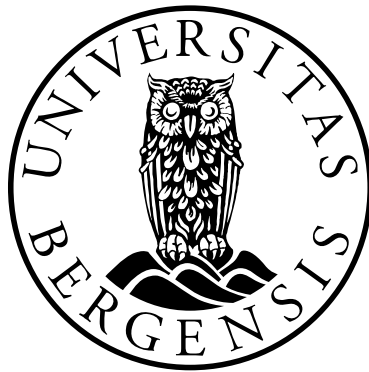


# **Climate change: Challenging democracies, challenging parties**

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# Abstract

## **Climate change: Challenging democracy, challenging parties.**

Climate change has emerged as the most prominent contemporary environmental issue, and poses several challenges to democratic processes. Democracies are struggling to integrate climate concern, and political parties attempt to shape the issue of climate change according to their existing policies and established conflict dimensions. The dissertation investigates climate politics, and seeks to understand what kind of political issue climate change is, and how democracies and political parties respond to climate change as a global environmental threat. Three different hypotheses are presented on how the issue of climate change relates to the dominating cleavages in politics, between state and market, and between environmental protection and economic growth. In order to do so, a framework for categorization is developed. The empirical analyses point to climate change as a multidimensional issue rather than being a leftist issue.

The dissertation is based on four articles:

**Essay 1: Climate politics: Freedom, coercion and limits to democracy.** A version in Norwegian has been accepted for publication in Berdinesen and Torjussen (eds.): *Klimaetikk*. Oslo; Dreyer forlag, forthcoming.

**Essay 2: Giving content to new politics. From broad hypothesis to empirical analysis using Norwegian manifesto data on climate change.** Published in *Party Politics*, 2014, 20 (6): 930-939.

**Essay 3: Coalitions, consensus and climate change. Climate policy in Norwegian coalition agreements 1989-2013.** Earlier versions in Norwegian were published in *Norsk statsvitenskapelig tidsskrift*, 2013, 29 (2): 159-165, and in Eide, Elgesem, Gloppen and Rakner (eds.): *Klima, medier og politikk*. Oslo; Abstrakt forlag, 2014, 101-118.

**Essay 4: More than Markets: A Comparative Study of Nine Conservative Parties on Climate Change.** Accepted for publication in *Politics & Policy*, 2015, 43 (4).

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# INTRODUCTION

Climate change has received increasing political attention over the past 50 years (Hulme 2009, 61-63), while at the same time, “in the past 50 years, the fraction of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> increased from 40 % to 45 %” (Lin 2014, 62). Greenhouse gas emissions have continued to grow steadily, including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide (WMO 2014, 2), even though the Kyoto Protocol commits the states to “reducing their overall emissions of such gases by at least 5 per cent below 1990 levels in the commitment period 2008 to 2012” (UN 1998, 3). The 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference decided on containing global temperature rise to 2 °C compared to the pre-industrial period (UN 2010, 5), which would imply a maximum CO<sub>2</sub> concentration of 450 parts per million in the atmosphere, but as noted by Bala (2013, 1472): “At the current rate of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, we could reach the 450 ppm target as early as 2035”. There is almost a consensus on the causes of climate change as well as the need to curb emissions, but so far, the necessary political actions have not been implemented, even though the knowledge of the massive impact climate change is expected to have on eco systems and human societies (IPCC 2014). Germanwatch illustrates the lack of political action in their Climate Change Performance Index in which “the first three places remain unoccupied to remind countries of how much still remains to be done to successfully prevent the dangerous impacts of climate change” (Burck, Marten and Bals 2014, 4). “The global-average near-surface temperature for 2014 was comparable to the warmest years in the 165-year instrumental record”, notes the World Meteorological Organization (WMO 2015, 4).

The political systems seem unable to mitigate climate change, and in this dissertation I am going to investigate what kind of political issue climate change represents, and why democracies are struggling to agree on effective climate measures. Climate change differs from traditional, localized environmental problems, and represents a challenge to the established political parties, and even to democracy itself. A premise for the dissertation is that climate politics has failed, and hence it is of great importance to improve the understanding of the issue. Much of the empirical work in the dissertation is on Norway, yet another country that has failed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions significantly (State of the Environment Norway 2015).

When confronted with a new issue, political parties have several strategies to choose between. They may ignore the issue, but with sufficient popular concern, ignorance is to be replaced by three strategies: Either they will actively oppose the need for political solutions,

find solutions in line with their established political agenda, or change their existing policies to solve the new problem. In the literature (Aardal 1993; Giddens 2009), there is an expectation that the parties will seek solutions within the frameworks of their established policies; hence socialists will promote state-centred solutions while neoliberals will emphasize market based solutions. Following from politics being dominated by conflicts between state and market solutions, it is expected that the left/right dimension will absorb new issues, including climate change. One alternative approach is that climate change will strengthen an independent environmental dimension, based on the conflict between ecological protection and economic growth. In this view, environmental issues are at the core of New Politics, as opposed to the Old Politics of economic issues and the traditional left/right dimension.

If the established parties are not able to incorporate the new issues or New Politics in a manner satisfactory to the voters, entrepreneurial parties would be expected to emerge and to manifest a new cleavage. All political parties represent poles in cleavages, and the Green Parties and other New Left parties attempt to manifest the green pole of a dimension from ecological protection to economic growth, the New Politics, while older parties may intend to keep conflicts over the environment and the climate within their preferred cleavages from Old Politics. Another possibility is to see climate change as a global issue more relevant to a cleavage based on globalization than an environmental cleavage, and hence to expect climate change to be treated differently than other environmental issues.

To investigate how political parties react in response to the phenomenon of climate change in nature and the societal phenomenon of growing popular concern for the climate, the focus is turned to the concrete political measures the political parties propose in their electoral manifestos, and in the next instance, how these proposals are reflected in coalition agreements. A significant contribution to the literature is the categorization scheme for (climate) measures on the dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics to shed light on how the parties integrate climate concerns. To some political scientists, all environmental measures are considered New Politics, and others use attitudes towards nuclear energy as the sole indicator of New Politics. I find it necessary to deepen the approach and to look closer into what kind of political measures the parties propose to differentiate between climate measures that are leftist and rightist on the two dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics.

By studying electoral manifestos, relatively little are revealed on how the parties prioritize climate politics after the election, so the two articles on electoral manifestos (*essays*

2 and 4) are supplemented by an article on coalition agreements, studying explicitly the link between electoral manifestos and coalition agreements (*essay 3*).

To find out more about how climate change as an issue is integrated within politics or challenging politics, an article is written on the relationship between climate change and democracy, the hindrances against democratic actions on the issue, and possible alternatives to democratic actions (*essay 1*). The international character of climate politics is viewed as a problem to politics still dominated by national actors, and international treaties means giving up some national sovereignty. Economic and national interests may hamper climate mitigation efforts or stimulate technological solutions not challenging existing economic structures, and climate change has some unique characteristics that must be taken into consideration.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE COMPARED TO OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

“Global warming is a problem unlike any other, however, both because of its scale and because it is mainly about the future”, argues Giddens (2009, 2). Climate change is certainly a prominent environmental issue, and even though some popular confusion exists on climate change related to other environmental issues (Reynolds et al 2010; Bostrom et al 2012; Rosentrater et al 2013), there are reasons for differentiating climate politics from traditional environmental politics. In contrast to traditional environmental problems that are local and concrete, climate change is global and abstract. While social problems characterized by “enormous interdependencies, uncertainties, circularities, and conflicting stakeholders” are termed “wicked problems”, climate change is termed a “super wicked problem” (Lazarus 2009).

With climate change, environmental problems are no longer restricted to the area around a point of emissions, and can no longer necessarily be tasted, smelled or felt: Environmental problems are more and more invisible and exceeding time and space. An important aspect then is that the intangible character of the problems makes us turn to science to find out whether or not something is dangerous, and hence not only politics get scientific, but science gets politicised (Beck 1992). Rutherford (1999, 53) notes that scientific expertise has been fundamental in defining environmental problems, and this is certainly relevant for the issue of climate change. “While climate change may kill millions, it will be on the death certificate of no-one”, claims Hulme (2009, 201). The link between emissions of greenhouse gases and climate change is not a link that can be seen, smelled or touched; it is a link that is

dependent on scientific knowledge and understanding of biological processes, making ideologies and values more important. Justice, Cheek and Buckman (2011) as well as Gökşen, Adaman and Zenginobuz (2002) present reasons for differentiating between environmental concerns that are local and global. Values influence primarily the attitude toward global concerns as climate change, and are less influential on local concerns. Everybody can see, smell and taste that a river is polluted; it is much easier to ignore an abstract environmental threat, especially when it seems to be threatening certain economic interests. “Individuals process information through a filter that depends on values, ideology, background, social forces, and the continuing intrusion of new signals from the information environment”, conclude Wood and Vedlitz (2006, 564). The concept could also be termed “motivated scepticism” (Campbell and Kay 2014), pointing to aversions of solutions (especially state interventions) as explanation for denial of the problem.

Another important aspect of climate politics is the broad scope and interference with many policy fields, making it even hard to compare climate politics with other global environmental issues such as ozone depletion. Magraw (2008, 10575) highlights “the importance of the realities that a much broader set of activities leads to climate change and a much larger range and depth of mitigation and adaptation measures are necessary to deal with it”. Climate change is not a narrow issue limited to one business sector, but a broad issue concerning many sectors, from energy and transport to agriculture and consumption. Even though there are possible alternatives to fossil resources, there are major obstacles to them, not the least by powerful corporations and states profiting on oil, gas and coal.

Climate measures can also be in conflict with other environmental issues. Nuclear power might compete with fossil fuels, but would in addition create major waste problems and pose a threat to the environment and risks to human health. Survey data from 27 European nations indicates that few respondents accept the notion of climate change justifying nuclear energy, as “having energy policy goals that give priority to fighting global warming correlates little with support for nuclear energy” (Pampel 2011, 262).

Building a wind farm might make more renewable energy available and possibly compete with fossil fuels, while at the same time be negative for biological diversity and wild life. This can explain why the voters of the Liberal Party and the Socialist Left Party are the most concerned by climate change, while at the same time express less enthusiasm towards wind power than voters of the Labour Party (Tjernshaugen, Aardal and Gullberg 2011, 351). A study on the Norwegian election of 2009 shows that voters concerned with climate change are not necessarily to be categorized at the green pole on a dimension from ecological



protection to economic growth (Tjernshaugen, Aardal and Gullberg 2009, 354-358), but still, the differences between environmental politics and climate politics should not be overestimated, as attitudes on the two questions have a relatively high correlation ( $r=0,52$ ) (Tjernshaugen, Aardal and Gullberg 2009, 352).

## **A CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRACY**

The global and abstract character of climate change is challenging to traditional politics based on elections of representatives within the borders of a state. In order to win elections, political parties will have a tendency to emphasize issues that will affect the voters directly, not far away in time or space. Even though voters might agree on the dangerous consequences of climate change, they do not necessarily support effective policies; and other issues than the climate is more decisive for the vote. A telling example is the opinion poll in which nearly six out of seven Norwegians agree that “Norwegian politicians do far too little to limit greenhouse emissions in Norway” (TNS Gallup 2012, 13), while at the same time “7 out of 10 want to develop new oil fields in the North Sea, even if that entail greenhouse emissions and disturbance of the natural environment” (TNS Gallup 2012, 16).

Foreign policy might be an underdeveloped field in the academic understanding of climate politics (Harris 2008), and it is a tendency for Norwegian climate policy turning more and more to international measures, showing less concern for domestic actions (Hovden and Lindseth 2004). The tendency might undermine democratic involvement, as foreign policy is often concerned with national interests (Harris 2008, 923) have a consensus-oriented policy style (Sydnes 1996, 294), and seldom dominate election campaigns: “Foreign policy plays little role in elections. Through time there have been some exceptions, such as the EU issue, but the pattern is clear”, claims director Ulf Sverdrup (2013) of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. The internationalization of climate politics could make it even less relevant to the voters. The voters will often not see the positive gains from climate measures, especially when these are located in other countries and hence the internationalization removes positive localized side effects of climate measures such as less traffic, improved public transport, bike lanes and cleaner air.

*Essay 1* is devoted to the problems of democratic actions on climate change, how the problems could be mitigated, and what alternatives there are to democracy. In other words, the first dimension to be investigated is the dimension from democracy to autocracy, and the aim is to clarify some of the political space the political parties are to operate within. Political

parties do not adopt climate policies in a vacuum, but do pay attention to popular attitudes, policies of rivaling parties, and pressure from their own activists as well as economic interests. Acknowledging the problems with regards to popular support for climate measures, there might be a need for restricting democratic decision making in order to sustain the climate. The restrictions could be in the shape of a permanent or temporarily dictatorship, while more moderate efforts would be to give up some state sovereignty through binding international treaties, or even broad agreements on the national level to help raise climate politics above the usual political games.

Democracy should ideally mean that the politicians do as the people want them to do, and many pro-democracy arguments are based on a belief that most people actually prioritize climate mitigation higher than increased material affluence. On the contrary, those who think most people will prioritize material affluence, frame democracy as part of the reason for climate change not being mitigated. Hence, some of the critic is aiming at the voters' and politicians' lacking ability to make short-term sacrifices in order to achieve long-term goals, and some point to the power of fossil based corporations in influencing attitudes and politics. Structural factors are present:

Hard decision-making on global environmental problems requires an almost unprecedented degree of trust in experts and in our political élites at the same time as this trust is continually undermined by scientific controversies and political indecision (Hajer 1995, 11).

*Essay 1* explores the existing literature on environmental effects of democracy and autocracy, and finds mixed results. Democracies seem to be better at committing themselves to reduce emissions, but are not necessarily implementing the ambitions. The conclusion is close to that of Bättig and Bernauer (2009, 303): “The results show that the effect of democracy on political commitment to global public goods provision (policy output) is positive. In contrast, the democracy effects on policy outcomes, measured in terms of emission levels and trends, are ambiguous”.

There is no unidimensional covariation between democracy and climate policy, and proponents of authoritarian solutions have no plan for implementing climate friendly autocracies, and in addition, there might be a risk that a rising dictatorship will utilize the climate to justify its grip on power but not necessarily prioritize climate politics when in power, and removing a dictatorship is more challenging than electing new elites in a

democracy. Hence, to propose dictatorship as an alternative within established democracies might be politically irrelevant and a form of derailment of the debate over climate change. *Essay 1* is still important in defining the political landscape climate policies have to relate to, highlighting some of the forces undermining progressive climate policies. Even though a majority of the voters say they are worried about climate change and call for more to be done by the government, they might resist the actual measures that are proposed, and in the next election can be tempted to vote for a rivalling party with less ambitions for the climate and more for material comfort.

From the 1980's, "the insight grew that political parties operating at the national level, as well as individual nation-states, had too limited capabilities to solve large-scale, often transboundary, environmental problems" (Van Der Heijden 2002, 189). Nevertheless, as a global issue with the states emitting the most not being the states most vulnerable to climate change, there is considerable opposition to binding global treaties on the issue, as well as a problem of global free riders (Bättig and Bernauer 2009). "From the perspective of justice, the nations with the most responsibility have the least incentive to engage in building an effective climate regime" (Connelly et al 2012, 277). The work on international treaties has in fact proved challenging, and so far the Kyoto Protocol is probably the best result, even though the treaty has not succeeded in reducing global emissions and the treaty has been heavily criticized over the years (Hagem and Holtsmark 2001; Böhringer and Vogt 2004; Rosen 2015).

The states are not necessarily willing to give up national sovereignty, but for politicians eager to promote environmental concerns, support for international treaties might be a preferable strategy, also to direct interest away from domestic measures. In *essay 4*, one finding is that potentially controversial domestic measures in electoral manifestoes occur to be translated into international measures in the governmental coalition agreements, hence placing responsibility outside of the government's immediate domain. A party with expressed scepticism towards the anthropogenic character of climate change and concern for the costs of climate measures can still support international treaties, as the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP 2013, 27), while more environmentally ambitious parties will insist on domestic measures (Gullberg 2009). Proposals of an Earth Commission for Thermostatic Control (Flannery 2005, 291-295) or an international court for intergenerational justice (Randers 2012, 350) are not likely to be supported as politicians protect their domestic powers. The global character of climate change could indicate a need for global regimes, but these are hard to establish.

Another way of restricting parliaments and governments on climate policy is to create broad agreements in parliament, committing all or most of the political parties to common ambitions and goals. Agreements could be further strengthened by making them part of the laws or even the constitution, but the problem remains that when reaching an agreement between parties of both pushers and laggards, the result might be weak, and could even remove climate policy from heated debates. As with internationalization, broad agreements might undermine democratic discourses on climate change. Essential to a dissertation on climate politics is to identify strategies political parties utilize to avoid changing policies because of climate change, as well as explaining changes in policies.

*Essay 1* highlights the democratic/autocracy dimension and the domestic/international dimension, of which the political parties and governments must relate to. Democracy is often taken for granted in established democracies, and alternatives to democracy are far from manifesting itself in elections or otherwise. The potential conflicts relevant to contemporary debates over climate politics are more specifically the will to restrict the freedom of current parliaments and governments in order to secure an active climate policy. Again, the will to sacrifice some of today's freedom due to future welfare, is a dominating topic within climate politics, and also evident in debates over democracy as well as internationalization. The aim of *essay 1* is not to conclude on what system is best fitted for solving climate change, but to point to which challenges and opportunities that exist. An important part of explaining the lacking ability to reduce emissions globally is unwillingness among voters, parties, states and powerful corporations, all promoting their own self-interests rather than the interests of the future generations or nature as such. When studying political parties' responses to climate change, these insights are necessary. Politics are made within political systems on all levels from the local to the global, and political parties are to react not only to scientific findings of a changing climate, but to the wishes of the voters and corporations, as well as strategic responses to the policies of rivalling parties. Together, the parties of a particular country have shared national interests that also intervene in the political process. These national interests can be influenced by the availability of fossil resources, as shown in *essay 4*. Differences between parties might be bigger between states than between party families, as conservative parties probably are not the only ones to be affected by natural resources and the related industries and economic interests. Too often, nature is ignored in political analyses, but with regards to climate politics, it is an important part of the understanding of why, for example, Norway has chosen, regardless of government coalitions, to make climate politics more international.

## NATURE AS BIOPHYSICAL REALITY IN POLITICAL STUDIES

Nature should be part of the context when climate politics are to be understood. Even though climate change is not studied as a natural phenomenon, but as a social and political phenomenon, natural dispositions and the biophysical reality certainly play a role.

Social scientists might, according to Freudenburg, Frickel and Gramling (1995, 363-369) hold four different positions with regard to biophysical materiality and socio-cultural construction. First, an “analytical separation” where only one side will be emphasized, second, an “analytical primacy”, where one aspect explains the other, third, a “dualistic balance” that focuses on both aspects, and fourth, a “conjoint constitution” that takes into account how the two aspects influence each other mutually. The principles in the “conjoint constitution” approach recognize both the importance of natural resources as well as socio-cultural aspects, and how these factors mutually influence each other. Still, the analytical separation might be in line with a political scientist limiting the studies to his or her own discipline, analysing climate politics detached from the realness of climate change.

What is considered reality may change due to different contexts. Freudenburg, Frickel and Gramling (1995) exemplify by Iron Mountain, US, that has been seen differently and utilized for different purposes even though the mountain itself has not changed in any relevant sense. The interaction between biophysical and socio-cultural variables is central to the analysis:

The physical characteristics do matter, but they matter in a way that depends to a large degree on the practices, perspectives, and technologies that are taken for granted in a given time and place. At the same time, the social definitions of the situation can depend – in unrecognized as well as recognized ways – on the physical environment, both in its raw form and as modified by past human activity (Freudenburg, Frickel and Gramling 1995, 372).

Freudenburg, Frickel and Gramling (1995, 386) can conclude that it is of course possible to separate the physical from the social to make the analysis easier, but note that it is important to acknowledge that the social often is embedded in what it commonly consider to be physical, and vice versa.

Climate change is therefore not a pre discursive premise, but something that is formed and interpreted through discourses. Political actors can change these discourses, but the

discourses are not completely detached from the biophysical environment. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) point out that the physical is not determining: “Physical objects also exist, but they only gain meaning through discourse” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 9). Following from this, climate change exists, and even though climate change gain meaning through discourses, the discourses are not independent of global warming, rising sea level, extreme weather or other phenomena interpreted as signs of climatic changes – or on the other side; availability of fossil resources in a given country.

There is a great scientific consensus on the anthropogenic character of climate change (Oreskes 2004; Doran and Kendall Zimmerman 2009; Anderegg et al. 2010; Cook et al. 2013), but establishing climate change as a scientific fact is not followed by a political consensus on the issue. The same science might be differently interpreted by different politicians. By studying Australian politics, Fielding et al. (2012) “found that politicians from more left-leaning or politically progressive parties (Greens, Labor) had beliefs that more closely endorse scientists’ beliefs about the causes and impacts of climate change” in contrast to conservative politicians. Hulme (2009, xxv) note that “as society has been increasingly confronted with the observable realities of climate change and heard of the dangers that scientists claim lie ahead, climate change has moved from being predominantly a physical phenomenon to being simultaneously a social phenomenon.”

From this it is possible to extract that climate change as a social phenomenon is not independent from climate change as a physical phenomenon. To some extent, this implies nature and climate change as pre discursive realities, while politics on nature and climate change are both reactions to the realities as well as attempts to shape realities and influence how society interpret nature and climate change. This can be utilized by political actors, and has been so by the conservative movement in the US in an attempt to counter environmentalism (Nisbet, 2009; Jacques, Dunlap and Freeman 2008).

Applying a deconstructivist approach to climate politics is not the same as a rejection of realities in general or the material realities of climate change in particular. It is rather an analytical tool better suited for understanding political responses to climate change, and can be compared with the queer approach to gender, in which gender is analysed solely as a social phenomenon with no biological essence (see Butler 2004), in line with a “analytical separation” (Freudenburg, Frickel and Gramling 1995). On the other hand, climate politics has an undeniable connection to the natural phenomenon of climatic changes, and the debate will be influenced not only by how climate change is interpreted, but also by climate change in itself. The link to reality is an essential part of politics, and hence Hulme (2009, 107) can

claim: “The separation of knowledge about climate change from the politics of climate change – a process that has been described as “purification” – is no longer possible, even if it ever was”.

In *essay 4* the biophysical reality is more present than in the other articles, acknowledging the fact that climate politics is not created in a political vacuum, but influenced by many factors and actors, not the least the fossil industries. The power of the fossil industries is indicated by a measure of available fossil resources, making a clear link between biophysical realities and politics. The results also show support for a notion of conservative climate policies being influenced by fossil resources. If I am to study climate politics based on analytical separation, important aspects would not be part of the investigation. The conjoint constitution approach seems to be preferable to better understand climate politics as both initiated by natural phenomena and influenced by natural resources.

Many studies have attempted to explain why the different outcomes occur in politic politics, but few have taken into consideration the importance of available natural resources. To counter that, Fisher (2006) studied the US climate policy as a case, with special emphasis on the relationship between coal extraction in each state and how the respective state’s senators do vote on some emblematic issues related to climate change.

Fisher (2006, 487) do find that “the overall results support the notion that natural resource dependence in the form of coal extraction affects political decision making in the United States”, and hence one possible generalization is presented:

These findings suggest that countries with similar energy endowments and resource dependencies – no matter what their ideological position on the issue of global warming – will adopt similar policies (Fisher 2006, 489).

The generalization is not presented as a law-like prediction, but as a relationship that has to be explored more through future research. Still, Fisher (2006, 489) mentions that Australia did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, and urges to investigate if the same pattern of coal-dependency is decisive for Australian climate policy. One good reason for not proposing the relationship as universal came a year after the article was published, when Australia in 2007, still dependent on coal, did ratify the protocol (ABC News 2007) as a consequence of a new government based on social democratic ideology (and backed by the Greens) rather than conservative ideology.

The power of fossil interests are part of the discussion on democracy in *essay 1*, and the need to include natural resources increases when comparing between different countries, as in *essay 4*. The cases in *essay 2* and *essay 3* are all drawn from the same country, Norway, and hence the Norwegian reservoirs of oil and gas cannot explain differences between the parties because they all are within the same system and under the same influence by the fossil industries. The Norwegian pattern of making climate politics into an international issue (Hovden and Lindseth 2004) can be seen as influenced by two factors; powerful fossil interests in Norway, and the fact that Norway is among the countries least vulnerable to climate change (Thow and Blois 2008; Gilroy 2014). Rich availability of fossil resources and little direct impact act together as hindrances for a progressive Norwegian climate policy, as well as in other countries.

One lesson from *essay 4* is that natural resources do have an impact on preferred policies, exemplified by none of the investigated conservative parties challenging the fossil industries based on large reservoirs in their own countries, protecting national economic interests. The chosen party family is known to be pro-business, and on the growth end of the dimension from ecological protection to economic growth, and hence extra inclined to protect national interests in fossil fuels. It would probably be different with Green parties, based on the protection end of the dimension, and as shown with the Australian ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, natural resources are not determining, but certainly an important part of the context. Natural resources could be politicized through discourses, not simply treated as pre-discursive. Natural resources are part of the discourse.

## **POLITICIZATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

When a new issue receives sufficient attention, political parties often respond by integrating the new issue in their rhetoric and their electoral manifestoes. That might resemble some definitions on politicization, as when Zalwietro (1998, 45) defines politicization as “the transformation of an issue from the private to the public”, and Halkier (1999, 27) describing environmental politicization as when “environmental considerations have become a question of everyday life practices, and some environmental policies are expected to be formed and put on the consumers ‘kitchen table agenda’.” Still, the simple mentioning or description of climate change in electoral manifestos will not be treated as politicization.

Party politicization is beyond consensus, and refers to a process in which an issue or topic “ascends the political agenda to become electorally salient and the subject of party



competition” (Carter 2007, 127). Hence, politicization requires conflicting interests and solutions to be presented, and parties to actively reject solutions of each other’s. The consensus oriented strategy is replaced by real political conflicts, and the parties are expected to link the politicized issue to their core issues, in what Giddens (2009, 50) refers to as a “bandwagon effect”. When Andeweg (2008) analyses Dutch coalition cabinets under the heading “from accommodation to politicization”, a resembling definition of politicization is implicit.

The traditional political parties have had difficulties accommodating environmental challenges into their ideologies, and Carter (2006, 749) “identifies ideology as a significant constraint on the capacity and willingness of established parties to embrace the issue”. Rohrschneider (1993b) emphasizes how the modern environmental movement question unmitigated economic growth, and hence challenge the premises shared by traditional parties of both left and right.

By studying Norwegian parties, Knutsen (1997, 257) came to the conclusion that “it was not easy to incorporate the new issues into the parties’ dominant cleavage positions”. This is not unique to Norway and in a study of British party responses to growing environmental concern; Owens (1986, 200) found that “the parties have tried to accommodate the new concern without confronting any fundamental contradictions between their own values and ideology and those of ‘green’ politics”. Twenty years later, Carter (2006) confirmed the continued relevance of the tendency: The main parties were adopting green rhetoric and moderate green policies, to resist the environment being a topic of intense party competition. This is labelled a preference-accommodation strategy (Carter 2006), opposed to ignorance on one side and politicization on the other, as well as a preference-shaping strategy in which the parties attempt to change the opinions of the voters (Dunleavy and Ward 1981). The dissertation looks into how the conclusion of Knutsen (1997) on Norwegian politics is still relevant with regards to climate politics today.

“Climate legislation is a fairly bi-partisan affair”, conclude Fankhauser, Gennaioli and Collins (2014, 1), and Harrison and Sundstrom (2007, 6) state that “protecting the environment is a valence issue”, in which the public is coherent on the preferred outcomes; a clean environment and a stable climate.

Parties therefore avoid taking sharply contrasting “pro” or “anti” positions on specific issues, preferring to endorse the same position (i.e. that of the majority). Instead, parties will compete by emphasizing different policy priorities, concentrating on those

issues where each believes its credibility is strong enough to attract votes (Carter 2006, 750).

Within a preference-accommodation strategy, all parties would support a pro-environment position, while ideological obstacles will obstruct any real radical positions, especially when popular pressure is limited. When the British parliament discussed a broad compromise on climate change, an all-party group prepared a report noting that “a consensus could potentially lead to a loss of public attention and awareness for the issue” as well as “opting for the lowest common denominator” (Giddens 2009, 115). A relevant example could be the Norwegian parliamentary climate agreements in 2008 and 2012, each supported by six out of seven parties in parliament. In 2008, it was the Progress Party’s negative attitude to the Kyoto Protocol and doubts on the anthropogenic character of climate change that made the other parties leave the Progress Party out of the negotiations on the climate agreement (Gullberg 2009, 5-6). The parties backing the broad agreements are then able to politicize what they all agree on, by distancing themselves from the Progress Party. The strategy might be favourable for both parts: When the question of human impact is politicized, less emphasis is on the concrete measures. Hence the other parties can portray themselves as environmentally friendly simply by stating that climate change is anthropogenic.

Carter (2006, 750) points to commitments to economic growth and consumption to sustain the assumption that “there are major obstacles to embracing the cross-cutting environmental issue dimension which will discourage parties from competing aggressively on this issue”. Hence, a preference-accommodation strategy will be utilized, but some parties have more incentives to challenge other parties on environmental issues, including climate change. Carter (2006) hypothesizes that oppositional parties and smaller parties will push environmental issues. When challenged by a niche party, the remaining parties have three options, according to Meguid (2005, 348-9): An accommodative strategy (policy convergence), an adversarial strategy (policy divergence), or a dismissive strategy (non-action). The accommodative strategy might resemble preference-accommodation, but could also include the adoption of more radical positions. The adversarial strategy would mean rejection of measures in favour of other measures, or even the need for measures, while the dismissive strategy is an attempt to reduce the salience of the issue (Meguid 2005, 349).

Especially conservative parties and new populist parties are said to choose the dismissive strategy. Conservatives are accused for being in general critical of environmentalism (Carter, 2007, 67), or even hostile, in Europe as well as the US (Gray,

1993, 123), and similar patterns are found in Australia (Fielding et al., 2012). The populist parties are also expected to mobilize against the environmental movement (Dalton 2002, 133), promoting “anti-green orientations” (Knutsen 2004, 78).

On the other side, Green parties would be expected to play the role of an entrepreneurial niche party on environmental issues, choosing the adversarial strategy and actively confronting other parties on the issues, and hence undermining mainstream parties’ efforts to depoliticize by an accommodative strategy. The fact that the Norwegian Green Party did not succeed in entering parliament before the 2013 election, might imply either that the new cleavage is not considered important by the voters, or that the older parties have accommodated environmental concerns so well that an entrepreneurial party was not seen as necessary by the voters. Jupskås (2013) views primarily the Socialist Left Party and the Liberal Party as parties blocking for the Green Party.

## **THE CLIMATE, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND CLEAVAGE BASED POLITICS**

The late 1960’s was a time of turmoil in Western democracies. New social movements emerged, brought new issues on the political agenda, and New Politics became a concept to label the new values in the US as well as in Europe (Borre 1995, 187-188). In short, there has been claimed “a transition from ‘Old Politics’ values of economic growth, security, and traditional lifestyles to ‘New Politics’ values of individual freedoms, social equality, and the quality of life” (Dalton 2002, 81). According to Bean and Kelley (1995, 339) as well as Achterberg (2006, 239), environmental politics lies at the core of New Politics. I am going to investigate the degree to which the New Politics can be said to constitute a new cleavage comparable to the established cleavages of Old Politics, based on how the parties politically integrate the issue of climate change.

The development of the Western European party systems is by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) linked to four critical junctures in history. These junctures are the foundations upon which the dimensions of Old Politics have been established. First is the centre versus periphery cleavage, in which a central nation building culture stands against peripheral cultures, and the second is between church and government over control of the educational system. These two cleavages originate in the national revolutions, while the next two originate from the industrial revolution: The conflict between rural interests and urban interests, and the one between workers and employers.

The parties have roots within these cleavages, as “individual parties exist because of a successful polarisation of underlying social cleavages” (Bengtsson et al 2014, 27). The conservative parties are representing the centre and liberal parties the periphery of the first cleavage. The second cleavage is important to the establishment of Christian democratic parties, the third for agrarian parties, and the fourth for socialist parties, later to be split between reform parties (social democrats) and revolutionary parties (communists) as a consequence of the Russian revolution. Lipset and Rokkan (1967, 4) note that the “Russian Revolution did not generate new cleavages, but simply accentuated long-established lines of division within the working-class elite”. The cleavages represent different types of protest against the national elites and were part of an emancipation and mobilization process (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 23).

In electoral systems with proportional representation, all these poles could be represented with their own party in parliament, while majority systems facilitated broader alliances. Lipset and Rokkan, writing in the 1960’s, proposed a “freezing of the party system” as “*the party systems of the 1960’s reflect, with few but significant exceptions, the cleavage structures of the 1920’s*” (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 50, italics in original). The parties founded during the process of extension of the right to vote to all adults and the following consolidation, has later dominated politics. These parties are based on the cleavages of the industrial society and what is termed Old Politics, characterized by conflicts based on class, religion and ethnicity: “The formation of mass political parties thus tended to institutionalize the existing group alignments, creating the framework for modern party systems. Once voters formed party loyalties and interest groups established party ties, these became self-perpetuating relationships” (Dalton 2002, 132).

A decline in party identification over the last decades is linked to broader societal changes, and causes a weakening of the Old Politics cleavages:

After the Second World War, these traditional cleavages have lost much of their traditional structuring capacity for politics as a result of secularization, value change, rising levels of education, improved standards of living and sectoral change (tertiarization)” (Kriesi et al 2006, 923).

Class is no longer considered essential for social stratification, and not as important for differentiating lifestyles, and hence voting based on class attachment is in decline in advanced industrial societies (Clark and Lipset 1991; Nieuwbeerta and Ultee 1999; Dalton 2002;

Bengtsson et al. 2014, 150-151), even though some scholars raise critical questions on the measurement and evidence of declining class voting (Manza, Hout and Brooks 1995; Van Der Waal, Achterberg and Houtman 2007). Dalton (1996, 338) points to “an erosion in the ability of social cleavages (and the characteristics derived from these cleavages) to explain electoral choice”. By studying party manifestos in 20 Western countries, Achterberg (2006) finds that class issues are still important, but are supplemented with new issues, while class voting as such is in decline. To conclude on the question of class voting is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but much evidence point to a weakening of the left/right dimension:

Sustained economic growth, growing individual affluence, and the expansion and perfection of the welfare state each contributed to a social and political climate conducive to political stability while eroding support for extremist solutions on both the left and right (Betz 1993, 413).

Since the 1980’s politics in general has experienced a right turn (Huber and Inglehart 1995, 84-85), and left and centre parties have supported, and in some instances even initiated, market liberal policies (Ross 2000). “Mainstream parties neoliberalized their programs across the Western world after the 1970s, and countries with strong socialist and social democratic traditions have been no exception” (Mudge 2011, 365). The planned economy of socialism is marginalized as a political goal, while the debate is over the pace of privatization and deregulation (Huber and Inglehart 1995, 84). Economy is still a dominating topic, but the debate has a more narrow scope, not for or against, but within, regulated capitalism.

Scholars have pointed to a decline of cleavages or a dealignment process, in which cleavages no longer structure politics:

According to the conclusion of the ‘decline thesis’, politics has become free from social structural anchors, is not interpretable in terms of polarization between social blocs, and has ceased to be organized around a few comprehensive conflict lines (Enyedi 2008, 290).

On the other side, there are many discussions on realignment and new cleavages replacing or supplementing the old ones, with evidence pointing in different directions (Warwick 2002; Kriesi et al 2006; Achterberg 2006; van der Brug and van Spanje 2009; Bornschieer 2010). Many studies have attempted to put environmentalism within a cultural

dimension and the concept of New Politics. The dimension goes under different labels, but with much of the same content: Postmaterialism versus materialism (Inglehart 1977; 1984), green/alternative/libertarian versus traditional/authoritarian/nationalist (Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002), libertarian versus authoritarian (Flanagan and Lee 2003), and libertarian-universalistic versus traditionalist-communitarian (Bornschieer 2010). These theories are not only concerned with the integration of new issues in politics, but with integration of new values. In these perspectives, the increased attention devoted to environmental issues is not only the result of increasing environmental problems, but also a result of values in change.

New critical junctures may manifest in new cleavages, and two of the most prominent newer conflicts are over globalization and the environment. Kriesi et al (2006) argues that the winners and losers of globalization would be at each end of a cultural dimension in politics. Globalization involves issues of protectionism and global markets as well as immigration, and new parties have emerged promoting welfare chauvinism and restrictive immigration policies. Even though they are not single-issue parties, immigration has worked as a catalyst for the new populist parties (Mudde 1999) and the immigration issue unites all successful right populist parties (Ivarsflaten 2008).

At the same time, Green parties have mobilized around environmental issues, and challenged the established parties on the ecological consequences of continued economic growth (Richardson 1995, 9). “Green parties have only partly succeeded in accommodating the new, ‘post-materialist’ or environmental cleavage”, argues Van Der Heijden (2002, 189), as for example not all Green parties are clearly opposed to economic growth. Still, the new party family can be interpreted as a result of the new issues’ not only arriving at the political scene, but also manifesting. Climate change could be the prime issue for promoting the new environmental cleavage.

Nevertheless, as climate change is treated as foreign policy issue, the borders between globalization and environmentalism starts to blur. Climate change could clearly be linked to globalization, and even be seen as the prime example of a globalized environmental issue, with winners from rich, high-emitting countries pitted up against losers from poor, low-emitting countries.

## **INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN POLITICS**

The multidimensional character of environmental issues could be a consequence of the diversity in environmental solutions. As a valence issue, there might be consensus on the need

for actions, but on what kinds of actions are needed, there is far from any consensus. There are not one single set of solutions backed by all environmentalists, and some differentiation is necessary, as well as a look at the history.

The radical environmental critique of the 1970's has given way to "ecological modernization", an approach that seeks to combine economic growth with ecological protection and "suggests that environmental problems can be solved in accordance with the workings of the main institutional arrangements of society" (Hajer 1995, 3). It is a "Economic/Technological Fix position" (Sandbach 1978): Instead of structural and behavioural changes, the ideology of ecological modernization promotes economic growth and market power as means to protect the environment, resembling what is termed "free market environmentalism" (Anderson and Leal 2001). The influential UN World Commission on Environment and Development report *Our Common Future* (Brundtland 1987) also promoted ecological protection combined with economic growth in the term sustainable development. These are developments that could potentially undermine the manifestation of environmental issues as a major cleavage in politics.

Environmental issues represent something new to the cleavage structure, as it is not based on the interests of former excluded groups, like the labour movement, or national interests, like the new populist parties. The environmental movement promotes not primarily their own interests, but the interests of nature, animals and future generations, none of them entitled with the right to vote. The self-interest is more relevant in accordance with local environmental issues, but with global issues like climate change, the environmentalists could be said to act on behalf of the interests of others. This aspect differentiates newer environmental problems from the older in which human health was more prominent in the debate. Even in ancient Greece, town leaders were supposed to keep sources of air pollution outside of the town, and in Rome, air pollution became an issue for civil lawsuits (Jacobson 2012, 74), but this was done to protect health, not ecological systems or nature as such. That said, nature protection has also a long tradition, and the first protected areas were established about a thousand years ago. "Most of these protected areas in medieval and early modern Europe were conceived of as an isolated tool to conserve an individual resource, usually timber or game" (EEA 2011, 10), and the aim was to reserve the resource to the ruler. Related to this intention of saving resources is the Norwegian decision to protect elks with calves in the 1570's (Berntsen 1977, 15). The issue of climate change could though resemble these older issues in an intention of securing future resources on one hand as well as protecting human health on the other. "Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st

century”, claim Costello et al (2009, 1693), and argues that increased health inequity between rich and poor countries will be the result, consistent with IPCC (2014, 15): “Throughout the 21st century, climate change is expected to lead to increases in ill-health in many regions and especially in developing countries with low income, as compared to a baseline without climate change”. Climate friendly transport will have a positive impact on health locally, also in rich countries (Woodcock et al 2009), but for the most: Those whose health will benefit the most from climate mitigation, is not the voters of countries like Norway, and not even the voters of today.

Long time went by before nature protection was manifesting itself as a political cleavage between the major parties, and it was for many years considered an issue to experts. The conservationist movement reflected “a growing middle-class interest in the protection of wildlife, wilderness and natural resources” (Carter 2007, 4). Still well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, environmental issues were not considered controversial or constituting a new political cleavage. In Norway, several areas were protected during the 1950’s and 1960’s, and national parks were established from 1962. The initiative came from environmental organizations, and even though the political parties were not important in promoting the plans, they were supportive and conservation was adopted unanimously by parliament (Knutson 1997, 231).

From the 1970’s, conflicts over environmental protection intensified, national environmental organizations were founded and took over the initiative from local groups (Van Der Heijden 2002, 189), and more attention has been devoted to the potential environmental cleavage. There are several theories on how this new cleavage could relate to the socioeconomic left/right cleavage; if it manifests itself as a new cleavage or if the new conflict is absorbed by the dominating cleavage. The absorption could take two forms, as leftist environmentalism versus rightist environmentalism or as environmentalism being part of the left. In addition, I will look into how these theories on environmentalism can be applied to the issue of climate change.

### **The leftist hypothesis**

One perspective is that environmental protection has become a new type of leftist policy rather than one that lies outside of the traditional left/right political dimension (Ware 1996, 43). Based on an international study that also includes Norway, Neumayer (2004) argues that leftist parties are more conducive to supporting environmental measures, and at the Norwegian municipal level, leftist mayors are more concerned with climate policy (Orderud and Kelman 2011). Rohrschneider (1993a) finds that traditional leftist parties are capable of



assimilating environmental concerns to a greater extent than was previously assumed, and Grendstad et al. 2006, 139-140) point out that leftist parties are more associated with the environmental movement than rightist parties.

Ware (1996, 43) explains the left-leaning by referring to the need for government and international interventions, and Neumayer (2003, 204) emphasises that becoming accustomed to interventions in order to correct markets on a social basis makes it easier to adopt similar interventions for environmental reasons. In an older, but still relevant, article, Owens (1986, 197) offers an explanation: “We might expect environmentalism to be more closely aligned to the philosophy of the left than that of the right, since socialism and “ecocentrism” share a collectivist spirit and have many roots and values in common.” This is in line with Poguntke (1993, 12) who suggests that “the New Politics is best understood as a left-wing addition to, and modification of, the traditional left-right dimension.”

Some evidence points to the leftist hypothesis being even more relevant to climate change than other environmental issues: “The data show that those on the traditional left are more likely to regard a global problem as serious, and the same goes for those who fall on the post-materialist side of the Inglehart axis” (Justice, Cheek and Buckman 2011, 9).

Persistence of the left/right dimension and the absorption of the environmental issue, including climate change, could be a result of environmental degradation following class lines:

As countless examples demonstrate, from asthma rates in the UK’s inner cities through the incidence of industrial accidents to the erosion of marginal grazing lands in Africa, the processes of environmental degradation almost always impact most devastatingly on the poorest and least powerful communities, both within countries and globally. The rich and powerful are often able to escape the worst effects of environmental loss, whether it is through buying houses in leafy suburbs or being able to purchase raw materials such as timber from new sources when previous supplies are depleted (Benton 1997, 42-43).

Carter (2006, 751) thinks that the right's neo-liberal ideology hampers the enactment of strong environmental programs because it is assumed that these will have to include proposals for new regulations and environmental taxes and that leftist parties will respond more positively to environmental issues than centrist and rightist parties. Many studies have found difficulties integrating environmentalism in conservative ideology (Carter, 2007, 67;

Gray, 1993, 123; Feygina, Jost and Goldsmith 2009, 332; Fielding et al., 2012), and Heath and Gifford (2006, 48) finds that “effects of support for free-market ideology and environmental apathy were investigated to identify some bases for not believing in global climate change”. Conservative think tanks have played a significant role in questioning climate science (Beder 2001; Jacques, Dunlap and Freeman 2008, 352). Even though there have been done many studies on the party level, the literature on comparisons cross-nationally within the same party family is rather scant. To fill in some of the gap in the literature, *essay 4* focuses on the conservative party family.

There is a risk that too many environmental measures are considered leftist, and hence the left-leaning could also be influenced by how political scientists treat the measures. Neumayer (2003, 204) considers emission permit trading as interventional and thereby left-leaning, while the trading by others are seen as emblematic to a market liberal response to climate change (Driesen 2008), and increasing the power of the markets: Stephan and Paterson (2012, 547) view carbon markets “in light of the rapidly increasing power of financial actors to shape policy in their interests”.

There might also be the case that some measurement of the potential new dimension contributes to a leftist connotation. How for example Inglehart operationalize postmaterialism could have an impact:

The index for postmaterialism only generates left-wing postmaterialists and is unable to generate any right-wing postmaterialists. So in this view, people who define new issues as important are by definition ideologically left-wing (Achterberg 2006, 239-240).

In its most extreme version, the leftist hypothesis would implicate that only left-leaning parties would propose climate measures, while right-leaning parties would reject the measures or even the need for measures. More modest versions would propose the view that the leftist parties are better at incorporating climate concern.

If the leftist hypothesis is correct, the solutions for mitigating climate change would be found at the left end of the state/market dimension, and the right-turn in politics (Huber and Inglehart 1995; Ross 2000; Mudge 2011) could then explain the unsuccessful climate policies: By turning right, politics move away from environmentalism and effective climate mitigation. The explanation is though dependent on environmentalism and climate concerns being exclusively leftist, and to counter, the next section is devoted to the view that both left

and right has integrated concerns for the climate. In addition, *essay 4* is devoted to investigate rightist climate policies.

### **The absorption hypothesis**

If both left and right parties are concerned with mitigating climate change and conflicts over climate politics arise following the left/right cleavage, it could be correct saying that the left/right dimension has absorbed climate change as a political issue.

“Political cleavages in western societies have become more and more one-dimensional in the sense that the left-right dimension has gradually absorbed other conflict dimensions”, claims Thomassen (1999, 54), while Kriesi et al (2006, 930) argue that environmental protection in most countries is integrated within the traditional left/right cleavage.

Knutsen (1997, 258) expects environmental issues to become more closely tied to the traditional left/right grouping of parties and be involved in changing the left/right dimension. The co-option may entail that there is consensus on environmental protection as a goal, while conflicts follow traditional cleavages, as when Norwegian parties first reacted to nature conservation; there was agreement about conservation, but disagreement about compensation to land owners (Knutsen 1997, 231). New environmental issues can be incorporated into existing cleavages and adapted to the parties’ traditional core issues (Aardal 1993, 165–166) so that a market liberal rightist party may embrace the ideas behind market based environmental protection, while leftist parties prefer state intervention and regulation. Climate politics could potentially follow a similar pattern. The claims of both Knutsen (1997) and Aardal (1993) are to be compared to contemporary climate politics.

Anderson and Leal (2001, 4) claims that the rightist free market environmentalism “emphasizes the positive incentives associated with prices, profits, and entrepreneurship”, while a leftist political environmentalism “emphasizes negative incentives associated with regulation and taxes”, and Bailey and Maresh (2009, 445) highlight a “growing influence of neoliberal approaches to environmental governance”. Beder (2001) also notes the influence of neoliberal think tanks in promoting the free market environmentalism:

By accepting market instruments as a solution to environmental problems, environmentalists have accepted the conservative definition of the problem – that environmental degradation is caused by a failure to ‘value’ the environment and a lack of properly defined property rights and therefore environmental degradation results

from a failure of the market to attach a price to environmental goods and services (Beder 2001, 131).

Climate change as a valence issue, the dominance of the left/right dimension in Norwegian politics in general (Heidar 2004, 55) and coalition formation specifically (Narud and Strøm 2011, 205), and the tendency for a “bandwagon effect” (Giddens 2009, 50), could work together into making climate change a conflict between leftist solutions on one side and rightist solutions on the opposite. The absorption of the issue into the left/right cleavage is in this aspect very different than the leftist hypothesis in which only the left propose solutions. The main difference is that the right is attributed with its own climate policy, that these rightist solutions are based on markets rather than state interventions, and that the main conflicts over the climate will occur along the state/market dimension. Both the left and the right will show concern for the climate, but they will propose opposing solutions, and hence avoid the economic growth/ecological protection dimension to structure politics. A possible hypothesis is then that the traditional left and right succeed in securing economic growth as an over-all societal goal, keeping New Politics in the background, and hence prevent the fundamental changes that might be necessary to preserve the climate. This argument is though based on an assumption of the necessity in embracing the New Politics dimension, quite contrary to the notions of sustainable development (Brundtland 1987) that has characterized Norwegian environmental debate (Aardal 1993, 79). Even if some studies indicate difficulties in combining economic growth with ecological protection (Ekins 1997; Rees 2003), highlight the link between global financial crisis and decreased emissions in developed countries (Peters et al 2012), and Midlarsky (1998, 353) finds that economic development is the variable that explains CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the greatest extent, the argument is controversial. Nevertheless, it might be helpful to reflect upon the notion. The late entry of the Norwegian Green Party could signify that the growth/protection dimension has not been so important in Norwegian politics, and even though climate concerns might be integrated in politics well enough to satisfy the voters, it might not be satisfying to the climate. Farstad (2014, 1098-1099) suggests that the unpopular anti-growth policies could at least partly explain why the Norwegian Green Party did not get more than one Member of Parliament after opinion polls for some time indicated a larger group of Green MPs.

On the other hand, the growth/protection dimension might be more prominent in other countries that still fail to present progressive climate politics. Hence, a simple notion that

rejecting anti-growth positions would explain failed climate policies will probably need much more empirical data to sustain.

### **The new cleavage hypothesis**

“We are neither Left nor Right, we are out in front”, claimed the environmental movement in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s (Dalton 2009, 161). The new issues brought up by the modern environmental movement, along with the peace and women’s’ movements, “have confused European party systems because they question premises that are shared by both the traditional Left and the center-conservative parties” (Rohrschneider 1993b, 160). In this view, rather than to enhance the conflict between the left and right, environmental conflicts have created a distinction between parties that give priority to ecological conservation and those that give priority to economic growth (Knutson 1997, 257). Climate politics could be expected to take part in this new cleavage that cross-cuts the traditional dimensions. New Politics is then the basis for a green cleavage, with New Left promoting environmentalism and New Right actively opposing environmentalism.

The New Politics issues are not easy to place on a strict state/market dimension:

The environmentalist movement, the opposition to nuclear power, the peace movement, the women’s’ movement, the limits to growth movement, the consumer advocacy movement – all are manifestations of conflict that is only loosely related to conflict over ownership of the means of production (Inglehart 1984, 26).

While Old Politics are based on economic issues such as redistribution of wealth and ownership to the means of production, New Politics are considered evolving around non-economic issues, but the borders are not necessarily clean cut. “One and the same issue often has economic as well as non-economic aspects and its classification with respect to the two dimensions frequently depends on how the item was worded in the survey” (Borre 1995, 188). A question of environmental protection could include economic costs of ecological degradation, making it into an economic issue, as when for instance Stern (2007) calculates on the economic consequences of climate change. These aspects would though be expected to be downplayed if climate change is part of a value-oriented environmental cleavage.

Some researchers, most notably Inglehart (1977; 1984; 2008), considers New Politics as part of a greater shift in societal values, from materialism to postmaterialism, but that does not implicate a consensus on the new values, rather that conflicts move from economics to

values. Dalton (2002, 133) emphasizes the “conservative counterattack that opposes the liberalization of social norms, women’s rights, environmentalism and related issues”, and Inglehart (1984, 28) notes that postmaterialist issues may provoke a materialist reaction in which the right wing mobilizes for traditional issues of “economic growth, military security, and domestic law and order”, priorities consistent also with the Old Left (Kaase and Klingemann 1982, 385).

Huber and Inglehart (1995, 74) use the growing popularity of green parties and xenophobic parties as examples that support their claim. New Politics is then a cleavage between New Left and New Right, in which environmentalism is placed on the New Left end of the dimension (Dalton 2002, 134). New Right parties are expected to be even less concerned about environmental issues than are the Old Politics parties, as they actively oppose environmental movement (Dalton 2002, 133; Knutsen 2004, 78). It must be noted that conceptualizing New Left and New Right is not the same as claiming that New Politics is simply a transformation of Old Left and Old Right, and Knutsen (1997, 257) claims that “the new cleavage cut across industrial left-right cleavages at the party level”. I am going to find out more on the relevance of the claim by studying climate politics today.

The environmental cleavage would imply proposals for climate politics to be more concerned with limiting growth than with state or market measures. The emblematic issue in the New Politics dimension is often resistance against nuclear power (Dalton 2002, 118; Rohrschneider 1993a), but as nuclear power might be portrayed as an alternative to carbon intensive fossil energy, the resistance is not necessarily a part of climate politics, and hence rather a part of a broader environmental platform.

A radical notion of the new cleavage hypothesis would be that climate change pressures democracies into new priorities, and hence the values of politics are changing due to new circumstances. This is the opposite from the parties linking climate change to their established core issues. The parties of the Old Politics cleavages would transform themselves rather than integrate the new issues in existing issues and dimensions. The main conflicts in society will be over New Politics issues, and climate change could be considered a core issue.

In order to explain failed climate policies, a hypothesis could be that the environmental cleavage has been prominent enough to change politics still concerned with the state/market dimension, or that the economic growth end of the environmental dimension is stronger than the ecological protection end. These notions could be correlated, as New Right resembles both ends of Old Politics in prioritizing economic growth, while New Right would be expected to be more hostile towards climate concerns.

## METHODOLOGY

To investigate how democracy responds to climate change, a qualitative research method is chosen, focusing on few cases, and with an aim of contributing to theoretical development in the field of climate politics. Qualitative methods are less able to explain differences in numbers and test theories statistically, but differences in kind (Landman 2003, 19). The ambition is to bring new understanding into climate politics and to contribute to new theoretical insights in a tradition of “hypothesis-generating research” (Donmoyer 2000, 52).

“Reconceptualization is the real power of qualitative research”, states Morse (1994a, 34), highlighting theory as the most important product of qualitative methods. Yin (2009, 15) also underscores the goal of expanding theories. The products of qualitative research is hence often “theory development, description, and operationalization” (Morse 1994b, 1).

So far the dissertation has included a summary of existing theories on environmental politics and climate politics. To develop the theories further and to investigate their transferability to new contexts (Lincoln and Guba 2000), operationalization is to be conducted with care.

The first step is to choose the angle from which to approach climate politics and which cases to study. Norway is chosen as the country of special interest in *essay 2* and *essay 3* as some of the challenges exposed in *essay 1* are clearly present in a country rich on oil and relatively little affected by climate change. The context of Norwegian climate policy is hence created within circumstances of more positive effects from fossil fuels than negative effects, and a population that declare concerns for the climate whilst supporting more petroleum extraction well aware of the consequences for the climate. The factors hampering progressive climate policies would be clearly present in the Norwegian context.

In addition, the Norwegian democracy includes a multiparty system with political parties representing the different cleavages described by Lipset and Rokkan (1967). As small entrepreneurial parties may play a role in politicizing climate change, the multiparty system should increase the possibility that some parties start competing over climate politics. In the absence of a Green Party in the data material, I would expect especially the Socialist Left Party and the Liberal Party to act on behalf of green interests. In *essay 4*, the propositions are applied to eight countries from three continents, in addition to Norway, to identify patterns beyond the Norwegian context.

The data material in *essay 2* and *essay 4* are electoral manifestos, and mainly coalition agreements at the governmental level in *essay 3*. The decision to investigate these documents

are based on the manifestos as the best representation of the collective will of the parties, and as the agreements as the best indicator on how manifestos are turned into government policy. The study of political documents, and especially electoral manifestos, must reflect on the nature of the documents. Mansergh and Thomson (2007, 325-326), argue that a “party's election program is designed not only to appeal to voters and to position the party in relation to other parties, including potential coalition partners, but also to secure the commitment of party members and activists”. On the other hand, Jahn (2010, 746) warns that “party manifestos are not written to inform citizens about a party’s position on a Left–Right dimension, but rather to accommodate strategic challenges in order to win an election”.

Electoral manifestos are made to bridge the gap between ideology and the everyday political struggles in parliaments, and the intention is to convince readers to vote for the party in question.

While extensive research based on party manifestos has shown that parties tend to avoid direct confrontation and that they differ from each other mainly through the selective emphasis of their priorities (...), we also know that new issues usually do not have a valence character and that direct confrontation (i.e., parties advocating diverging positions on political issues) is much more pronounced in the media and during electoral campaigns than in party programmes (Kriesi et al. 2006, 930-931).

There are reasons to oppose a general view of new issues not being valence issues (Harrison and Sundstrom 2007, 6), but the note on party manifestos is still relevant: Political parties tend to downplay certain conflicts in their own manifestos and hence avoid confrontation. This could be a methodological challenge, potentially distorting the study. By investigating electoral manifestos, it could be the case that the findings would easier fit into an accommodative strategy (Meguid 2005) or preference-accommodation (Carter 2006), simply because of the chosen objects of study. On the other hand, there are good reasons for studying electoral manifestos. It is reasonable to believe that a study on media coverage would reveal more confrontation, but at the same time, the claims and proposals presented in the media is not necessarily representative for the party: Single politicians or fractions within a party might utilize media for promoting their special causes, as well as problems stemming from political claims being filtered through media lenses often preferring conflicts over consensus. Through party manifestos, the collective will of the party is better represented, as the “parties’ only authoritative policy statements and, therefore, as indicators of the parties’



policy preferences at a given point in time” (Volkens et al. 2010, 2). The time aspect is important when studying a new issue such as climate change, and hence the selection of manifestos in *essay 4* on conservative parties, had to be limited in time. The manifestos were adopted in the time period between 2007 and 2014, and the seven years’ time span must be taken into consideration. Still, there were no major climate events in the scope of the Kyoto Protocol or establishment of the IPCC during the period, and it would be more questionable to study manifestos adopted before and after these events. In *essay 3* on coalition agreements 1989-2013, the influence from the time dimension is explicitly discussed, with the underlying expectation that interest in climate change increases over the years. For *essay 2* and *essay 4* the time span is limited in order to catch the parties at a point in time when the failed status of climate politics has become evident, and hence the parties are under more pressure to solve the issue, also under the influence of science reaching an almost consensus on the causes of climate change.

“Election programs are important documents; they offer the most definitive statements of parties’ positions and are reference sources for political candidates during election campaigns”, note Mansergh and Thomson (2007, 326). The political parties do most often stay loyal to their manifestos after the election. Electoral manifestos matter for budgeting and legislation (Walgrave and Nuytemans 2009) and are influential also in presidential systems, as the platforms of the US parties (Simas and Evans 2011). By studying UK parties, Bara (2005, 596) comes to the conclusion that “parties do genuinely seem to keep some of their important, specific promises when they achieve power”, and Naurin (2014, 1062), based on Swedish politics, states that research “clearly shows that what is promised in election manifestos affects government behavior”.

In the manifestos and agreements, the objects of study are the electoral pledges linked to climate change, and there are good reasons for focusing on the concrete pledges rather than general statements on climate change. The program-to-policy linkage is influenced by institutional arrangements and economic conditions, but the study of 13.279 pledges prior to the formation of 46 governments in eleven countries, “show that parties act according to their election pledges to a considerable extent” (Thomson et al 2012, 1). Even though research on coalition agreements has been much more scant than the studies on electoral manifestos, there is evidence indicating that these agreements matter for policy making. “Studies of the fulfillment of election pledges find that the appearance of a coalition party’s election pledge in the coalition agreement increases the likelihood that it will be fulfilled” (Indridason and Kristinsson 2013, 826).

Many studies have focused on electoral manifestos, but often the methodology is quantitative. The much cited (as well as criticized, see Dinas and Gemenis 2010; Mölder 2013) Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al 2010) is based on counting of sentences endorsing certain policy positions, as the free market positions and the environmental positions mentioned in the article on conservative parties, but “a manifesto peppered with appealing references to popular environmental concerns does not necessarily mean that a party treats the issue seriously” (Carter 2006, 754). All parties will state their intentions of a clean environment, but the will to actually achieve the goals, could differ greatly. “While voters tend to be strongly supportive of the *idea* of compliance with international environmental treaties, they can simultaneously be strongly resistant to the reality of higher taxes or energy prices”, note Harrison and Sundstrom (2007, 15). Hence the importance of studying the electoral pledges rather than vague ambitions, as these pledges is assumed to receive far more resistance than general support for the climate.

Another factor is that climate change is a sort of issue that the voters not necessarily let be decisive, and Justice, Cheek and Buckman (2011, 11) note that “the fact that a far smaller collection of demographics perceive global issues decreases the risk taken by politicians who only pay lip service to those issues or choose to ignore them completely”. Data from the Comparative Manifesto Project would mainly differentiate between those ignoring climate change and not, and to differentiate between progressive climate politics and lip service, a qualitative approach is needed.

A challenge evident in the essays using electoral manifesto data is how to define a climate measure and how to differentiate from general environmental measures. The aforementioned confusion among voters on what is environmental politics and what is climate politics is also seen in the electoral manifestoes. Sometimes climate politics are just a part of a general environmental policy, and sometimes measures with no relevance for greenhouse gas emissions are part of a manifesto section on climate politics. Hence, there are some challenges when extracting the climate measures from the manifestos. Within qualitative research, there is an ambition “to understand the social world from the viewpoint of respondents” (Myers 2000, para. 5). Following from the intention of letting the parties themselves define their climate policies by studying electoral manifestos and coalition agreements rather than press coverage, the working definition is as presented in *essay 2*: “A climate measure is defined as a concrete measure which is intended to have an impact on climate change, or is part of a section explicitly devoted to climate change”. As a consequence, some measures that arguably would reduce greenhouse gas emissions are not included as the parties’ themselves do not link

the measures to climate change, and some measures with dubious, at best, effect on the emissions are included because the parties claim that the measures are due to climate change. In this attempt to investigate the proposed measures, it is not the role of the scientist to judge the measures, but rather to categorize them according to different dimensions. If it was the task to include all measures with an effect on greenhouse gas emissions, the approach would have to be substantially changed. Some measures on transport would certainly reduce emissions, but when the parties present them as measures to gain better air quality locally, they are not considered climate measures. On the other side, many measures presented in chapters on energy, agriculture, transport and industry would actually increase emissions, and still, if the parties claim the measures to be climate measures, then the measures are considered accordingly. If the measures are not presented as linked to climate change, they are excluded from the study. An example in *essay 2* is the ban on oil-fired boilers in new buildings proposed by the Conservative Party (Høyre 2009, 68), that certainly could reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but as the measure is not linked to climate change it is not counted as a climate measure. On the other hand, even though the effectiveness of international emissions trading might be questioned (Woerdman 2000; Ellerman and Buchner 2007; Lohmann 2008; Perdan and Azapagic 2011), pledges on carbon trading will be perceived as climate measures. The parties' own perceptions are important.

Another important aspect is the concreteness of the measures. To be considered a measure, there must be a clear pledge. To simply state an intention of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, is not to be considered a climate measure. To reduce emissions is presumably the goal of all climate measures; the emphasis here is on how the parties and governments intend to achieve the common goal of a stabilized climate. The climate measure is a form of electoral pledge, on which it is an extensive literature. Bara (2005, 587) use a definition of a pledge as "a specific commitment on behalf of a party to act in a certain area following a strategy also mentioned". The pledges can vary from vague and general to specific and detailed, from a pledge that "stipulates a commitment to a particular course of action but this is defined weakly" to a pledge with "precise information about intended action or target focus" (Bara 2005, 589). All the climate measures included in this study fit into the framework of electoral pledges.

### **Operationalization**

Qualitative research is often concerned with operationalizing concepts and to contribute to further theory development (Morse 1994b, 1), and to study how the issue of climate change

appears on different cleavages, there is a need to counter the literature's lack of concretization. The New Politics literature has so far been mostly concerned with the overarching structural and value changes, with little emphasis on actual empirical political measures the parties propose on the issues and how these relate to the cleavages. "To a considerable extent, New Politics theories are based on the measurement of individual-level attitudinal changes", notes Poguntke (1993, 6), and little has changed since then. While much has been written on transitions of values, the concrete politics is often left without further specification. In *essay 2*, the ambition is to clarify the concepts and to present a new approach to operationalization of the left/right dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics.

It has been done less work on the concretization of what New Politics constitutes practically and how to differentiate New Left and New Right from the older versions. Rohrschneider (1993a) is primarily concerned with the link between partisanship and environmental attitudes among voters, but he also utilizes party positions on nuclear energy as an indicator for responsiveness to New Politics. There are good reasons to treat nuclear energy as an emblematic New Politics issue (Dalton 2002, 118), but the simple notion that resistance to nuclear energy is New Politics, misses the point of New Right as a reaction against environmentalism (Knutsen 2004, 78; Dalton 2002, 133), rejecting measures and even the need for measures.

Studies based on a premise that all environmental measures are signifiers of New Politics will not bring better understandings as a clean environment is considered a valence issue everyone is supportive of, but there are good reasons for differentiating and concretization of environmental politics. If an environmental dimension would simply be for or against a clean environment, all parties and governments would be at the same end. Hence it is necessary to differentiate among environmental measures, and not treat all measures as the same, acknowledging that the "proposals of established parties for solving the ecological crisis (...) are clearly inspired by the values and overriding goals of the Old Politics" (Poguntke 1993, 10). 20 years after it is time for an update on how the traditional parties propose solutions to climate change.

In the dissertation, it is the traditional economy based left/right dimension that receives the most attention, being as it is the most prominent cleavage in Western democracies. Hence, the first task is to operationalize climate measures on the left/right dimension.

The left/right dimension is closely related to industrialization and the empowerment of the working class, and "economic inequalities, differences in ownership to the means of

production, and conflict over the desirability of a market economy” (Knutsen 1995, 65). According to Ware (1996, 27), public ownership of the means of production is traditionally considered to be “a litmus test dividing left from right”, and McDonald, Mendes and Kim (2007, 64) argue that left and right refer mainly to “the scope and breadth of what goods and services should and should not be public goods”. Hence, the role of the state and the markets in climate politics will be important for differentiating between leftist measures and rightist measures.

Knutsen (1997) presents a brief framework for differentiating left/right measures in pointing to a tendency evident in the 1980's:

(...) the socialist parties emphasized solutions to the environmental challenge by planning, regulation, and strengthening of the public administration and control system, while the rightist parties emphasized taxes and the consideration of pollution as a law-and-order issue (Knutsen 1997, 258).

The framework needs to be elaborated further, especially the consideration of taxes as such as right-wing politics, a point that is questioned by Knutsen (1997, 251) himself, proposing use of “the progressiveness of taxes” as a left/right indicator. This might be a better measure than simply putting tax proposals without further specification in the categories of left (Anderson and Leal 2001, 4) or right (Nilsson, von Borgstede and Biel 2004, 267), and in the dissertation, proposals for increased taxation or new eco-taxes added to existing taxes will be considered leftist, while tax cuts will be rightist. The leftist parties would be expected to add new eco-taxes on environmentally harmful products and activities, while the rightist parties would remove taxes on environmentally friendly products and activities.

At the state end of the dimension I place, in addition to increased taxation, state ownership and state imposed regulation. This is consistent with the expectation that “a reformist socialist strategy uses a central interventionist state to regulate the market to protect the environment” (Carter 2007, 72), considering leftist notions from planned economy to regulations on privately owned enterprises (McDonald, Mendes and Kim 2007, 64; Jahn 2010, 752). The same logic applies for rightist measures that span from less regulation to full scale privatization. An emblematic rightist climate measures is trading with emissions permits (Bailey and Maresh 2009; Beder 2001).

Many measures fall outside of the framework, especially uncontroversial measures like support for research, renewable energy, new technologies and international agreements,

but these could also fit depending on the content, e.g. if an international treaty is on a global carbon tax (left) or carbon trading (right). Subsidies is also a contested issue on the left/right dimension, placed to the left by Amundsen and Bergman (2004, 2) and to the right by Nilsson, von Borgstede and Biel (2004, 267).

It has been an ambition to include only clearly leftist and rightist measures in the framework in order to investigate the left/right dimension in climate politics. The framework used for the analyses in *essay 3* and *essay 4* is only on the Old Politics categories of left and right, while a more extensive framework is used in *essay 2*, in which New Politics have its own left and right categories.

To differentiate between Old Politics left and right, and the left and right of New Politics, the New Politics categories must represent a substantive new approach. If all environmental measures were considered New Politics, the old cleavages ability to absorb or adjust to new issues would be ignored. Hence carbon trading is not New Politics, but an Old Right response to a new issue, while a ban on fossil heating would be typical for an Old Left response.

The categorization of New Politics measures has received surprisingly little attention in the literature. Rohrschneider (1993a), working on the link between partisanship and environmental attitudes among voters, utilizes party positions on nuclear energy as an indicator for responsiveness to New Politics. There are good reasons to treat nuclear energy as an emblematic New Politics issue (Dalton 2002, 118), but the simple notion that resistance to nuclear energy is New Politics, misses the point of New Right as a reaction against environmentalism (Knutsen 2004, 78; Dalton 2002, 133), rejecting measures and even the need for measures. New Right is then characterized by either ignoring the issue of climate change as a dismissive strategy, or expressing scepticism towards climate science and rejecting the need for climate measures.

Now the special character of New Left must be translated into a categorization framework, and I take into account that Inglehart (1984, 26) links the new impulses to “the limits to growth movement” and the “consumer advocacy movement”. Hence measures towards reduced over-all production and consumption of material goods and especially fossil fuels could be at the core of a New Left response to climate change. Pricing mechanisms to facilitate less consumption, as in progressive electricity bills, would be New Left, because some people will pay more and others less, based on the consumption. Green taxation is another New Left measure in which an increase in taxation on certain goods is compensated by reduced taxation on others, so the over-all taxation rate does not increase while climate

friendly behaviour is rewarded. The proposition that New Politics is not concerned with economic issues seems to fall short. It is apparently hard to do politics without interfering with the economy, so it might be more accurate to discuss the goals of the economy related to the dimension from economic growth to ecological protection rather than to ignore the economic character of many New Politics issues.

Table 1: Indicators of left and right, new and old

<b><i>Old Left</i></b>	<b><i>Old Right</i></b>
Bans/regulations	Trading of quotas/certificates
Public ownership	Liberalization/privatization
New, increased taxes	Reduced or eliminated taxes
<b><i>New Left</i></b>	<b><i>New Right</i></b>
Reduced consumption	No mention of climate change
Green (balanced) taxation	Climate scepticism
Consumer responsibility	Rejection of measures

The New Left approach places more responsibility on the individual consumer, and hence labelling of products is a New Left measure as well as public awareness campaigns. The categorization scheme is presented in table 1, and it is worth noting how the categories differ in who or what is attributed most responsibility: Old Left emphasizes the state, Old Right the markets, and New Left the individual consumers, while New Right either rejects that anybody has a responsibility or ties responsibility solely to the nature if rejecting anthropogenic climate change.

The categorization framework first presented in *essay 2* has afterwards been utilized in two master theses. Myklebust (2013, 31) uses the categories of Old Left and New Left to differentiate between left-oriented environmentalism with socialism as overarching goal and ecologism with fundamental green transformation of society as the goal. Vik (2013, 46-48) also emphasizes the Old Left/New Left divide, and proposes a new type of measure within the category of New Left in adding support for improvements of public transport and creation of bike lanes. These measures are intended to reduce traffic, and hence reduce consumption of fossil fuels, but on the other hand, neither public transport nor bike lanes represent new issues stemming from the limits to growth and consumer advocacy movements highlighted by Inglehart (1984, 26). While the existing framework in table 1 would place proposals for

increased public ownership on public transport in the Old Left category and proposals for procurement or privatization in the Old Right, a general increase in efforts on public transport could resemble subsidies and hence be harder to categorize. A possible solution is to treat all subsidies of climate friendly purposes as New Left, unless they are explicitly linked to state or market actors, while New Right would be expected to oppose the subsidies. Another possibility is to develop the proposal from Vik (2013) further in expanding the New Left category of reduced consumption into a slightly broader category termed green lifestyle, which consists of measures aimed at not only reducing consumption of goods, but also facilitating climate friendly behaviour in general. Relevant measures could aim at reducing emissions from traffic by public transport and cycling, from meat consumption by promoting vegetarian food, or from general consumption by stimulating recycling. It is necessary to underscore that this will only be New Left as far as the concrete measures do not imitate Old Left or Old Right, as in increased tax on meat, decreased tax on vegetarian food, or regulation in the form of some days being declared meat free. By expanding the New Left category, and especially including measures on public transport, a New Politics conflict between public transport and private cars is appropriately represented, with New Right parties on the car end of the dimension, rejecting measures to reduce traffic or even proposing construction of new roads to encounter congestion.

There are many possible adjustments that can be done to the framework of *essay 2*, and I welcome the proposal by Vik (2013). This is consistent with the ambition of qualitative research to contribute to theoretical development (Morse 1994b; Yin 2009). Pledges on public transport and subsidies are among the measures that need to be elaborated on in further development of the categorization scheme. A radical notion is that all climate measures not linked to any other major cleavage would be considered New Left, based on an assumption that if the measures fall outside of Old Politics, they must be New Politics, but on the other hand, if so, I might run the risk of diluting the New Politics concept away from the growth/anti-growth conflict. An argument for including public transport in New Left while excluding subsidies for research or new technologies would be that the latter categories do not challenge economic growth as a goal. This is especially relevant as ecological modernization seeks to solve environmental problems and climate change within “the workings of the main institutional arrangements of society” (Hajer 1995, 3), while New Politics on the contrary would be expected to challenge societal structures. More research is definitely needed on the dimensions within Old Politics as well as New Politics.



## DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

*Essay 1* presents some significant context to the rest of the dissertation, and highlights the challenges to a progressive climate policy. Political parties are not expected to win elections based on climate politics, and a democratic system is often more open towards the immediate material well-being of the voters than mitigating an abstract, future threat. Climate change is harder to approach politically than more localized environmental problems, and hence the political parties might be cautious in promoting climate change policies. A possible solution is restrictions on democratic processes, be it international treaties or domestic climate laws, but the political parties seem sceptical to relinquishing power due to climate change. Still, many climate measures are presented by the parties, and the next essays look into how these measures are to be categorized within dominating dimensions in politics.

In *essay 2* the whole framework in table 1 is applied to a study of the electoral manifestos of four Norwegian parties, each located at a different end on the dimensions: Labour Party (Old Left), Conservative Party (Old Right), Socialist Left Party (New Left) and Progress Party (New Right). The limited study shows the relevance of the Old Politics left/right dimension in climate politics, in which only the Socialist Left Party and the Labour Party supported Old Left climate measures. Only the leftist parties portray public ownership as a climate measure, while the rightist parties do not link privatization to climate change. This might signify a pattern of more explicit integration of climate politics within leftist politics, but on the other hand, all the parties promote Old Right measures, and the more leftist the party, the more Old Right measures are supported. This could be consistent with the notion of leftist parties being in general more open towards environmental measures (Rohrschneider 1993a), and also to an overall right turn in politics (Ross 2000; Mudge 2011), but hardly consistent with the leftist hypothesis. To some extent, the left/right dimension has been able to integrate climate concerns.

On New Politics, a similar pattern is revealed: The more to the left on the state/market dimension, the more New Left measures are supported, while the Progress Party does not support any New Left measures and is the only party questioning climate science and explicitly rejecting measures, consistent with expectations to a New Right party. The other three parties do not criticize climate measures they do not support. This can be interpreted in line with preference-accommodation and climate change as a valence issue, with the parties avoiding too much politicization while at the same time linking climate change to their traditional policies.

*Essay 3* explores the coalition agreements of six Norwegian multiparty governments from 1989 to 2013, based on the framework for categorizing leftist and rightist climate measures within Old Politics. The left/right placement of the proposed climate measures is related to not only the left/right position of the actual government, but also the position on the ecological protection/economic growth dimension. In addition, as the study covers a time span of 24 years, and along the time dimension, more space is devoted to climate change as the general attention to the issue has increased.

A majority of the proposed climate measures are neither left nor right according to the framework. The governments prefer measures considered uncontroversial, avoiding too much politicization and downplaying a potential left/right conflict over the issue. Both left-leaning and right-leaning governments propose state regulations as well as emissions trading, but summing up all platforms, there are more leftist climate measures than rightist climate measures in total. This could either be a result of climate politics actually being easier to incorporate in a leftist platform or that leftist governments are more prone to link climate measures to a leftist profile.

Whereas all of the other governments propose a reasonably balanced number of Old Left and Old Right climate measures, there was a preponderance of leftist measures by the centre/left governments of 2005 and 2009. The explanation for this is probably that this was the only governments in the data material with a solid majority in parliament, making it possible to pursue their own profile to a greater extent. However, there are also Old Right measures in their platforms, as market based environmental protection in the form of an emission trading system has also won acceptance on the left.

A way of indicating if the issue dimension of climate change is absorbed by the left/right dimension, would be an increasing amount of either leftist or rightist measures. During the period there was been a steady increase in leftist and rightist measures, but the percentage of proposed measures falling into these categories are kept quite stable. There are climate measures on both the left and the right, but the majority of the proposed measures are not easy to place on a left/right dimension. It is worth noting that some leftist or rightist measures are scaled up from the national to the international level during the negotiations, and it could be the case that internationalization is a way to avoid too much politicization of climate change. Making climate policy into consensus oriented foreign policy minimizes political risks, and could be a consequence of the features of democratic processes discussed in *essay 1*.

In *essay 4* the geographical breadth is increased with a total of nine countries, while the political breadth is reduced, only investigating conservative parties. To shed light on

conservative responses to climate change, the electoral manifestos of nine conservative, centre/right parties were investigated. The parties are selected from UK, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Germany, USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, and their manifestos was searched for proposed climate measures, especially those to be categorized on a left/right dimension. The first finding is that the New Right position denying the problems and rejecting the measures is not accurate for describing conservative parties as such. It is a position favoured only by the Republican Party of the US, while the Australian Liberal Party shares much of the scepticism towards measures, even carbon trading, but still recognizes the need for reduced emissions. Both countries have vast reserves of coal, sustaining the notion of pro-business positions hindering climate measures when the industry is important enough to the economy, as suggested that the coal industry is with large reserves. The coal reserves could also serve as an explanation for another difference between the US and Australian parties and the others, namely that the first two do not explicitly promote international agreements in their manifestos while all the rest do so. Natural resources and powerful corporations must be part of analyses of climate politics, as well as the problems of achieving popular support for radical measures as highlighted in *essay 1*.

Among the other conservative parties, there is a balance between leftist and rightist measures, opposing the notion of Old Right parties limiting themselves to free market environmentalism. While four of the parties propose new regulations and taxes, only three parties express support for market measures and carbon trading. Conservative parties have adopted climate policies from the left as well as the right, but many measures are neither left nor right. A popular approach among conservative parties is research and technologies as solutions intended to make nuclear power secure or fossil fuels, even coal, clean. In countries dependent on nuclear power and fossils, the conservative parties do not challenge the industries, yet another confirmation of the pro-business position of conservatives.

The clearest finding based on *essays 2-4*, is the rejection of the notion of environmental politics belonging more or less exclusively to the left. Leftist measures have been more important to environmental responses historically, but rightist measures have gained importance as well since the rise of neo-liberalism and a general right turn in politics. If the leftist hypothesis is correct, this may explain the lack of successful climate politics today, based on the premise that rightist measures would not work as well as leftist measures. To judge the measures efficiency is though beyond the scope of this dissertation.

The occurrence of leftist measures in the manifestos of rightist parties or coalition agreements of rightist governments could be interpreted as a signifier that the state/market

dimension is losing importance. With less dominance of the traditional cleavage between left and right, it is easier for parties and governments to cross the cleavage when adopting their climate policies. The general right turn in politics would be able to explain the Old Left embrace of for example carbon trading, but on the other hand, even conservative parties express intentions of not only regulations and new taxes, but also, in some instances, for implementing bans. The parties and governments mix different climate measures, but it is still possible to trace left/right positions in the climate policies related to the left/right positions of the parties and governments.

The dissertation does not provide strong evidence supporting the notion of climate politics being absorbed by the state/market dimension. Absorption does not mean that all measures would be able to place on the left/right dimension, but rather that the real political conflicts would follow a left/right cleavage, with many consensual issues in between. The leftist support for carbon trading and the rightist support for regulation contradict the notion of absorption, and could rather point in the direction of a consensual approach to climate change, in line with climate change being considered foreign policy.

Climate change could evolve into an issue that is truly “neither left nor right, but ahead”. Climate change is then such a serious threat that all parties put their differences aside and unite in mitigating climate change. In an optimistic vein, the result could be cross-partisan efforts protecting the climate and reducing emissions, but in a pessimistic vein, it is just a political strategy undermining actual change: The parties avoid too much contestation of the issue, in line with expectations based on preference-accommodation. The broad political compromises within Norwegian politics are signs of this strategy in practice, and a consequence could be depoliticization of climate change.

The conflicts over climate change are hard to simplify into one single dimension, and following literature expectations on bandwagon effects and preference-accommodation, the political parties, and to some extent the governments, try to link climate change to their core issues. This is most evident in the leftist electoral manifestos, for example when state ownership is portrayed as important in mitigating climate change. The opposite position, favouring privatization due to climate change, is not expressed directly. Hence, some of the background for notions of the left being more prone to incorporate environmental concerns, might be the result of a greater willingness to link climate change to old core issues, not necessarily a result of any new proposed policies.

Another question is whether it is possible to track an independent environmental cleavage by studying the manifestos and platforms. If all environmental measures

automatically were considered New Politics, then there would be a dimension pro and contra environmental protection, but then nuances of environmental and climate politics would be ignored as well as the strategies parties utilize. If all environmental measures signify New Politics, then suddenly almost all parties would be New Politics parties, reducing Old Politics into a category more resembling the expected New Right position. Hence it is important to continue to link New Left with aims of reducing consumption and limit growth, in order to conserve the unique characteristics of the New Politics dimension compared to Old Politics. Using attitude towards nuclear power as the sole indicator for New Politics misses several aspects, especially when the issue is climate change. The framework for categorizing climate measures on the dimensions of state/market and growth/protection presented in this dissertation is a significant contribution to the literature, and has already inspired new proposals that actually improve the framework. The dissertation seems to have a function in theoretical development and operationalization, in line with ideals of qualitative research.

A new cleavage should be detectable when surveying intentions among voters and what kind of issues they deem decisive for their voting behaviour, but could also be present in the electoral manifestos or coalition agreements. The evidence presented here, is though not very convincing: The dimension of ecological protection versus economic growth is not dominating, not even in the sections devoted to climate politics. This might be an effect of much empirical emphasis on Norway, a country with almost political consensus on the concept of sustainable growth and technological fixes, combining ecological protection with economic growth, and hence undermining the whole environmental cleavage. On the other hand, the same perspective is to a large degree evident in the conservative party family cross-nationally. Conservative parties agree on the protection of the environment, while at the same time promoting further economic growth, in line with ecological modernization. Some climate measures are though rejected explicitly due to economic interests, approaching what could resemble a New Right position. But then again, this would also be an expected response from both the left and right of Old Politics, not surprisingly highlighted by conservative parties, being at the core of Old Right.

New Politics first emerged in opposition to both left and right of Old Politics, and hence environmental concerns as such were considered New Politics. Then New Right emerged as a reaction against what was first labelled New Politics and then specified into New Left. There has been too little work on the distinctions between New Right and Old Politics, but one approach seems to be that New Right is more fiercely and openly resisting environmentalism, while Old Left and Old Right attempt for preference-accommodation of

environmentalism without deeper political transformations. The environmental cleavage is then manifested when the New Left includes anti-growth politics and New Right includes anti-green politics, and the Old Left and Old Right would be placed somewhere in between the two extremes. If all environmental measures were considered New Left, the conflict would be restricted to be for or against environmental concerns, but then the parties of both Old Left and Old Right, would be on the New Left end of the dimension. Some parties of the Old Right, most explicitly the Republican Party, would rather belong to the New Right. Neo-liberalism is probably closer to New Right than Old Right, and Old Right parties most clearly influenced by neo-liberalism might simply have turned themselves into New Right parties, but most Old Right parties have not done so.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

As the political systems of today seem unable to mitigate climate change, more academic work on climate politics is needed to increase the understanding of the issue. This dissertation aims at bringing theoretical insights and to further develop theories on climate politics. The new analytical framework for categorizing climate measures is already being utilized in other studies, and that could be taken as a sign of success in line with the theory developing goals within qualitative research. The framework needs further elaboration, and I am looking forward to new inputs.

To investigate how climate change is attempted integrated in politics, several hypotheses are presented. Most prominently is the leftist hypothesis, but little evidence point in the direction of climate politics being exclusively leftist. The other hypothesis, the left/right dimension absorbing climate change, and the rise of a new environmental cleavage, get some support in the data material, but still quite modest. Together, the empirical analyses might point to climate change as a multidimensional issue, being included in more dimensions. This could be in line with a preference-accommodation strategy of the established parties. Climate measures as such are not manifesting a pole in its own right, but are integrated within several dimensions, including the state/market dimension and the environmental dimension. More research is needed on other dimensions, especially a globalization dimension contrasting national sovereignty and international commitments, and how climate change may functions as a foreign policy issue in the countries least vulnerable to climate change.

Another significant finding is the tendency for internationalizing controversial climate measures in coalition agreements, pointing to a pattern in which the political parties emerging

from the Old Politics conflicts seek to avoid establishment of a strong New Politics dimension that would probably benefit the Green Party or other New Left parties rather than the old parties. However, it is not a task of this dissertation to conclude on the necessity of limiting economic growth in order to mitigate climate change. The main ambition has been to contribute to theory development and operationalization of climate change as a political problem that has yet to be solved. Democracies struggle with climate change, but a transition to autocracy is not much likely to succeed or even to be politicized. Future research will show how and if democracies and political parties will be able to fully integrate concerns for the climate. There is an almost consensus on the importance of climate change, but the actual political measures implemented are so far not sufficient. Hence the emphasis must be not only on general statements of commitment to the cause of the climate, but on the concrete measures. In this regard, the analytical framework presented in the dissertation is a significant contribution to the political science literature on climate change and environmentalism.

## LITERATURE

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## ESSAY 1:

# Climate politics:

## *Freedom, coercion and limits to democracy*

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Introduction: Democracy under pressure

"The really big problems with regard to the climate will come when all terms of office have expired, but the politicians will have to convince the population at present and thereby invest political capital in making decisions about something that will get really bad in 10, 20, or 30 years. In many ways, democracy is completely unaccustomed to dealing with this kind of problem"<sup>1</sup>. These words were spoken by the European Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, who in an interview after the climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009 confirmed that democracy is a problem for action in climate policy. Is it the case that democracy is incapable of handling a threat such as climate change and that democratic regimes are incapable of making the necessary tough decisions so that the solution lies in fewer individual rights and a more authoritarian form of government, or is it realistic to work against climate change in a democracy? In the extension of the criticism of democracy, it is also relevant to discuss civil disobedience, sabotage and violence as political methods.

We can find many arguments that it is difficult for democracy to take climate change seriously, but on the other hand, there is no guarantee that dictatorships will deal with climate change in a better way. Examples from communist regimes in Eastern Europe indicate the opposite, and the empirical data does not clearly favour either alternative. In addition, the transition from democracy to a climate dictatorship is rarely raised as an issue in the literature, even though this is a weak point in the defence of authoritarian regimes as an answer to climate change. Dictatorship as a solution appears to be academically interesting, but politically irrelevant. Thus, the solutions may entail introducing international, constitutional

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<sup>1</sup> Alslund-Lanthén 2011

or multi-partisan limits on the ways in which democracy functions. In this chapter, we shall take a closer look at democracy, climate change and alternative solutions based on the premise regarding the seriousness of climate change and the need for action.

## Democracy for climate and the environment

"What the voters freely support, whether foolishly or wisely, unknowingly or well-informed, is democratic politics", writes Thomas Chr. Wyller in the book, *Demokratiet og miljøkrisen (Democracy and the environmental crisis)*.<sup>2</sup> Directly translated, democracy means government by the people, but the many variants and interpretations of democracy make it necessary to present a brief review of the concept. The original Greek democracy was a direct democracy based on participation in small city states, where all of the citizens were directly involved in the decisions. There were clear limitations on who could participate in this democracy, and women and slaves were among those who were excluded. Since then, democracies have become more and more inclusive, but every time new groups are included, there is also a debate about the abilities of these new groups. For a long time, it was required that you had to own property in order to be allowed to vote since economic independence was regarded as a necessary condition for being able to make political decisions on your own. At present, the debate is whether 16-year-olds are mature enough to be given suffrage, whereas the debate about democracy's ability to deal with climate change leans in the opposite direction and points to insufficient maturity among the overwhelming majority of voters and politicians.

Our modern democracy differs from the Greek city states in that representation has taken the place of direct democracy. The classical doctrine maintains that democracy is a method of making decisions where the common good is achieved with the people electing their representatives to govern. Objections point out that it is not necessarily correct to include the goal of the common good because that means so many different things for different groups and individuals. Joseph Schumpeter concludes with the following definition: "The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote".<sup>3</sup> Democracy requires that the people can choose between competing political elites. If there is widespread discontent with the policies that are practised by a sitting

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<sup>2</sup> Wyller 1999, 32

<sup>3</sup> Schumpeter 1942, 269

government, it shall be possible to vote for other politicians who can take over government power. In this view of democracy, the elections are the key events with suffrage being the inhabitants' primary way of exerting influence.

Later on, participation has been given greater emphasis. Joshua Cohen thinks that democratic politics involves public deliberation focused on the common good and requires some form of manifest equality among the citizens.<sup>4</sup> In order for it to be possible to achieve democracy, the citizens must have a number of freedoms and rights that shall ensure the possibility of having their preferences heard, from freedom of speech and suffrage to freedom to organize and free and fair elections. Thus, democracy is not based solely on elections, but also on a number of rights and opportunities for political participation outside of elections. These rights are ensured by limiting democracy's freedom of action in such a way that a slight majority cannot help itself to resources at the expense of the minority, and this forms the basis for the rule of law and liberal democracy.

Whereas Schumpeter took normative ideals from the classical concept of democracy, Cohen was concerned with participation as an instrument for arriving at good decisions. In the deliberative democracy, it is precisely the objective arguments and consideration of the community as a whole that form the basis for decisions on which everyone can agree. The discussions shall be free, the participants shall be attentive, and the arguments shall focus on the common good rather than on private interests. Thus, the legitimacy of laws does not come first and foremost from voting, but from the process that resulted in agreement. Ideally, the open debate should have resulted in an agreement that all of the parties can live with, but time pressure may force more rapid processes. Actors who deliberately want to sabotage or delay the process are not taken into account either, and the deliberative democracy tends to appear to be a description of an ideal democracy with ideal citizens, or perhaps as an ideal that is worth making an effort to achieve.

The idea of a relationship between democratic processes and decisions for the common good also lies behind part of the argumentation for democracy as a key method of solving environmental problems. In a key article in this field, Rodger A. Payne<sup>5</sup> summarizes the arguments for democracy in five points that shall form the background for the broader debate. The first of these points is individual rights and the open marketplace for ideas, where activists and scientists can provide information, make proposals and overcome powerful economic interests without fear of being harassed by the regime. Through freedom of speech,

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<sup>4</sup> Cohen 1989, 19

<sup>5</sup> Payne 1995

the environmentalists' arguments can reach the public authorities, and climate researchers can submit scientific arguments and correct politicians who spread erroneous views about the realities of climate change.

The second argument is that democratic regimes have to be responsive to the voters concerns about the environment. Voters can vote green parties into power and can make governments accountable if the expectations for environmental policy are not met. In this way, the power of economic interests can be kept in check by interest groups and social movements. Whereas a dictatorship can repress environmental concerns, a democracy gives these concerns elbow room and influence on the policies that are practised.

The third argument is that democracies learn lessons from other regimes to a greater extent. Information about successful environmental programmes finds its way more easily into and out of democratic regimes. The free flow of information ensures that citizens and politicians can learn lessons from scientific communities and independent sources. A dictatorship will have a much greater possibility of censoring information and preventing learning from being spread.

The fourth argument is that it is easier for democracies to participate in and respect international bodies and agreements and that actors can utilize these bodies and agreements far better in democracies than they can in dictatorships. One example of this is Eastern European countries that have to upgrade their environmental requirements in order to be able to become members of the EU. In a democracy, it is also easier to get support from transnational environmental organizations.

The fifth and final argument is that democracies usually have a market economy, which must take consumers' and authorities' environmental requirements into consideration. Through market-based measures, it should be possible to reduce emissions more effectively than through direct regulations, and the purchase and sale of emission quotas will be emphasized, as well as cuts in subsidies for environmentally hazardous activities. This is an idea that is in keeping with a predominantly market liberal approach to the climate problem and is based on a belief that markets are steered from below, by the individual consumer and does not raise unequal division of power in the market economy or any advantages that may exist in a planned economy as issues.

Throughout this argumentation is the idea that if everyone will be able to speak their mind, consideration for the environment will weigh heaviest since it deals with our common basis of existence. In this way, Payne closely follows the deliberative ideal of a democracy and the classical democratic doctrine of the common good, which argues that solutions are

possible to identify and gain support from the will of the people through rational argumentation. That is more of a normative ideal about how democracy ideally should have functioned than a description of the realities.

Peter Burnell is another respected researcher who argues for a positive relationship between democracy and environmental protection in the form of seven assumptions.<sup>6</sup> First, is an assumption that democracies are more concerned with human life and quality of life, where it is implicit that the citizens' view of quality of life coincides with environmental interests more than, for example, quality of life understood as increased material consumption and mobility through private motoring. His next assumption is that authoritarian leaders are more concerned with preserving their own political tenure and maximizing their personal gains, whereas democratic processes force leaders of democracies to take a broader and perhaps a longer-term view. We are already familiar from Payne's arguments with the third and fourth assumptions, namely that democratic institutions are assumed to be responsive to express concerns, such as the environment and that democratic governments must be accountable for their actions. The fifth assumption is that openness, diffusion of power and the voters' possibility of replacing a government gives fertile ground for developing a broad range of implementable solutions and rejecting solutions that do not work. Assumption number six is that democracies can more easily implement tough decisions because democratically elected political leaders have legitimacy from elections and abilities to persuade in order to be elected whereas the seventh and final assumption is that democracies' environmental policies are improved because women are generally more environmentally concerned than men and that high female participation should therefore have a beneficial effect on the ability to reduce CO2 emissions. The underlying premise is that women have greater influence in democracies than in dictatorships. Burnell's assumptions are consistently based on the assumption that the citizens actually want a stronger environmental protection.

The diffusion of power in democracies is emphasized as a key argument by Margrethe Winslow<sup>7</sup> who points out that there are few who profit from environmental problems, but many who are damaged so that the majority can prevent elites from implementing environmentally hazardous projects. She also mentions that the need for coercion and/or legitimacy prevents long-term investments in environmental protection in authoritarian regimes, whereas the possibility of civil suits is regarded as an advantage for environmental efforts in democracies. Interestingly enough, litigation of climate policy may be a

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<sup>6</sup> Burnell 2012

<sup>7</sup> Winslow 2005

consequence of insufficient response from elite-controlled, elected bodies: when the representation channel fails in a democracy, the rule of law incorporated into that same democracy can be an effective alternative in order to compel changes as long as there is a legal basis on which one can file legal actions.

A second argument is that a highly uncertain career ladder to the top in a dictatorship and the relatively brief term of office give authoritarian decision-makers a shorter time horizon and hence willingness to accept a greater risk than the average voter in a democracy would have accepted. Social stability can act in different ways: according to Hugh Ward,<sup>8</sup> stability in democracies will give politicians the composure to handle environmental issues, whereas stability in an authoritarian regime can give the elite an opportunity to continue with environmentally hazardous practices.

Anthony Giddens also emphasizes freedom within organizations and research as advantageous aspects for democracy when facing climate change.<sup>9</sup> Peter Christoff and Robyn Eckersley<sup>10</sup> emphasize the importance of a strong civil society, strong and respected traditions for scientific research and many diverse media, among other things, at the same time as they admit that these factors are not always necessary for good climate policy.

Participation is easier in democracies, and lobbying for the environment may have an effect. The number of environmental organizations has been found to affect the policy,<sup>11</sup> and the strength of the environmental organizations helps reduce air pollution.<sup>12</sup> Payne is interested in the rise of green parties in democracies when the voters are discontented with environmental policy. Quan Li and Rafael Reuveny<sup>13</sup> argue likewise that regular and free elections give the inhabitants an opportunity to vote new parties into power and get environmentalists elected to parliament, e.g. the German Green Party. A study based on data from 29 countries shows that green parties in parliaments may help change the values in the society by "promoting a political discourse and political agenda which contributes to the formative experiences that underlie value change"<sup>14</sup>. Li and Reuveny acknowledge that this logic also allows the citizens to vote "extreme, anti-environmental parties" into power, but argue on the basis of individual observations that "such situations do not occur frequently in

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<sup>8</sup> Ward 2008

<sup>9</sup> Giddens 2009, 74

<sup>10</sup> Christoff & Eckersley 2011, 445

<sup>11</sup> Fredriksson et al. 2005

<sup>12</sup> Binder & Neumayer 2005

<sup>13</sup> Li & Reuveny 2006, 937

<sup>14</sup> Tranter & Western 2012, 161



reality".<sup>15</sup> It may also be worth remembering that environmental movements are working in practice for openness and the spread of democracy,<sup>16</sup> and were involved in the fall of communism in Eastern Europe,<sup>17</sup> and that green political theory emphasizes participatory democracy.<sup>18</sup>

The pro-democracy arguments are based on an assumption that if they just inform themselves about the issue the people will prioritize environmental protection over short-term private interests. Thus, this approach can be said to be based on an optimistic view of humanity. However, this premise is not made explicit or raised as an issue by Payne, Burnell or others who defend the hypothesis that democracy is a necessary condition for solving environmental problems. Much of the criticism against their standpoint is based on the assumption that voters are not necessarily as environmentally aware and that cumbersome power structures impede a more environment-friendly policy within democratic regimes as well. Manus I. Midlarsky raises the question of whether the argumentation for a positive relationship between democracy and environmental protection entails an idealization of democracy.<sup>19</sup>

#### Criticism: Democracy as an impediment

"Political regimes whose survival depends mainly on delivering material prosperity for the people will not prioritize environmental sustainability if that comes into conflict", writes Burnell,<sup>20</sup> but that could in my opinion just as well be a criticism of democracies as of dictatorships. There is not any documentation that democratic regimes are less concerned with material well-being and economic growth. Edward C. Epstein points out that bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes get their legitimacy from economic progress or prospects of economic progress, but emphasizes that economic recessions create problems for both authoritarian and democratic regimes.<sup>21</sup> Although it is plausible to argue that democratic leaders get their legitimacy from elections more than from what they give the inhabitants in the way of material goods, the elections will often be able to deal with what material goods the candidates will give to the inhabitants. It is also documented that the will to approve climate-

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<sup>15</sup> Li & Reuveny 2006, 937

<sup>16</sup> Paehlke 2004

<sup>17</sup> Jancar-Webster 1998; Botcheva 1996

<sup>18</sup> Hysing 2013, 956

<sup>19</sup> Midlarsky 1998, 344

<sup>20</sup> Burnell 2012, 823

<sup>21</sup> Epstein 1984, 52

related legislation decreases prior to elections in democratic states.<sup>22</sup> That can be considered in the context of the need to maximize votes. In political economics, it is common to expect that democratic leaders are motivated by the possibility of being re-elected, which makes them dependent on support from groups of voters that lie between the different wings; i.e. median voters. Thus, it is this moderate group of voters that sets the limits on how far democratic authorities will go toward obligating themselves to contribute in international climate negotiations.<sup>23</sup>

When Payne and Burnell argue that democratic regimes respond to the inhabitants' concern for the environment, they take it for granted that the inhabitants not only are concerned for the environment, but actually prefer reduced greenhouse emissions over increased material welfare. In 2009, for example, the Norwegian election survey showed that 56 per cent of the voters in an advanced - and very affluent - democracy gave priority to "economic growth over environmental protection".<sup>24</sup> Although the inhabitants have a positive attitude to environmental protection, that does not mean that they will prioritize environmental protection over material goods when they come into conflict. Elections and politicians can also reject that there is a conflict, as when Norwegian environmental ideology is characterized as an idea that economic growth and ecological conservation may be compatible with each other.<sup>25</sup> On the other hand, the World Commission on Environment and Development has been of the opinion that it is both possible and desirable to combine growth and conservation,<sup>26</sup> even if there are many studies that indicate that it is a challenging combination.<sup>27</sup> Midlarsky finds that economic development is the variable that explains CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the greatest extent.<sup>28</sup>

Democratic elections not only provide an opportunity to vote for green parties, but also to use your right to vote against environmental protection. It can be argued that Li and Reuveny takes this criticism too lightly, for right-wing populist parties are mobilizing around "anti-green" issues<sup>29</sup> and are in clear opposition to the environmental movement,<sup>30</sup> nor is it necessary to bring explicitly "anti-environmental parties", such as the Swiss *Autopartei* (Automobile Party), into the debate. It is sufficient that the voters vote parties into power that

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<sup>22</sup> Fankhauser et al. 2014

<sup>23</sup> Böhringer & Vogt 2004, 598

<sup>24</sup> Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 351

<sup>25</sup> Aardal 1993, 79

<sup>26</sup> Brundtland 1987

<sup>27</sup> Cf. for example, Ekins 1997; Rees 2003

<sup>28</sup> Midlarsky 1998, 353

<sup>29</sup> Knutsen 2004, 78

<sup>30</sup> Dalton 2002, 133

reject key measures for reducing the greenhouse emissions, and it is worth remembering that the three biggest parties in Norwegian politics are all clearly on the growth side of an axis that extends from ecological conservation to economic growth.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless nearly six out of ten Norwegians say that they agree that "Norwegian politicians do far too little to limit greenhouse emissions in Norway",<sup>32</sup> but that does not mean that climate considerations are crucial to the voting, especially not when the same survey shows that "7 out of 10 want to develop new oil fields in the North Sea, even if that entail greenhouse emissions and disturbance of the natural environment".<sup>33</sup> That may indicate that neither the voters nor the politicians they elect prioritize the climate over material goods, which may explain why a growth party like the Labour Party is the absolute largest party among proponents of conservation in the electorate.<sup>34</sup> Kathryn Harrison and Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom note that "while voters tend to be strongly supportive of the *idea* of compliance with international environmental treaties, they can simultaneously be strongly resistant to the reality of higher taxes or energy prices."<sup>35</sup>

This type of criticism is not necessarily a criticism of democracy as a form of government, but probably just as much a criticism of the voters and the politicians they vote into power through democratic processes. Democracy is characterized, to be sure, by a continual attentiveness to the preferences of the citizens, but the citizens may prioritize short-term income from fossil resources over the consideration of long-term ecological effects. Humans have adapted over a long period of time to their immediate surroundings and are not very accustomed to give consideration to factors that do not concern a close proximity in time and space. "The democratic voter is more concerned with the present than with the future, more with his/her own desires than with the needs of posterity; it is rational for the individual to undertake actions that are irrational in the long run for the common good," writes Wyller, who thinks leaders have a responsibility not only to follow the people but also to lead the people and to get people to accept the necessity of "an egalitarian willingness to sacrifice".<sup>36</sup> The need for coercion in an authoritarian regime, which Winslow describes as a disadvantage, may also be an advantage when it comes to leading the people in an environment-friendly direction. Likewise, the diffusion of power in a market economy can make it more difficult to use economic policy instruments than if we had a centrally controlled planned economy, but it

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<sup>31</sup> Knutsen 1997, 238; Grendstad et al. 2006, 68

<sup>32</sup> TNS Gallup 2012, 13

<sup>33</sup> TNS Gallup 2012, 16

<sup>34</sup> Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 356

<sup>35</sup> Harrison & Sundstrom 2007, 15

<sup>36</sup> Wyller 1991, 180-182

all depends on who is in power: If the government is not concerned with the environment, the diffusion of power can be advantageous, but if the government is very active in the environmental field, the diffusion of power may be an impediment to change.

A study from Great Britain shows that the population feels considerable psychological distance from climate change.<sup>37</sup> Both time and space play a role. Jørgen Randers thinks a normal human perspective reaches about five years ahead in time, and that this complicates solutions of long-term problems.<sup>38</sup> Politicians have little to gain from bringing up issues where the positive results will first come after the next election, and taken together these factors will contribute to humanity's postponing necessary measures until climate change is clearly apparent. Climate change is a phenomenon that can clearly be perceived as abstract and remote from the voters' everyday life and thereby an issue that is not given priority when votes are to be cast. Politicians will have difficulty winning votes for a strong commitment to the climate, so the Norwegian Storting adheres to climate agreements that avoid measures that can give rise to opposition in the population and business and industry and prioritizes emission cuts in other countries.<sup>39</sup> That agrees well with the voters preferences: Norwegians are not very willing to change their own behaviour out of consideration for the climate and are most favourable to measures that they themselves profit from such as retro-insulation. Measures that do not affect everyday life to the same extent, such as support for renewable energy and research, are popular.<sup>40</sup> We see the same pattern in American transport policy, where the political and institutional barriers appear to be so insurmountable that climate policy is limited to taking action on technological solutions.<sup>41</sup> Measures that entail changes in behaviour are less popular, and that may be related to the fact that climate change is perceived as abstract so that taking a bus instead of a private car is perceived as a sacrifice, a less comfortable trip, without the individual seeing any of the positive effects of so doing.

One problem involves balancing the consideration of perceived loss of welfare for existing generations with the potential risk for future generations; introduction of restrictions on private motoring, for example, are something that will be experienced as difficult at present, at the same time as it is conceivable that impending technological changes will make restrictions less important for the climate. In addition, each generation gets to enjoy the benefits of the emissions whereas the disadvantages go to the next generation. Thus, it will be

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<sup>37</sup> Spence et al. 2012

<sup>38</sup> Randers 2012, 164-6

<sup>39</sup> Gullberg 2009, 10

<sup>40</sup> TNS Gallup 2012

<sup>41</sup> Rajan 2006, 666-667

easier for politicians to prioritize today's generations, who have the right to vote over the consideration of future generations. Richard B. Howarth discusses this moral framework under the name of "presentism", where decisions are only made on the basis of the interests of current generations without giving any moral status to descendants.<sup>42</sup>

Climate change also deals with international justice in the present, based on the great asymmetry regarding the countries that profit from greenhouse emissions and the countries that are most damaged by the consequences. Those that enjoy benefits as a result of the emissions are to a great extent voters in countries other than those that notice the negative consequences so that Winslow's analysis based on a local problem such as air pollution will be insufficient when it comes to global climate change, as she herself admits,<sup>43</sup> nor is it the case that democracies do away with the distinction between the elite and the grass roots, and a democracy can still be dominated by a narrow elite.

So far, the criticism has mainly been focused on voters' and politicians' ability to make short-term sacrifices in order to achieve long-term goals. That is a key criticism, for if human psychology and behaviour prevent democratic resolutions to prevent greenhouse emissions, it is relevant to discuss forms of government that make it easier to gain acceptance. Nevertheless, I think that there is a need to consider the effects of power. My main criticism of the democracy arguments of Payne and Burnell is that in my opinion they disregard power relationships that give powerful actors disproportionately great influence on decision-making processes in democratic regimes, summarized by Stein Rokkan's well-known formulation "votes count, resources decide".<sup>44</sup> It is also important to include big corporations in the analysis, for they are "large organizations with considerable economic and political influence, which can override many people's environmental interests".<sup>45</sup> Resource power has made the oil industry capable of stopping important climate proposals<sup>46</sup> and undermining international climate negotiations,<sup>47</sup> and they may be part of the reason why popular support does not necessarily seem to affect the results of environmental policy.<sup>48</sup> A democratic constitutional government provides opportunities to fight climate policy battles in courtrooms rather than in parliaments, but resource power also play a significant role in legal conflicts. Big corporations

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<sup>42</sup> Howarth 2011

<sup>43</sup> Winslow 2005, 781

<sup>44</sup> Rokkan 1987, 206

<sup>45</sup> Midlarsky 1998, 344

<sup>46</sup> cf. for example, Skjærseth & Skodvin 2009, 215

<sup>47</sup> cf. for example, Connelly et al. 2012, 279

<sup>48</sup> Ward 2008, 396

use the judicial system to avoid climate requirements, and it is also the case that climate policy victories in courtrooms do not necessarily result in specific changes.<sup>49</sup>

Despite increased popular knowledge about and acceptance of environmental problems and increased support for green parties, political action with regard to the climate remains insufficient. It is not necessarily a lack of information that impedes climate policy, but rather the values with which the information is confronted, and values have greater importance for opinions about global environmental problems than about local, perceivable problems.<sup>50</sup> Another aspect may be an excess of information, where constant reports about new environmental disasters create a normalization of the environmental crisis as a "normal, if unpleasant, aspect of modern life".<sup>51</sup>

Persuasive abilities can just as well be used against environmental proposals as in service of the environment, nor can freedom of speech only be used to spread knowledge about the environment, but can also be used to systematically undermine environmental science, in the way that conservative think tanks in the USA have spent considerable resources on sowing doubt about scientific conclusions so that the environmental movement's proposals have been greatly weakened.<sup>52</sup> Whereas the voters have difficulty seeing the advantages of slowing down climate change, powerful interests, especially the oil industry, are working hard to conceal those advantages, notes John Broome.<sup>53</sup> Norwegian governments also tell their inhabitants that increased production of Norwegian oil and gas is good for the climate,<sup>54</sup> so it is not strange that there is great confusion about what is the best climate policy for the public at large. In the book *Merchants of Doubt*, Naomi Oreskes and Erik B. Conway have documented the ways in which powerful companies go in for a systematic undermining of the basis for an active climate policy and compare this with the way in which the tobacco industry worked to prevent the spread of knowledge about the adverse effects of tobacco.<sup>55</sup> The concealment of the realities of climate change caused by humans diminishes the possibilities of arousing popular involvement and is thus a problem for democracy's ability to comprehend the seriousness of the climate crisis.

Consensus about what is the best environmental or climate policy for the society is not just impeded by active concealment and campaigns from powerful business interests. There is

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<sup>49</sup> Vanhanen 2013)

<sup>50</sup> Justice et al. 2011; Göksen et al. 2002

<sup>51</sup> Blühdorn 2011, 37

<sup>52</sup> Jacques et al. 2008; Dunlap & McCright 2011

<sup>53</sup> Broome 2012, 7

<sup>54</sup> Norgaard 2011, 407

<sup>55</sup> Oreskes & Conway 2010

also real disagreement within the environmental movement, such as when new renewable energy in the form of wind power conflicts with nature conservation and biological diversity. For some people, market-liberal measures such as carbon offsets and private ownership are the solution, whereas for others, this is regarded as an attempt to increase market hegemony instead of helping the environment.<sup>56</sup> There is not just one solution to the climate challenge, and many of the established lines of conflict in politics, such as state power versus market power are apparent in the climate debate. In 2009, 20 per cent of Norwegian voters stated that environmental issues were crucial to their voting,<sup>57</sup> but there can be big variations in the ways in which these voters envision an environmentally friendly future. In addition, it is not necessarily the case that attitudes to environmental protection coincide with attitudes to climate change.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, I want to share a few thoughts concerning Burnell's argument about female influence in democracies. He cites data from the UN's development programme, which shows that women in highly developed countries are more concerned about environmental protection than men, but the data also show that the opposite is actually the case in developing countries.<sup>59</sup> In keeping with this, more women than men among Norwegian voters are proponents of conservation and are concerned about climate change, at the same time as it is worth emphasizing that other factors play a role, such as age, income and geographical centre-periphery orientation.<sup>60</sup>

## Environmentally friendly alternatives to democracy

Democracy's lack of mettle in defending the environment may help pave the way for requirements of "enlightened ecological autocracy",<sup>61</sup> and while democratic leaders tone down environmental policy out of fear of losing votes, the exception, according to Jørgen Randers, will be future-oriented authoritarian regimes that have the freedom to consult the people much less often.<sup>62</sup> Authoritarian, non-democratic regimes are characterized by the fact that only a few people control the state, without constitutional accountability or popular influence, and that the authorities thereby have far greater freedom of action to dictate to the

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<sup>56</sup> Carter 2007, 67

<sup>57</sup> Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 357

<sup>58</sup> Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 352

<sup>59</sup> UNDP 2011, 63-64

<sup>60</sup> Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 353-355

<sup>61</sup> Wyller 1991, 181

<sup>62</sup> Randers 2012, 165-6

population (hence the concept of dictatorship). An authoritarian regime needs to take less consideration to the people's wishes when a progressive environmental policy is to be implemented.

Miranda A. Schreurs points out that Chinese authorities have "introduced measures that would be hard to implement in most democratic systems"<sup>63</sup> and mentions rapid decisions to close hundreds of heavily polluted companies and restrictions on automobile use and industrial activities during special events. On the basis of studies of Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, Laurence Crot argues that the dynastic regimes in the Persian Gulf are well-suited to adopt a long-term time perspective,<sup>64</sup> whereas the Australian environmental activist Tim Flannery thinks that if we postpone measures to prevent climate change, a "carbon dictatorship" will become necessary for survival.<sup>65</sup> According to Siri Gloppen and Asuncion Lera St. Clair, the great need for change combined with insufficient democratic governing tools to implement those changes may result in the emergence of authoritarian regimes.<sup>66</sup> Studies done by the psychologist Stephen M. Sales indicate that experiencing threats to society may pave the way for authoritarian attitudes,<sup>67</sup> whereas other studies conclude to the contrary that threats and uncertainty manifest latent authoritarian attitudes and that the effect may be the opposite among those with non-authoritarian predispositions.<sup>68</sup> Since none of them did any research on threats to the environment, there is reason to have some reservations about whether this applies to climate policy, which would also require that the population actually experience climate change as a real threat to the society. It may be more relevant to look at social effects of natural disasters, but a study of interpersonal trust after the earthquakes in El Salvador (2001), Haiti (2010) and Chile (2010) indicates that the trust first begins to decline if the state does not have the capacity to assist the inhabitants after the disaster. That brings us back to the problem of the sharing of responsibilities and burdens, where the states that are least vulnerable to climate change have the best capacity to deal with the consequences.<sup>69</sup>

The environmental activists David Shearman and Joseph Wayne Smith see the solution in an altruistic authoritarian leader with scientific understanding and human relations skills and propose the establishment of "a supreme office of the biosphere", which shall

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<sup>63</sup> Schreurs 2011, 450

<sup>64</sup> Crot 2013, 2821-2822

<sup>65</sup> Flannery 2005, 294

<sup>66</sup> Gloppen & St. Clair 2012, 905-906

<sup>67</sup> Sales 1973

<sup>68</sup> Feldman & Stenner 1997

<sup>69</sup> Carlin, Love & Zechmeister 2014



consist of specially trained philosophers and ecologists who shall either govern themselves or give advice to an authoritarian government.<sup>70</sup> It is reminiscent of Plato's vision of a society governed by philosophers, presented in the classical work, *The Republic*<sup>71</sup>. In a far more moderate version, local environmental civil servants in Sweden point to a greater need to include experts instead of ordinary people in the decision-making processes.<sup>72</sup>

The desire to let experts and technocrats solve problems that politicians are incapable of solving is inherent in bureaucratic authoritarian regimes, where the military and the bureaucracy form an alliance that promotes "rational, objective, technical expertise" in contrast to ideologically based political parties that are regarded as "emotional" and "irrational".<sup>73</sup>

"Authoritarian environmentalism's merits are its ability to produce a rapid, centralised response to severe environmental threats, and to mobilise state and social actors," writes Bruce Gilley,<sup>74</sup> who emphasizes that it requires a strong state power. Participation is not only reserved for democracies, and it does not necessarily involve co-determination, but one of very few studies that look at environmental policy effects of participation in various regimes concludes that participation does not affect environmental policy in dictatorships.<sup>75</sup> Participation in a dictatorship is probably mainly based on obeying instead of cooperating, even if there are also examples of successful environmental involvement in communist states, such as when Polish environmentalists managed to get an aluminium smelter closed in 1980.<sup>76</sup> In the last couple of decades, we have also seen a flowering of environmental organizations in China,<sup>77</sup> and their biggest victory so far is the campaign where the media, civil society and the public were able to stop the authorities' and corporations' attempt to build a major hydro-power plant with a dam in Tiger Leaping Gorge.<sup>78</sup> The struggle against the dam also shows the complexity of the environmental issue, for the hydro-power plant could have provided renewable energy that is good for the climate, but other environmental considerations weighed heavier with the activists who won out.

"In an increasingly crowded world, collective well-being will be more important than individual rights," writes Jørgen Randers in his book *2052*, and he warns that freedom of

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<sup>70</sup> Shearman & Smith 2007, 134

<sup>71</sup> Plato 1946

<sup>72</sup> Hysing 2013, 965

<sup>73</sup> O'Neil 2013, 182

<sup>74</sup> Gilley 2012, 300

<sup>75</sup> Fredriksson et al. 2005

<sup>76</sup> Jancar-Webster 1998, 70

<sup>77</sup> Boyd 2013

<sup>78</sup> Jianqiang 2013

speech must give way to a just distribution of scarce resources: "A government that can make sure that everyone gets his or her fair share of a limited resource supply will sit safer than one that solely promotes the right of each individual to argue why he or she should have a bigger share", he argues.<sup>79</sup> It is somewhat unclear how Randers wants to limit freedom of speech, but he is not alone in seeing the need to limit individual freedom in order to change environmentally hazardous patterns. Many researchers point out that individual rights not only give voters the possibility of promoting a better environmental policy, but are just as likely to increase the pressure on natural resources.<sup>80</sup> Mark Beeson points to China's one-child policy as a major environmental victory, and based on experiences from Southeast Asia, he thinks that environmental problems can not only justify authoritarian measures, but that the authoritarian steps may be completely necessary in order to maintain civilization.<sup>81</sup> However, I want to emphasize the difference between limiting individual freedom in the sense that the authorities regulate, for example, private motoring and forbid especially polluting activities and limiting the citizens' right to express their desire for more individual freedom. The latter category is in direct conflict with individual rights in a liberal democracy, whereas bans, orders and regulations are common in all types of regimes, including democracies.

The experiences from communist regimes in Eastern Europe are that restrictions on freedom of speech in no way helped the environment, for even if the inhabitants could see, taste and smell the pollution, they were forbidden to talk about it because statements about pollution were perceived as criticism of the authorities and the communist party.<sup>82</sup> «One-party government inhibited the dissemination of information about environmental destruction», concludes Krzysztof Mazurski in an article that reviews the extensive environmental problems created under communism in Eastern Europe.<sup>83</sup> Even some of those who have given their clearest support to authoritarian environmental regimes, Shearman and Smith, acknowledge that former and existing authoritarian regimes have made a worse effort for the environment than liberal democracies.<sup>84</sup> For example, there was a formidable increase in CO2 emissions in Eastern European communist states from the middle of the 1940s up to 1988, only to decline after the fall of communism.<sup>85</sup> It is still worth emphasizing that reduced emissions in Eastern Europe probably have a greater correlation with the economic collapse than with

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<sup>79</sup> Randers 2012, 350

<sup>80</sup> Whitford & Wong 2009, 191

<sup>81</sup> Beeson 2010, 289

<sup>82</sup> Bowman & Hunter 1992, 926

<sup>83</sup> Mazurski 1991, 40

<sup>84</sup> Shearman and Smith 2007, 13

<sup>85</sup> Boden et al. 2011

democratization, even though there may be grounds for a more nuanced distinction between countries that have handled the transition in different ways.<sup>86</sup> There were significant differences among these countries both before and after the fall of communism, and the outcome of the democratization is still unclear. Even if the Communist Party in China has implemented a number of environmental reforms, it is worth keeping in mind that the Chinese greenhouse emissions have still increased.<sup>87</sup> China can still serve as an example of a dictatorship that is beginning to take environmental problems seriously, also through a certain degree of litigation and the establishment of environmental tribunals with a subsequent victory for environmental interests.<sup>88</sup>

One of the premises for Randers's restrictions on freedom of speech is that the authoritarian regime must be "forward-looking",<sup>89</sup> so that curtailment of individual freedoms and rights is executed out of consideration for the environment. He emphasizes that even if a more authoritarian regime can give a faster response to environmental challenges, there is also a risk that the response will be in the wrong direction.<sup>90</sup> Climate change can also function as a distraction for African dictators who want to have someone to blame when things go wrong in their country.<sup>91</sup> An authoritarian regime can use the climate as an excuse when its actual aim is to strengthen its own power.

It is not necessarily true that the time horizon is shorter in a democracy than in a dictatorship. The crucial element seems to be the expected term of office for decision-makers, and in that case, dictatorships' environmental policy should improve in step with the years that the dictator or the authoritarian regime has been in power or has prospects of remaining in power. That does not agree with the findings of the study, which concludes that it is precisely in stable dictatorships without any pressure for change or internal challengers that the idea that the regime will exploit natural resources for immediate personal gain has the greatest plausibility.<sup>92</sup>

Shearman and Smith argue that democratic institutions are not well-suited for handling crisis situations and compare them with a complicated heart operation and add that we would not let democratically elected leaders operate on us.<sup>93</sup> In the classic *Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity*, William Ophuls also discusses expertise as a key factor between democracy and

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<sup>86</sup> Skou Andersen 2001, 1404-6

<sup>87</sup> Schreuers 2011, 450-451

<sup>88</sup> Moser 2013

<sup>89</sup> Randers 2012, 166

<sup>90</sup> Randers 2012, 88-9

<sup>91</sup> Mariam 2010

<sup>92</sup> Ward 2008, 405

<sup>93</sup> Shearman & Smith 2007, 15

rule by experts, but looks at the problems associated with the selection of the experts who may decide and how their statements should be interpreted, before he ends up asking the question of who in any case shall control the governing experts.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, there is a risk that an authoritarian regime will end up with extensive corruption, and a study refers to difficulties with providing effective control over the state of the environment in a society marred by corruption.<sup>95</sup>

The well-known environmental activist, James Lovelock, rejects the idea that there is any alternative to democracy, at the same time that he points out that democracies also introduce martial law during major wars: "I have a feeling that climate change may be an issue as severe as a war. It may be necessary to put democracy on hold for a while," he says.<sup>96</sup> We can draw the parallel back to the Roman republic 2,500 years ago, which in crises appointed a dictator who was given absolute power during a period of up to six months before the status quo was to be re-established. Another parallel is modern military regimes that take power through a coup d'état, but promise that power will return to civilian hands as soon as calm and order have been restored.<sup>97</sup> Can it be necessary to have a climate dictator who has full power until the greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced? On the other hand, is there a risk "that the temporary becomes permanent",<sup>98</sup> and who shall intervene if a climate dictatorship does not provide reduced greenhouse emissions or deviates from the ideals in other ways?

In my opinion, many of the arguments for authoritarian regimes as the solution to the environmental crisis are implicitly based on the idea of "the benevolent dictator" within the ideal of an enlightened absolutism. That in turn may be related to the optimism of the Enlightenment and the belief in the common good as something that can be revealed and implemented as long as there is enough power behind the task of so doing. A pure rule of experts encounters not only normative counter-arguments, but also empirical arguments: experts may have superior knowledge about solving environmental problems, but not about making value-based judgements, and effective environmental governing requires letting multiple perspectives get involved in the decision-making process.<sup>99</sup>

Common to all of those who promote authoritarian solutions is also a clear lack of specific models. Authoritarian regimes come in many forms that do not necessarily have very

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<sup>94</sup> Ophuls 1977, 159-161

<sup>95</sup> Stretton 1976, 26-34

<sup>96</sup> Hickman 2010

<sup>97</sup> O'Neil 2013, 182

<sup>98</sup> Wyller 1991, 181

<sup>99</sup> Hysing 2013, 959-960

much in common other than the lack of democracy, and no serious attempt has been made to show how an environmental dictatorship would appear, and whether this should be an authoritarian or totalitarian regime. The focus is often criticism of democracies and especially their voters' lack of involvement in protecting the environment and the climate. Already in the first paragraph of the foreword of his book, Ophuls points out that he has not made a systematic attempt to provide institutional answers, and he is more concerned with the questions.<sup>100</sup>

The arguments in favour of democracy can certainly be criticised for idealizing the democracies, but similar criticism can be directed at the arguments for authoritarian solutions, which to a great extent attack democracy's insufficient efforts to prevent climate change, but avoid taking a closer look at authoritarian regimes' practical efforts. Whether democracy or dictatorship is the answer is not just a theoretical issue, and an extensive literature gives it empirical consideration.

#### Empirical data: environmental protection in democracies and dictatorships

There are a number of challenges related to measuring climate and environmental policy effects of democracies and dictatorships. One thing is distinctions between the two extremes of democracy and dictatorship and whatever may lie between them, and another aspect is the indicators that will be used to evaluate how good the environmental policy is. In addition, it is necessary to have control variables, such as economic development and population density, but these will only be commented on to a limited extent in this section.

Robert Deacon uses the phasing out of lead in petrol as an indicator after there first was agreement at the end of the 1960s on the hazardous effects of lead, so the lead content in petrol is therefore well-suited to tell us the extent to which a regime is capable of comprehending the importance of new knowledge and translating it into specific policies. Based on data from 130 countries between 1980 and 1996, Deacon estimates that democracies took twelve years less than dictatorships to cut out lead completely.<sup>101</sup> That should indicate that the flow of information in a democracy makes it easier to ban lead content in petrol.

Another environmental indicator may be emissions of gases that damage the ozone layer. In his study from 1992, Roger Congleton looks at adherence to the Vienna Convention of 1985 and the Montreal Protocol of 1987 as well as actual emissions of methane and

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<sup>100</sup> Ophuls 1977, iv

<sup>101</sup> Deacon 2009, 258

chlorofluorocarbons and concludes that there is a clear distinction between democratic and authoritarian regimes: liberal democracies are more inclined to regulate emissions than less liberal regimes.<sup>102</sup> At the same time, the study also shows that democracies produce more emissions, which means that the need for regulation is greater.

Andrew Whitford and Karen Wong base their study on a sustainability index that covers a broad range from air and water quality to child mortality in 80 countries and find moderate evidence that democracy has a direct effect on sustainability. Their findings indicate that the effect of democracy is more indirect through factors such as national income and the introduction of environmental management systems.<sup>103</sup>

So far, we have focused on environmental indicators that measure domestic environmental problems, where it is easier to imagine that democracies have an advantage since the problems hurt the voters. That is not as inevitable in the case of global environmental problems such as climate change, as was emphasized when Li and Reuveny tested democracy with the Polity index<sup>104</sup>, using six environmental indicators. More democracy gives a clear reduction in NOx emissions, water pollution, deforestation and soil contamination, whereas forested land area increases. For CO2 emissions per capita, the study shows that democracy is more likely to reduce the emissions, but the effect is less than for the other variables.<sup>105</sup>

Hugh Ward also uses the Polity index, but measures sustainability by means of the ecological footprint<sup>106</sup> and the genuine savings indicator of the World Bank<sup>107</sup>. His analysis shows that democracies come out better in genuine saving, whereas both dictatorships and democracies do poorly when it comes to the ecological footprint so that other factors must be added to the computation in order to explain the variation. When the regime's stability is checked, democracies namely get a better score.<sup>108</sup>

Per Fredriksson and Jim Wollscheid base their study on fully ten environmental indicators, including greenhouse emissions, from 163 countries and find that democracies, defined as free or almost free by Freedom House<sup>109</sup>, perform significantly better on six out of ten indicators. In contrast to environmental management, institutional capacity and four

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<sup>102</sup> Congleton 1992

<sup>103</sup> Whitford & Wong 2008

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>

<sup>105</sup> Li & Reuveny 2006

<sup>106</sup> [http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/footprint\\_basics\\_overview/](http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/footprint_basics_overview/)

<sup>107</sup> [http://remi.bazillier.free.fr/gec\\_1997\\_03.pdf](http://remi.bazillier.free.fr/gec_1997_03.pdf)

<sup>108</sup> Ward 2008

<sup>109</sup> [http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014#.U9\\_KThBCNeA](http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014#.U9_KThBCNeA)

indicators of prices for fossil fuel, the positive relationship between democracy and reduced greenhouse emissions, however, is not among the statistically significant relationships.<sup>110</sup>

There are many ways to measure both democracy and climate policy, and Marianne Kneuer bases her study from 2012 on democracy data from the Bertelsmann Foundation's Transformation Index<sup>111</sup> and climate data from the Climate Change Performance Index from Germanwatch<sup>112</sup>. The transformation index covers over one hundred countries that are either authoritarian or in a transition process, and the climate index covers 57 countries that account for more than 90 per cent of the global greenhouse emissions. By adding countries that are not covered in the Transformation Index, we get a category of full-fledged democracies, whereas three intermediate categories are merged into one category that lies between democracy and dictatorship. Kneuer concludes that there is not any evidence that dictatorships perform better than democracies, and that the countries in transition to democracy do no worse than established democracies. Other factors, such as good governing, are more important in all types of regimes.<sup>113</sup> The importance of other factors is also emphasized by Lorenzo Pellegrini and Rayer Gerlagh who do not find any significant relationship between democracy and environmental protection, but on the contrary between corruption and environmental protection, and given that democracy has been found to work against corruption, democracy has an indirect positive effect on environmental policy.<sup>114</sup>

Midlarsky measures democracy in three ways, with the focus on political rights, liberal democracy and political institutions, whereas environmental protection is measured with six variables, and over 70 countries are included in the data base. The empirical analysis indicates that there is not any conclusive relationship between democracy and environmental protection in general: Democracies have greater problems with water-based soil erosion and deforestation, which Midlarsky puts in the context of the need to listen to voters and their need for land, whereas there is nevertheless a positive relationship between democracy and the protection of land areas. Midlarsky does not find any relationship between democracy on the one hand and access to pure water and soil erosion because of chemicals. As regards climate, it appears that democracies do worse with CO2 emissions, whereas the control

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<sup>110</sup> Fredriksson & Wollscheid 2007

<sup>111</sup> <http://www.bti-project.org/index/>

<sup>112</sup> <https://germanwatch.org/en/7677>

<sup>113</sup> Kneuer 2012

<sup>114</sup> Pellegrini & Gerlagh 2006

variables show that older regimes located in Europe are reducing their greenhouse emissions to a greater extent.<sup>115</sup>

It is also possible to use obligations as an indicator of environmental protection, as Eric Neumayer does. Four indices measure democracy, whereas the obligations are measured through adherence to and ratification of international environmental agreements, membership in international environmental organizations, reporting to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the percentage of conserved land area, existence of a national council for sustainable development and availability of information about the country's environmental condition. The number of analytical units varies with the variables and lies between 95 and 175 countries. The result of the analyses shows a positive, and for the most parts a statistically significant, relationship between democracy and environmental obligations for all dependent variables. Neumayer concludes that although "representative democracy might not be perfect, it is surely better than any non-democratic alternative",<sup>116</sup> but he also specifies that obligations are not the same as specific results. That point is clearly emphasized when Michéle Bättig and Thomas Bernauer analyse climate policy obligations and results in 185 countries between 1990 and 2004, where democracy is measured with a basis in the index from Freedom House<sup>117</sup>. They conclude that democracies obligate themselves to reduce greenhouse emissions more easily, but that the real effect on the emission levels or the emission trends is uncertain.<sup>118</sup> Harrison and Sundstrom also find that adherence to the Kyoto Protocol is not necessarily followed up with specific policies to reduce greenhouse emissions.<sup>119</sup>

The review of the literature gives grounds for supporting the summary made by Bättig and Bernauer: democracies are better than dictatorships in preserving the domestic environment and at adhering to international environmental obligations, whereas the effect on contributions to transnational environmental problems is uncertain.<sup>120</sup> That should be in keeping with the theoretical expectations that democracies focus on their own voters and on nearness in time and space. For those who have directly considered greenhouse emissions, the results give little support to the extremes in the debate: there is some support for the hypothesis about democracies' advantages<sup>121</sup> and some support for the opposite hypothesis

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<sup>115</sup> Midlarsky 1998

<sup>116</sup> Neumayer 2002, 160

<sup>117</sup> [http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014#\\_U9\\_KThBCNeA](http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2014#_U9_KThBCNeA)

<sup>118</sup> Bättig & Bernauer 2009, 281

<sup>119</sup> Harrison & Sundstrom 2007

<sup>120</sup> Bättig & Bernauer 2009, 282

<sup>121</sup> Li & Reuveny 2006



about dictatorships' advantages,<sup>122</sup> whereas many people think that the effect is uncertain<sup>123</sup> or that there is not any statistically significant relationship.<sup>124</sup>

The existing empirical data concerning democracies' and dictatorships' environmental performance are characterized by various operationalizations of the relevant concepts. For instance, the use of the Freedom House index for democracy is controversial, and Freedom House is accused of having an ideological bias that favours market liberalism.<sup>125</sup> Often there is only one or a few indicators that measure environmental policy, or the selection of units is limited so that differences in empirical evidence at any rate are attributed to some extent to differences in research design. Attempts to summarize sustainability in one index, such as the World Bank's genuine savings index, have also been criticised.<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, there are grounds for asserting that the transition from democracy to dictatorship is not very justifiable on the basis of environmental and climate considerations, given all the time that neither democracies nor dictatorships have made the necessary interventions to counteract climate change. The environmental dictatorship will be such a radical and risky experiment that clear evidence ought to be required that it will have the desired effect. The literature indicates that other factors are more important, also given the big variations in the environmental performance of regimes within the categories of democracies and dictatorships.<sup>127</sup> Ward points out that the literature has scarcely tested the effect of various types of democracy,<sup>128</sup> but some things have been done, and they deserve a brief review.

The analysis of Fredriksson and Wollscheid shows that democracies come out better because of the environmental performance of parliamentary democracies, whereas presidential governments perform at the same level as dictatorships.<sup>129</sup> Ward also arrives at the conclusion that presidential governments perform worse than parliamentary democracies and thinks that strengthens the idea that negotiations between president and congress give economic special interests too many opportunities to block environmental measures.<sup>130</sup> On the other hand, the trio of Sam Fankhauser, Caterina Gennaioli and Murray Collins find in their fresh study from 2014 that presidential governments are more inclined to pass comprehensive climate legislation, at the same time that it is emphasized that it is easier for all executive

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<sup>122</sup> Midlarsky 1998

<sup>123</sup> Kneuer 2012; Bättig & Bernauer 2009

<sup>124</sup> Fredriksson & Wollscheid 2007

<sup>125</sup> Giannone 2010

<sup>126</sup> Dietz & Neumayer 2006

<sup>127</sup> Christoff & Eckersley 2011, 439

<sup>128</sup> Ward 2008, 389

<sup>129</sup> Fredriksson & Wollscheid 2007

<sup>130</sup> Ward 2008, 406

authorities to pass climate legislation with a majority behind them in the legislative assembly.<sup>131</sup> Christoff and Eckersley summarize the findings in the empirical literature concerning climate-related consequences of parliamentary and presidential governments by noting that the results are mixed.<sup>132</sup>

It is conceivable that federalism makes an aggregate climate effort more difficult, and Canada may be an example that federalism may weaken the positive effect on parliamentary governments when power over natural resources is at the state level.<sup>133</sup> It is also relevant to point out a relationship between the states in the USA that have coal reserves and the senators who vote against climate measures,<sup>134</sup> but Ward does not find any support for the hypothesis that federalism as a system of government has any inherent effect.<sup>135</sup>

Other institutional characteristics that may have an effect are corporatism, where some interest groups are given a privileged negotiating position with the state, usually in the form of employers and trade unions negotiating the pay settlement together with the central government. Whereas a Finnish study of waste policy indicates that corporate moves hamper environmental efforts,<sup>136</sup> two international studies by Lyle Scruggs draw the opposite conclusion.<sup>137</sup> There are similar disagreements with regard to the advantages or disadvantages of environmental efforts within consociational democracies in contrast to majoritarian democracies. Characteristics of the first category include a proportional election scheme, a multi-party system, decentralization of power and constitutional protection of minority interests, whereas majoritarian democracies concentrate much more power in a central government. Lori Poloni-Staudinger finds that democracies with consociational features do better in everyday environmental protection, such as source separation, whereas majoritarian democracies achieve more when it comes to nature conservation.<sup>138</sup> Christoff and Eckersley use Great Britain and Germany as examples of states characterized by majoritarian democracy and consociational democracy respectively, but where both are pioneering nations in climate policy.<sup>139</sup> That may indicate that it is possible to promote reduced greenhouse emissions within many types of political regimes, but that does not mean that institutional characteristics have no relevance for climate policy. In the next section, we shall take a closer look at various

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<sup>131</sup> Fankhauser et al. 2014

<sup>132</sup> Christoff & Eckersley 2011, 441

<sup>133</sup> Harrison 2007

<sup>134</sup> Fisher 2006

<sup>135</sup> Ward 2008, 402

<sup>136</sup> Hukkinen 1995

<sup>137</sup> Scruggs 1999; 2001

<sup>138</sup> Poloni-Staudinger 2008

<sup>139</sup> Christoff & Eckersley 2011, 444

reforms that are meant to pave the way for an effective climate policy without changing the type of regime.

### International restrictions

Climate change is a global environmental problem, so the solution may involve improved international cooperation. The Kyoto Protocol from 1997 is the first binding agreement concerning emission reductions and entails that industrialized countries shall reduce their emissions by at least five per cent in the period 2008-2012 compared with 1990. However, the agreement has been heavily criticised. When it became clear that the USA would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, Cathrin Hagem and Bjart Holtsmark argued that the effect on the climate went from little to insignificant.<sup>140</sup> Christoph Böhringer and Carsten Vogt find that the agreement mainly continues existing policies and point, for example, to insufficient possibilities of sanctions on parties who break the agreement.<sup>141</sup> The USA's rejection, credits for carbon sinks and unlimited trading in emission quotas from Eastern European countries that had especially low emissions in 1990 are factors that make the Kyoto Protocol only a symbolic agreement according to a new article by the same authors.<sup>142</sup>

In the wake of the Kyoto Protocol, Flannery envisions the establishment of an Earth Commission for Thermostatic Control.<sup>143</sup> This should regulate the oceans of the world and the use of land area and mediate between countries that primarily notice negative effects of climate change and those, for example, that get better agricultural opportunities through global warming. As the seriousness of climate change increases, it is to be expected that the commission will be given increased power to enforce international agreements, and Flannery thinks it may be necessary to bolster the commission with armed forces in keeping with the model of the UN's peacekeeping forces in order to prevent some countries from acting as free-loaders.

The work on a new climate agreement that shall follow the Kyoto Protocol has so far been difficult and has not led to any specific results. The expectations of the climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009 declined as the meeting approached, and it ended with a declaration to limit global warming to 2 °C, but without any legally binding obligations.<sup>144</sup> In December

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<sup>140</sup> Hagem & Holtsmark 2001

<sup>141</sup> Böhringer & Vogt 2003

<sup>142</sup> Böhringer & Vogt 2004

<sup>143</sup> Flannery 2005, 291-295

<sup>144</sup> Connelly 2012, 276-285

2012, the climate summit in Doha ended with an extension of the Kyoto Protocol to 2020 with fewer nations adhering, and it was agreed to negotiate a legally binding agreement by 2015.<sup>145</sup>

In the debate about necessary measures to prevent climate change, there are many who point to a need to compel a more long-term way of thinking in order to atone for "presentism". The short-sightedness that dominates politics at present lies behind the desire for an international court for intergenerational justice.<sup>146</sup>

International agreements are quite clearly an important element of the solution to climate change, by imposing restrictions and specifying requirements for individual countries. That requires, however, that there are actual possibilities of sanctions aimed at countries that will not cut emissions, but whether it is necessary to have armed forces is another matter. The proposal for a climate court may be relevant, but a court must have sufficient authority in order to be able to function as intended. At present, the weaknesses in international environmental agreements and common law are so great, and there is insufficient coercive power in international courts, so legal actions are more or less meaningless other than to attract attention.<sup>147</sup> It may be tempting to present the climate issue as a question about violation of human rights, but there remain many challenges in proving a relationship between the damages from a flood, for example, and the emissions from a specific corporation or factory.

The international efforts to limit climate change face a number of challenges. Successful collective effort usually requires that everyone has something to gain from the effort. Rich industrialized countries in the global North notice fewer negative effects from climate change and must undergo a costly restructuring of their energy use and feel that their economic interests are threatened whereas rapidly industrializing countries in the South may be more concerned with economic growth and increased standard of living than with reduced greenhouse emissions. "From the perspective of justice, the nations with the most responsibility have the least incentive to engage in building an effective climate regime", summarize James Connelly, Graham Smith, David Benson and Clare Saunders.<sup>148</sup> That does not mean that the efforts to promote international climate agreements will necessarily fail in the future, but helps explain the insufficient results so far. The same factors that complicate domestic emission reductions also contribute to the difficulty that nations have in reaching agreement about an effective climate regime at the global level. Because national sovereignty

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<sup>145</sup> Nordeng & Skjæraasen 2012

<sup>146</sup> Randers 2012, 350

<sup>147</sup> Posner 2007, 3

<sup>148</sup> Connelly et al. 2012, 277

is so important, and national policies in many nations prioritize economic growth based on old industrial and energy structures, international negotiations have not made substantial progress.<sup>149</sup> Harrison and Sundstrom point out that politicians have much greater incentives to adhere to an international climate agreement than to implement the obligations. As a rule, adherence attracts favourable attention in the media and from the general public, whereas implementation often encounters resistance from business interests and voters.<sup>150</sup>

### Constitutional restrictions

In the extension of a constitutional democracy, which already puts some restrictions on the freedom of action for the authorities, we can add provisions about environmental protection to a country's constitution. In that way, the politicians relinquish some of their power as an acknowledgement of how difficult it can be to prioritize environmental protection in their daily business. Many countries have tried to do this, but so far without any great effect. In 2008, Ecuador got a new Constitution where nature is awarded rights, whereas Bolivia has also gone a long way toward giving legal status to nature, but without this resulting in any changes in the form of new legislation to reduce pollution.<sup>151</sup>

Although nature has not been given any rights, Norway, Sweden and Finland have added environmental considerations to their respective Constitutions.<sup>152</sup> A total of 142 national constitutions mention the environment, 125 of which explicitly refer to environmental human rights.<sup>153</sup> In 1992, the Norwegian Constitution got its environmental article in the form of Article 110b, supported by all parties in the Norwegian Storting:

Every person has the right to an environment that is conducive to health and to a natural environment whose productivity and diversity are maintained. Nature's resources should be managed on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations that will safeguard this right for future generations as well.

In order to safeguard their right in accordance with the foregoing paragraph, citizens are entitled to information on the state of the natural environment and on the effects of any encroachment on nature that is planned or carried out.

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<sup>149</sup> Schreurs 2012, 210

<sup>150</sup> Harrison & Sundstrom 2007, 15

<sup>151</sup> Gloppen & St. Clair 2012, 909-912

<sup>152</sup> Fauchald 2007, 3

<sup>153</sup> Jeffords 2011

The authorities of the state shall provide more detailed provisions in order to implement these principles.<sup>154</sup>

It is worth noting that this Article refines the democracy argument that a good environment is ensured through openness. Article 110b of the Norwegian Constitution is part of the background for the Environmental Information Act,<sup>155</sup> but beyond that the Article has "been of little legal and legal policy importance. This applies to all authorities, legislative, executive and judicial", according to legal expert Ole Kristian Fauchald.<sup>156</sup>

In a judicial study of the Government Pension Fund – Global's (SPU) investments in tar sands, however, attorney Cathrine Hambro thinks that the Article "can be employed as an independent legal basis for filing a legal action where it is argued that SPU's investments in Canadian tar sand projects are illegal."<sup>157</sup> This kind of legal action has not yet been filed, but in 2014, the Constitution was updated, and in the third paragraph of the environmental article (now Article 112) it is stated now that "the authorities of the state shall take measures for the implementation of these principles".<sup>158</sup> Another attorney, Pål W. Lorentzen, thinks that entails an improvement that means that the Article "can be a decisive contribution to Norway's transition to a low emission society".<sup>159</sup> The still vague formulations in the environmental Article make it doubtful, however, whether it will have any effect on Norwegian climate policy, and as we have seen before in the chapter, Norwegian oil and gas can be produced as part of a long-term solution to the climate problem. Based on this kind of interpretation, there will not necessarily be any contradiction between oil and gas production and the formulations in the Constitution about the environment.

A far more specific proposal about environmental considerations in the Constitution was submitted in 1979 and entailed that the Storting had to pass substantial encroachments on the environment by a two-thirds majority, possibly three-fourths, and that a simple majority in either a municipal council, county council or the Storting was sufficient to define the encroachment as substantial.<sup>160</sup> In this way, the Constitution would ensure that a sufficiently strong minority could stop controversial projects with potentially great negative impacts on the environment in keeping with consociational democracies' protection of minority interests.

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<sup>154</sup> Fauchald 2007, 3

<sup>155</sup> Fauchald 2007, 14

<sup>156</sup> Fauchald 2007, 81

<sup>157</sup> Hambro 2013, 20

<sup>158</sup> Grunnloven 1814

<sup>159</sup> Lorentzen 2014

<sup>160</sup> *Document no. 13. 1979—80, 14-15*

With requirements for a three-fourths majority, an environmental opposition in the Storting would have gained extremely great influence, but the proposal was rejected by the elected representatives.<sup>161</sup>

In constitutional democracies, there is a tradition of limiting government power, but so far, the Constitution's formulations on environmental protection have not had any particularly practical consequences

#### Laws and agreements as restrictions

A state does not need to have a written constitution in order to restrict the political freedom of action. Alternative approaches can be decisions about comprehensive climate legislation or broad agreements. In this way, the political parties can avoid letting climate policy become a heated topic, at the same time as they implement less popular measures. Through multi-partisan cooperation, it is possible to imagine that democracy's negative influence on climate policy may be neutralized. Voters may well be dissatisfied that their party prioritizes long-term climate policy over short-term profit, but if the competing parties all do the same thing, all of the parties can avoid a loss of votes as a result of the climate policy. That may be part of the reason why important climate legislation has a tendency to be based on multi-partisan support,<sup>162</sup> and in Norway, the climate agreement is regarded as an expression of an attempt to raise climate policy above partisan political rivalry. The problem with this approach may be that the parties' common climate policy is not strong enough or that it lacks measures for achieving goals,<sup>163</sup> and in that case the climate debate may bog down because all of the parties are tied to a compromise. The two Norwegian climate agreements from 2008 and 2012 were supported by seven of the eight parties that were represented in the Storting, so that the only party that was not party to the agreement was the party that wanted to do the least to reduce the greenhouse emissions, namely the Progress Party. Thus, the only opposition to the agreement was from a party that has long doubted the seriousness of human-created climate change.

An alternative to climate agreements may be to approve comprehensive climate legislation that sets the guidelines that shall ensure a policy for reduced greenhouse emissions. The predecessor to the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Climate and Pollution Agency,

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<sup>161</sup> *Document no. 13. 1979—80, 25*

<sup>162</sup> Townshend et al. 2011, 15

<sup>163</sup> Gullberg 2009, 10

argues that this kind of climate legislation may be necessary in order to safeguard climate considerations and to prevent governments from putting off dealing with the problem.<sup>164</sup> Inspiration comes from the British Climate Change Act,<sup>165</sup> where the goal of reduced greenhouse emissions is established by law with requirements that the governments submit five-year carbon budgets that are to be met on the way to the final goal. The Minister of Energy and Climate Change is responsible for implementing the emission goals, but there are not any possibilities of sanctions in the act other than that the Minister may have to resign. Insufficient achievement of goals only entails a "government account and that the lost ground be made up in the next budget period".<sup>166</sup> Nevertheless, the conclusion in a report from the Fridtjof Nansen Institute is that "the Climate Change Act has improved and will continue to improve the climate policy in the weighing of various considerations".<sup>167</sup> However, there is no automatic guarantee that the Climate Act will have this effect, and former Minister of the Environment Bård Vegar Solhjell warns that the Act may be a source of complacency.<sup>168</sup> Cuts in greenhouse emissions still require leading politicians to prioritize the climate over other considerations, and neither climate agreements nor climate legislation are sufficient policy instruments in themselves. They are not absolutely necessary policy instruments either, but they can help pave the way for reduced emissions. There are apparently no short-cuts to a policy for a stable climate, with the reservation that comprehensive climate change legislation is such a new phenomenon that the research on its effects is still insufficient. Climate agreements and climate legislation are attempts to overcome political challenges, but appear to be trapped in the same challenges.

Another variant of political reforms for the climate could include an extension of the terms of office, given that climate legislation is more rarely passed prior to elections. Randers also designates the freedom to consult the people more rarely as an advantage in climate policy, so one possibility could be to double the time between elections. The problem, however, is still the possibility of electing a majority of less environmentally aware politicians who cannot be held accountable for their policies before many years have passed or that the elected politicians turn out to be less concerned about the environment than expected. No research has been conducted either on the relationship between the length of the terms of office and the environment-friendliness of the policies that are implemented.

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<sup>164</sup> The Climate and Pollution Agency 2011

<sup>165</sup> Climate Change Act 2008

<sup>166</sup> Jevnaker et al. 2014, 7

<sup>167</sup> Jevnaker et al. 2014, 20

<sup>168</sup> Gjerstad & Skard 2014



## Civil disobedience, sabotage and terrorism

Ideas about environmental dictatorship may be said to be related to ideas that survival is more important than quality of life. Moderate alternatives to environmental dictatorship can be environment-oriented resistance to democratic decisions, and the Norwegian environmental movement has developed a tradition of making use of non-violent civil disobedience.

"Civil disobedience is an act of protest, deliberately unlawful, conscientiously and publicly performed", according to Carl Cohen.<sup>169</sup> Bernt Hagtvedt emphasizes a historical background where civil disobedience arose because "the traditional opportunities for influence did not allow the realization of a greater good, which had to be given priority over devotion to law and order."<sup>170</sup> Civil disobedience can be justified by claiming that resolutions are unconstitutional, that faults in the political process led to the resolution, or ethically in the sense that one's own principles are regarded as more important and of greater benefit to the common good. With regard to climate policy in well-functioning democracies, it will mainly be the third type of justification that manifests itself. The climate considerations weigh heavier than respecting a democratically passed resolution. Non-violent civil disobedience on behalf of the climate can be justified because a great injustice is about to occur and because there are good reasons for assuming that the problem cannot be resolved with traditional political policy instruments. The non-violence advocates Åsne Berre Persen and Jørgen Johansen emphasize the consideration of future generations when civil disobedience is coupled to climate change: "An incorrect law can be amended, but [...] it will be difficult to bring an altered climate back to its original state."<sup>171</sup>

Civil disobedience is often associated with non-violence, and the absence of violence is often used as a criterion for characterizing an action as civilly disobedient, in keeping with the ideas of Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Arne Næss. On the other hand, Cohen rejects the idea that non-violence is a universal and necessary feature of civil disobedience, but emphasizes nonetheless that non-violence is the archetype of civil disobedience.<sup>172</sup>

Eco-sabotage is "destruction of material in order to save natural values"<sup>173</sup> and may include removal of measuring stakes in road construction projects or pouring sugar into fuel, but also more radical acts. The eco-sabotage carried out by the American *Earth Liberation*

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<sup>169</sup> Cohen 1971, 39

<sup>170</sup> Hagtvedt 1981, 30

<sup>171</sup> Persen & Johansen 1998, 87-88

<sup>172</sup> Cohen 1971, 36

<sup>173</sup> Persen & Johansen 1998, 36

*Front* has been categorized as terrorism, even though only property has been destroyed and human life has not been lost.<sup>174</sup> Eco-terrorism in the form of threats of or direct violence against people is not very extensive, but has occurred, most famously by the Una-bomber, Theodore Kaczynski. For the most part, it appears that even the most radical environmentalists reject violence against people,<sup>175</sup> so this will be a less relevant part of a chapter that deals with climate change and democracy. Violence against people seems to be more common in other political conflicts. It is possible that the limited violence is related to the fact that climate change is an abstract phenomenon. Though solidarity with animals that are subjected to painful experiments can provoke violence against the researchers in the form of letter bombs,<sup>176</sup> there is no equally obvious victim in the case of climate change. The same abstraction that causes voters and politicians to put off dealing with climate change can hypothetically put a damper on the use of violence. However, this relationship has not been studied more closely.

One aspect that is worth mentioning in connection with political violence is the transition to a possible environmental dictatorship. None of the people who argue for authoritarian solutions to climate policy take a closer look at how democracy shall make way for a more authoritarian regime. When it comes to the introduction of an environmental dictatorship, it is difficult to envision that the population will support it through elections or referendums. Much of the argumentation against democracy is based on an idea that popular influence complicates environmental efforts, and it is scarcely the case that the population will voluntarily give up democratic rights to an environmental dictatorship. Thus, it will more likely be a revolution or a coup d'état, and it seems highly unlikely that we would face a situation where the environmental movement, the bureaucracy and the military, for example, join together to take power in a violent way in a country such as Norway, or anywhere else for that matter, out of consideration for climate change. If a climate-based justification of a coup d'état should nevertheless occur, there is some possibility that the climate would be an ulterior motive, but this is a highly hypothetical discussion.

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<sup>174</sup> Loadenthal 2013

<sup>175</sup> Taylor 1998

<sup>176</sup> Persen & Johansen 1998, 38

## Summary

Democracy in itself does not solve social problems, but to a varying extent it can pave the way for solutions. Payne and Burnell argue that democracy is part of the solution to the climate challenge, whereas Ophuls and Shearman and Smith are among those who think that democracy is part of the problem. The former position emphasizes the openness and accountability in democracies, whereas the latter position points to the short-sightedness that characterizes voters and politicians in democracies. I myself would like to emphasize an inequitable distribution of power in democracies as an important cause of the insufficient ability to reduce the greenhouse emissions, where big corporations that profit from the activity that damages the climate use their resource power to undermine initiatives that threaten their economic interests.

There are valid theoretical arguments for both democratic and authoritarian regimes as a good framework for taking greenhouse emissions seriously, but the empirical data is not clear one way or the other. In practice, neither democracies nor authoritarian regimes as categories show enough willingness to prioritize climate over other considerations. Thus, it may be fruitful to discuss reforms within existing systems, exemplified in this chapter by international, constitutional, legislative- or agreement-based restrictions on the political freedom of action, but the question of whether democracy or dictatorship is better suited to solving the problem is still a relevant debate.

The review of the empirical data shows that it is easy enough for us to do away with democracy without protecting the environment and our survival, but a necessary condition for terminating democracy in order to ensure survival must be that we introduce a climate dictatorship, i.e. an authoritarian regime that regards it as its main task to help stabilize the climate. Since climate change is a global phenomenon, this will have to occur in many countries simultaneously if it is going to have any effect, which makes it even less likely, but let us nevertheless assume it has occurred. In that case, an authoritarian Earth Commission for Thermostatic Control, supported by armed forces, could intervene in states that did not meet their targets. In theory, this could work, but the risk is also great that in the absence of sufficient mechanisms for holding the people in power accountable, they would choose ineffective solutions, be plagued by corruption, or simply loses their focus on the climate. The risk that the authoritarian regime would not relinquish power after having accomplished its mission becomes less relevant if we assume that stopping climate change is more important than preserving democratic forms of government, but it can be worth including in the

considerations. The main point, however, is that the introduction of an environmental dictatorship, perhaps after a military coup d'etat, is not any guarantee that the climate will be stabilized. Thus, we risk introducing a form of government that has a number of controversial aspects, such as restriction of freedom and concentration of power, without achieving the desired benefits. The fact that a coup d'etat would have been justified by climate considerations does not mean that the coup-makers would necessarily have a genuine desire for anything more than taking power. Consequently, there is a great risk that an environmental dictatorship will go wrong, and in this kind of debate it may be an useful principle that those who want an authoritarian regime be subject to the greatest burden of proof.

When the world faces a threat as great as that entailed in climate change, it is clear that it is tempting to search for short-cuts to a solution, usually in the form of one major resolution that solves the whole problem. Democracies with voters and politicians who put other needs ahead of the need for a stable climate are regarded as a challenge to an effective climate policy, but there is no automatic guarantee that a dictatorship will function any better. There has never been a previous attempt to institute a climate and environmental dictatorship, so it appears to be a utopia. On the other hand, it may be objected that environmental democracies are also utopias, but that is not inherently an argument for doing away with democracy. If we accept that both democracies and dictatorships have difficulty achieving a reduction in the global greenhouse emissions, an obvious conclusion may be that it is best to work for a better climate policy within existing systems.

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## ESSAY 2:

# **Giving Content to New Politics**

## *From broad hypothesis to empirical analysis using Norwegian manifesto data on climate change*

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### *Abstract*

The concept of New Politics is rarely translated into actual political measures differentiated from measures of Old Politics. This article presents a new approach to the categorization of policy measures as either leftist or rightist on an Old Politics or New Politics dimension. The approach is tested on climate policies expressed in the electoral manifestos of four Norwegian parties considered to be representative of the Old Left, Old Right, New Left, or New Right. The analysis suggests that it is possible to incorporate actual politics into the hypothesis on New Politics. The article's main contribution is theoretical rather than empirical, but evidence is presented that points to New Politics as an addition to Old Politics, rather than as a replacement, or New Politics being absorbed by Old Politics.

*Key words: political parties, Norway, left-right classification, environmental politics, climate change, New Politics*

### *Introduction*

Since first introduced in the 1970s, the hypothesis of New Politics as a supplement to or replacement for Old Politics (Inglehart 1977: 262; Hildebrandt & Dalton 1978) has received much attention. Thus far, however, little has been done to link the hypothesis with actual empirical political measures. The emphasis has been on 'a transition from "Old Politics" values of economic growth, security, and traditional lifestyles to "New Politics" values of individual freedoms, social equality, and the quality of life' (Dalton 2002: 81), often without further specification. Two problems can be identified in the existing literature. First, there has

been a marked lack of attention to empirical examples and relevant concepts. Second, the existing studies have paid insufficient attention to the systematic testing of actual political measures. This article aims to clarify the concepts and to present a new approach to the testing of policies on the left-right dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics. The main contribution is theoretical rather than empirical, but in order to test the new approach, the proposed climate measures in the 2009 electoral manifestos of four Norwegian parties, representing Old Left (Labour Party), Old Right (Conservative Party), New Left (Socialist Left Party) and New Right (Progress Party) are carried out.

Although the main focus is on theory and the development of a new methodological approach, the choice of case is not random. Not only does Norway have an ambitious climate policy (Ministry of Environment 2012), it is also one of the world's biggest exporters of petroleum (IEA 2011, 11, 13, 23). Norway is not significantly affected by the financial crisis (IMF 2010), and the 2009 parliamentary election is considered to be the election which thus far has had the greatest focus on the environment and climate issues (Tjernshagen, Aardal & Gullberg 2011). Lastly, the Norwegian multiparty system includes parties associated with all the relevant tendencies in this study: Old Left, Old Right, New Left, and New Right.

New Politics is linked to environmentalism, and the new cleavage is characterized by conflict in regard to environmental issues. Climate change is probably the contemporary environmental issue that receives the most attention, and all political parties must relate to climate change when setting their policies. The article begins with a clarification of the concepts of left and right within both Old Politics and New Politics. In the next section, the content of leftist and rightist environmentalism is discussed, as well as New Left and New Right. Then the focus turns to operational measures, with an explanation of climate measures and how they are categorized. An empirical analysis of the 2009 electoral manifestos of four Norwegian parties is then carried out, followed by a discussion. Finally, the findings are then summarized in a concluding section.

### *Left versus Right, Old Politics versus New Politics*

The notion of a political left in opposition to a political right is a central conceptualization for the elite and the masses in most democratic societies (Knutsen 1995: 63; Huber & Inglehart 1995; van Eijk et al. 2005), placing state-centered socialist parties on the left and market-centered conservative parties on the right. Public ownership of the means of production is traditionally considered to be 'a litmus test dividing left from right' (Ware 1996: 27). The left-right dimension is closely related to industrialization and the empowerment of the working

class, and 'economic inequalities, differences in ownership to the means of production, and conflict over the desirability of a market economy' (Knutsen 1995: 65).

When Huber & Inglehart (1995: 84) asked experts in 42 societies an open-ended question on the substance of the concepts left and right, economy was clearly the issue mentioned most often. With McDonald et al. (2007: 64) it could be argued that today, left and right refer mainly to 'the scope and breadth of what goods and services should and should not be public goods'. Still, the contemporary notion of extreme right parties does not point to parties being primarily free market advocates, but to an older concept of left and right in which right defends the privileges of certain groups (McDonald et al. 2007: 64). The concepts of left and right change meaning over shorter time periods as well, even among experts (Budge 2000: 107), so the concepts are dependent on time and location (van Eijk et al. 2005: 181).

If the traditional economic left-right cleavage still dominates politics, it could also be that new issues become incorporated into the old framework: 'Political cleavages in western societies have become more and more one-dimensional in the sense that the left-right dimension has gradually absorbed other conflict dimensions', argues Thomassen (1999: 54). Knutsen (1997: 258) predicted that '[e]nvironmental issues will become more closely linked to the traditional left-right grouping of the parties' as one possibility, and Ware (1996: 43) found 'ground for regarding environmentalism as having become a new kind of politics of the left, rather than as falling wholly outside traditional notions of left and right'.

Dalton (2002: 118) argues that the meaning of the concepts left and right may vary with the age of the respondents living today. As a dimension based on industrial societies, the economic left-right dimension is a central part of that which is considered Old Politics, as opposed to New Politics, where conflict over environmental issues is a central theme. Younger cohorts may think of the left as representing 'opposition to nuclear energy, support for sexual equality, a preference for disarmament, or endorsement of social programs' (Dalton 2002: 118). The traditional left-right dimension of Old Politics does not cover all the new conflicts:

The environmentalist movement, the opposition to nuclear power, the peace movement, the women's movement, the limits to growth movement, the consumer advocacy movement – all are manifestations of conflict that is only loosely related to conflict over ownership of the means of production (Inglehart 1984: 26).

Some researchers, most notably Inglehart (1977; 1984; 1995), view New Politics as part of a greater shift in societal values, from materialism to postmaterialism. The priorities change from an emphasis on safety and order to freedom and participation, as well as concerns for the environment,<sup>177</sup> but we must not ignore the ‘conservative counterattack that opposes the liberalization of social norms, women’s rights, environmentalism and related issues’ (Dalton 2002: 133). Inglehart (1984: 28) notes that postmaterialist issues may provoke a materialist reaction in which the right wing mobilizes for traditional issues of ‘economic growth, military security, and domestic law and order’. At the same time, these are also likely to be priorities of the Old Left (Kaase & Klingemann 1982 385). Neither Old Left nor Old Right parties are expected to have environmental concerns as top priorities.

Huber & Inglehart (1995: 74) use the growing popularity of green parties and xenophobic parties as examples that support their claim. New Politics is then a cleavage between New Left and New Right, in which environmentalism is placed on the New Left end of the continuum (Dalton 2002: 134). New Right parties are expected to be even less concerned about environmental issues than are the Old Politics parties, as they mobilize against the environmental movement (Dalton 2002: 133; Knutsen 2004: 78).

It must be noted that conceptualizing New Left and New Right is not the same as claiming that New Politics is simply a transformation of Old Left and Old Right. Knutsen (1997: 257) finds that ‘the new cleavage cut across industrial left-right cleavages at the party level’, and according to Inglehart (1984: 25), ‘there is a growing tendency for politics to polarize along a new dimension that cuts across this conventional Left-Right axis’. At the same time, Inglehart (1984: 69) predicted that the new dimension would merge with the traditional left-right dimension.

#### *Left Environmentalism versus Right Environmentalism*

Traditionally, environmental concerns were linked to conservative politics (Grendstad et al. 2006: 65), but this has changed. Grendstad et al. (2006) state that environmentalism today cross-cuts other political positions, but find that organized environmentalists lean toward left-oriented parties. Owens (1986: 197) offers an explanation: ‘We might expect environmentalism to be more closely aligned to the philosophy of the left than that of the right, since socialism and “ecocentrism” share a collectivist spirit and have many roots and

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<sup>177</sup> Both Justice et al. (2011) and Göksen et al. (2002) present reasons for differentiating between environmental concerns that are local and global. Postmaterial values influence primarily the attitude towards global concerns as climate change, and are less influential on local concerns.



values in common'. Ware (1996: 43) points out that '[m]any of the goals favoured by Ecologists could not be attained without a high degree of state intervention', so that left-leaning environmentalism would dominate over conservative environmentalism. The need for an active government and rejection of status quo are also highlighted by Grendstad et al. (2006: 65), and Rohrschneider (1993: 682) found that 'Old Left parties are considerably more able than previously assumed to absorb the environmental challenge'.

Today, environmental concerns are integrated into both leftist and rightist policies. Even though government-enforced regulation still dominates the debate (Carter 2007: 323), we have seen a 'growing influence of neoliberal approaches to environmental governance' (Bailey & Maresh 2009: 445). This points to New Politics being incorporated into the frameworks and parties of Old Politics, and is counter to the belief that environmentalism is simply a new kind of leftist policy. New Right, on the other hand, mobilizes around, among other themes, 'anti-green orientations' (Knutson 2004: 78). While Old Left and New Left might share some perspectives on the environmental debate, Old Right should be clearly differentiated from New Right, as Old Right is supposed to create environmental policy within a rightist frame, and New Right is supposed to ignore environmental concerns to a much greater degree than all other parties.

## **The New Approach**

To narrow the gap between New Politics as a hypothesis and as concrete politics, this section is devoted to the concretization of the concepts of left and right within Old Politics and New Politics in the form of a categorization scheme. As the study is limited to measures relevant to climate change, it is necessary to begin by explaining how climate measures are differentiated from other environmental measures and from other policies found in the electoral manifestos.

### *What Is A Climate Measure?*

A ban on oil-fired boilers in new buildings could certainly reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, but when the Conservative Party presented their proposal in the 2009 manifesto, it was not linked at all to climate change (Høyre 2009: 68). To qualify as a climate measure, a measure must be linked to climate change, the greenhouse effect, or global warming by the party itself. Hence, policies that the parties themselves do not connect to climate change are not considered, even if the connection to the aforementioned conditions seems quite obvious.

On the contrary, a policy that might increase climate emissions, such as building a new gas power plant, are considered a climate measure if the party believes that the new plant will result in closed coal power plants, and thus a global reduction in climate emissions. The party's own intentions are important.

To clarify, the following working definition of a climate measure is in use in this study: *A climate measure is defined as a concrete measure which is intended to have an impact on climate change, or is part of a section explicitly devoted to climate change.*

### *Left Environmentalism versus Right Environmentalism*

In order to decide where to place a certain climate measure on the traditional left-right dimension, I build on and develop the framework sketched out by Knutsen (1997: 258), in which left-wing environmentalism proposes solutions based on 'planning, regulation, and strengthening of the public administration and control system', as compared to right-wing environmentalism, which is concerned with 'taxes and the consideration of pollution as a law-and-order issue'. This framework must be both expanded and adjusted. First, I argue that even in free market environmentalism, government has a role in defining and enforcing property rights (Anderson & Leal 2001: 5). The public administration and control system must have the necessary capacities to perform their functions, so it is necessary to differentiate between a leftist goal of a bigger public sector, and a rightist goal of increased capacity for law enforcement, even though the outcomes might not differ greatly.

Second, I claim that an emphasis on taxes does not necessarily indicate a right-wing approach. A relevant distinction is made by Anderson & Leal (2001: 4) between 'free market environmentalism' and 'political environmentalism', the first of which 'emphasizes the positive incentives associated with prices, profits, and entrepreneurship', while the latter 'emphasizes negative incentives associated with regulation and taxes'. 'Political environmentalism' could be another label for what this study treats as leftist environmentalism. However, Nilsson et al. (2004: 267) support the idea of taxes being market-based, by describing a development in environmental policy from 'command-and-control' to 'market-based instruments such as taxes, subsidies, and tradable permits'. At the same time, taxes as such are seldom used as an indicator for the right in traditional literature on left and right, and seems to occur only in relation to environmental politics, as when Carter (2007: 761-2) expects a neoliberal ideology to be a hindrance to 'any strong environmental protection programme that would inevitably contain proposals for both new regulations and eco-taxes'. An exception is Knutsen's (1997: 251) use of 'the progressiveness of taxes' as a

left-right indicator. My approach is to take into consideration whether or not taxes increase, and to treat increased taxation as leftist and decreased taxation as rightist.

Further, regulation of public procurements is to be considered leftist in this study. Although I treat most forms of regulation as leftist, it should be noted that this is not always the case. When it comes to regulation of tendering, for example, it is more appropriate to categorize it as rightist, as the concept of tendering is market-based.

A rightist approach to climate policy would emphasize market mechanisms to a much greater degree than would a leftist approach. Trading with emission permits or quotas would be a clear example of rightist environmentalism, with its emphasis on the buying and selling of pollution to combat anthropogenic climate change. Another relevant example is the green certificates introduced in some European countries from 2002 and in Norway from 2012: ‘Common to these systems is that they seek to replace systems of direct governmental subsidies to renewable energy by market mechanisms’ (Amundsen & Bergman 2004: 2). The approach is market-driven, and the problems are linked to ‘the absence of clear, enforceable and tradable property rights; put differently, the market solution is to privatise public goods’ (Carter 2007: 67). Leftist parties may support market mechanisms, but the mechanisms are still representative of right-wing policy.

Ownership of e.g. public transport or energy companies is taken into account, as state ownership signifies left and private ownership signifies right. Not only state ownership, but also strong regulation of the private sector is considered leftist, as ‘a reformist socialist strategy uses a central interventionist state to regulate the market to protect the environment’ (Carter 2007: 72). Here it is necessary to distinguish between different degrees of left policy, from the radical statement of planned economy to the weaker statement of the government imposing regulations on privately owned enterprises (McDonald et al. 2007: 64; Jahn 2010: 752). The same principle applies to the degree of rightist policies, from less regulation to complete privatization.

Subsidies are a theme that is not easy to place on a left-right scale. Amundsen & Bergman (2004: 2) use subsidies in opposition to quota trading, but Nilsson et al. (2004: 267) mention subsidies among market-driven mechanisms. Hence, in this study, subsidies will not be used as an indicator of left or right.

To sum up, I define some climate measures as left-oriented and others as right-oriented. Banning harmful products, implementing governmental regulations, and state ownership are categorized as signifiers for a leftist policy, while trading with emission quotas and certificates and privatization and liberalization signify a rightist policy. In general, an

intention to increase or create new taxes is considered leftist, and reduced or eliminated taxes, as rightist. Also, a larger public sector is treated as leftist, and better capacity for law enforcement as rightist. Climate measures that are neither left nor right will also be taken into consideration. If the majority of proposed measures cannot be categorized as left or right, a logical consequence would be to reject the notion of climate policy being accommodated into a classical left-right framework.

### *Old Politics versus New Politics*

When climate measures are categorized on a traditional left-right dimension, the measures are categorized as Old Politics. If climate change and the environment are issues that belong to a New Politics dimension independent of the old left and right, it is difficult to categorize the issues within an Old Politics framework. In this case, there is reason to dismiss the hypothesis of Old Politics absorbing New Politics.

In the literature on New Politics, concrete measures are seldom a topic. The environmental movement is in itself considered as New Politics by Inglehart (1984: 26), who also mention ‘the limits to growth movement’ and ‘the consumer advocacy movement’. The opposition to nuclear power might be emblematic to New Politics (Dalton 2002: 118), but cannot be considered the promotion of a measure to counteract climate change. On the contrary, opposition to nuclear power can be viewed as rejection of a climate measure based on a broader understanding of the environment. In my opinion, the tendency to treat environmental interests as homogenous is not a path to greater understanding.

The opposition to economic growth as a goal in itself points to a New Politics environmentalism, which is concerned with the reduction of the overall consumption of natural resources. Any proposed measure intended to reduce consumption will therefore be categorized as New Politics contrasted with Old Politics, or specified as New Left contrasted with New Right, as both Old Politics and New Right share the goal of economic growth (Inglehart 1984: 68; Knutsen 1997: 257). Relevant New Left measures in the context of climate change include reduced consumption of energy directly, by energy efficiency or energy conservation, or indirectly, by the reduction of transport. Proposals for public transport as a means to reduce the use of private cars is not regarded New Politics, but measures to reduce the overall need for transport are considered as such. To consume less and travel less can be seen as part of the alternative lifestyles promoted by New Politics (Knutsen 2004: 77), and requirements for better product quality are commensurate with this, as a concrete measure to reduce consumption. A concrete measure to support alternative lifestyles might be

campaigns to change popular attitudes. The consumer advocacy movement was used by both Inglehart (1984: 26) and Dalton (2002: 90) as an example of New Politics movements, and hence measures to label harmful products are categorized as New Politics. Individual participation is essential to postmaterial values (Dalton 2002: 82-3; Aardal 1993: 39), and this is thought to extend to individual consumer choices.

On taxes, I have thus far claimed that increased taxes are s leftist and decreased taxation is rightist within Old Politics. Increased taxation could include many of the aspects of green tax reforms, but it is also possible to balance increased taxes on consumption with decreased taxation on labour. If the intention is a transformation of taxes from labour to consumption, the measure is included in the category toward reduced consumption under New (Left) Politics. The same goes for proposals to price according to consumption, such as when electricity becomes more expensive after a certain level of consumption is passed.

Environmentalism is linked to New Left, while New Right is linked with anti-environmentalism (Dalton 2002: 133). Hence, New Right is expected to stick to a strategy of ignorance of environmental concerns: if you do not recognize environmental problems, you will not present solutions to them. It does not mean that only New Right rejects climate measures, as all four categories will reject some measures, but rather that New Right is the only category *characterized* by a rejection of measures.

To sum up, I have found some indicators for New Left environmentalism, and categorize measures as such if they tap reduced consumption in general, reduced energy consumption in particular, reduced transport, green taxation, consumer responsibility, or campaigns to change popular attitudes. New Right environmentalism is a contradictory concept, and here, ignorance and lack of measures are signifiers, in addition to the open rejection of measures proposed by other parties or environmentalists.

## **Electoral manifestos as data, climate policies as indicators**

### *Electoral Manifestos*

By studying electoral manifestos, it is possible to allow the parties to speak freely, without interruption. The parties are able to present the world exactly as they would like the electorate to see it. Following Volkens et al. (2010: 2), manifestos are treated as the ‘parties’ only authoritative policy statements and, therefore, as indicators of the parties’ policy preferences at a given point in time’.

Saliency theory points out that the parties will devote most attention to issues that are believed to attract voters, and will tend to downplay less attractive parts of their policies (Pennings & Keman 2002: 55-6); hence, electoral manifestos illustrate party priorities. 'They provide cohesive and regular documentation of parties' "best thinking" on how they perceive their priorities and strategy in government in the short to medium term' (Pennings & Keman 2002: 76). It must also be taken into consideration that 'there are many aspects of a party's beliefs, values, or ethos which may not be stated in its manifesto' (Ware 1996: 20), and that the main rationale behind an electoral manifesto is 'to accommodate strategic challenges in order to win an election' (Jahn 2010: 746).

Electoral manifestos are relevant study objects as they differ from other political statements on some important criteria. First of all, an electoral manifesto is not only the voice of the party elite. The Norwegian parties spend months on deliberation before the congress of delegates from local chapters all over the country collectively decide what should be included in or excluded from the manifesto (Svåsand et al. 1997: 106). It must however be kept in mind what Carter (2006: 754) admits; namely, that 'a manifesto peppered with appealing references to popular environmental concerns does not necessarily mean that a party treats the issue seriously'. The much cited Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2010) is based on counting the percentage of sentences in party manifestos that embrace different policy positions, including broad environmental goals (Volkens et al. 2010: 19), but does not take into consideration how the parties plan to reach their goals. Carter (2006) tries to solve the problem by using expert opinions to measure environmental concerns in the political parties, but the intention of this study is to investigate the nature of the proposed solutions, narrowed down to climate policy.

The sole focus on electoral manifestos could be criticized, but the importance of the manifestos seems to be considerable (Walgrave & Nuytemans 2009). Gabel & Huber (2000: 102) conclude that party manifesto data 'can be used to obtain reasonably accurate predictions of parties' left-right placement'. Jahn (2010: 746) also points to electoral manifestos as relevant study objects 'to deduce a party's underlying ideological position'. Hence, the manifestos are investigated in order to place the parties' climate policies on the Old and New left-right dimensions.

#### *A set of indicators*

Table 1 shows the indicators chosen for left-right placement of measures toward climate change, and which measures are to be categorized as New Politics. One measure can fit into

more than one category, as e.g. party support for a state-owned organization for consumer responsibility would be both Old Left and New Left.

Table 1: Indicators of left and right, new and old

<b><i>Old Left</i></b>	<b><i>Old Right</i></b>
Bans/regulations	Trading of quotas/certificates
Public ownership	Liberalization/privatization
New, increased taxes	Reduced or eliminated taxes
<b><i>New Left</i></b>	<b><i>New Right</i></b>
Reduced consumption	No mention of climate change
Green (balanced) taxation	Climate scepticism
Consumer responsibility	Rejection of measures

The indicators are not meant to be a tool for telling the whole story of the parties’ climate policies, but are a first step to categorize the parties’ climate policies in light of Old Left and Old Right, as well as New Left and New Right. The study objects are the political parties and their electoral manifestos, so for each manifesto, climate measures are mapped to see if they fit one of the categories. Despite some limitations, this can be a useful starting point for further analyses.

Many measures are not covered because they do not fit into either Old Politics or New Politics. Support for public transport, renewable energy, research, technology, forest protection, and international treaties are examples of themes not easily placed within the framework, even though all the mentioned examples may be thought of as significant in the debate on climate change. On the other hand, elements such as how the parties intend to organize services such as public transport is possible to place within the classical left-right dimension, from state ownership to private ownership. In a similar manner, support for renewable energy could be in the form of extra taxes on fossil fuels (leftist) or less taxation of renewable energy (rightist), while a New Left approach could be to stimulate less energy consumption. Hence, enough issues will be possible to place within the framework. Another point is that this study explores two specific dimensions within climate policy, and measures that fall outside that framework will not disturb the study as such.

## **Analyzing the election manifestos of four Norwegian parties**

Originally, environmental concerns in the form of nature conservation did not create divisions between the Norwegian parties, as there was a clear consensus on most issues. However, the ‘only conflict was related to questions that may be grouped along the left-right dimension’, in particular questions about compensation to land owners (Knutsen 1997: 231). In the late 1980s, there was a tendency for socialist parties to support more left-oriented environmental policies with planning and regulation, while rightist parties sought right-oriented solutions based on the ‘polluter pays’ principle (Knutsen 1997: 258). Aardal (1993: 421) noted that the Norwegian parties seemed committed to relate the environment to their core issues, while also integrating the new issues in their traditional political platforms. This study examines how this works with climate change today, on the dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics.

In the literature, New Left is often represented by green parties or reformed socialist parties as the Norwegian Socialist Left Party (Knutsen 1997: 248; Knutsen 2004: 78), while New Right is represented by parties as the Norwegian Progress Party (Ignazi 1992: 15; Knutsen 2004: 78). Hence, in my study, the Socialist Left Party and the Progress Party represent two opposing forms of New Politics, while the Labour Party and the Conservative Party represent Old Left and Old Right. The parties are chosen because of theoretical expectations, and the question is how their policies on climate change reflect their placement on the left or the right side of Old and New Politics.

All the original data material is in Norwegian, so all quotes in English are the author’s own translations from the electoral manifestos of the Socialist Left Party (Sosialistisk Venstreparti 2009), the Labour Party (Arbeiderpartiet 2009), the Conservative Party (Høyre 2009), and the Progress Party (Fremskrittspartiet 2009).

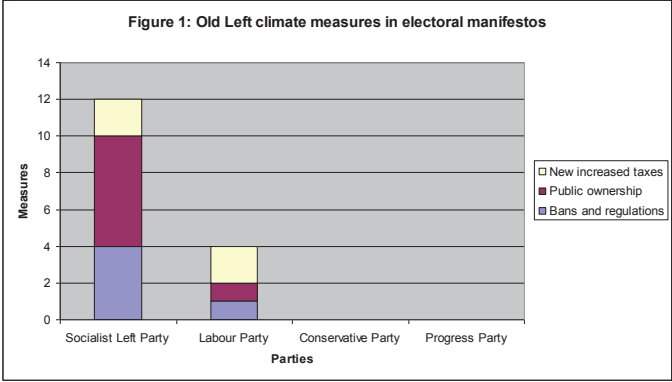
### *Old Left*

As the representative of Old Left, the Labour Party is expected to have the most Old Left measures against climate change, and four are found: certification in procurement, public ownership of electricity companies, a new international tax on aviation, and a carbon tax. The Conservative Party shows a clear opposition to Old Left by not embracing a single Old Left measure in its climate policy. However, the party supports a ban on oil-fired boilers in new buildings (Old Left), but as the measure is proposed without any reference to climate change, it is not considered an explicit climate measure. The Progress Party supports no Old Left measures, neither explicitly or implicitly.



The Socialist Left Party is clearly located to the left on the Old Politics dimension, proposing no fewer than twelve Old Left measures: four relate to bans and regulations (stronger legislation on pollution, energy standards for new buildings, ban on fossil heating of houses, and ban on new cars fuelled by fossil fuels); six relate to state control (public ownership in the energy sector, state ownership of businesses, state-driven infrastructure for carbon capture and storage, strengthening of a state-run program for environmentally-friendly transport, climate sections in all governmental departments, and climate plans in all municipalities); and two relate to new, increased taxes (congestion charge in cities and a new charge on aviation).

The results in figure 1 point to the Socialist Left Party being more of an Old Left party than the Labour Party, but one reason for this is that the Socialist Left Party proposes many more environmental measures in their electoral manifesto than does the Labour Party. The right-wing parties are clearly opposed to Old Left measures toward climate change.



*Old Right*

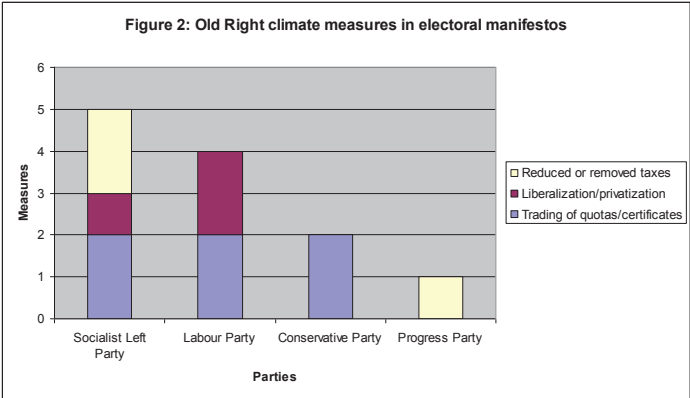
The Conservative Party should in theory be the party most prone to market solutions to climate change, but in the manifesto, few measures are explicitly linked to climate change. Support for a green certificate market is not portrayed as a climate measure, but two measures are – those concerning emission quota trading and forest carbon trading. The Conservative Party is not the leading party on Old Right climate measures (see figure 2).

The Labour Party should traditionally reject Old Right measures, but the party may have distanced itself from a clear leftist position; today, Labour supports more market measures than do the Conservative Party. Four Old Right measures are explicitly linked to

climate change: gas use within the EU quota system, a green certificates market, the consideration of simpler regulations for licensing, and certification in tendering.

The Socialist Left Party supports more Old Right measures than do both the Conservative and Labour Parties, by embracing five measures: quota trading, green certificates trading, requirements in tendering, tax exemption for green commuting, and tax exemption for green measures. Again, this must be viewed as a consequence of the party being in general more prone to support climate measures, but could still be a sign of the Old Politics dimension losing importance. Support for climate measures is considered more important than rejection of Old Right politics.

The Progress Party appears to be the party with the fewest Old Right measures, only supporting reduced charges to stimulate renewal of the automobile fleet. It could be interpreted as the New Right being more sceptical toward Old Right than the leftist parties are, but I suggest a better explanation in that the Progress Party is simply not particularly interested in climate measures, regardless of the political positioning of the measures. This is consistent with theories on New Right parties representing anti-environmentalism (Dalton 2002: 133).



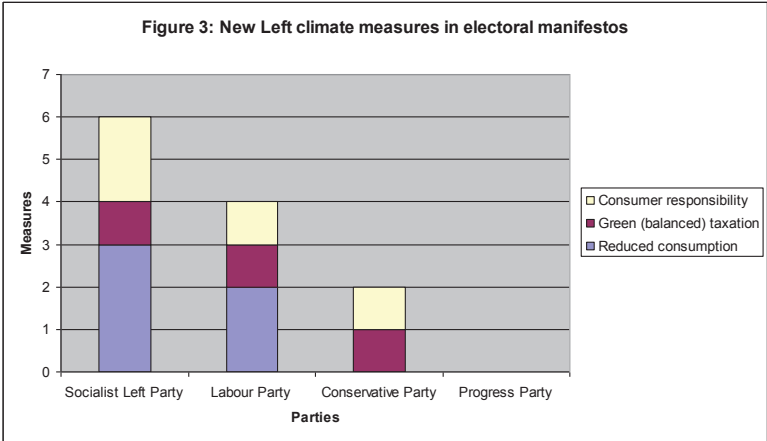
*New Left*

The Socialist Left Party is portrayed as a New Left party. Hence, the expectation is to find many New Left climate measures in the electoral manifesto; despite this, I do not find as many New Left measures as Old Left measures. Six New Left measures are proposed: three on reduced consumption (subsidize energy conservation, price electricity according to consumption, and a plan to reduce transport), one on green taxation, and two on consumer

responsibility (international information work and better product labeling). The results for this category of measures are shown in figure 3, and classical left-right positioning seems to be relevant for the parties' abilities to embrace New Left policies.

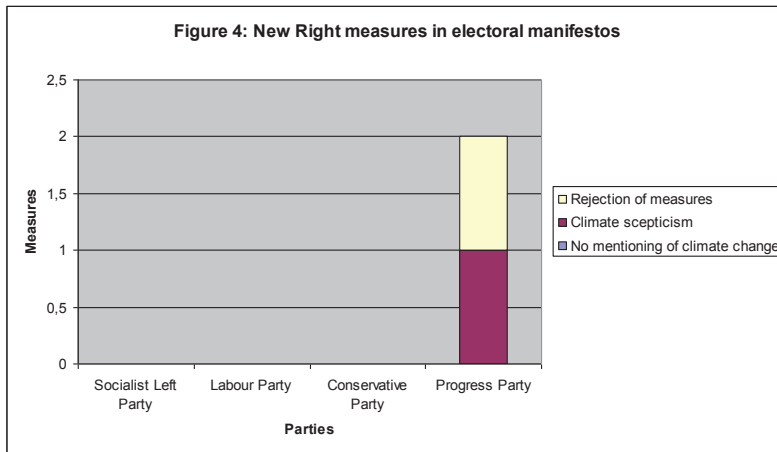
The Labour Party follows after the Socialist Left Party with four proposed measures: investment in energy conservation, a national strategy for energy efficiency, green taxation with a constant tax level, and better product labeling. Next is the Conservative Party, which supports two measures: the use of taxes to reduce emissions and better product labeling. The Progress Party, in line with theory, does not support any New Left measure to counter climate change.

Once again, the Conservative Party supports a measure to counter climate change, but without linking the measure with the climate. Here it is support for energy labeling of vehicles that falls outside the framework.



*New Right*

The Progress Party is the only party with New Right measures in the electoral manifesto (see figure 4). New Right is characterized more by a lack of measures than its own measures, and therefore the Progress Party rejects regulation and increased taxes, and expresses doubt in regard to climate change being anthropogenic. The other parties might reject some measures, but do not reject the need for measures, and disagree on the nature of the measures. The Progress Party doubts the need for measures, and especially measures that might be costly.



## Discussion

As shown in the electoral manifestos, the classical left-right dimension of Old Politics is absolutely a part of the Norwegian party debate on climate change, with slightly more proposed measures on the left side of the spectrum than on the right. Public ownership is as a telling example portrayed as relevant for climate change among the leftist parties in the study, while none of the rightist parties consider privatization explicitly to be a climate measure. Hence, on the state-market dichotomy, the left has been more prone to incorporate climate policy in an existing framework.

When it comes to bans and regulations, the Socialist Left Party is, as expected, more prone to support these measures than are the other parties, including the Labour Party. The latter only expresses an intention to regulate public procurement, compared to the Socialist Left Party, which has proposed several bans and regulations. Neither the Conservative Party nor the Progress Party expresses any intention to propose bans or regulations on behalf of the climate. This is not unique: Huber & Inglehart (1995: 84-5) point to the general turning of politics to the right since the 1980s, and this tendency can be traced in that none of the right wing-parties expresses any Old Left positions on climate change, while both leftist parties support Old Right solutions in addition to Old Left. For the Labour Party, there are as many Old Right solutions as Old Left solutions in the electoral manifesto, which indicates that Labour has followed the general drift from the left toward the right. On the right side, though, the Conservative Party has more Old Right solutions than does the Progress Party, and would hence be the most right-leaning party on the Old Politics dimension, contrary to the usual left-

right ordering of the Norwegian parties (Huber & Inglehart 1995: 102; Grendstad et al. 2006: 136). The placement is however logical when New Politics perspectives are added to the picture: the Progress Party is more of a New Right party, and the placement not far to the right on the Old Politics dimension can be explained primarily by the lack of climate policy, as expected in the literature on New Politics (Dalton 2002: 133). The Conservative Party is placed to the right of the Progress Party on Old Politics because the Conservative Party is more embedded in Old Politics than is the Progress Party.

On New Politics, the party measures are according to the theory, with the Socialist Left Party as the most left-leaning party, followed by the Labour Party, with the Conservative Party to the right and the Progress Party further to the right. The Labour Party, representing Old Left, is hence more prone to incorporate New Left perspectives, consistent with the findings of Rohrschneider (1993: 682). In contrast to this, the Progress Party chooses New Right approaches to climate change, which is also consistent with the expectations in the literature (Dalton 2002: 133).

The ordering of the parties' climate policies on the New Politics dimension follows the literature better than does the ordering based on Old Politics. This indicates a potential for New Politics as a better tool for understanding climate policy than Old Politics, but still, climate policy cannot escape the cleavages based on Old Politics, which influence and shape the debate. The Socialist Left Party is thought of as a New Left party (Knutson 2004: 78), but is clearly under strong influence from the Old Left traditions. A relevant question for further studies would be whether or not there is a difference between New Left parties based on socialist roots and green parties.

It is also clear that more proposed measures are to be placed within Old Politics than within New Politics. This might of course be a result of my framework not being developed enough, but it could also indicate a dominance of the classical left-right dimension. One plausible hypothesis might be that the major conflicts occur on grounds of Old Politics, and hence these aspects are given the most weight in electoral manifestos.

All the parties emphasize renewable energy and new technologies, issues not covered within my framework, and there seems to be little disagreement over these issues. To map conflicts over renewable energy and technology, it is probably necessary to go to other sources than the electoral manifestos, and develop a more extensive framework.

## Conclusion

Many of the proposed climate measures in the electoral manifestos are possible to place on the left or right on the dimensions of Old Politics and New Politics, while other measures fall outside of the framework. Still, it seems fruitful to develop a framework for categorizing concrete political measures on a New Politics dimension, as well as Old Politics. In addition, the data points to New Politics as a supplement to Old Politics rather than as a replacement, or New Politics being absorbed by Old Politics. Climate measures can be Old Left, Old Right, New Left, and New Right, and political scientists need the necessary tools to explore the dimensions empirically.

In this limited and country-specific study, a New Left party (the Socialist Left Party) is to a large degree based on an Old Left approach to politics, including climate policy, while both an Old Left party (the Labour Party) and an Old Right party (the Conservative Party) are influenced by New Left in their attempts to solve the climate issue. A New Right party (the Progress Party) is the one that best fits the theoretical expectations, with less taxation as the only Old (Right) Politics measure, and with its counter-reaction to the New Left by questioning the anthropogenic character of climate change.

The empirical part of the study is however not very encompassing, neither in time nor space, but the intention is not foremost to reveal climate policies as such. The concern has been to test the newly-developed framework for the categorization of climate measures in a country with the potential for action, based both on petroleum resources and the relatively minor impact of the financial crisis.

All parties must relate to climate change, but not all climate measures are supported by all parties. Politics have in general turned to the right of Old Politics (Huber & Inglehart 1995: 84-5), a trend also recognizable in climate policies, but climate policy is by no means a one-dimensional field. The number of measures that fall outside the framework proposed in this study points to multi-dimensionality in the climate policy.

Further studies are needed. The framework must be developed more extensively and tested empirically in a greater variety of both time and space, but so far, a reasonable conclusion is that Old Politics are very influential on a rather new political issue such as climate change, even though New Politics also contributes to the picture, and that environmental concerns are found both in a leftist and a rightist wrapping. I recommend the concretization of concepts to be expanded.

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## ESSAY 3:

# Coalitions, consensus and climate change

## *Climate policy in Norwegian coalition agreements*

*1989-2013*

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### **Introduction**

Most studies of dimensions within environmental politics have focused on electoral manifestoes and the ways in which the parties appear in parliament, whereas few have looked at the ways in which different coalition governments deal with environmental protection in their agreements. This article is devoted to the proposals for climate measures that are found in the coalition agreements, and which of the coalition partners proposed the measures that finally reached the coalition agreement, what kind of measures did travel from manifestos to agreements and how the original measures were modified. In political science, there are many who regard environmental protection as a form of leftist politics, but an alternative hypothesis is that the state/market dimension assimilates environmental issues. A third approach is that environmental issues have their own dimension, which spans from ecological conservation to economic growth.

Based on the political agreements of six Norwegian coalition governments and a conception of climate change as today's most important environmental issue, we shall analyse specific climate measures with special emphasis on leftist or rightist measures of the state/marked dimension, but also keeping in mind the conflict between ecological conservation and economic growth as well as the time and size dimensions. Expectations from the literature to be investigated in the article are on whether a left-leaning government will promote more climate measures and be more conducive to government control, and if it is the coalition parties' placement on the growth/conservation dimension that is most important. Another aspect is to what extent the climate issue evolves with time more or less

independently of which parties are in office. In addition, there is reason to expect that governments with a majority of the seats in parliament will have greater freedom of action to define their own climate policy, and that the biggest party in a coalition will have the most influence on the climate policies.

### **Environmental protection between new and old lines of conflict**

The traditional left/right political dimension between state and market is dominant in Norwegian politics (Heidar 2004, 55), but the lines of conflict in politics are by no means one-dimensional. According to Rohrschneider (1993, 160), the modern environmental movement along with the peace and women's movements "have confused European party systems because they question premises that are shared by both the traditional Left and the center-conservative parties". Conflicts in environmental and climate policy have traditionally been difficult to subordinate to the established political dividing lines. Rather than enhance the conflict between the left and right, environmental conflicts have created a distinction between parties that give priority to ecological conservation and those that give priority to economic growth (Knutsen 1997, 257), but there are reasons to challenge the idea that environmental issues are a conflicting rather than an overlapping cleavage.

Another perspective is that environmental protection has become a new type of leftist policy rather than one that lies outside of the traditional left-right political dimension (Ware 1996, 43). Several studies point to leftist parties being more conducive of supporting environmental measures (Rohrschneider 1993; Neumayer 2004; Orderud and Kelman 2011), and Grendstad et al. 2006, 139-140) point out that leftist parties are more associated with the environmental movement than rightist parties. Ware (1996, 43) explains the left-leaning by referring to the need for government and international interventions, and Neumayer (2003, 204) emphasises that becoming accustomed to interventions in order to correct markets on a social basis makes it easier to adopt similar interventions for environmental reasons. Carter (2006, 751) thinks that the rightist's neo-liberal ideology hampers the enactment of strong environmental programs because it is assumed that these will have to include proposals for new regulations and environmental taxes and that leftist parties will respond more positively to environmental issues than centrist and rightist parties. It may be the case, however, that this effect will be neutralised through participation in a coalition government.

A third perspective is that both the left and rightists express support for environmental protection. New environmental issues can be incorporated into existing cleavages and adapted

to traditional core issues (Aardal 1993, 165–166) so that a market-liberal rightist may embrace the ideas behind market-based environmental protection (Anderson and Leal 2001). Thomassen (1999, 54) thinks “Political cleavages in western societies have become more and more one-dimensional in the sense that the left-right dimension has gradually absorbed other conflict dimensions”. Knutsen (1997, 258) expects environmental issues to become more closely tied to the traditional left/right grouping of parties and be involved in changing the left/right dimension. The co-option may entail that there is consensus on environmental protection as a goal, but that conflicts follow traditional cleavages, as when Norwegian parties first reacted to nature conservation; there was agreement about conservation, but disagreement about compensation to land-owners (Knutsen 1997, 231).

In the Norwegian climate debate, there is a large amount of bipartisan agreement on support for technology, research, public transportation and foot and cycle paths (Gullberg 2009, 10); the disagreement first comes to light along the left/right dimension with regard to economic disparity, ownership of the means of production and how desirable it is to have market control of the economy (Knutsen 1995, 65). A general shift to the right in politics since the 1980s (Huber and Inglehart 1995, 84-85) may have had an impact on climate policy in the sense that leftist parties will also support market-based measures, but if there is any truth to the arguments that environmental protection must necessarily be a policy of the left, the shift to the right will entail a serious challenge to environmental efforts. It may be the case, however, that too many environmental measures are categorized as leftist, as when Neumayer (2003, 204) regards trading in emission quotas as interventionist and thereby leftist. The conception of environmental protection as a policy of the left may thus be a result of the tendency to regard environmental measures as leftist, not first and foremost that the measures inherently increase the state's power at the expense of markets.

Knutsen (1997, 258) highlights a tendency in which environmental policy seems to reflect the left/right conflict. Another factor that may support the dominance of the left/right political dimension is that Norwegian environmental ideology is characterised by an idea that economic growth and ecological conservation may be combined (Aardal 1993, 79). Thus, the growth/conservation dimension does not dominate environmental policy because the particular cleavage is not clearly expressed in Norwegian politics, but that does not mean that there are not any subtler differences. Some parties emphasise growth to a greater extent, whereas others emphasise conservation, even though the categories are not regarded as mutually exclusive. In Norwegian politics, the Labour Party, the Conservative Party and the Progress Party are the clearest growth parties (Knutsen 1997, 238; Grendstad et al. 2006, 68),

whereas the Socialist Left Party and the Liberal Party are most concerned about conservation (Grendstad et al. 2006, 152), followed by the Centre Party and the Christian Democratic Party (Knutson 1997, 247). The parties' placement on the growth/conservation dimension can thus have some significance for the ways in which the governments react to the climate issue in the form of specific measures.

In addition to the dimensions mentioned above, the time dimension also plays a key role. More and more attention and scientific studies are being devoted to climate change, and there is reason to expect that all of the parties take the issue more seriously. Hovden and Lindseth (2002) have shown how Norwegian parties have evolved in the same direction over a period of time, from national goals and policy instruments to a more and more internationally oriented approach, and hence making climate politics into foreign policy, which is known to be consensus-oriented (Sydnes 1996, 294). The time dimension, as well as the consensus approach, is also influenced by the broad climate agreements in the Storting (Norwegian parliament) in 2008 and 2012, which limit the space for competition among the parties with regard to climate policy, in line with a preference-accommodation strategy (Carter 2006, 750), where all the parties support environmental issues without making it an important contentious political issue. The parties accommodate environmentally aware voters, but do not want to shape opinion on this topic. "In other words, environmental protection has become an issue that none of the parties want to risk opposing" (Aardal 1993, 29). As a valence issue, environmental issues are something that everyone supports, but there is disagreement on the policy instruments (Bjørklund and Saglie 2002, 9; Carter 2006, 750). Another point is that the emphasis on environmental and climate issues is not uniformly increasing, but rather following "attention cycles" (Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 334).

The left/right political dimension has been essential to the formation of Norwegian governments (Strøm and Leipart 1993, 884), and those formations have been characterized by two blocks of parties that take turns in power. Thus, an objection to the theory of preference-accommodation could be that the potential for conflicts over climate policy is high because parliamentary majorities must include parties that disagree on climate issues (Tjernshaugen et al. 2011, 336). The only exception from the two-block format was the centrist government composed of the Christian Democratic Party, the Liberal Party and the Centre Party (1997-2000) (Narud and Strøm 2011, 205). This government was also the only one not including any of the dominant growth parties and should therefore have been expected to take climate change more seriously than other governments and thereby weaken the conception that environmental protection lies on the left in the political landscape. On the other hand, this

government controlled few seats in parliament, and was hence dependent on support from growth parties in order to gain a majority for its proposals. Whether the governments have had a majority or a minority is an aspect worth taking a closer look at in the analysis. A moderating effect on the shift to the right to the Conservative and Progress Party government may be their need for parliamentary support from the centrist Christian Democratic and Liberal parties, where especially the latter is regarded as a conservation party.

**Coalition agreements as data material**

“Coalition agreements are the *most binding, written* statements to which the parties of a coalition commit themselves, that is, the most authoritative document that constrains party behaviour”, according to Strøm and Müller (1999, 263-265, italics in original). They find that most coalitions are based on a public coalition agreement negotiated after the election, and in Norway, 90 percent or more of the content are on policy and little on procedures or distribution of offices (Strøm and Müller 1999, 265-268). The importance of the coalition agreements is underscored by the fact that “Support for election pledges in the government agreement has a significant, positive effect on the likelihood of enactment” (Mansergh and Thomson 2007, 321), that most of the pledges in the agreements are made into cabinet decisions, and that one-third of all cabinet decisions are based directly on the agreements (Moury 2011).

Table 1: Coalition agreements 1989-2013

Year	Placement	Parties (mandates in the Storting)	Pages
1989	Centre-right	Conservative Party (37), Christian Democratic Party (14), Centre Party (11)	33
1997	Centre	Christian Democratic Party (25), Centre Party (11), Liberal Party (6)	47
2001	Centre-right	Conservative Party (38), Christian Democratic Party (22), Liberal Party (2)	51
2005	Centre-left	Labour Party (61), Socialist Left Party (15), Centre Party (11)	73
2009	Centre-left	Labour Party (64), Socialist Left Party (11), Centre Party (11)	76
2013	Right	Conservative Party (48), Progress Party (29)	75

The data material for this study is primarily the official agreements of six Norwegian coalition governments, presented in Table 1. Since the left/right political dimension is so important in the study, it is necessary to provide some clarifications. Data from the Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2013) shows that the Socialist Left Party is consistently the farthest to the left, followed by the Labour Party, whereas the Progress Party is consistently the farthest to the right followed by the Conservative Party. Whereas the positions of the centrist parties are more dynamic, Hubert and Inglehart (1995, 102) and Grendstad et al. (2006, 136) have both drawn the conclusion that the order from left to right is the Centre Party, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democratic Party. Narud og Strøm (2011, 202) place the Liberal Party to the right of the Christian Democratic Party, and the possibilities of dynamic party positions (McDonald et al. 2007), exemplified by the Centre Party's having been a part of governments with the Socialist Left Party as well as the Conservative Party justifies a simplified categorization in three blocks: left (Socialist Left Party and Labour Party), centre (Centre Party, Liberal Party and Christian Democratic Party) and right (Conservative Party and Progress Party). Hence, the relevant coalition governments are divided into four categories: (1) centre/left (Labour Party, Socialist Left Party and Centre Party), (2) centrist (Centre Party, Christian Democratic Party and Liberal Party), (3) centre/right (Centre Party, Christian Democratic Party and Conservative Party and Liberal Party, Christian Democratic Party and Conservative Party) and (4) right (Conservative Party and Progress Party). The centre/left governments were the only ones with a majority in the Storting. The others have had to manoeuvre in the Storting and seek majorities from issue to issue, with the exception of the Conservative/Progress Party government, which has a cooperative agreement with the Liberal Party and the Christian Democratic Party. This agreement will probably have a moderating effect on the government. Another important aspect is the relative strengths of the governing parties, and it is expected that the Labour Party in 2009 had much greater clout with 64 mandates than the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party, which each had 11 mandates. Because the Labour Party and the Conservative Party are the dominant parties in the coalitions, the distinction between centre/left and centre/right governments could be undermined. Since the growth parties on each side of the dimension are so much larger than their junior partners, it would be reasonable to assume that differences among the governments may be attributed their placement on the left/right dimension rather than the growth/conservation dimension.

Climate change was first mentioned in a coalition agreement in 1989, which explains why this is the initial year of the study. Three governments are not included, namely the three



pure minority governments of the Labour Party in 1990, 1996 and 2000. One-party governments do not present coalition agreements, because their policies will reflect the electoral manifesto in a much more direct way than for a coalition that has to negotiate a common policy. While Warwick (2001) and others have studied the government declarations given by the prime minister in parliament, we follow Debus (2008, 524) in studying the coalition agreements rather than government declarations, “because of the more independent position of coalition agreements from other factors; for instance, the position of the prime minister.” The agreements are not only symbolic, but also act as a framework for the work in government.

The examination of the coalition agreements focuses on the measures that the governments propose and explicitly link to climate change, with a special interest in leftist and rightist measures based on the conceptualization of left/right as a conflict between state and market power. Leftist climate measures emphasise bans and/or regulations, state intervention and increased taxes and/or duties, whereas rightist measures emphasise reduced taxes and/or duties, liberalization and/or privatization and trading in emission quotas and/or green certificates (Båtstrand 2014). Explicitly maintaining taxes and/or duties will be considered leftist, whereas maintaining tax exemptions will be rightist. Green taxation, where increased taxes in some areas are balanced out with reduced taxes in others, is neither leftist nor rightist because the total tax burden remains unchanged. In general, measures that strengthen the state's influence will be leftist, whereas measures that give more power to private sector interests will be regarded as rightist, in keeping with the traditional distinction between the state and the market.

Some conditions must be met in order to qualify as a climate measure. The measures must be specific proposals, not general opinions or intentions, and the governments themselves must explicitly relate them to climate change, global warming, carbon or CO<sub>2</sub> rather than local air quality or general environmental protection, to name two alternatives. “Submitting new national measures in order to achieve demonstrable progress by 2005 in accordance with the Kyoto Protocol” (Norwegian Government 2001, 16) will not be categorised as a climate measure, because it does not entail any specific proposals. On the other hand, a proposal to implement sector-wise climate action plans (Norwegian Government 2005, 52) or to appoint a “green tax commission” (Norwegian Government 2013, 25) will inherently be considered climate measures.

Many explicit climate measures are neither leftist nor rightist. One example is subsidies, which are regarded by Amundsen and Bergman (2004, 2) as a contrast to the

emission trading system and market-oriented measures, but are regarded as a market-driven mechanism by Nilsson et al. (2005, 267). Other measures that are neither leftist nor rightist are energy conservation, research, technological development and product labelling, none of which arouses great debate in Norwegian politics (Gullberg 2009, 10). The same applies to international cooperation and agreements, which all of the governments support in their agreements. Although Ware (1996, 43) regards international interventions as leftist, it is worth recalling that the Kyoto Protocol is based on market mechanisms (Hovden and Lindseth 2002, 149). International measures can be both leftist (international carbon tax) and rightist (international emission trading system).

The coalition agreements are the result of intense negotiations between the parties of the coalition, which bring each respective electoral manifesto into the negotiations. “Coalition formation is a complex political outcome that is no doubt the result of variously motivated politicians bargaining in institutionally rich environment” (Martin and Stevenson 2001, 49), and both size and ideology, in addition to institutional factors, are important when explaining whether or not a party will join a coalition. In the negotiations over the coalition agreement, the weight of the parties can be seen as static (proportionality) or dynamic (pivotality), the latter taking into consideration the importance of small parties when they are “numerically necessary for the formation of a majority coalition” (Bolleyer 2007, 125).

A study of links between electoral manifestos and coalition agreements, with a special emphasis on the left/right dimension finds that “key parties in a clear majority of cases were located closest to the coalition policy agreement and hence received the highest policy payoffs of all coalition parties” (Debus 2008, 533). If this is not evident, it can be seen in light of “the need to make concessions to support parties as well as a tendency, perhaps more public relations than substance, to position the government closer to the parliamentary center” (Warwick 2001, 1234). Another point is that a government policy seems to be influenced by the preceding government (Warwick 2001).

To investigate the link from electoral manifestos to coalition agreements, we do study the manifestos of the coalition partners to find what kind of election pledges were translated into governmental policy and what party or parties originally proposed the measures. The criteria for climate measures in electoral manifestos are the same as for coalition agreements, and the electoral pledges will also be categorized on the same left/right dimension.

## Empirical analysis

If it is true that the left/right political dimension assimilates environmental issues (Thomassen 1999), many of the conflicts will take place along the traditional economic dimension. It is worth noting that the requirement of an explicit connection to climate change means that some proposals that will have an effect on greenhouse emissions will not be included and that the governments may have different motivations when it comes to linking issues to climate change. The findings are presented chronologically in a table for each government; cf. tables 2-7.

*1989*

In 1989, climate policy was not yet particularly well developed. Climate was still only discussed in the environment chapter and not clearly distinguished from other environmental policy in a separate section. Only three measures were proposed, of which one was an evaluation (Table 2).

Table 2: The centre-right government of 1989

Leftist measures	1	Environmental tax with increased costs for the individual
Rightist measures	0	Not found
Other measures	2	International agreements; assess increased forestation

The climate policy in Coalition agreement of 1989 seems to reflect the pledges from the major coalition partner, the Conservative Party (Høyre 1989), which in the electoral manifesto proposed climate measures on forestation, renegotiation of international treaties, and use of taxes. The only measure not translated into government policy was research and development of environmentally friendly energy alternatives. The Christian Democratic Party (KrF 1989) did not mention climate change or any climate measures in the manifesto, while the Centre Party (Sp 1989) presented some vague measures on regulation, public transport and cleaning technology in a section devoted to emissions to air and water, in which global warming was briefly mentioned.

With the absence of concrete electoral pledges on climate policy from the coalition partners, the Conservative Party got a climate policy close to the conservative manifesto. This might have been the outcome anyhow, as the Conservatives had 37 mandates in parliament, while the Christian Democrats and the Centre Party combined held 25 mandates. The

Conservative Party was obviously the key party in government, with the expected political payoffs.

Two types of measures in the Centre party manifesto were not translated into government policy; technology and regulation. The last one could be linked to the left/right dimension and a possible resistance from the Conservatives, but even the Conservatives emphasized eco-taxes as a measure. The research and technology part seems uncontroversial, but did anyhow not get into the coalition agreement.

*1997*

The shift to the right in politics since the 1980s (Huber and Inglehart 1995, 84-85) was not apparent in the Norwegian climate policy until later, for neither in 1989 nor in 1997 (Table 3) were any rightist measures against climate change proposed.

Table 3: The centrist government of 1997

Leftist measures	1	International CO <sub>2</sub> tax
Rightist measures	0	Not found
Other measures	5	International agreements; no gas power plants; energy conservation; new renewable energy; fund for research on renewable energy

The small centrist government of 1997 was headed by the Christian Democratic Party (KrF 1997), which in the electoral manifesto emphasized international agreements and rejection of gas power plants without new technology that would contribute to lower global carbon emissions. From the Centre Party (Sp 1997) manifesto, the government made use of pledges on energy conservation and renewable energy, and from the Liberal Party (Venstre 1997) manifesto, energy conservation and international agreements, hence both energy conservation and international agreements were found in two out of three electoral manifestos. The Centre Party and the Liberal Party emphasized domestic CO<sub>2</sub> taxes, but these pledges were changed into a proposal for an international CO<sub>2</sub> tax, thereby the leftist measure was scaled away from the national level. The centrist minority government might have attempted to soften national controversies by changing the scale of the only leftist measure, and were in addition very dependent on support from parties outside of the coalition to implement policies.

2001

In 2001, climate policy was still not very prominent in the coalition agreement, but the number of proposed measures was increasing and climate policy was given its own section in the environment and resource chapter. Rightist climate measures were introduced for the first time (cf. Table 4), most notably in the form of emissions trading, which was promoted in the electoral manifestos of all the coalition parties, the Conservative Party (Høyre 2001), the Christian Democratic Party (KrF 2001) and the Liberal Party (Venstre 2001).

Table 4: The centre-right government of 2001

Leftist measures	2	Only concessions for gas power plants with capture and storage of CO <sub>2</sub> ; the Snøhvit project pays a CO <sub>2</sub> tax
Rightist measures	2	Speed up a national emissions trading system; exemption from CO <sub>2</sub> tax to sectors in the emissions trading system
Other measures	4	Subsidize gas power plants with capture and storage of CO <sub>2</sub> ; increase grants to energy research; cooperation with industry on capture and storage of CO <sub>2</sub> ; green taxation

The emphasis also changed from renewable energy to gas power, and the technology development now focused on reducing emissions from gas power plants rather than to reject the construction of the plants. The increased grants to energy research fitted nicely into this shift, as well as subsidies and cooperation with industry. These aspects were especially highlighted in the manifesto of the Christian Democratic Party, and partly the Liberal Party. These parties had formerly opposed gas power plants, while the Conservative Party had the opposite view, and the governmental compromise was carbon capture and storage.

The Christian Democratic Party and the Liberal Party proposed active use of the CO<sub>2</sub> tax, while also adding that the CO<sub>2</sub> tax could be replaced by emissions trading. The coalition agreement hence included one leftist measure (taxation of a particular project) and one rightist measure (tax exemption for sectors under the emissions trading scheme). The inherently leftist tax proposal was modified into balanced policy.

The Conservative Party and the Liberal Party mentioned a need for the tax system to stimulate climate friendly behaviour, and the Christian Democratic Party supported the polluter pays principle. Green taxation was then probably easily integrated in the coalition agreement.

Also worth noting is the lack of international measures, contrary to the view that Norwegian climate policy turned international.

2005

Whereas former governments with a centre/right base had submitted coalition agreements where the percentage of leftist and rightist measures was reasonably balanced, policy took a turn to the left with the centre/left government in 2005 (Table 5). With a stable majority and no need for concessions to support parties, the centre/left position could be purebred to a greater extent. Still, the Labour Party, with its growth orientation, was by far the biggest party within the coalition, and hence had the most influence.

Public companies were given a much more prominent place in the climate policy, but one type of government involvement will nevertheless be categorized as rightist. The government's proposal “that the state takes part in financing the infrastructure for the transport of natural gas through a public company together with commercial players” (Norwegian Government 2005, 59), is reminiscent of public/private sector cooperation, which allows more room for private sector interests. Public/private sector cooperation has been promoted on the right, and as a kind of organization it “lies somewhere between traditional public procurement of goods and services and full scale privatization” (Grindheim 2011, 32).

Table 5: The centre-left government of 2005

Leftist measures	6	CO <sub>2</sub> tax rather than quotas in heavily taxed sectors; use of CO <sub>2</sub> tax in order to prevent gas power from out-performing renewable energy; public company for value chain for CO <sub>2</sub> ; research on gas power by public company; public company for use of gas in industry and transport; international carbon tax
Rightist measures	2	International emissions trading system; public-private sector cooperation on CO <sub>2</sub> transport
Other measure	8	International agreement; climate research; climate plans of action by sector; survey the need for climate change adaptation; subsidise carbon capture; gas power concessions are maintained; increased capacity for reception of gas; efficiency improvements, electrification and carbon capture on the Norwegian continental shelf

The new government prolonged the emphasis on gas power as a climate solution, and renewable energy was also indirectly backed in the use of CO2 tax to avoid gas power from outperforming renewable energy. Half of all the measures were related to gas power and carbon capture and storage. In the electoral manifestos, all the coalition partners had emphasized these solutions. The heavy emphasis on state actions on gas power was the most important reason for the left turn, even though public-private cooperation is considered rightist.

Some conflict arose along the left/right dimension, as the most leftist party, the Socialist Left Party (SV 2005) expressed scepticism towards carbon trading in its manifesto, while the Labour Party (Ap 2005) and the Centre Party (Sp 2005) actively promoted the trade. The coalition agreement hence supported an international trading system, possibly of the same reasons as the 2001 government scaled the CO2 tax to the international level.

The international CO2 tax was also included in the 2005 agreement, even though none of the parties actively promoted it in their manifestos. On the other hand, both the Socialist Left Party and the Centre Party promoted an international charge on transport, which in the coalition agreement was somewhat generalized into an international tax. There seems to be a tendency in which clearly leftist and rightist measures are removed from the domestic domain, in line with an expectation of a government paying attention to the parliamentary center (Warwick 2001: 1234). International measures were back in the agreement.

### *2009*

In 2009, the government could present an agreement where the number of proposed climate measures had rapidly increased (cf. Table 6), but at the same time more of the measures had a vague character. Some measures are difficult to categorize because they are vaguely formulated, e.g. “that the Pollution Control Act shall continue to be an important policy instrument in climate and environmental effort” (Norwegian Government 2009, 51). It could have been regarded as maintaining regulations and hence leftist, but it is not specified how the act shall be enforced, and Knutsen (1997, 257) highlighted the rightist character of “the consideration of pollution as a law-and-order issue”. Another proposal closer to the left is to “actively use the Norwegian Planning and Building Act to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases from the transport and building sector” (Norwegian Government 2009, 51), because the latter specifies the intention of how the act shall be used in a way making it logical to interpret the proposal as a tightening of the requirements in the Planning and Building Act and hence increased regulation, which is left-leaning.

On the left side of climate policy, the Labour Party (Ap 2009) emphasized an international carbon tax in the electoral manifesto, the Centre Party (Sp 2009) proposed climate charges on international transport, and the Socialist Left Party (SV 2009) saw an international carbon tax as an alternative to emissions trading. In government, the Labour Party proposal was agreed upon as common policy, while the support for a rightist measure as emissions trading was somewhat downplayed. The Labour Party wanted aviation included in a global climate regime, and the government policy reflected this in support for emissions trading for Norwegian aviation, even though the Socialist Left Party emphasized an extra domestic tax on aviation and the Centre Party a global aviation tax. The tax proposal was not only scaled up to the international level, but also replaced by emissions trading.

Table 6: The centre-left government of 2009

Leftist measures	6	International carbon tax; public companies take the lead in low emissions and technological development; advertising-free schools, use of the Planning and Building Act; public company with performance objectives for bioenergy; requirements for carbon capture in all new gas power concessions
Rightist measures	1	Include Norwegian aviation in international emission trading
Other measure	20	Follow up White paper on agriculture and food policy and assess policy instruments for biogas; increase climate research; international agreement; international forest conservation; change of name to the Norwegian Climate and Pollution Agency; the Pollution Control Act still important; greenhouse emissions in budgets; plan of action for climate adaptation; upgrade and develop hydropower; improve knowledge about consumption; increased funding of energy research; district heating; plan for energy economising; wood as a construction material; support energy efficiency; household volunteer effort for energy economising; incinerate residual waste in Norway; follow up bioenergy strategy; international acceptance for carbon capture



One of the most significant leftist measures linked to climate change in the coalition agreement was to keep advertising out of schools in order to protect children and adolescents from marketing pressure and to highlight the relationship between consumption and the climate. All of the coalition parties focused on the measure in their manifestos, but none of them linked it explicitly to climate change before it was translated into government policy.

Another point about the 2009 agreement is a shift back to more emphasis on renewable energy and less on gas power, while energy conservation was highlighted much more often than before. This can be interpreted as signs of influence from the more conservationist parties, especially the Centre Party, which mentioned the word “renewable” 44 times in the manifesto, and the Socialist Left Party with 22 times, compared to only seven in the Labour manifesto.

### *2013*

When the Conservative Party and the Progress Party formed a government with the support of the Liberal Party and the Christian Democratic Party in 2013, a balance between rightist and leftist measures was restored (Table 7). It is interesting to note that the most right-leaning government is the one that proposed a specific ban in an agreement, namely a ban on the use of fossil oil in the heating of buildings starting in 2020 (Norwegian Government 2013, 61). The public company Enova's support scheme for the conversion of oil heating was supposed to be strengthened in order to achieve this, but even though other governments' active use of public companies has been categorized as leftist, this proposal is not regarded as a leftist policy because the support scheme most resembles subsidies.

Almost all of the climate measures in the coalition agreement are taken directly from the electoral manifesto of the Conservative Party (Høyre 2013), while some of the measures were actively opposed in the manifesto of the Progress Party (Frp 2013), which only supported international agreements and research on energy and technology. The junior partner of the coalition rejected any increase in taxes and charges or any ban, injunction, restriction and other public intervention due to climate change, but had to accept the Conservative climate policy in government. The Progress Party has been the only party to question anthropogenic climate change, and was the only party that voted against Norwegian ratification of the Kyoto protocol (Gullberg 2009). The position of the Progress Party might have been too far from the other parties; hence to join a government coalition, the common climate policy had to be far from the stance of the party. In addition, the need for concessions to the centrist support parties, in line with Warwick (2001, 1234), is another factor pulling the

climate policy away from the position of the Progress Party. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the climate policy of the Progress Party manifesto was quite close to how Norwegian climate policy had been conducted over the last decades (Wernersen 2013), so the differences between the Progress Party and the others might have been exaggerated in the rhetoric.

Table 7: The rightist government of 2013

Leftist measures	4	Phase out oil heating in public buildings by 2018; ban oil heating of all buildings from 2020; requirements that public sector vehicles utilise technology to reduce emissions; public sector shall choose climate friendly technologies and solutions
Rightist measures	4	International carbon markets; continued tax benefits for zero-emission vehicles; continued exemption from road user charges for alternative fuel; tax exemption for energy conservation in households
Other measure	15	Public transport; green tax commission; forest management; international agreement; invest in research and technology; international forest conservation; increase return from environmental technology fund; development of carbon capture; use of vehicle and fuel taxes for environment friendly fleets of vehicles; support of phasing out of oil heating; electrification of harbours; White paper on energy; strengthened research on renewable energy; research expertise on climate in the polar areas; study salvage payment on scrapping of Norwegian ships

**Discussion**

As climate change has been given increased attention and the issue has matured in politics, more and more proposals in the coalition agreements have been related to the climate. At the same time, it is worth noting that the agreements as such also have increased in scope during this period of time so that more issues than just the climate have been discussed more thoroughly. Overall, the six agreements include 83 explicit climate measures, 54 of which are

neither leftist nor rightist, which accounts for 65 per cent of the measures. The pattern of a majority of the measures not being leftist or rightist is found in all of the agreements, and may be a result of the consensus approach in preference-accommodation (Carter 2006), which may also lie behind the broad climate agreements in the Storting. In keeping with the idea that environmental concern is a valence issue, the governments rarely put forward controversial proposals for measures, and therefore avoid making climate policy a conflict between the left and the right. Both left- and right-dominated governments support state regulations on the one hand and emission trading on the other, but we also see a tendency for potential controversial issues being scaled up to the international level. The internationalization of Norwegian climate politics (Hovden and Lindseth 2002) does not prevent the clear majority of the proposals to be domestic measures.

This review shows that the governments have proposed 20 leftist climate measures as opposed to nine rightist measures. Thus, it may seem as if climate policy is more often leftist policy with regulations and interventions, but that does not mean that only leftist parties may support the policies, as expected by Carter (2006, 751). Even though the left/right political dimension has not assimilated the climate issue, there are both leftist and rightist approaches. The concept that environmental considerations, and hence also climate considerations, must necessarily be leftist is not supported, but more measures on the left than on the right may indicate that climate policy is more easily incorporated within a leftist approach.

Thomassen (1999, 54) expected that the left/right political dimension would assimilate other dimensions, and Knutsen (1997, 258) supported the idea that environmental issues were part of an updated left/right dimension. The trend is not so clear at the governmental level, and although the number of leftist and rightist climate measures has increased, the percentage of these among all of the climate measures has remained reasonably stable. Thus, the main focus is not on controversial measures, for as a valence issue, the climate policy of the different governments serves to a great extent as a preference-accommodation and is “about who best can implement a generally accepted policy” (Bjørklund and Saglie 2002, 9). The broad climate agreements help amplifying this trend and lessen the politicisation of climate change, but the noted tendency of government policies being influenced by the preceding government (Warwick 2001) may play a role, also in explaining centre/left governments supporting rightist measures and centre/right and right governments supporting leftist measures.

The parties’ desire to incorporate environmental issues into their traditional policies (Aardal 1993, 165–166) is apparent when the left promotes regulations and state ownership,

while the right chooses market solutions. Yet this picture is scarcely so black and white that the parties only support solutions in line with their core issues, and even less so in the case of a negotiated coalition agreement or of governments that only have a minority behind them in the Storting with the resultant need to give consideration to the wishes of parties that are not included in their own parliamentary base. Whereas all of the other governments propose a reasonably balanced number of leftist and rightist climate measures, there was a preponderance of leftist measures in the centre/left governments of 2005 and 2009. One possibility is that the preponderance is an effect of leftist governments being more inclined to relate climate measures to their leftist profile, but it is important to highlight that this was the only governments in the data material with a solid majority behind them in the Storting, so they did not have to constantly take into consideration any partners outside the government, and hence the coalition could pursue their own profile to a greater extent. However, there are also rightist measures in their agreements, so this may challenge Ware (1996) and Carter's (2006) view of environmental protection as a leftist issue in politics. Market-based environmental protection in the form of an emission trading system has also won acceptance on the left. The study finds that leftist, centrist and rightist governments have all taken the climate into consideration. An argument that environmental protection may be more easily incorporated on the left is supported, however, by the fact that the number of proposed climate measures increases for each government up to the purely rightist government of 2013, but on the other hand the decline is not dramatic, and the 2013 government is still the one that has proposed the second largest number of climate measures in its agreement. Substantially, the profile of the pure rightist government is not very deviant from the others in what is actually proposed.

The environmental movement's slogan "neither to the left nor the right" may be echoed in the fact that most of the proposed climate measures do not have a clear leftist or rightist orientation. Different governments propose efforts in support of research, technology and international agreements, and it is within these issues that the greatest proportion of measures is found. Although the Conservative Party and Progress Party government of 2013 also proposes banning as a policy instrument, some of the differences still entail the degree of state involvement, and to a much greater extent than in the conflict between economic growth and ecological conservation. The Norwegian consensus attitude that growth and conservation may be combined is one of the reasons why the growth/conservation dimension appears to be so weak that it is not clearly expressed in the data material. A weak growth/conservation

dimension is also related to the fact that the governments include, or are dependent on, support from both growth and conservation parties.

The lack of a parliamentary majority and the dependence on support from more conservation-oriented centrist parties may also serve as an explanation for why the Conservative Party and Progress Party government does not stress growth at the expense of conservation to a greater extent, which could have found expression in their approach to climate change. This concession to support parties is in line with expectations from Warwick (2001).

Twenty years after Rohrschneider (1993, 160) concluded that the environmental movement confused European party systems by asking questions challenging premises that all of the parties shared, it appears as if the coalitions have gotten over that confusion and rejected the questions. Climate policy is about to become a more traditional political issue within established cleavages rather than creating new cleavages. Leftist and rightist policies are not mutually exclusive categories either in the sense that a government can promote policies from both categories, and proposals for political solutions can be spread across the dominant cleavage. It is well accommodated with an expectation that climate policy is to be a valence issue.

## **Conclusion**

The findings indicate that the left/right political dimension is downplayed in the coalition agreements of governments that do not have a solid majority and that the expectations regarding the left/right dimension's assimilation of climate change as a new political issue are not so prominent at the governmental level. The need for concessions to support parties and a tendency for government policy being influenced by the previous government, may serve, at least partly, as explanations. All governments have either to include or to be supported by the dominating growth parties, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, which could contribute to the continuity from government to government. Another point is that the governments seem to prefer to translate leftist and rightist domestic measures in the electoral manifestos to international measures in the coalition agreements, even though domestic measures dominate numerically.

The study also shows that Norwegian coalition agreements increasingly pay attention to climate policy and include more and more specific measures for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. One explanation may be that climate change has become a more important

political issue, but also that the scope of the agreements measured in the number of pages has become steadily more extensive. As expressed in the coalition agreements, the dominant left/right dimension has only assimilated climate policy to a limited extent, but the number of leftist and rightist climate measures has increased in step with the general increase in the number of proposed measures rather than occupying more and more space in the climate sections.

Norwegian climate policy involves a high degree of consensus so that governments at different points on the left/right dimension agree about many measures, especially with regard to research, technology and international efforts. These are measures that in this study's framework lie outside of the categories of leftist and rightist. If the coalitions are based on centrist, centre/right or only rightist parties, that does not entail significant changes in the percentage of leftist or rightist measures, whereas there is a clear preponderance of leftist measures in the centre/left governments. The explanation for this is probably more that these were the two governments that had a solid majority in the Storting rather than that the left is better at incorporating climate considerations into its agreements. That means that the study does not inherently provide weighty arguments in support of the idea that environmental protection is left-oriented. There are climate measures on both the left and the right, but the majority of the proposed measures are neither leftist nor rightist, and much of the coalition agreements' climate policy is to be regarded consensus oriented.

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## ESSAY 4:

# More than Markets

## *A Comparative Study of Nine Conservative Parties on Climate Change*

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Cross-national comparisons of proposed policies of individual parties are an underdeveloped part of the literature on environmental politics in general and climate politics in particular. Although conservative parties are portrayed as skeptical toward adopting climate measures or even supposed to ignore climate change, this study of nine conservative electoral manifestos nevertheless finds that most of them support climate measures, even in the form of state interventions in the market economy. Market measures are not as dominating as could be expected, but a clear finding is that available fossil reserves seem to have an influence on conservative climate politics. The U.S. Republican Party is an anomaly in denying anthropogenic climate change. Conservative parties as such are not in opposition to climate policies, but the pro-business position is evident in that conservative parties do not challenge coal or petroleum in countries with large reserves of these resources.

### **Introduction**

Climate change has emerged as the most prominent contemporary environmental issue with massive consequences, ecologically and economically, as well as politically. All political parties have to react to the issue of climate change, and their reactions are likely to reflect their ideological background. In the literature, conservative ideology is often portrayed as a hindrance against adopting environmental measures (Fielding *et al.* 2012; Carter 2007; Dunlap, Xiao, and McCright 2001; Ware 1996; Gray 1993), while another expectation is that the parties link climate change to their existing core issues (Giddens 2009), and hence conservative parties, if adopting climate measures, would favor market-based solutions in line with free market environmentalism. In addition, the pro-business position of conservative

parties makes it relevant to see their climate policies in light of the country's reserves of fossil resources, assuming that vast reserves would make the conservatives more skeptical towards climate measures.

The literature on environmental politics and climate change has, so far, lacked a substantial cross-national comparison of the proposed measures of individual political parties within the same party family. Studies have counted the mentioning of environmental issues in electoral manifestoes, both within a single country (Carter 2006) and cross-nationally (Carter 2013), linked countries' environmental performances to the political parties in parliament and government (Jahn 1998), or investigated attitudes toward climate change among politicians of different parties within the same country (Dunlap, Xiao, and McCright 2001; Fielding *et al.* 2012). Less attention has been devoted to the concrete measures proposed in the electoral manifestos and the commonalities on proposed climate policies within the same party families cross-nationally have not been specifically investigated, and hence this study is a starting point highlighting the similarities in the family of conservative parties' approach to the issue of climate change.

In this article, the manifestos of nine conservative parties are investigated to address two questions. First, to what extent do conservative parties treat climate change as a serious issue? And second, is it possible to find a common conservative approach to the issue of climate change based on the measures proposed in the manifestos? The study starts by summarizing the literature before turning to expectations for conservative climate policies. Especially, there is an expectation that conservative parties under the influence of neo-liberalism will emphasize market-based solutions to the issue of climate change, and be skeptical to state interventions.

### **Conservative Parties and the Climate**

Conservatives are accused for being, in general, critical of environmentalism (Carter 2007, 67; Gray 1993, 123; Feygina, Jost, and Goldsmith 2009, 332; Fielding *et al.* 2012).

Conservative parties have also been influenced by neo-liberalism, "an ideology which legitimates individual competition and questions collective structures" (Amable 2011, 7) and an ideology that highlights "core elements of conservatism, such as the primacy of individual freedom, private property rights, laissez-faire government, and promotion of free enterprise" (McCright and Dunlap 2000, 504). Studying politicization of the environment in the United Kingdom, Carter (2006, 761-2) argues that "the neoliberal ideology of the contemporary

Conservative Party would sit uncomfortably alongside any strong environmental protection program that would inevitably contain proposals for both new regulations and eco-taxes.”

Aversions against governmental intervention and ties to business and industry interests have created differences between environmentalists and the conservative right, as businesses attempt to avoid costly environmental reforms (Grendstad *et al.* 2006, 65). The Republican Party, representing conservatives in the United States, are given a threefold argument for being less prone to support environmental measures, and the argument could be extended to conservative parties beyond the American context:

(1) a more pro-business orientation; (2) a greater opposition to the extension of governmental activities and regulations; and (3) a less innovative and more cautious posture concerning attempts to ameliorate societal problems (Dunlap and Gale 1974, 675).

Heath and Gifford (2006, 48) give a noteworthy empirical example in the finding that “effects of support for free-market ideology and environmental apathy were investigated to identify some bases for not believing in global climate change.” The goals of less state intervention and conservation of the *status quo* are thought to act together as hindrances against an ambitious environmental policy in general and climate policy in particular. This is so to the extent that conservatives might reject the whole need for a climate policy, as in the systematic undermining of environmental science, “questioning whether human activities drive climate change while also arguing that any action to curb it will lead to dire economic consequences” (Nisbet 2009, 18). Consequently, there seems to be a cleavage between conservation of ecology and conservation of the economy, in which the economy will be prioritized. The importance of conservative think tanks in questioning climate science, is also highlighted by Beder (2001) and Jacques, Dunlap, and Freeman (2009, 352), the latter pointing to a fear of environmentalism being in opposition to social and economic progress.

When acknowledging anthropogenic climate change as a problem, conservative parties would be expected to choose market-based measures. Free market environmentalism (Anderson and Leal 2001) and the “growing influence of neoliberal approaches to environmental governance” (Bailey and Maresh 2009, 445) could be in line with a modern conservative response to climate change. Giddens (2009, 49-50) notes that as a result of the “bandwagon effect,” climate change could be utilized as an argument for parties’ established policies; and Beder (2001, 31) argues that market instruments inhibit an acceptance of “the

conservative definition of the problem,” namely “a failure of the market to attach a price to environmental goods and services”. Still, not all conservatives agree on free markets as a solution to environmental problems. “Even conservative thinkers who support free enterprise and free trade find themselves uncomfortable with the idea of letting unfettered markets determine how and when natural resources are used” (Anderson and Leal 2001, 1). Market solutions contain ways of making markets environmentally friendly, beyond simply via letting the markets decide, while still being an alternative to government regulation. For instance, free market environmentalism may be manifested by “instituting a legal system of rights which can be modified by transactions on the market” (Coase 1960, 17). Market solutions are in opposition to taxation and regulation. And so “[t]he correction of market failure could be achieved without recourse to the use of external cost-internalizing taxes,” argue Ellerman, Convery, and de Perthuis (2010, 13), while Stephan and Paterson (2012, 547) view carbon markets “in light of the rapidly increasing power of financial actors to shape policy in their interests.”

Anderson and Leal (2001, 4) claim that rightist free market environmentalism “emphasizes the positive incentives associated with prices, profits, and entrepreneurship,” while a leftist political environmentalism “emphasizes negative incentives associated with regulation and taxes.” Conversely, Nilsson, Borgstede, and Biel (2004, 267) treat taxes and subsidies as “market driven instruments.” I argue, however, that these measures are interfering with free markets more than they are facilitating, and hence are forms of state intervention in the economy. State interventions should be differentiated from the radical idea of a planned economy to the more moderate approach surrounding the government imposing regulations on privately owned enterprises (McDonald, Mendes, and Kim 2007, 64). Given this, it might be appropriate to view climate politics via a left/right dimension: a continuum that spans government bans or the nationalization of businesses on the far left, through government regulation and taxation, to market-based solutions (like emissions trading schemes) on the right, with resistance against interference with free markets at the far right. I utilize this left/right dimensional framework in the following cross-national investigation concerning the proposed climate measures of nine conservative electoral manifestos to see how far it assists the identification of key similarities and differences in their approaches to climate change. In doing so, the following analysis aims to shed additional light on how the conservative parties intend to utilize markets in their policies on climate change, identify the extent to which regulations are seen as necessary fettering mechanisms, or ascertain if conservative parties expect the markets to solve much of the issue by themselves. One

expectation based on Thomassen’s (1999, 54) arguments is that the left-right dimension—from state-centered to market-centered—will absorb other conflict dimensions, including the relatively new issue of climate change, and hence conservative parties are more likely to prefer a rightist climate policy facilitating free markets and restricting the use of state regulations.

**Research Design and Data**

Nine conservative party manifestos, presented in Table 1, are investigated.

Table 1. Conservative Parties and Manifestos Included in the Study

Party name	Country	Manifesto adopted	Pages of manifesto
Conservative Party	United Kingdom	2010	131
Høyre	Norway	2013	108
Moderaterna	Sweden	2007	45
Partido Popular	Spain	2011	214
Republican Party	United States	2012	62
Conservative Party	Canada	2011	67
National Party	New Zealand	2014	284
Christlich Demokratische Union	Germany	2007	67
Liberal Party	Australia	2013	52

*Choice of parties*

There are several reasons for the choice of parties, as well as electoral manifestos to be used as data sources on conservative climate policies. Challenges confront any grouping of parties in families across borders, but common strategies in the existing literature involve basing the selection on membership in transnational federations, party name, origin and sociology, policy, and/or ideology (see Mair and Mudde 1998). This analysis makes ample use of most of these criteria.

One reason underpinning the selection concerns transnational federation membership. All the parties in the study are full members of the International Democrat Union (IDU 2015), an organization labeled “conservative” by, among others, Mair and Mudde (1998, 217) and Scott (1999, 148), as well as “neo-liberal” by Mudge (2008, 716). In addition, with the exception of the Spanish and Swedish parties, all European parties are members of the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists, while the four selected parties from the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are all regional partners of the conservative alliance (AECR 2015). The Spanish and Swedish parties are members of another center-right alliance, the European People’s Party, which is originally Christian Democratic,

but “increasingly conservative” (Ladrech 2002, 399), while the German party is member of the Alliance of European Conservatives and Reformists as well as the European People’s Party (EPP 2015).

Regarding name, although all parties selected clearly hold a right or center-right ideology, only two of the selected parties contain the term “conservative” in the party name: the Conservative Party of the United Kingdom and the Conservative Party of Canada; the Norwegian Høyre (literally “right”) itself uses the name Conservative Party in English (Høyre 2013).

On the origin and policy selection criteria, all the included parties in this study are the dominant center-right party in their respective party systems. It is important to bear in mind that Christian democratic or other center-right parties in countries without a prominent conservative party may occupy much of the same space in the political landscape as a conservative party. “Conservatives,” according to Ware (1996, 32), “have involved themselves in other parties of the center and the right, forcing them to keep many of their policy positions within bounds acceptable to Conservatives.” The Liberal Party of Australia, the National Party of New Zealand, the Republican Party of the United States, and the CDU of Germany are all expected to play a similar political role as explicitly conservative parties.

Another, more practically oriented, criterion for the party selection is the need for an available electoral manifesto comparable to the others. It would, for example, have been interesting to include the South Korean Saenuri Party in the study, as the party is a full member of the IDU (2015), but the only available manifesto is too short for sufficiently detailed analysis, consisting of ten principal pledges rather than a full political program (Saenuri Party 2015).

Conservative parties operate in different environments with regard to party systems and political cultures, as well as popular opinions on the issue of climate change (Kvaløy, Finseraas, and Listhaug 2012). As such, the conservative electoral manifestos might be influenced by the acts and manifestos of their main opponents on climate change, the strength of the environmental movement, and the political opportunity structure, including the electoral system, as well as if the parties have been in government while adopting the manifesto. It is tempting to include national contexts, as well as analyses of each individual conservative party, but in the present study this is done only briefly as my main comparative goal is to explore the extent of commonalities between conservative parties despite their differing historical backgrounds and national contexts. Since it is expected that opposition parties will have greater incentives to strengthen environmental policies (Carter 2006), it is



worth noting that the conservative parties of Sweden, Canada, Germany, and New Zealand were in government while adopting the manifestos. Further, acknowledging the importance of the business sector and that a country’s approach to climate politics is influenced by available natural resources (Fisher 2006), Table 2 presents data on the fossil reserves in the countries included in the study. The expectation is that conservative parties in countries with vast fossil reserves will be less prone to adopt radical climate policies, making the Swedish party the least challenged by national interests, with the U.S. party at the other extreme.

Table 2. Fossil Reserves

Country	Oil reserves	Gas reserves	Coal reserves
United Kingdom	3,1	8,7	228
Norway	7,5	73,8	-
Sweden	-	-	-
Spain	-	-	530
United States	35,0	300,0	237295
Canada	173,9	70,0	6582
New Zealand	-	-	571
Germany	-	2,0	40699
Australia	3,9	132,8	76400

*Oil reserves: Thousand million barrels at end of 2012 (BP 2013, 6)*

*Gas reserves: Trillion cubic feet at end of 2012 (BP 2013, 20)*

*Coal reserves: Million tons at end of 2012 (BP 2013, 30)*

The parties have certain differences in their established policies and how they approach free markets and environmental protection in general. Data from the Comparative Manifesto Project (Volkens *et al.* 2014, see Table 3) sums up how often the parties state support for, among other variables, a free market economy and environmental protection in their electoral manifestos. According to these data, the Norwegian party is clearly most concerned with free markets, followed by the U.S. Republican Party, while the Swedish party is most devoted to environmental protection. The UK and Canadian parties are seemingly the least interested in free markets, while the New Zealand party does not promote any environmental protection. Here it must be noted that the most recent manifesto in the Comparative Data Project is not necessarily the same as the manifesto included in this study, but Table 3 still indicates some of what to expect from the different parties. While the Comparative Data Project treats environmental politics in a quantitative manner, the current study is qualitatively oriented, aiming at deeper clarity on the concrete political measures. Beyond climate skepticism, the question is not primarily “for or against” climate measures as

such, but what kinds of measures are supported, and to grasp that aspect, a qualitative approach is preferable.

Table 3. Manifesto Data

Party	Country	Free market economy (1)		Environmental protection (2)	
		Frequency	Share	Frequency	Share
Conservative Party	United Kingdom	7	0,6	58	5,2
Høyre	Norway	179	11,0	80	4,9
Moderaterna	Sweden	31	1,6	193	10,2
Partido Popular	Spain	33	1,7	43	2,2
Republican Party	United States	98	5,9	7	0,4
Conservative Party	Canada	6	0,6	50	5,4
National Party	New Zealand	5	4,2	0	0,0
CDU	Germany	51	2,0	125	4,9
Liberal Party	Australia	6	1,0	12	2,0

(1): Favorable mentions of the free market and free market capitalism as an economic model.

(2): General policies in favor of protecting the environment, fighting climate change, and other “green” policies.

### *The Investigation of Party Manifestos*

The electoral manifestos were chosen as the focus of this research because they represent a collective will of the parties, and are stable documents meant to endure for several years. “If one wants to study party policy, and not the policies advocated by internal factions or individuals inside the party, one has to study the manifesto, platform or election program,” argues Ian Budge (2001, 211). Even though the processes behind the adoption of manifestos might vary from party to party, and these processes have received scant attention within political science (Dolezal *et al.* 2012), there are clear indications highlighting the importance of the final manifestos. Based on an investigation of parties in 25 countries, including all the nine countries in this study, Walgrave and Nuytemans (2009, 191) conclude that the electoral manifestos matter for budgeting and legislation, and hence are relevant study objects. The platforms of the U.S. parties are also found to be influential and “a signal of a unified party brand and the product of intraparty compromise” (Simas and Evans 2011, 834). In addition, and in spite of contextual factors influencing the manifesto process, conservative parties are

found to “stick to their programs and hardly change them at all” (Walgrave and Nuytemans 2009, 201).

Analysis of the electoral manifestos was geared toward searching for, and identifying, what kinds of measures on climate change, if any, are proposed. To be considered a climate measure the party must itself link the proposal directly to the issue of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, either by mentioning the measure in the same paragraph as concerns for the climate, or by including the measure in a section or chapter devoted to climate politics. The following example is illustrative: the Norwegian Conservative Party supports less waste production and more recycling (Høyre 2013, 59), measures that certainly have the potential of reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Eneh and Oluigbo 2012), but as the measure is presented without any explicit linkage to climate change, it is not counted in this study as a climate measure. The important rationale behind this is to identify how the parties themselves define what they consider a climate measure, which in itself is instructive. In this case, the vagueness of the measure (less waste production) is not a valid reason for excluding it, as this analysis includes measures spanning from vague and general to specific and detailed.

The data includes the most recent electoral manifestos downloaded from the parties' own websites. Six manifestos are originally in English (CDU 2008; CP-UK 2010; CP-C 2011; Republican Party 2012, Liberal Party 2013; National Party 2014a), one manifesto is only available in Swedish (Moderaterna 2007) so quotations have been translated to English by the author of this article, one is translated to English by the party itself (Høyre 2013), and one is available in Spanish (PP 2011) and has been translated into English. The manifestos differ in how encompassing they are; from the 45 page manifesto of the Swedish party to the 284-page New Zealand manifesto, but all still represent the best expressions of the parties' intentions.

### **Empirical Analysis**

The electoral manifestos are investigated in order to answer two questions: Do conservative parties express trust in the concept of anthropogenic climate change cross-nationally, and when they recognize a need for reduced greenhouse gas emissions, will they propose measures in line with free market environmentalism? The climate measures of each manifesto are categorized within the framework of the left/right dimension highlighted earlier, from planned economy and regulations to market solutions and unfettered free markets. The results are interpreted in light of available fossil reserves in the respective countries.

*United States: Republican Party*

The manifesto of the Republican Party (2012, 40) criticizes the Democratic Obama administration for taking climate change too seriously by treating it as a “severe threat” and mentioning it too frequently in the National Security Strategy. The Republican Party is highly critical against new legislation aimed at reducing emissions relevant to climate change:

We also call on Congress to take quick action to prohibit the EPA from moving forward with new greenhouse gas regulations that will harm the nation’s economy and threaten millions of jobs over the next quarter century (Republican Party 2012, 19).

Following the critical approach to climate politics, the party does not promote new measures. Quite the contrary, the party opposes emissions trading in the form of cap and trade legislation (Republican Party 2012, 16) without referring explicitly to climate change. The party seems to treat climate change as a nonissue, and hence skirts the need for any measures, either based on state or market initiatives. This appears to be consistent with the United States’ national context as a country with large reserves of coal.

*Sweden: Moderaterna*

“Researchers and academics might discuss the details, but there is a near-consensus that humanity affects the environment. It is acknowledged that man can do something about the problems, but it takes serious effort to achieve the results,” claims Moderaterna (2007, 7). The party stresses the necessity of international cooperation and binding treaties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with the European Union and emissions trading as essentials.

The world's ability to tackle climate change is determined by whether the world's countries are able to enter into mutually binding agreements for tough emission reductions. Many of the basic measures must be decided at the European level. Trading with emissions permits remains the main weapon against greenhouse gases. Swedish companies are to make cost-effective carbon reductions in countries outside Europe and be credited with the investments in their national commitments (Moderaterna 2007, 7).

Other relevant measures are research and development of nuclear energy and alternative energy sources (Moderaterna 2007, 6), and export of zero emission energy (2007,

7). The party appears to support market-based measures, and promotes no new regulations beyond the international cooperation facilitating carbon trading.

*Canada: The Conservative Party*

“Unlike the previous Liberal government—which signed grand international accords but took no action—our Government has a climate change plan, and it is working,” claims the Conservative Party of Canada (CP-C 2011, 40). The manifesto lists environmental measures put forward by the government, including several measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and then states: “We will build on these major accomplishments to conserve and protect our environment” (CP-C 2011, 41).

One point to highlight here is that the manifesto presents both past and future measures on climate change. The past measures are regulations on electricity production, research and development on clean energy (including carbon capture and storage), and international cooperation and agreements including support for adaptation in developing countries. Another worth emphasizing is that the party proposes new measures: from energy efficiency in homes to more research and development of clean energy, in order to replace fossil fuel with renewable energy, including a major hydro-electric project (CP-C 2011, 40-1). Therefore, the Canadian reserves of oil, gas, and coal do not hinder the party from proposing a transition away from fossil fuels.

Some regulations are deemed necessary, but on the whole more emphasis is placed on developing new technologies than on forcing market actors to utilize them. Still, the party proposes regulation rather than market measures and carbon trading.

*United Kingdom: Conservative Party*

The British Conservative Party emphasizes that “the low carbon economy also provides exciting opportunities for British businesses” and will be “creating jobs and new businesses across the country” (CP-UK 2010, 31). A stated goal is to “increase our share of global markets for low carbon technologies,” and the Labor Party is accused for having “said the right things on climate change, but these have proved little more than warm words” (CP-UK 2010, 31). The party outlines a vision for a low carbon economy with electric cars, high-speed trains, renewable energy, and green jobs (CP-UK 2010, 89). Markets are certainly a part of the solution, according to the British party:

Instead of using rules and regulations to impose a centralised worldview, we will go with the grain of human nature, creating new incentives and market signals which reward people for doing the right thing. Instead of pulling bureaucratic levers from above telling people what they can't do, we will provide people with the information they need to make more responsible choices (CP-UK 2010, 89).

To combat climate change, the UK party proposes to establish a Green Investment Bank and a floor price on carbon to stimulate low carbon energy production, and increase the proportion of tax revenues from eco-taxes (CP-UK 2010, 31). The party supports an ambitious international agreement on reduced emissions and the funding of adaptation and mitigation regulation in the form of a standard on emissions from energy production. It also supports new nuclear power plants, carbon capture and storage from coal plants, several incentives for wind power and district heating, and government support for energy efficiency measures in homes (2010, 91-3). It is worth underlining the links between the intention of cleaner energy from coal and the national context of British coal reserves. Better railways are also promoted to “encourage people to switch to lower carbon public transport” (2010, 23), and the adaptation to climate change includes not only international measures, but domestic propositions for “new green spaces and wildlife corridors” (2010, 96), as well as flood defense (2010, 98).

The British Conservative Party thus speaks against regulations, while at the same time proposing new regulations. Notably, the manifesto does not include concrete market measures on climate change, but markets are clearly considered to be part of the solution. This can be interpreted as a support for a “markets as they are” approach, and indicates that the party sees no acute need for the extension of markets.

#### *Norway: Høyre*

According to Høyre (2013, 59), “climate change will probably be the greatest single challenge facing the global community in the next few decades,” and the party promotes preventive action even in the face of uncertainties about the full impact of climatic changes. Høyre thus claims that the party wants “Norway to take responsibility for the lives and livelihoods of future generations.”

The electoral manifesto of Høyre includes many measures on the issue of climate change. First, there are a plethora of international measures stating that the party will work for

an international climate treaty, and reduce emissions through the EU emissions trading system (Høyre 2013, 59). Second, several research and technology measures are mentioned, from research on climate change to the development of renewable energy such as geothermal energy, energy efficiency, and the fossil-based technology of carbon capture and storage, as well as grants to the Environmental Technology Fund (Høyre 2013, 60). Forests are also intended to be utilized in carbon storage (Høyre 2013, 60). The third set of measures involves tax policies. Reduced road tax for cars with lesser emissions is proposed, as is utilizing environmental taxes and duties to make polluters pay and stimulate green consumer habits, plus increasing the excise duty on mineral oil (Høyre 2013, 60). The fourth set relates to facilitating low emission transport, from bicycle lanes to large-scale public transport projects, with environmental requirements to procurements (Høyre 2013, 60). The fifth set involves regulations directly, from fuel-efficiency requirements via mandatory zero-emission vehicles in public sector to a ban on crude oil for heating (Høyre 2013, 60). Høyre is among those conservative parties most prone to supporting state regulations, taxations, and interventions into the market economy, while also emphasizing carbon trading. The support for carbon capture and storage is likely linked to Norway's reserves of oil and gas.

*Spain: Partido Popular*

“We consider energy efficiency to be a remedy in the fight against climate change, taking into account that it is also a key to economic recovery, energy security and job creation” (PP 2011, 131). The party promotes a sustainable, low carbon economy with arguments for not only “new sources of employment” but also to “improve the quality of life for Spaniards” (PP 2011, 132).

The Spanish conservatives emphasize sustainable and efficient transport, energy efficiency, forests as carbon sinks, and a global agreement on the issue (PP 2011, 132-3). Carbon markets are mentioned, but only in a descriptive way:

We are the country in the European Union which recedes the most from the fulfillment of the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the country that has to purchase most tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in the market of emissions. The steps towards energy saving and efficiency has been improved, but with scarce results, and nothing has yet been done to actuate forest policies and its effect as carbon sink (PP 2011, 131).

Emission trading is viewed as a measure Spain is forced to take part in due to lack of working measures to reduce emissions. The party does present quite vague measures not easily categorized within a left/right dimension, and does not challenge the coal industry in a country with significant coal reserves.

*Germany: Christlich Demokratische Union*

In the section entitled “Creation under threat,” CDU points out that “climate change threatens the very foundations of our existence and the chances of development of the next generations” (CDU 2008, 13). The party promotes energy research and new innovative energy technologies, which also include “clean coal” and research on nuclear fusion (CDU 2008, 49). In addition, “maintaining the existing scientific, technological and security competencies in Germany” is important for the party’s support for nuclear power to counteract climate change (2008, 48). The party also highlights technology transfer to poorer countries (CDU 2008, 47), as well as opportunities for job creation (CDU 2008, 46). The main pillars are energy saving, energy efficiency, and renewal energy (CDU 2008, 47).

CDU (2008, 47) propose worldwide carbon pricing as a specific measure. The party also supports use of environmental levies, and argues that “levies should be raised on long-term consumption of resources or environmental encumbrance rather than taxes” (CDU 2008, 47). Markets also have an important role in the CDU climate policy: “Through ecologically efficient framework conditions and market economic instruments we want to increase the climate sustainability of the air, ship and railway traffic (CDU 2008, 49). CDU (2008, 47) stresses the importance of an international agreement committing industrialized countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Last, the party also points to the necessity of climate adaptation, from high tide and coastal protection to strategies for land use under the new climate (CDU 2008, 47).

Preferring market solutions places CDU on the right of the left/right dimension, while raised levies point to the left. Most of the proposed measures are nevertheless not necessarily leftist or rightist. The support for “clean coal” can be understood in light of vast German coal reserves.

*Australia: Liberal Party*

Climate change is only directly mentioned once in the Liberal Party manifesto for the Coalition with the National Party, but an intention of reducing carbon emissions is stated several times. “We will take direct action to reduce carbon emissions inside Australia, not



overseas,” was claimed among the “top policy priorities” (Liberal Party 2013, 5). Another top priority is to abolish the carbon tax, a pledge that is repeated in nine out of 21 chapters, while “carbon tax” is mentioned 29 times, always in a negative way:

The world’s biggest carbon tax damages the Australian economy, drives up prices unnecessarily, hits the cost-of-living of families, hurts small businesses and makes all Australian businesses less competitive in both domestic and international markets (Liberal Party 2013, 18).

The preferred plan for reducing emissions includes “an Emissions Reduction Fund of \$3 billion to allocate money in response to emission reduction tenders to projects designed to reduce carbon emissions” and support for “projects such as the exploration of soil carbon technologies and abatement, putting carbon back in soils” (Liberal Party 2013, 45). To keep jobs in Australia, all money would go to domestic projects, “not foreign carbon credits” (Liberal Party 2013, 45). Carbon trading is directly criticized: “We will reduce emissions inside Australia, not by paying billions of dollars to foreign carbon traders” (Liberal Party 2013, 18).

The aim of sponsoring instead of taxing businesses could be interpreted as a rightist approach to climate politics, while the rejection of carbon trading is not in line with “free market environmentalism.” The criticism of carbon trading could though place the party further to the right, as it is skeptical to interventions, even in the form of market-based measures. With vast reserves of coal in Australia, the party does not mention coal related to climate change, while at the same time not promoting coal. Coal is a non-issue.

#### *New Zealand: National Party*

“National takes climate change seriously and we are committed to making sure New Zealand does its fair share,” according to the electoral manifesto for 2014 (National Party 2014b, 9). At the same time, the party warns that the rivaling coalition of Labor and the Greens would “drive an extreme climate change agenda dictated by the Green Party” and that their opponents’ emissions trading scheme would “add costs to households and put the brakes on the economy” (National Party 2014b, 13).

The National Party put much emphasis on the costs of mitigation and that New Zealand only contributes with 0.15 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions:

New Zealand faces unique challenges in reducing emissions. About three-quarters of electricity are already from renewable energy, we have a growing and dispersed population, and around half of our emissions are from agriculture. Our opportunities to reduce emissions are more expensive than in other developed countries (National Party 2014b, 9).

Even though emission trading is criticized, and the National Party wants to extend a transitional phase for electricity, industries, and transport, while keeping agriculture out (National Party 2014b, 11), the party sees emission trading as a “long-term tool” with an expectation of increased impact (9).

The proposed policies on climate change include funding of research on adaptation and technology, especially for agriculture, more renewable energy, international agreements, support for adaptation in vulnerable Pacific islands, and investing in planting of trees. “The removal of carbon by forests plays an important role in helping New Zealand meet its long-term climate change commitments” (National Party 2014b, 12). Another concrete measure is support for energy efficiency in businesses and households, estimated to “save around 30,000 tons of carbon emissions per year” (National Party 2014c, 4). As in Australia, coal is not mentioned in the manifesto sections related to climate change.

The National Party devotes a lot of space to criticizing climate measures of the Labor Party and the Green Party, while presenting less conflict-driven solutions on primarily research and technology. The approach to market solutions is quite vague, as the costs of carbon trading makes the National Party slow down implementation of the emissions trading scheme. The New Zealand conservative party does little to relate climate change to its established core issues, and the climate policy is not easy to place on a left/right dimension.

## **Discussion**

Conservatives have been accused for downplaying the importance of climate change, but only the Republican Party in the United States has chosen this approach in its electoral manifesto, while the rest of the parties acknowledge climate change as a problem. Denial of climate science is, however, not a “conservative approach,” but an approach utilized by one conservative party, and the focus can therefore move to what kind of measures are promoted, and the extent of market trust or need for state interventions.

The emphasis on market measures and carbon trading is not as dominating as could be expected. Only the conservative parties of Norway and Sweden highlight emissions trading as

a positive measure, the British and German parties mention markets in a very positive way, but without proposing new market measures, and the Spanish party restricts itself to mentioning emissions trading in a neutral way. The Canadian party does not mention market measures or carbon trading, while the parties of both the United States and Australia are clearly opposed to carbon trading. The New Zealand party is vaguer, and shows some skepticism towards carbon trading in the short term, while at the same time recognizing a long-term importance.

Aversions against state intervention and regulations are often portrayed as a hindrance to a conservative climate policy, but this is not necessarily the case with the electoral manifestos on climate change. According to Carter (2006, 761-2) the neoliberal ideology of the UK party could be difficult to combine with “new regulations and eco-taxes,” but the party supports imposing a new standard on energy production as well as introducing increased eco-taxes. Some state regulations are also backed by the Canadian, Norwegian, and German parties. Still, regulations are not a characteristic part of the conservative climate policy, even though some smaller regulations might be supported. The U.S. Republican Party is the only party that directly distances itself from mitigation policies as such, but is clearly an exception. The study confirms the notion of Anderson and Leal (2001) that supporters of free market capitalism might still be skeptical of “unfettered markets” as an environmental solution.

Rejection of eco-taxes is explicit only in the electoral manifesto of the Australian party. On the opposite, the UK, German, and Norwegian parties highlight taxes and duties as climate measures. It is also relevant that none of the parties use the climate sections to promote increased overall level of taxation, but rather support a balance in which pollution will be taxed more and other activities less. The simple state/market-based left/right dimension might be too simplistic to explain conservative climate policies.

A popular approach among the conservative parties is to promote research and technological solutions. The conservative parties of Norway, Sweden, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and Canada all promote technological solutions. The UK party supports “development of a new generation of offshore wind power” as well as nuclear power stations, but also believes carbon capture and storage will make coal “into a low carbon fuel of the future” (CP-UK 2010, 92). The Norwegian and Canadian parties promote carbon capture and storage, the Swedish party supports “secure nuclear power” (Moderaterna 2007, 16), and the German party supports “clean coal” as well as nuclear power. This trust in new technologies might be interpreted as a way of achieving reduced emissions without societal changes, which would be in line with conservative ideology, and the intention of conserving

economic structures. With the example of carbon capture and storage, even structures based on fossil fuels will be conserved while conserving the climate. In countries heavily dependent on fossil resources, conservatives might prefer technological transformations of fossils over alternative fuels, and the same goes for countries dependent on nuclear power, such as Sweden and Germany. To relate the question of technology to the state/market dimension, it is worth noting that the conservative parties seems more open towards introducing new technologies and letting market forces implement them than to enforce the use of new technologies by state interventions.

With regard to the expected pro-business position of conservative parties, it is not surprising to find that availability of fossil reserves seem to have an effect on the proposed climate policies. In countries with vast reserves of oil, gas, or coal, these resources are not challenged by conservative parties, which rather propose technological improvements on the use of the fossils.

The transport sector is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and three of the conservative parties do link transport and climate. These are the Norwegian party, the UK party, and the Spanish party. The Norwegian Høyre (2013, 7) proposes both “technological and behavioral change” arguing that politicians should make it easier for people to live “climate friendly,” exemplified by better opportunities for public transport and cycling (Høyre 2013, 60). The parties do not promote strict state regulations of the transport sector, but on the other hand, none of them actively propose for example privatization of public transport, at least not in the manifestos.

Finally, the measures most conservative parties do back are international cooperation, agreements, and treaties. The exceptions are the U.S. and Australian parties. The former rejects the whole need for climate policies, while the latter simply does not mention any international cooperation. The rest of the parties all agree on the need for international measures and treaties. International agreements could be viewed as state regulations “leveled up,” but could likewise be considered as facilitating for international markets, as done most explicitly by the Norwegian and Swedish conservative parties.

The findings regarding the left/right dimension are summarized in Table 4, with four columns of categories spanning from the most leftist (bans and state ownership) to the most rightist (resistance against state interventions). The parties might present measures within some, all, or none of the categories. The results indicate that conservative parties do not necessarily support market measures or show aversions against state interventions, and the parties of Norway, Canada, and the UK even lean slightly toward the left, with more emphasis

on regulation and taxation than market measures. The German party promotes both regulation and markets, while the Swedish party is the most clearly pro-market. Aversions against state interventions are only expressed by the U.S. and Australian parties, while it is hard to place those of New Zealand and Spain on the left/right dimension at all. The U.S. and Australian aversion against interventions could be linked to the power of the coal industry in these two countries.

Table 4. Left/Right Climate Measures in the Manifestos

Party	Bans/State ownership	Regulation/ Taxes	Markets/ Trading	Against state interventions
Høyre – Norway	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Conservative Party – Canada	No	Yes	No	No
Conservative Party – UK	No	Yes	No	No
CDU - Germany	No	Yes	Yes	No
Moderaterna - Sweden	No	No	Yes	No
Republican Party - USA	No	No	No	Yes
Liberal Party - Australia	No	No	No	Yes
Partido Popular - Spain	No	No	No	No
National Party – New Zealand	No	No	No	No

**Conclusion**

This investigation of nine conservative party manifestos has found that conservative parties share the intention of smaller changes to sustain both climate and societal structures. In much of the literature, there is an expectation of a conservative aversion against environmental measures as such. With regard to climate change, this is only the case with the U.S. Republican Party, and hence not representative of conservative parties as a party family. The expectation that conservative parties influenced by neo-liberalism have difficulties backing new eco-taxes and state regulations is not sustained by the study, however. The proposed climate policies of the conservative parties are not as easy to categorize on the state/market dimension as could be expected. The preferred measures include both state regulations and carbon trading, and many measures in between the state and market ends of the dimension.

Conservative parties certainly do not propose exclusive rightist measures towards climate change; they also promote some state interventions in the market economy. The traditional left/right dimension has not absorbed climate change to the extent that conservative parties support only those climate measures based on free markets, and some parties oppose carbon trading. The lack of privatization proposals and the inclusion of even prohibitions show that conservative climate policies utilize policy parts from the left as well as the right on the state/market dimension.

An expectation from the literature that receives some support in this study is the notion of a conservative pro-business position followed by natural resources playing a role in shaping climate policies. The conservative parties do not intend to challenge the fossil industry if the respective countries have vast reserves of fossils.

The study points to a conservative climate policy that does not ignore the issue, but utilizes a broad selection of measures to mitigate climate change. One noteworthy tendency is toward facilitating markets, especially internationally, but conservative climate policies extend far further than market measures. The cross-national data from the nine conservative party manifestos analyzed in this article provides sufficient initial evidence supporting the existence of a distinctive conservative approach to climate change. However, it is acknowledged that this is a preliminary study into the area of the climate change approaches adopted by conservative parties, and the stated or tacit reasoning behind them. Further comparative research in the area is nevertheless required to ascertain how far the initial similarities and dimensions isolated here are upheld across other party families.

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