy-making. The fast policy concept also challenges the premise upon which Norwegian climate policy is built, that there will be a convergence on climate policy which will be beneficial to the Norwegian approach.

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A focus on cost-effectiveness and the desirability of technology development does not explicitly consider the possible negative impact of technology on emission reductions or human livelihoods, or the possible inadequacy of market approaches when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is indeed possible that the solutions chosen by the Government are serving the interest of the most powerful actors in society by not questioning the narratives pushed by the oil industry as well as excluding narratives that are critical to current approaches. If this happens at the expense of necessary climate change mitigation policy and without considering negative impacts on marginalized groups of people, it might well be that Norway is actively pursuing policies which are indirectly working against the objective of the SDG and the Paris Agreement.

These new insights provide a starting point for engaging in further debate and research on the values and principles guiding Norwegian climate policy, and how they as well as other structural and political factors influence policy and development pathways. The discourse analysis approach has proved to be a useful tool for critically discussing challenges related to Norwegian climate policy. It is exciting to think about what this research might inspire, and hopefully future work will build upon the work done here and elaborate on these insights by researching fast climate policies and the powerful elements that help shape them.

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