Opportunities for Supply-Side Climate Policies in a Norwegian Context

Exploring the Political Landscape Using Critical Discourse Analysis and Middle-Range Theories

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Abstract

This thesis investigates opportunities and barriers for implementing supply-side climate policies in Norway. Studies have shown that reducing petroleum production on the Norwegian Continental Shelf and hence the market supply of Norwegian oil and gas can provide meaningful climate change mitigation, however a supply-side climate strategy is not considered relevant by Norwegian authorities. This research applies a social constructionist approach and Critical Discourse Theory to explore the underlying mechanisms preventing such a strategy despite the presence of exhaustive research and viable pathways. Middle-range theories on path dependency, carbon lock-in and the green paradox is put forward to elaborate on these mechanisms and the separation between petroleum and carbon policies in Norwegian politics. Six governing documents, consultation responses from 5 licensing rounds, in addition to observational studies of the 'climate lawsuit' provides the data material for the discourse analysis. Three prevalent discourses in the political landscape is identified; the 'status quo'; 'managed decline' and 'scientific research' discourse. Each discourse holds opportunities and barriers for implementing supply-side climate policies, however the research finds that the current dominance and carbon entanglement of the 'status quo' discourse functions as a main obstacle for alternative pathways away from fossil fuels.

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Sigrid Vigdisdatter Berg

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Abbreviations and Norwegian Translations

APA	Awards in Predefined Areas (TFO)
CCS	Carbon Capture and Storage (Karbonfangst og -lagring)
COP	Conference of the Parties (Klimaforhandlinger)
NDNM	Norwegian Directorate of Nature Management (Direktoratet for Naturforvaltning)
ESR	Effort Sharing Regulation (Innsatsfordelingen)
EU ETS	European Emission Trading Scheme (EUs Kvotehandelsystem)
FOE	Friends of the Earth Norway (Norges Naturvernforbund)
GHG	Greenhouse Gas (Drivhusgass)
GPFG	Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global (Statens Pensjonsfond utland)
IEA	International Energy Agency (Det Internasjonale Energibyrået)
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions (Nasjonalt bestemte bidrag)
NCS	Norwegian Continental Shelf (Den Norske Kontinentalsokkelen)
NEA	Norwegian Environment Agency (Miljødirektoratet)
NPD	Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (Oljedirektoratet)
MPE	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (Olje- og Energidepartementet)
NOROG	Norwegian Oil and Gas Association (Norsk Olje og Gass)
MOF	Ministry of Finance (Finansdepartementet)
MCE	Ministry of Climate and Environment (Miljødepartementet)
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from deforestation and forest degradation

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

In May 2016 the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (MPE) awarded the 23rd licensing round on the Norwegian Continental Shelf (NCS) (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2016). For the first time, areas in the Barents Sea South were opened for petroleum exploration, further north than any oil rig had ever been. Tord Lien, then Minister of Oil and Petroleum, assured Norwegian newspapers that this was merely the beginning for the 'new Norwegian oil adventure' (Dagbladet, 2016). The Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (NPD) had estimated that the majority of undiscovered oil and gas resources were situated in the Barents Sea, and so the opening of new areas was met with high expectances of new jobs and increased economic input for the Norwegian welfare state (E24, 2016). A few months later, in October 2016, Greenpeace and Nature & Youth filed a lawsuit against the Norwegian Government, claiming that the awarded licenses were in violation with the Norwegian constitution (Klimasøksmål Arktis, 2020). The environmental NGOs demanded 10 of the awarded exploration licenses to be invalidated because they posed a threat to Norwegian citizens 'right to a healthy environment'. Paragraph 112 of the Norwegian constitution states that

> §112 Every person has the right to an environment that is conducive to health and to a natural environment whose productivity and diversity are maintained. Natural resources shall be managed on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations which 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. The authorities of the state shall take measures for the implementation of these principles. (The Constitution, 1814).

The environmental NGOs line of argumentation in the 'climate lawsuit' was that the Norwegian government is responsible for increased global Greenhouse Gas Emissions

through extraction of petroleum resources. Greenhouse gases cause global heating, leading to climate change that will deprive current and future Norwegian citizens their constitutional right to a healthy natural environment whose 'productivity and diversity are maintained' (Klimasøksmål Arktis, 2020). They further argued that the Norwegian Government exposed the Norwegian economy for financial risk when making long-term investments in the petroleum industry, which presumably will become abundant or at least much less profitable than today if the ambitions set in the Paris Agreement are fulfilled.

Why is Norway searching for a resource that the world has too much of? The 23rd licensing round was first announced in January 2016, less than two months after Norway committed to the Paris Agreement. Then Minister of Climate and Environment Tine Sundtoft stated after the 2015 Conference of the Parties that Norway had contributed to writing history (NRK, 2015). With knowledge that oil and gas are among the main drivers of dangerous global heating (IEA, 2012), a process was set in motion to look for even more. Some of the blocs awarded were placed behind the previous line of the Marginal Ice Zone in the Barents Sea, an area politically protected for petroleum production due to its status as a biological vulnerable area. This contradiction in Norwegian policies – actively searching for new areas to extract petroleum resources while at the same time striving towards recognition as a front-runner in the international climate regime – is commonly dubbed 'The Norwegian Climate Paradox' (Alstadheim & Stoltenberg, 2010). Climate and petroleum policies are detached in Norwegian governance (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004), and although never used specifically as climate policy, continued exploration of oil reserves is presented as a climate measure because of the relatively low emissions from production on the Norwegian Continental Shelf (Enerwe, 2018). "Norwegian gas is important if the world is to reach the climate mitigation targets" (E24, 2016) stated Karl-Eirik Schjøtt Pedersen, former director of Norwegian Oil and Gas in 2016, and this formed a core argument made by the oil industry after the signing of the Paris Agreement.

However, recent contributions of economic research, show that a moderate decline in Norwegian export of petroleum could pose as a cost-efficient and effective mitigation policy. Scholars are suggesting that Norway take use of 'supply-side climate policies', i.e. decreasing production of petroleum resources in order to reduce climate emissions from fossil fuels (Asheim et al., 2019; Fæhn, Hagem, Lindholdt, Mæland, & Rosendahl, 2017). In an OP-ED

from 2018, economists Greaker and Rosendahl suggested there were many reasons to look closer into Norwegian petroleum export: “First of all, a moderate reduction might be an effective climate policy. Second, it is worth discussing whether it is morally correct to produce as much oil as the market is demanding in a world at the bridge of dangerous climate change” (Mads Greaker & Rosendahl, 2018, my translation).

The literature establishes that there are moral, environmental, economic, juridical and climatic incentives for moderating production of oil and gas resources. Why then, have no effective cuts been introduced? Le Billon and Kristoffersen (2019) suggest answers might be found by understanding how intricacies of power relations are working to prevent such policies even in the presence of valid arguments and possible pathways. Narrowing their line of reasoning, my aim in this thesis is to explore the underlying power relations that keep petroleum production and climate policies so strictly separated. Although the issue is frequently debated, leaving oil and gas underground as a measure for reducing CO_2-emissions is unprecedented in Norwegian climate politics. Electrification of platforms is under development many places, however the potential reductions in CO_2 only apply to emissions from production. The oil and gas sector is financially Norway´s most important industry and has since 1969 had immense impact on the Norwegian economy. It is institutionally embedded through governance of the NCS and state majority ownership in the national petroleum company Equinor. In 2017, 140 000 people were employed directly or indirectly by the petroleum industry (Statistics Norway, 2019). After 50 years of successfully extracting and exporting fossil fuels, the idea of altering production for environmental reasons is highly contested in the Norwegian public debate. Even though scholars have brought forward policy instruments for supply-side climate policies, it remains unclear whether there is political space for changing approach in Norwegian climate policy.

I will not pursue to determine whether Norway should implement restrictive production policies, as this strand of research is still at its outset. This thesis takes an explorative approach to investigate *first* the landscape of Norwegian petroleum and climate policy, *second* the concept of and possibilities for supply-side climate policies in a Norwegian context, and *third*, the ‘climate lawsuit’ as a recent example of enacting reductions on petroleum production. While much has been written on the discursive landscape found in Norwegian newspapers and media, this thesis takes a different approach to examine discourses found in official government papers and consultation responds from ministries, directorates, research

institutes and environmental organisations. I aim to study the actors involved in environmental and petroleum policy processes and what discourses they draw on. The relevance of this research was considered substantial at the onset because of the urgency to reduce greenhouse gases and mitigate climate change. The global pandemic and following economic crisis unfolding this spring has further elevated it´s importance because of the political consequences for the Norwegian petroleum industry. While it is beyond the reach of this thesis to undertake fully the recent developments, I have attached an epilogue to address the event that the Norwegian Parliament passed an economic crisis package for the oil and gas sector.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This research will explore the political space for implementing supply-side climate policies in Norway, specifically identifying opportunities and barriers for reducing exploration licenses on the Norwegian Continental Shelf. This focus on restraining licenses is because this instrument is one of two specifically drawn forward in literature on supply-side politics, the other being changing tax benefits and investment facilitation (Fæhn et al., 2018), and because it forms the core dispute in the climate lawsuit. In order to identify barriers and opportunities I apply as my point of departure a premise I consider fundamental for implementing supply-side climate policies in Norway, which is that petroleum and climate policy must be seen in connection. As both previous literature and my document analysis show, petroleum and climate policy are strictly divided and reductions in oil and gas production is not considered as a mitigation strategy in a Norwegian climate context. Although immense research has been put forward suggesting supply-side policy can function as an efficient and cost-effective climate measure in Norway (Asheim et al., 2019; Fæhn et al., 2018; Hoel, 1994), I hold that the gap between oil and climate policy needs to be reduced or eliminated to accommodate for even a proper debate on such policies. Exploring the political space for implementing supply-side climate policies therefore becomes a case of exploring the prevailing environmental discourses in Norway, how actors relate and reason with the so called 'Norwegian climate paradox', if discursive worldviews include a future based on the Paris Agreement succeeding or not, and what scalar perspective they apply to their understanding of the climate crisis.

I will apply discourse theory to analyse textual sources, mainly governing documents within climate and petroleum politics, in addition to data gathered from observing the climate

lawsuit. In discourse analysis, theory and method is intertwined (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002), meaning the framework provides analytical tools for both accessing and analysing data. In addition to applying a social constructivist theoretical framework and critical discourse analysis as my main methodology, I also set up for analysing my findings using middle-range and space-specific theories such as path dependency, carbon lock-in and more specifically the green paradox to provide further insights to the Norwegian climate-petroleum debate. The thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

(1) How is the connection between petroleum and climate policy recognized in prevalent discourses observed in Norwegian governing institutions, and in the political landscape at large?
    a. Is it static or has it changed during the last 10 years?
(2) How are barriers and opportunities for supply-side climate policies constructed through discursive structures and social production of knowledge?
    a. What mechanisms produce and upholds these structures, and how are they visible in observational data from the 'climate lawsuit'?

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

The remaining part of **chapter one** will provide background information I consider relevant in order to give context for the following chapters. I will shortly address Norwegian climate politics, international commitments, and cooperation with the European Union, before introducing Norwegian petroleum governance including the tax-system, and the process of awarding new licenses.

Chapter two is devoted to methodology. I present my epistemological perspective social constructionism and its core premises for social research. From there I describe the theoretical and methodological framework in discourse analysis, with special emphasis on critical discourse theory and how it is empirically applied. I go ahead to outline the process of data gathering I have conducted, separated into document studies and observational studies, before briefly discussing the authors positionality.

In **chapter three**, I present the theoretical terms I will take use of to understand, explore, and analyse my findings. First, I establish the concept of oil as a social and political resource, before presenting more technical middle-range theories of path-dependency which can explain why and how extractive states may become 'carbon-locked' and unable to make the transition towards alternative sources of energy. Then I present two theories connected to

climate policies, first Sinn's (2012) theory of 'the Green Paradox' which suggests climate policies might lead to accelerated emissions. Second, I put forward the literature on supply-side policies in order to explain why and how reducing petroleum activity on the Norwegian continental shelf can act as an effective climate measure.

With background, methodology and theory accounted for, in **chapter four** I go on to provide an account of previous literature on discourses involved in the petroleum and climate debate in Norway. I present what I consider relevant previous findings such as the 'thinking nationally' vs. 'national action' discourses, as well as discourses on oil for environment, and environmental Norwegian oil.

In **chapter five** I address the case at hand through a document analysis, by investigating the political landscape of petroleum and climate governance, and identify main discourses found in governing documents. I present the results of a textual close-reading and analysis from 5 government documents and one Norwegian Official Report, in addition to the consultation papers and following consultation responses from the hearing on four numbered licensing rounds and one awards in pre-defined areas from the period from 2010 - 2019.

Moving on to **chapter six** I present and analyse the collected data from the climate lawsuit. The opposing parts reasoning, arguments and overall worldview is presented thematically, categorized into their environmental, scalar, economic, democratic and governance perceptions.

Chapter seven provides a discussion where I analytically discuss my findings thematically and their implications for the political landscape and consequences for Norwegian climate policy with regards to a possible implementation of supply-side policies.

In **chapter eight** I present my conclusion. Due to the ongoing pandemic, its economic consequences for the petroleum sector and the ongoing debate regarding a possible economic crisis package for the oil industry, I have chosen to include an **epilogue**. Here, I address shortly the recent changes in the petroleum industry political landscape, and how I consider the political debate on a petroleum crisis package with reference to the findings in this thesis.

1.3 Background: Norwegian Petroleum Industry

With 'Norwegian Petroleum Industry', I refer to companies exploring, facilitating, extracting, refining and transporting oil and gas reserves from the Norwegian Continental Shelf, as well as Norwegian Oil and Gas which is the professional body and employer´s association for oil and supplier companies. Although oil and gas have different emission intensity, gas emitting

less greenhouse gases, I have not distinguished between them in this thesis, but refer to Norwegian Petroleum as one collective term. This is first of all because both resources are extracted from the same fields, by the same companies, and regulated within the same framework, but subsequently because they, together with coal, constitute the greatest contributor to global heating, meaning both oil and gas must play a minimal role in a zero-emission future.

The first significant discovery of Norwegian oil was made in 1969 at the Ekofisk field in the North Sea, and so in 2019 Norway celebrated 50 years of activity on the Norwegian shelf (Government.no, 2019a). Subsequently, in 1971 a report to the Norwegian Parliament was issued to establish the main principled for Norwegian oil industry, often referred to as the 10 oil amendments, which emphasised the importance of a nationally controlled industry (Ryggvik, 2009). There was consensus on the understanding of Norwegian Oil reserves as Norwegian public property, and consequently that the resources should be utilised in a way so as to benefit the entire Norwegian society in a long-term perspective (Industridepartementet, 1971). The ten oil commandments also included a principle stating that the development of an oil industry must take considerations to other industries and to nature- and environmental preservation. Although the size and importance of the industry has surpassed the expectations in 1971, these 10 principles have served as a backdrop through 50 years of Norwegian Petroleum policies as a foundation for governance.

Today, petroleum resources on the Norwegian Continental Shelf are governed by the Norwegian state through shared and differentiated responsibilities by clearly dedicated and specialized institutions. The clear separation between the states commercial interests and its role as a policy and administrative body is considered unique among petroleum-states and often referred to as the 'Norwegian Model' (Al-Kasim, 2006). I will shortly explain its core mechanisms. The Norwegian Parliament sets the framework for petroleum production by enacting laws to regulate activity, mainly the Norwegian Petroleum Law (LOV-1996-11-29-72, 1996). The government enforces these regulations, through the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy (MPE). The ministry is separated in two, energy and petroleum are separated in different department fractions. The ministry is supported by the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (NPD) which is its advisory institution. The NPD is both a specialist directorate collecting and analysing data from the Norwegian continental shelf to provide research-based advise to the MPE, as well as an administrative body, following planned and on-going petroleum activity (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019a). The MPE oversees three state-

owned companies; Petoro, Equinor and GassCo. While Petoro and GassCo are fully state-owned, Equinor (previously Statoil) is partly privatized, however the Norwegian state is its primary owner holding 67 percent of shares. Oil and gas-companies operating on Norwegian soil is taxed 78 percent, of which 22 percent make up the normal corporate tax in Norway, and 56 percent constitutes the special ground rent tax rate (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019b). Revenue from petroleum activity is managed through the Government Pension Fund Global, and gradually phased into the Norwegian economy over time in accordance with the fiscal rule on oil-revenue spending. The fiscal rule upholds that the government can only spend the expected return from the fund's investment, currently estimated to 3 percent of its net worth. The fiscal rule regulates both government over-spending securing economic resources for future generations, and at the same time it protects the Norwegian economy from being flooded with petroleum income, which can severely de-stabilize the national economy and lead to inflation (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019b). By passing oil revenue through the Government Pension Fund Global, it can be argued that Norway has avoided effects of the 'Dutch disease', which in essence refers to export countries experiencing 'negative impacts of a sudden inflow of foreign currency' (Claes, 2018, p. 61).

The continental shelf is not open, but areas are opened gradually for petroleum activity in a step-by-step process based on geological knowledge. The oil industry is subject to the Nature diversity act which requires the industry to acquire a knowledge-based approach to decisions affecting the natural environment, uphold the precautionary principle and consider total ecosystem burdens when evaluating environmental impact (LOV-2009-06-19-100, 2009). Activity on the Norwegian continental shelf is strictly governed by institutions mentioned above, as well as through other ministries regulating the industry more specialized such as the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs managing workers environment, the Ministry of Finance overseeing the taxation system and ministry of climate and environment regulating standards for environmental impact. If opening up a new area is initiated by the government, an opening-process has to be enacted to put forward the scientific research basis for the Parliament, where the final decision is made. The opening process consists of geological mapping conducted by the NPD, as well as an impact assessment where the industrial, environmental, economic and generally societal effects is reviewed (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2013). The assessment report must be distributed to relevant actors for consultation, a hearing to shed new light on the issue at hand and request updated and relevant scientific knowledge, which often is controversial and subject of public debate. If an opening

finds support in the Parliament, the process to extract petroleum continues. The MPE will then initiate a numbered licensing round, starting with asking oil and gas-companies to nominate blocks for exploration after assessing nominations the ministry will present to the public a proposition for licenses. Numbered licensing rounds are applied when unknown areas are to be explored, meaning at this point there is no certainty to the expectation of finding fossil fuel reserves. Similar to the process when producing an impact assessment report, the numbered licensing round is sent to relevant actors for consultation, a hearing. Such actors include oil and gas companies and organisations, other ministries, environmental organisations, the Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA), scientific institutions such as the Norwegian Polar Institute and the Institute of Marine Research, as well as fisheries organizations.

The approached actors can endorse or advise against the suggested blocks based on environmental concerns or considerations regarding other industries operating in the area. The ministry takes the advice into consideration before finally announcing the licensing round and awarding blocks to different oil and gas companies operating on the Norwegian continental shelf (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019b). To what degree scientific advice is weighted in the process is however contested and forms an aspect of debate found in the document and observational study this thesis is based on. This step-by-step process is designed to secure a steady, managed and knowledge-based development on the Norwegian continental shelf, based on scientific advice securing that environmental standards are upheld and to coordinate petroleum activity with other industries in the area. The licences awarded are specifically for exploration, if oil-companies make significant findings a new process to allow extraction of reserves must be initiated. Another aspect to take note of because it forms an issue of dispute in the climate lawsuit is that oil and gas companies exploring the Norwegian continental shelf can have their taxes returned should they not find petroleum reserves. This means that the Norwegian state obtains much of the risk of costly exploration. The mechanism is designed to ensure incentives for oil companies to keep up activity on the Norwegian shelf, where conditions are rougher than other places, exploration more costly and hence more risk is involved (Norwegian Oil and Gas Association, 2019a).

In areas defined as open and ‘mature,’ which entails that there is substantial geological knowledge, exploration licenses can be awarded outside the numbered rounds, through the annual Awards in Predefined Areas (APA). These rounds are also subject for public consultation, but follows no step of nomination and involves less research-led impact

assessment as the process is aimed at known or ‘mature’ areas where infrastructure is available (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019b).

1.4 Background: Norwegian Climate Policy

In signing the Paris Climate Agreement, the Norwegian government has committed to the goal of keeping temperature rises below 1.5°C, and hence to provide increased reduction ambitions regularly to the UN. Norway is reducing emissions in cooperation with the European Union, and has committed to 40 percent reductions within 2030, compared to 1990 levels (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017b, p. 13). Recently the newly admitted Minister of Climate and Environment Sveinung Rotevatn adjusted Norwegian ambitions, raising emission reduction target to 50-55% within 2030 (NTB, 2020c). Note, however that in 2019 Norway´s currently implemented climate policies as ‘highly insufficient’ by climate action tracker, which estimated the Norwegian climate policies consistent with between 3ºC and 4ºC global temperature rise (Climate Action Tracker, 2019). Approximately 80% of Norwegian emissions are regulated by the European quota market through the European Trading Scheme (EU ETS), including emissions from land-based industry, offshore petroleum production and aircraft. The remaining 20 percent are regulated by the Norwegian government, with the goal of reducing 45 percent within 2030 (Ministry of Climate and Environment & Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2020).

The European Trading Scheme is designed to provide flexibility for emission reductions, reduce carbon leakage and secure cost-efficient carbon reductions. An absolute ceiling of emitted CO_2 emissions into the atmosphere among those taking part, distributed through tradeable quotas serves to reduce emissions according to increases elsewhere (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017b). If a business can run production without larger carbon emissions, it can sell its quotas for profit, thus the system rewards environmental behaviour while economically punishing polluters. In order to actually reduce emission and not just keep them at a stabile status quo, the quota ceiling has to be reduced regularly so that the total emitted CO_2 into the atmosphere is lowered. That the EU has failed to evoke this mechanism sufficiently has caused scholars to compare the EU ETS with a waterbed (Rosendahl, 2019). While the desired effect is that of a tub, so that when a person sits in the water rises, and eventually flows over the edge, reducing the total amount of water in the tub. When a person sits down at a waterbed, however, the water just shifts to another point of the bed and rises there. Water is never removed, only shifted, and following this analogy, neither is emissions

within the EU. However, the EU recently introduced changes to counteract this effect, by regularly removing quotas from the market (Wettestad, 2017).

Norwegian climate policy is, similar to EU policy, based on two main principles. First, the polluters pay-principle, which states that the end-user is the one responsible for cutting emissions from the product in use, or to pay accordingly to the emissions emitted (Ministry of Environment, 2012, p. 8). The principle revolves around an economic climate approach; by putting a price on carbon emissions, a price incentive is introduced to encourage environmental behaviour while punishing polluting. The second principle is on efficiency (Ministry of Environment, 2012). Cuts should be made where output is greatest, also seen in relation to the cost. It translates that when cutting emissions, start with the least profitable, and most carbon-intensive source.

A climate law was enacted in 2018 to secure achievement of the Norwegian climate goals, fixing by law that Norway will be a low-carbon society by 2050 (LOV-2017-06-16-60, 2017). Such future legislation is difficult to rule by, but the law sees to transparency in climate policies, as well as legally committing the government to propose ascending climate goals and report to parliament on their climate mitigation. Norwegian climate strategy, goal, and policy, similar to petroleum policies, is primarily decided through law-making in the Norwegian parliament. The Ministry of Climate and Environment is responsible for enacting climate policies, sustainable resource management, pollution and global environmental cooperation. Their advisory institute the Norwegian Environment Agency (NEA) gives research-based advice, while also handling licenses to industrial pollution etc. This concludes the introduction chapter; I now move on to present the methodological framework applied in this research.

2 Methodological Framework

Through qualitative research methods, this thesis will investigate the political space for implementing supply-side politics in the Norwegian public sphere, taking use of the philosophy from social constructionism and the theoretical and methodological framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Qualitative research within human geography is broadly concerned with elucidating human environments and experiences, with an overarching focus on examining structures and processes (Winchester & Rofe, 2016). I will put forward a textual analysis predicated on a constructionist epistemology, examining how structures within the public debate on climate politics are held up by discourses and how these are constructed and sustained, what implications they have for implementing meaningful climate policies as well as investigate how they are opposed by alternative discourses. A main task given the research question is to look for how, if even discourses relate to the connection between climate and petroleum policy, and further if they can be said to pose barriers or opportunities for supply-side climate policy.

No interviews or datasets will be used as data in this thesis, rather it is text that will form the empirical basis. When texts are used as data they are studied systematically to draw conclusions about either their contextual surroundings or the intentions and ideas of the author (Bratberg, 2017). The theme of this thesis is supply-side politics and how the Norwegian government relate to the question of scaling down and phasing out the petroleum industry. The relationship between petroleum and climate policies is the central topic, as well as the ideas and worldviews shaping the political strategies associated. A textual analysis of political and governing papers will be carried out to study certain actors and institutions ideas, as well as to investigate what collective worldviews – discourses – is present and how they in turn influence the public debate. Are opinions and statements steered by one hegemonic discursive direction or by peoples established knowledge on the subject? If political spheres are dominated by collectively upheld worldviews that are being maintained through language, it is possible for social scientists to study both the discursive components and reproduction, as well as the consequences it has on society and political processes. It is the latter that will form

the main part of this thesis. Such research can give important insights as to how environmental and climate politics are reasoned and what forces is needed to keep it constant, or to change it (Bratberg, 2017). In this chapter I will introduce discourse analysis and more specifically critical discourse analysis with the intention of explaining the methodological basis for the thesis, starting with philosophical approach of social constructionism upon which most textual analysis emanates.

2.1 Textual Analysis and Social Constructionism

The way we express ourselves both written and oral cannot be reduced simply as a neutral way of describing our surroundings, rather language has an active role in shaping and changing identities, social relations and society as a whole (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Social research applying textual and discursive analysis is as such a part of the social constructivist strand of social science, which according to Burr (2015) imply endorsing several main premises, despite difference in methodological approaches. First and most importantly, social constructionism entails a critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge. It is an antagonist to positivism, empiricism and 'hard' sciences such as physics and biology where it is assumed possible to obtain perfect knowledge of the world by observation, as well as that what exists is limited to what we can observe. Social constructionism upholds that we as scientists should be sceptical towards our perceptions about the world around us and cautions us to be suspicious of our assumptions. Secondly, within social constructionism it is assumed that the categories and concept we make use of to understand society and the world around us are historically and culturally specific. The way we understand, talk about, place value and name both things and social conditions depend on our placement geographically, culturally and historically in time. How we understand sizes, concepts and terms such as man and woman, rich and poor, good or bad etc. will differ greatly depending on where and when in the world one lives (Burr, 2015). This also applies to the way we understand scale and scalar sizes, which will be elaborated on in chapter 3.6.

The third premise listed by Burr (2015) is that knowledge is constantly sustained and upheld by social processes. Social interaction of all kinds and language especially is of great interest to social constructionists because it is through the daily interactions between people in the day-to-day social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated. Consequently, when studying political processes, we need to include not just campaign slogans and election speeches, but also what is communicated through planning documents, working papers and

paper trails within the administrative governmental branch, as will be done in this thesis (Asdal, 2014). Moving on, the forth premise put forward by Burr (2015) is that knowledge and social action are connected. Varying types of language and social constructions preconditions different types of social behaviour. Here lies the notion of structural power, which I will return to shortly, but for now the important aspect is how language influences social action. Our constructions of the world and how we convey them is closely tied to power relations because they have implications for what is or is not permissible for people to do and sustains limits as to how people may legitimately treat others. Lastly, research based in social constructionism apply an anti-essentialist epistemological stance as well as a critical scepticism towards realism. Social constructionism argues that there is nothing essential in humans that predetermine who they are and how they behave. This follows from the notion that the social world, including humans - are socially produced and therefore permittable and as such there can be no given, determined human nature that decides our actions (Burr, 2015).

> Social constructionism argues that our ways of understanding the world do not come from objective reality but from other people, both past and present. We are born into a world where the conceptual frameworks and categories used by the people in our culture already exists. (Burr, 2015, p. 10).

The world is constructed through language when people interpret the world surrounding them and talk, write and discuss it among each other. Knowledge is not inherent, not something people have or lack, rather it is created and enacted collectively. Accordingly, social science should not set out to discover underlying societal laws and structures, because language is understood as constructing our social realities it is necessarily in constant flux. Burr (2015) explain how language and our use of language is not just describing the world we observe, but rather produces a framework for how we perceive everything around us, which in turn has actual consequences for our actions. Language is not transparent, and the meaning of a single word or phrase can differ greatly between spaces and contexts, or simply be limited certain places or situations, something I got to experience myself in a minimalised and isolated manner, when observing and gathering data in an unfamiliar place; the courtroom. In order to keep up with the terminology I kept a juridical glossary which I updated with help from search engines or other observers during the break. Without a law-degree it was difficult simply to navigate through the 10 000 pages of paperwork the trial was based on, not to mention the snap comments and references, the meaning of different procedures or the rules and acceptable behaviour in a court room.

Yet, however unfathomable the terminology seemed to me I can easily picture how a different, more loose or informal language would be considered inappropriate and out-of-place. The actors of the courtroom, lawyers and judges who were familiar with the terminology did not have any difficulty following the process, quite the opposite: it seems like they picked up on aspects and details of what was said that passed me by as an observer. According to social constructionism this is a simplified and concentrated example of our interpretative repertoires, that is our culturally shared tool kit of linguistic and social resources. These repertoires make it possible for us to defend certain versions of events, stand up to critique or even to excuse or validate our own behaviour. Although mostly unintended and non-intentional, our interpretive repertoires generates us to interpret and construct different versions of events (Burr, 2015).

Social constructionism as research philosophy is advantageous when studying climate and energy politics because, as Hulme (2009) puts it, understanding climate change is about understanding the meeting of nature and Culture, "… about how humans are central actors in both of these realms, and about how we are continually creating and re-creating both Nature and Culture" (Hulme, 2009, p. xxviii). First, the issue of climate crisis and global heating has despite its deep foundation in scientific research, traditionally been a field where narratives prosper, and it has proven difficult to establish natural scientific research on climate change as mainstream. Hulme (2009, p. 74) suggests one of the reason why we disagree about climate change is because we have different views on the authority of scientific knowledge, as well as diverging expectations to what science can or should tell us. The politization of natural scientific knowledge as found in IPCC reports has taken detours through climate change denialism, disbelief, postponement and alienation. Most climate change research is concerned with future projections and scenarios which is necessarily characterized by high uncertainty and various possible outcomes, unable to stake out *one* clear path ahead. This has opened up for alternative interpretations, doubts concerning research credibility, political apathy and numerous environmental discourses, each staking out different paths towards a sustainable society (Dryzek, 2013; Hulme, 2009). Making sense of this field acquires knowledge of how social reality is constructed through language, as well as the tools to decipher these discourses.

The main objection towards social constructionism is concerned with its lack of ontological explanations, and what should be considered *real* or as the *real world* (Neumann, 2001). Critique has been put forward questioning its constructivist explanations; if everything is

socially or cognitive produced, how do you explain physical objects? Scholars reject this critique stating that their lack of ontological explanations is simply due to its epistemological focus. Within this strand of research, it is not the things and objects that are in focus, but rather how we gain knowledge about them. Social constructionist does not claim that everything *is* text, but rather that everything can be *read* as text: there exists a physical reality as well as a social reality, and social constructionists are concerned with the latter. Further, this strand of research has been criticised for not providing any certain knowledge, as well as not being able to make generalisations and predictions. The response by social constructionist is to adhere to this, all-the-while rejecting the problematisation, as they aim not to make general explanations but rather case-specific and narrow analyses. Social and cognitive frames of explanations cannot explain everything about the world, but they can give us meaningful insights in why we think as we do, and what actions that leads to (Bratberg, 2017).

The critique against social constructionism also encompasses the friction between quantitative and qualitative methods in social science. However, Winchester & Rofe (2016) argue that in recent years the maturing of qualitative methods have led to an increased acceptance of their validity, proving the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative research to be false, while also reducing the previous polarization. According to Hulme (2009) climate is best understood as an idea bringing together the physical world and our cultural imagination, meaning more abstract social research as social constructionism is paramount to understand fully the idea of, and ideas shaping climate change. In this thesis I draw on both more abstract epistemological theories combined with more concrete, middle-ranged theories to describe the different discourses, origin, worldview and material political implications. Social science with a social constructionist philosophy comes in different shapes; a prevalent approach and the one taken into use in this thesis is to study social construction of meaning, truth, power and worldviews through discourse analysis, which is where I now turn my attention.

2.2 Discourse and Discourse Analysis

With discourse analysis the researcher is concerned with the study of texts, actions and images, and how these are socially constructed through habit and conventions, making them well-established to the point where they appear natural. Within social and historical sciences, Foucault is recognised as influential and for shaping much discursive theory. According to Andersen (1999, p. 31), one of Foucault's fundamental interests was to question discursive

truisms, opting trough his work to problematise the individual free will and reason by showing how language, speech and text is always part of a distinct discourse and hence affixed certain rules for acceptability. Being placed within social constructionism, the field has an epistemological focus, investigating how humans create meaning and knowledge about the world surrounding us (Hitching, Nilsen, & Veum, 2011). It is considered both as theory and method; a framework for applying social constructionist philosophy on empirical research, giving the researcher the opportunity – and challenge- of approaching the field. Discourse analysis is a broad field that encompasses a variation of approaches, hence discourse itself has numerous definitions, I will present a short discussion before presenting the definition I will base the rest of my thesis on.

Burr refers to discourse as

> …a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events. It refers to a particular picture that is painted of an event, person, or class of persons, a particular way of representing it in a certain light. (Burr, 2015, p. 75).

The fact that discourse can mean constructing certain versions of events also implies that events, statements or persons can change its nature if perceived through a different discourse, which fits neatly into social constructionism's premise that social reality is produced and inconstant. Burr's definition highlights how discourses shape and limit how humans experience and interpret the social world around them. Skrede (2017) on the other hand focus on discourses normative aspect, as not merely reflections of the world as it is or is considered to be, but also notions representing how society *could* be, enabling us to vision possible worlds that does not yet exist. By enabling alternate worldviews through language, discourses have a role in changing society materially. Action follows words, and so language describing alternate societal circumstances cause humans to act according to this worldview, in turn potentially changing society so that the envisioned perspective becomes reality. Skrede (2017) suggests that discourses are constructing society, which is further elaborated on by Neumann (2001), who defines discourse as a system for bringing forth a set of statements and actions that through institutionalisation and normalisation becomes constitutive of reality for people who carry and reproduce it. What discourse we are part of, intentionally or not influences what we consider as true or false, good or bad, real or fake, hence knowledge is not a static quality you can hold, but in flux and constantly produced and reproduced through social actions. This has special relevance to climate change politics because it presents a field where

'hard' natural science intersect with social research and concrete politics. It can hence be argued that what is considered effective and suitable climate mitigation is not so much grounded in scientific facts as in discursive circumstances and prevalent world-views.

When discourses are intrinsic in institutions and society they are normalised and difficult to distinguish in everyday life, and at the same time making it hard to act out scepticism towards taken-for-granted knowledge. Another term to bring into consideration is *context,* because the set of statements and images discourses brings forward are not encompassing, but specific to the social context at hand (Bratberg, 2017). A prevailing discourse provides formal and informal rules for what can and cannot be said within a certain context, in addition to setting frames for what is reasonable to believe or convey. Jørgensen and Philips (2002) term this the regimes of knowledge, under which contextual frames constitute what humans regard as true or false. What we know, or have knowledge about, what we perceive as valuable, good and important is created collectively through language and has implications for our actions. Discourse should be considered as the structure that give language and text meaning, provides a common structure and a framework for understanding the social world, as well as providing a cognitive and normative foundation for action (Bratberg, 2017). This induces that discourses are structures that carry meaning, or certain perspectives, including both views on what the world looks like, worldviews, and ideologies of what the world should look like (Grue, 2011). Such structures are hard to question when they are normalised, which is why discourse analysis is important and can achieve corrections to developments in society or in the public debate (Grue, 2011).

What then, about language, the pillar carrying all these definitions of discourse?

> With language, we create representations of reality that are never mere reflections of a pre-existing reality but contribute to constructing reality. That does not mean that reality does not exist. Meanings and representations are real. Physical objects also exist, but they only gain meaning through discourse. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 8).

Our access to knowledge about the world and reality is always through language, and so language has the ability to weight or even filter that knowledge based on different perspectives. Consider a relevant example; an oil rig. While discussing it from a discursive point of view opens up for different representations of the oil rig as a generator of revenue, a dangerous polluter, or possible stranded asset, none of these interpretations questions the

substantial character of the rig. It´s physical aspect remains unchanged but depending on which discourse emphasised the meaning of the oil rig change from money-maker to hazardous polluter. Following the assumption that social action is driven by language and knowledge regimes; in order to achieve social change, we have to start with studying the ways we talk about and consider our reality. Conflicts at a discursive level have real consequences for the reproduction of our social reality, and as such discourses sustain power. Discourse is both constitutive and constituted, in as it affects how we perceive the social world, but also works the other way around to create actual change in the material world (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

What the literature suggests is that to understand how change come about in society at large, and more specifically within environmental politics, we need to study and analyse the prevailing discourses. Based on the literature above, I will go forward with the definition of discourses as systems of statements, representations and images that both give and provide meaning to social events, as well as equip carriers with a framework for what social actions are acceptable or not. While discourse analysis is a broad field, stemming from the classic Foucauldian approach, via psychological discourse analysis and linguistic discourse analysis it is the methodology of critical discourse analysis that will form the methodological foundation in this thesis.

2.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

When social and political practices are not examined it is hard to explain where the structures influencing practice comes from and what can change it (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), also known as Norman Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003) takes on the task of investigating such practices. CDA differs from other discursive approaches by focusing less on linguistic features, compensated by the inclusion of established theories within social sciences, taking use of the framework from discourse theory to study social phenomena or to prove social theories from other disciplines, and is such an interdisciplinary approach. In this thesis, critical discourse theory will be applied in unison with economic, middle-range theories. Another feature is that CDA is considered ideological; it is put forward by Fairclough (2003) that discursive practices contribute to produce and reproduce unequal power relations – between different classes, men and women or between an ethnic minority and the majority (Hitching et al., 2011; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). With regards to the aim of this thesis, could discursive practices be found to

produce unequal relations and status between those defending environmental values and those urging to develop the petroleum industry? Common for all critical discourse analysts is that they seek to analyse how ideological issues are reproduced through language (Skrede, 2017). As such, CDA is a *critical* approach in that it seeks to uncover what role language, text and discursive practices has in maintaining social relations, and unequal power structures specifically (Hitching et al., 2011). To contribute to positive social change towards more equal power relations is an outspoken goal, in this context, the goal is identified as combating dangerous climate change. Consequentially, it cannot be considered politically neutral, but rather as a scientific critical approach, committed to achieve social change (Skrede, 2017). As a social scientist and analyst objective descriptions should always be pursued, however CDA opens up for research that is motived by an ambition to uncover social problems and unequal power relations, which resonates with the premise from social constructionism concerning how language and society affects each other reciprocally. As previously stated, our language is both constitutive and constituted (Bratberg, 2017; Burr, 2015; Grue, 2011).

While definitively opening up scientific opportunities, the ideological aspect of CDA also brings about certain demands and precautions for the analyst. When critique of prevailing structures is included in the research design, it seems clear that the analyst will bring with her values, background knowledge, perspectives, and assumptions into the research project. While choice of theme and focus is usually somewhat influenced by the researchers interests and ideological position, other social scientific methodology will usually secure neutrality and objectivity. As this cannot be achieved using CDA, it is decisive for validity and legitimacy that the analyst is explicit and precise concerning her background knowledge, values and attitudes towards those themes under scrutiny (Hitching et al., 2011). A usual requirement to secure methodological rigour is that the analyst put forward possible bias so that readers can consider the results with full knowledge. This entails not just disclosing one's presumptions in advance, but constantly inviting the reader to follow her line of thought and reasoning throughout the analysis so that the validity of the results is open for scrutiny. See chapter 2.5 for an account of this authors positionality.

As mentioned, Fairclough does not consider text and language alone sufficient for analysis and so CDA is composed of three equally positioned components; text, discursive practice and social practice, visualised in his three-dimensional model. Discourse is (1) language use as social practice, (2) context-specific language and (3) a way of speaking which gives meaning to experiences from a particular perspective (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). In

addition to textual analysis, CDA call for analysing social relation at micro- and macrolevel and should be focused on the linguistic distinctiveness of the text, as well as processes related to authors construction and audience's reception, and lastly the wider social practice that the text belongs to. The model shows that discourses construct both social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and meaning, demonstrating why text cannot be studied isolated, rather it should only be analysed in relation to other text – intertextuality – and in relation to its wider social context. These three; text, discourse and social practice forms the core of CDA, which is considered a framework combining both theory on how to approach social issues and a methodology for how to analyse social phenomena. While theory explains how language and society influence each other, the approaches and methodology is used to study specific areas of society where language plays a part in maintaining or even aggravate inequality in political, economic and social power relations, making CDA an approach for investigating the tensions between language and political space (Bratberg, 2017; Grue, 2011).

Space for social change can appear when there is friction between text and the discourse it belongs to, or if the central values of the discourse is no longer possible to obtain through social practice (Bratberg, 2017). CDA therefore investigates text considering the authors motive, text audience and what role it may come to play in society. What possible ideological interest could the text be serving? A central and recurring theme in Norman Fairclough's CDA theory is capitalism as a discursive and structural phenomenon, and the neoliberal phase especially. Many analysts, including this author, are occupied with how capitalism and neoliberal governance consolidates in text and affects our use of language (Skrede, 2017). Neoliberal theory will be presented in chapter 3.7 of this thesis and applied to analyse the finding of the document and observational study. In his book from 2017 on CDA, Skrede discusses whether or not CDA should be placed on the left wing of the political spectrum but concludes that although Fairclough is inspired by Marxists philosophy of language there is nothing inherent in the framework that hinders it from being applied from other political perspectives. CDA is concerned with normative argumentation – how things should or should not be – unaffected by which strand of politics is criticized. In this thesis, documents from both a left-winged labour coalition government (Stoltenberg II) and a right-winged coalition government are analysed. It should, however, be pointed out that political standpoint and party politics will not be considered when analysing different discourses prevalent in the Norwegian petroleum/climate debate.

Another central theme frequently analysed using CDA is power, power relations between groups in society and how language reproduces these. Fairclough adhere to Foucault's perspective of power as productive and dynamic rather than a permanent quality inherent in certain institutions or persons. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) points to how within the discourse framework power is closely connected to ideologies; ideologies are meaning in the service of power. More to the point, Fairclough understands ideologies as constructions of meaning that contribute to the production, reproduction and transformation of domination (Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Not all discourses are ideological however, Fairclough (2003) envisions a continuum where the most ideological discourses are actively contributing to reproducing and transforming power relations in society. This obliges analysts to interpret their data and consider independently what is recognised as ideological or non-ideological discourses. Hegemony, like power, is not only dominance but rather a process of negotiation that results in consensus concerning meaning, and consequently never stable but always changing and incomplete.

> According to Fairclough, the concept of hegemony gives us the means by which to analyse how discursive practice is part of a larger social practice involving power relations; discursive practice can be seen as an aspect of a hegemonic struggle that contributes to the reproduction and transformation of the order of discourse of which it is part (and consequently of the existing power relations). Discursive change takes place when discursive elements are articulated in new ways. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 76).

In this thesis both power and hegemony, as well as hegemony of discourse will be central themes when investigating the political space for supply-side policies within the Norwegian petroleum regime. By studying discursive developments over time, I expect to be able to identify discursive changes, or a lack thereof in the data material gathered, and further the potential outcome of these changes. I draw on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model to analyse my data on three levels: the linguistic aspects of the text, the discursive level (expose and categorize discourses) and what consequences can be expected within social practice.

2.4 Empirical Appliance: Conducting Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA requires textual analysis, and consequently close reading of central texts. Grue (2011) suggests that familiarisation with the research topic and relevant texts will uncover one or

more *key texts*, a constituent text or document that serves as a reference or guidance for similar text, these are also referred to as monuments or pioneer texts (Neumann, 2001). Within the field of governance and politics such texts are often documents of law and regulation, or official reports issued by parliament or the government that can provide some official statements or normative position on a given topic. Key texts provide a starting point for analysis, by searching for semantic and syntactic choices made by the author: looking for cases where reality through language is coded. Analyses should include as much material as possible, but as it is impossible to read everything about a certain topic it is necessary to make clear restrictions to the selection of texts, while also acknowledging the fact that certain texts of relevance could be left out. Through close reading of texts the analyst can de-mystify and simplify narratives and expose matters that are not mentioned, identifying taken-for-granted knowledge and problematising what is naturalised and normalised (Grue, 2011). Within politics this includes revealing the cognitive and normative frames that steer politics in certain directions, instead of others (Bratberg, 2017).

While there are no recipes for conducting CDA, there are concepts and guidelines to guide the process of analysis. The size of the selection needs to be broad enough to acquire credible findings from the material, a corpus composed by multiple authors and actors. I will apply two reports from parliament, national budgets, one Norwegian Official Reports and reports from Ministry of Energy and Petroleum and Norwegian Petroleum Directorate as key texts, while consultation letters and responses from numbered licensing rounds will form the surrounding corpus, as will the observational data I gathered from the climate lawsuit. Bratberg (2017) offers a list of linguistic instruments to guide the initial analysis. To identify how discourses act out in texts, analysts may look for *passive form;* minimising the authors opportunities for action by presenting actions as outside of the actors' control or as a necessary and unavoidable consequence. Or has the author used *nominalisation*, mentioning actions as things, also with the intention of limiting the space for action. For example: 'Greenhouse gases are increasing, and climate scientist are becoming concerned'. The substantives *increase, become* and *concerned* are made into verbs and so appears more like a stabile concept than an action, this can be exposed through narrow grammatical reading. Hay (2016) refers to this as 'effects of truth', incidents where the author presents contested statements as truth or facts, disclosing alternative perceptions. This can be unveiled by questioning the authors presentation of something as uncontested, questioning the taken-for-granted statements. *Nodal points* are the central terms that other concepts are defined by,

analysts should look for these and how they determine a linguistic frame (Bratberg, 2017). Or are there metaphors that add value to certain viewpoints, what can these metaphors tell us about the authors motivation?

Neumann (2001) suggests searching for and categorizing the representations present within the prevalent discourse(s). A sort of inventory list to make up the contents and main perceptions of reality, as well as its core sender and recipients, its boundaries and possible conflicts with alternative discourses. It will also include important forms of communication, possible social field, and important actors. When a model of the discourse is provided, the next step is to analyse how this discourse is reproduced, and how is it connected to relations of power. What consequences does it have for social and political action, what is the materiality of the discourse? The field of global petroleum production is a very suitable example as such, just think of how oral statements can have direct outcomes for oil prices (Neumann, 2001).

Although this toolbox is useful when carrying out an analysis, the main purpose of a CDA analyst would be to interpret rather than to explain.

> The point of these analyses would be that our collective understanding of processes and events are often rooted in a narrative, a picture that not just illustrates our perceptions, but contributes to reproduce and confirm them. And they can be used as political tools to mobilise public support. (Bratberg, 2017, p. 57).

It is not so much concerned with cause and effect, how *this* specific use of language has caused *this* political action, but sooner CDA is about understanding people's life-world and how the dominating mindsets and assumptions that surround us are built up and maintained through texts. However, CDA can draw lines from language to action based on the expectation that language constructs action, and so explain what political practice consequences is precipitated by certain discourses. Analysts will however be cautious to draw generalizing conclusions to other contexts, as cognitive and normative frames are context-specific. To secure validity and rigour, I will put forward what documents and texts have been studied, and why these have been chosen while others let out. I will explain how they have been read and analysed, as well as provide direct quotations to document and exemplify my findings to the reader.

2.5 Positionality of the Author

Despite an obvious and growing call for extensive research on supply-side politics in general and in Norway especially (Le Billon & Kristoffersen, 2019), as well as the fact that the novelty of the climate law-suit requires excessive academic discussion, my choice of research topic is not purely academically motivated. My interest in climate and environmental issues developed when I worked politically and administratively for Nature & Youth from 2013 to 2014 and has since then regarded myself as an environmentalist, enacted through both active political engagement and passively as a paying member of several environmental organizations. When writing a discourse analysis I find it important to acknowledge that I as a scholar also write from a discursive standpoint. Personally, I find myself nearer the environmental discourse seeking reductions in CO_2-emissions through reduced licenses for the oil industry, posing a great challenge in keeping neutrality and acceptable standards of rigour in this research. The research theme is chosen because I find it necessary to investigate further the strategies put forward by science to reduce Norwegian emissions. However, my approach to environmental politics is never to place blame or to characterize the petroleum industry in itself as responsible for climate crisis. Rather, I find it more fruitful to seek knowledge about the arguments for expansion of the petroleum industry despite the threat of global heating. Only by understanding the opponents and their decisions for continuous non-environmental actions can we gain a constructive and fact-based discussion about the rate of production on the Norwegian continental shelf.

2.6 Gathering Data: Document Studies

This research aims to investigate and identify barriers and opportunities for implementing supply-side climate policy in Norway, and to recognise these by studying discourses prevalent in governing documents, consultation responses and progress in the court proceedings of the climate lawsuit. Similar to Asdal´s (2014) claim that exploring the emergence of carbon markets requires the study of a wide set of devices including planning documents and paper trails, this paper suggests that exploring the absence of managed reductions in the petroleum industry as a climate mitigation strategy must be done by studying governing documents, reports and plans, as well as the bureaucratic correspondence between key actors and institutions. By including texts not directly appointed to the central theme of investigation, such as the national budget which is a general document addressing economic status and future estimations opens an opportunity to study how climate change and environmental

issues are described and taken into account outside their main field of governance (Asdal, 2014). As mentioned above, it is necessary to make a selection of data, as it is impossible to explore all relevant texts on the topic at hand. I decided to delineate my data material determined by specific actors and a ten year time-period from 2009 – 2019. Syvertsen (1998) provide a checklist for analysing public (and other) documents which includes exploring the documents purpose, responsible authors, type of information gathered, mandate, validity of information, method of data gathering and finally, how does information from this source correspond with material from other sources.

To assist the close-reading and coding of these documents I utilised NVivo (qualitative data analysis program) which allows for processing extensive data material in an organised manner. Due to the time frame I have not read through all text with the same carefulness but applied the search function to be able to identify essential sections for close reading. All material was coded and sorted at two levels in NVivo, first by detailed descriptions of content, and subsequently sorted into 9 categories. The categories dispensed were; democracy; research and knowledge; governance; climate; petroleum; petroleum + climate; petroleum + local environment; petroleum + economic development; petroleum + economic risk. This process provided me with an overall idea of the texts main purpose, the different discursive directions employed, as well as identifying recurring statements that went on to inform and sort out discursive patterns for analysis. The reading and coding was informed by the theme and research question of this thesis as well as by theories and theoretical terms applied, as is necessary in the process of textual analysis (Østbye, Helland, Knapskog, & Larsen, 2013). I make reservations that relevant information might have been overlooked, however, all documents used as data are available for reading online, should readers wish to verify findings. In addition, in order to secure research validity, numerous direct citations are included in the analysis to ensure the preservation of the document's contents.

All citations presented in the document analysis has been translated from Norwegian to English by me. I have sought to find official or often-used translations of common terms and proper names when possible, and to use concise translations throughout the text. When translating text from official documents I have attempted to keep the citations as similar as the original text as possible, sometimes at the cost of textual flow and eloquent writing. I will assert that all citations have maintained their intention and purpose. Still, it is important to acknowledge that important content may have been lost in translation, if so, all error is mine.

In addition, all sources cited are available online for the reader should there arise a need to review my translation.

2.7 Gathering Data: Observational Studies

In order to study how the discourses under investigation act out in practice I observed the trial where Nature & Youth and Greenpeace took the state to court, sued for violating the Norwegian constitution when issuing new licenses for oil-exploration in the Barents Sea back in 2016. I had two main reasons for choosing this lawsuit as a case. First, because it brings together two actors belonging to opposing discourses in an isolated courtroom where I expected the details of each discourse would become especially clear. And second, because the overall aim of this thesis is to investigate opportunities for supply-side climate policies, meaning states refraining from extracting fossil fuels based on climate change considerations. This type of climate policy has proven harder than anticipated to study because despite immense research and economic studies there is no real public, political debate on supply-side policy in Norway, and it has never been attempted or even assessed by the Norwegian government. I consider the climate law-suit the most substantial and recent attempt at implementing reduced pace of petroleum extraction in Norway, and hence a form of supply-side climate policy. Therefore, I found it is necessary to study this process, its arguments and counter-arguments in order to identify the underlying structures and power-relations functioning as barriers for implementing supply-side climate policy in Norway.

Gathering data through observation offers a chance to study social events *naturally*, without interventions or questions from the scholar. According to Tjora (2017) it is considered among the most challenging, time-consuming, but also most potent data-gathering processes one can expose oneself to as a student or researcher. Observational data is valuable because it gives us access to situations that are not yet analysed by the actors involved and is as such an opportunity to study what people actually do, not just what they say they do. It is suitable for this theme and research topic as CDA includes both written and oral texts. Within the courtroom two discourses met in an isolated setting where the language was distinct and concentrated, undisturbed by other actors or political struggles which is ideal for analysis.

Since I did not make my presence known, I avoided so-called research effects, which occurs when the observed acts differently because they are aware that they are under observation by a researcher. However, a courtroom is hardly a natural setting encouraging a relaxed and unstrained every-day behaviour; every trial follows a specific process and procedure, a

technical legal language is used, and almost everything being said is prepared and rehearsed. The aim of observing the climate lawsuit was not however to investigate behaviour, but to trace it as a textual source, as CDA allows for analysing oral as well as written text. In that regard, the fact that the courtroom is so formal served to concentrate the text performed and made it easy to sort out the core aspects.

Tjora (2017) encourages scholars to concentrate their curiosity during observation, as taking notes of everything observed is impossible and will cause massive workloads when processing the material. I quickly concentrated my attention towards the topic's gas, politics, governance, climate, environment and economy in an effort to shut out all the information concerning the law, the constitution, the discussions in parliament leading up to the constitution, references to textbooks on environmental law and interpretation of constitutional laws etc. This heightened my attention span and reduced my notes substantially. During observation I gathered data in a handwritten field diary, on account of practical concerns (limited space, no access to charger in the courtroom), and consequently chose a salient documenting strategy where I described only the most conspicuous events. Following Tjora's (2017) recommendations I portrayed events and oral text in my field notes without interpretation and analysis aspiring 'clean' field notes describing exactly what was said, justifications of arguments and recurring themes, all the while keeping an eye open for what was excluded from the conversation. These considerations were documented in a secluded document. My analytical impressions and interpretations were kept in a secluded document, mostly written after the court was closed.

To better concentrate my field work beyond this, I formulated observation questions in advance and during the proceedings. First and foremost, I observed what was being said and what worldviews the opposing actors could be understood to maintain, in addition to distinguishing what were the main areas of conflict and disagreements. An overarching focus was to look for contesting discourses prevalent in the court room, how these were presented and how the differing discourses related to the core aspects of dispute. Lastly, I looked for 'truth effects' what was put forward by the opposing parts were objectively true, based on assumptions or facts, and if contesting views were attempted hidden or denied. I was present every day of the proceedings and sought to record witness statements as well as argumentative statements without reference to my personal background information and insights I obtain due to my personal interest in environmental issues. Due to my positionality I aspired to gather data unaffected by personal perceptions. On the first day in court, there was

not enough space for everyone who had turned up, including myself, so I spent the first day of observation watching a livestream set up by Friends of the Earth Norway from a conference hotel nearby. The remaining part of the trial received less attendance by media which made it able for me to observe from the audience benches.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

I took the part of a *complete observant*, where the observer is passive and the observed is not made aware of my role as a researcher (Tjora, 2017). During the trial I sat with other bystanders in the press bench and blended in rather effortlessly in the crowd, mainly because other former members of Nature and Youth and the environmental movement at large were present to follow the trial from the audience. Seeing as this was an open and public trial with substantial media coverage and all the participants in the trial represented not themselves but either an organization, the government or the Ministry of Petroleum I did not consider it necessary to alert them about my presence. The proceedings were also live streamed through the organisation's social media channels. My decision not to alert the actors about my presence was supported by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), with the same justifications. The correspondence confirming this is attached in the appendix.

Hidden observation is not usually encouraged because it conflicts with the basic principle which holds that people are entitled to know if they are part of a research project and reserve the opportunity to withdraw at any point. Observation in public places and of public persons however opens up for hidden observation, especially if gathering consent is practically challenging or if the space in which people are observed is uncontestably of public quality (NESH, 2016). Persons who voluntarily seek public attention or have accepted work-related positions that forges public attention are not derived of their freedom in the same manner as other private persons (NESH, 2016). As public figures and participants in the public debate they must expect that their public actions or statements could be the subject of research. Both judges, lawyers, representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum as well as the leaders of Greenpeace and Nature & Youth were considered public figures, and it seemed unlikely they would expose any personal information during the trial.

3 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will put forward middle-range theories and terms that will be used as analytical tools, to put findings into a greater context and to analyse the developments found in Norwegian climate and petroleum policy. I will start by conceptualizing oil as a social and political resource and go on to present theoretical terms that can explain why energy transition from fossil to renewable energy has proved so complicated. Relevant terms are path dependency, carbon lock-in, and spatial embeddedness. I further explain the theory put forward by Sinn (2012) on the Green Paradox, which explains how demand-side climate policies can lead to accelerated production of fossil fuels, and subsequently the approach of 'supply-side climate policies' which is drawn forward as a possible response to the lack of economic and climate efficiency of demand-side climate policies as well as a corrective to a possible green paradox. Finally, I present theory on neoliberal governance of nature, and theories of scale to form additional basis for later analysis of discourses in Norwegian petroleum and climate change policy. In pair with the analytical toolkit from critical discourse analysis, this theoretical framework will be applied to explain the current position of petroleum governance in Norway, seen in context with the threat of global heating. In particular, it will contribute to identify and analyse the political space for moderating petroleum activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf in pursuance of mitigating carbon emissions and reducing global heating.

3.1 Oil as a Social and Political Resource

In many ways, oil can be described simply as a natural resource: a 'gift' from nature, produced over time by geological processes and handed to humanity to process and use for developmental purposes. Located far beneath the crust of the earth, oil is a natural product that can, and has to a large degree been described purely as a natural scientific subject (Malm, 2016). As humans have developed technology for extracting fossil fuel from beneath the ground, oil and gas has served as a resource for creating energy and as a valuable commodity for export and trade. Because so much of our modern society is based on the extraction of

fossil fuels, Malm (2016) suggest we are living in the era of 'the fossil economy'. "…an economy of self-sustaining growth predicated on the growing consumption of fossil fuels, and therefore generating a sustained growth in emissions of carbon dioxide" (Malm, 2016, p. 11). Certain essential attributes to this exact resource causes scholars within social sciences to consider it mainly as a *social*, rather than a natural resource:

> Where, how, and when oil moves within modern economies has little to do with nature or geology. The way we use it, who can afford it, where it is extracted, and even how we know how much is in the ground are determined by the actions and interaction of some of the most powerful actors and institutions in the global economy. (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013, p. 3).

It is above all due to the uneven geographical location of oil reserves, the different prerequisites of owners of oil resources to extract it and the competition, cooperation and conflict that oil resources bring about that oil can also be termed not just a social, but a political resource. Le Billon & Kristoffersen (2019) argue that fossil fuel reserves are actually 'created' by new technological developments extending accessibility, deregulation and raising prices.

Oils exceptionally high energy density combined with its transportation advantages offered by its liquid properties creates a significant gap between the energy and investments expended in gathering oil, and the amount of released energy and profit accrued. This energy surplus is what makes oil as a resource so advantageous compared to other sources of energy, as well as an extremely profitable product. Additionally, although oil like other fossil fuels is conventionally considered an exhaustible resource, it is argued by Bridge & Le Billon (2013) that the extension of oil reserves are in fact not fixed, but rather continuously shaped and produced by our geological knowledge, technological advancements, political factors and the changing economics of extracting and producing oil. Even though over 1,3 trillion barrels of oil have been extracted from the earth over the last 150 years, known world reserves have grown by 38 percent between 1990 and 2010 (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013). As a recent UNEP report declared: 'we are awash in fossil fuels' (UNEP et al., 2019, p. 7). It suggests that even though we have extracted enough oil to term our economies 'fossil economies', we are not yet running out of oil, we are running into it (Claes, 2018, p. 29). Included in this picture is also that oil´s unusual qualities has made the oil market vulnerable for other mechanisms than just demand and supply, particularly decisions set by the Organisation for Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) which controls 80% of the world´s oil reserves and as such can, to some degree,

regulate the price of oil by continuously controlling production levels to meet global demand. The price of oil is also influenced by external events, or events disrupting production and supply, which overall means that also the oil price can be considered as constructed.

3.2 Path Dependence Theory

One of the main aims of this thesis is to investigate reasons why Norway has yet to appreciate supply-side reductions in oil productions as a means of reducing greenhouse gases despite plausible research, and so I now turn to assess different middle-range theories that might enlighten the issues at hand, starting with theory on path dependency. Employing a broad conceptualization, path dependency entails simply that 'history matters', and that past events has influence for future events (Mahoney, 2000). This suggests that within a given system or institution, decisions made in the past prevail, and can have consequences for future development. Applying a more narrow definition, path dependency is what occurs when a contingent event sets in motion a sequence of future events in a deterministic pattern (Mahoney, 2000). The self-reinforcing mechanisms contributes to a stable reproduction of the system over time, but the deterministic pattern initiated by historical events functions as a barrier for rapid reaction and restructuring. Through path-dependency theory, processes can be traced to display how when an economy or a system is faced with multiple potential outcomes, the eventual outcome is dependent on historical events and decisions (Fouquet, 2016). As a result, if circumstances change or if the 'wrong' path is followed, the system can end up in a sub-optimal outcome.

Applied to energy, which is produced from a variety of sources, and its efficiency is dependent on technological developments. As technology advances, new sources of energy may become more cost-efficient by more electricity produced per cost of raw material or beneficial for society by causing less greenhouse gases (Kuzemko, Keating, & Goldthau, 2016). It is expected that the market will shift accordingly and take use of the most profitable or socially viable source of energy (Fouquet, 2016). The exact cost of environmental damage caused by use of fossil fuel is hard to determine, but they are clearly greater than zero. Path dependency can explain why the energy market has failed to move towards the socially optimal outcome (Unruh, 2000). Once in a position of path-dependence, barriers for moving beyond this established system are exacerbated by sunk costs in existing infrastructure and vested interests. Investments in alternative energy sources with new technology makes little

financial sense when enormous amounts have already been spent creating systems for the current source of energy. Neither does it encourage innovation and explorative technological novelties. According to Kuzemko, Keating and Goldthau (2016), processes of path dependence are driven not only by technical features, the social aspect also has to be acknowledged. The literature suggest analysis should consider the prospects for innovation 'a reflection of the existing values, laws, patterns and institutional arrangements' (Kuzemko et al., 2016, p. 197) inhibited, in order to explain why innovation tend to seek change or adaption within the existing system. This literature and its descriptions hold connotations to the situation in Norway where credible arguments for larger structural transitions away from the prevailing oil regime are expressed but have not yet managed to produce meaningful changes. Considering this, in my analysis I will put emphasis on studying whether path dependence theory can explain why Norway is not moving beyond oil.

3.3 Carbon Lock-In, Sunk Costs and Spatial Embeddedness

The term 'lock-in' is a way to describe a systems entry into a trapping area of stable equilibrium (David, 2000). When locked into this stability, it can be impossible to escape without an intervention of some external force or shock, which can transform the underlying structural landscape. The stable condition is positive if the point of departure is optimal, and negative if the system is locked at an unproductive stage, or become inadequate because of changed conditions (David, 2000).

Literature on carbon economy find that extractive states are vulnerable to suffer from different consequences of 'carbon entanglement', that is to say a deep interconnection of economies and political structures with the fossil fuel industry (Piggot, 2018). Introducing the term carbon lock-in, Unruh (2000) provides a more specific theoretical explanation for why governments, and societies in general are unable to take the necessary precautionary action to move towards more sustainable energy sources. This is explained as an outcome of reinforcing mechanisms at the technological, organizational and institutional level. For example, governments have policy instruments to steer the energy market and override mistakes, but in the instance of the fossil energy regime the opposite is happening, governments are exacerbating market and policy failures through subsidies and policies bolstering fossil fuel extraction (UNEP et al., 2019). First, at the technological level, *technological* systems, inferior designs and dominant production designs can become locked-

in through a path-dependent process, excluding firms with new, improved technology-designs (Unruh, 2000). A prominent example is the qwerty-keyboard, developed in 1847 and specialized to write fast on a mechanical type-writer, and still in use on today's modern computers despite the introduction of several new designs aimed at speeding up typing. Such standards can be reinforced by firms building on their core competencies, technological standards and investments by financial institutions seeking to minimize risk (Unruh, 2000).

Second, lock-in at the *organizational* level is mainly driven by private institutions such as unions, universities, industry associations that through coalition building, development of social norms, customs and behaviour, as well as political lobbying produce a social affiliation on behalf of the technological system. "This social co-evolution with technology can have pervasive and lasting influence on individual preferences. From this perspective, expectations and preferences co-evolve with, and become adapted to, the dominant technological system in an endogenous path-dependent manner" (Unruh, 2000, p. 823). Third, considering the *institutional level* and governments contributions to a systems state of carbon lock-in, it is important first due to the ability for implementing policies that can override market forces, and second because governmental institutions change slower than technological innovation happens. According to Unruh (2000) if governments decides to favour a specific design to give it competitive advantages, and formalizes this standardized practice through formal justifications, laws, and governmental institutions they tend to prove difficult to transform. If technology becomes pervasive to the point where it is considered a social need, stepping out of a lock-in system will seem risky for officials seeking to extend their tenure. Together, mechanisms at these three levels; technological, organizational and institutional, in a technological-industrial system reinforce each other and creates a situation that hinders governments from correcting market failure, in this case: to move from carbon-intensive to sustainable energy sources and technologies. It is important to note however, that carbon lock-in is not considered a permanent condition, but rather a persistent state that creates 'systemic market and policy barriers to alternatives' (Unruh, 2000, p. 818).

The situation where one technology has become dominant to such a degree also brings with it more material consequences, in the form of sunk costs. Investments in physical infrastructure such as grids, platforms and pipes are enormous, and investments are made with prospects of long-term earnings. Bridge et al. (2013) apply the term 'spatial embeddedness' to encompass both economic, material and cultural aspects of energy systems which highlight how physical

and geographical aspects serve as barriers for low-carbon transition. With the prospect of environmental system transitions comes concerns for 'stranded assets': unsustainable assets suffering due to diverse climatic measures, which could pose major losses for investors (Ansar, Caldecott, & Tilbury, 2013). Muttit et al. (2016) conceptualise stranded assets with regard to fossil fuels as an event where "Companies continue to develop new fields and mines, governments are eventually successful in restricting emissions, and the resulting reduction in demand causes many extraction assets to become uneconomic and shut down, causing destruction of capital and large job losses" (Muttit et al., 2016, p. 32). Moreover, McGlade & Ekins (2014) argue that lack of coherence between climate and petroleum policies will cause 'unburnable carbon', suggesting already found reserves will come to pose a financial risk to resource owners, as the price of production exceeds expected income. Addressing the magnitude of these reserves, Meinshausen et al. (2009), estimate that "Emitting the carbon from all proven fossil fuel reserves would […] vastly exceed the allowable CO_2 emission budget for staying below 2ºC" (Meinshausen et al., 2009, p. 1160). As an exporter of oil and gas, what challenges does this pose for Norway? Is Norway in, or headed towards a state of carbon lock-in? Could our assets become stranded?

3.4 The Green Paradox

First termed by Sinn (2008), the so-called Green Paradox refers to a phenomena arising when announced future restrictions on carbon consumption lead to accelerated production and emissions from fossil fuel reserves. To understand this outcome, we need to take a short detour into the political economy of oil and the intrinsic structures and mechanisms governing the global oil trade market, more specifically the implications of the Hotelling rule.

In short, the Hotelling framework demonstrates how owners of oil resources consider the most advantageous strategy for maximizing their income (Claes, 2018). Based on the premise that oil is an exhaustive resource and that there is a fixed amount of oil reserves on the earth, the Hotelling framework applies the idea that owners of exhaustible resources have two choices. Either extract petroleum resources now and turn oil into money in the bank, or keep oil in the ground in expectance of rising oil prices in the future. If the oil price is expected to rise in the future, following the Hotelling theory the rational choice would be to delay extraction in order to maximise the profit possible to accrue from the oil reserves. If, however prices are expected to drop in the future, resource owners will extract and export as much as

possible while the price is still at a high, avoiding the risk of being stuck with a worthless resource and sunk interests, as well as gaining profits from the interest rate from savings in the bank (Claes, 2018). The global oil price is exceptionally volatile and vulnerable to political instability, which along with other factors makes the market of extractive resources stand out compared to other industries. In the petroleum industry, time is of the essence more than in other industries, and for owners of fossil resources the concern is not *how much* fuel to produce, but rather *when* to extract it (Pittel, Van der Ploeg, & Withagen, 2014). Although the Hotelling theory rely on some inaccurate premises, such as the assumption of perfect knowledge of available resources which have been empirically rejected and is as such not directly applicable to reality, its core ideas provides the starting point for most economic theories regarding exhaustible resources.

The theory outlined by Sinn (Sinn, 2008, 2012) on green paradoxes suggests that announced climate policy measures and plans for future restrictions to demand-side of fossil (as signalled by the EU through the EU ETS) fuels signals to owners of resources that the current market price is currently the highest within a foreseeable future. With intentions to maximise the profit from their asset, fossil fuel companies speed up extraction and sell their resource before it is too late. “The mere announcement of intentions to fight global warming made the world warmer even faster. That is the green paradox” (Sinn, 2012, p. 189). Applied on the emission trading scheme within the EU, if regulation of demand is not as exhaustive as first announced, and emission caps are not tightened as much or as rapidly as expected, this can increase future emissions. Should anticipated demand-side regulations not reduce the price and market for fossil fuel sufficiently, resource owners will continue production as usual. As a result, emissions are accelerated instead of reduced, as a direct cause of the announced demand-side climate policies. Because of these effects, Sinn (2012) argues demand-side policy alone is not an efficient strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Even less effective than an announcement of future restrictive climate policies, is announcing strict policies and then relaxing them (Sinn, 2012). The result is not only that fossil carbon is introduced to the atmosphere faster than what would have been the case without the announced climate policies, the total share of carbon introduced to the atmosphere is also greater. According to Van de Graaf & Verbruggen (2015), we need to consider the geopolitics of oil not so much as a struggle to attain access to scarce resources, but rather a contest between oil producers seeking to maximize their financial rents in the face of excess oil

supplies. In this regard, I find it relevant to consider Norway´s position and development, are we under the risk of experiencing a green paradox? Can the accelerated pace of oil exploration in the Barents Sea be seen as a reaction to expected restrictions on fossil fuels and an attempt at extracting and exporting the reserves on the Norwegian Continental Shelf before CO_2-pricing on oil and gas reduces market profitability? Sinn (2008) argues that the primary strategy for avoiding the green paradox is to take resource owners by surprise by implementing climate policies rapidly, thus removing their window for accelerating production. Unannounced changes to restrictive climate policies on one of the world's most profitable, powerful and complex industries does however seem both unrealistic and with undemocratic and unpredictable outcomes. The second best strategy presented by Sinn (2008) is to implement supply-side climate policies, which will be addressed next.

3.5 Supply-Side Climate Policy

The unwanted occurrence of redundant greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has numerous and complicated causes, but clearly the greatest contributor to CO_2-emissions is the use and production of fossil fuels, which accounts for over 75% of global greenhouse emissions (Aykut & Castro, 2017; Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018; UNEP et al., 2019). In Norway, emissions from oil and gas production on the Norwegian continental shelf accounts for 27% of national emissions, making it the second largest contributor after emissions relating to transport (Norwegian Environment Agency, 2019b). Despite excessive measures taken to de-carbonize the energy-market, coal, oil and natural gas remain the world's dominant energy sources, making up 81% of the total primary energy supply (UNEP et al., 2019). Ever since global heating was put on the international agenda, fossil fuels have been targeted to minimize dependence on carbon-intensive energy sources while transitioning to alternative sources of renewable energy. The EU has used economic and political tools to put a price on carbon combustion, i.e. a price paid as a tax or emission permit to government for every tonne of CO_2 emitted into the atmosphere (IPCC, 2007). Targeting importers and consumers, these policies seek to limit demand for fossil fuels, using economic market forces to steer the global energy regime from fossil to renewable sources of energy. This strategy follows the basic economic model market mechanisms, meaning adjustments between price, supply and demand which tend to automatically gravitate toward market equilibrium, thus overcoming excess supply or excess demand (Xiao, 2017). If the demand of a product decreases, so will the supply. By

making fossil fuels too expensive to purchase, demand-side policies are designed to make consumers choose cheaper, and more sustainable sources of energy.

However, when domestic demand in one country or region decreases, the global price of fossil fuels will also decrease, which in turn leads to increased demand abroad. In effect, this causes carbon leakage, zeroing out some of the effect on Co_2-emissions (Holtsmark, 2019). Carbon leakage is what happens when emission reductions in countries with strong climate governance is offset by an increase of emissions in countries with less stringent climate policy, so-called free-riders (IPCC, 2007). It occurs because decline in the international price of oil due to demand-restrictions triggers consumption in countries without such demand-side climate policies. Carbon leakage can also happen if restraints on production of carbon-intensive energy leads to a reallocation of energy-production to a region with less strict, or even without mitigation rules (IPCC, 2007). In short, as long as countries operate with different stringency of climate policies, some effect of domestic reductions is expected to be cancelled out by increased emissions abroad. Considering carbon leakage is important in this regard because it forms a core argument in Norway´s reasoning for increased oil and gas exploration and extraction, articulated as 'if we don't produce oil and gas, someone else will' (Norwegian Oil and Gas Association, 2019b). The overall concern is that due to carbon leakage, national cuts will not have any effect on total global emissions, but rather increase as Norwegian production of fossil fuels is relatively green. The tenability of this concern is contested however, and this topic will be further discussed in chapter 5, 6 and 7.

This carbon-leakage would not be present in a 'perfect scenario' of absolute global climate cooperation. If the Paris agreement had absolute endorsement and Nationally Determined Contributions were coherent with the goal of keeping global heating well below 2°C, demand-side policies would successfully make the fossil fuel industry abundant (Fæhn et al., 2018). This is however far from the present reality, recently exemplified by the United States formally withdrawing from the Paris agreement (DN, 2019). Faced with inadequate climate policy cooperation, climate researchers within economy have seen the need for additional policies, a new strand of economic literature combining regulations on both the supply and demand-side of fossil fuel production has developed in recent years (Asheim et al., 2019; Fæhn et al., 2018; Fæhn et al., 2017; Green & Denniss, 2018; Hagem & Storrøsten, 2019; Hoel, 1994; Holtsmark, 2019; Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018). These studies show that regulating fossil fuel energy from the demand- and the supply-side simultaneously can serve

as the most effective way to minimize carbon leakage and reduce CO_2 emissions, which in a Norwegian context would entail reducing the production of oil and gas while continuing reducing fossil fuel demand through EU ETS mechanisms. The literature indicates that even relatively small reductions in supply has meaningful effect on the global amount of emissions, meaning also a reduction in Norwegian production will have robust effect on the total CO_2 budget.

Supply-side climate policy comes in different formats, primarily divided into material and economic instruments. Material policies aim to mechanically reduce the space for fossil fuel industries, making geographical limits to extractive activity (Le Billon & Kristoffersen, 2019). Perhaps the most direct form of regulation is to introduce moratoria on production within state territories, meaning a temporarily but complete stop in fossil fuel exploration and activity within a certain area. Moratoriums on petroleum have been implemented already in France, Costa Rica, Belize, Ireland and New Zealand, by national policies rejecting all new proposals for extractive offshore activity (Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018). Production bans can also be applied on more specific areas, which often occurs when there is an interest in preserving local environment as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Examples of this is former US president Barack Obamas legislation to preserve Arctic Areas for petroleum exploration, or the political consensus in Norway to not drill for petroleum within the marginal ice zone in the Arctic (Bjørndal, 2020; The Guardian, 2016). In a Norwegian context, restraints in awarded licenses is drawn forward as a favourable instrument for reducing production, especially if licenses held back would be awarded without supply-side policies (Fæhn et al., 2018). This is supported by literature considering a global context by Muttit et al. (2016) who argues leaving the supply of fossil fuels to the market is no longer a supportable approach, and suggests governmental regulation of the amount of fossil fuels that can be extracted by means of withholding leases or permits for fossil fuel extraction. The effect of restraining licenses grows by each exporter following suit, and so in order to achieve a certain level of efficiency in supply-side climate policies it is necessary to encourage other exporters participation. As in other parts of climate policy, the most efficient measures come from cooperation between countries.

Economic instruments for supply-side policies moderate supply of fossil fuels by use of fees or taxes for oil production, or by removal of beneficial industry subsidies. Implementation tools also include taxes on export of fossil fuels or pricing carbon emitted during production,

with the intention of making production more expensive for the oil and gas companies (Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018). Fæhn et al. (2018) argue that a fee decided by the quantity of extracted petroleum could be beneficial, targeting production volume instead of emitted CO_2-emissions. A production fee is flexible as it can distribute expenses on new projects only, as well as distinguish between oil and gas production, which differs in carbon-intensity. Fossil fuel companies often depend on beneficial tax-systems or direct subsidies to be profitable, and so an economic strategy proposed is to remove such 'special arrangements' to make extractive industries less profitable and heighten companies risk (Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018).

> By reducing the costs of finding and developing new oil fields and by increasing net revenues for the fuels extracted, these subsidies affect the economies of fossil fuel extraction; in the USA, for example, half of all oil production from new fields may depend on subsidies to be profitable. (Lazarus & Van Asselt, 2018, p. 7).

Changing the economic foundation for extractive companies induces incentives to only extract the most profitable, and easily accessed resources. As put forward in the previous chapter on the Norwegian petroleum industry, Norway has several 'special arrangements' included in the petroleum tax regime which might be subject of removal should a climate strategy using supply-side policies be considered.

With the intention of avoiding a green paradox, supply-side policies are effective because restricting fossil fuel production eliminates resource owners of their window of opportunity to accelerate present production, thus counteracting the paradox (Hagem & Storrøsten, 2019). Approaching fossil fuel production from both sides leaves resource owners with fewer loopholes to maximise profit, hence ensuring the efficiency and accuracy of already announced climate policies targeting the consumption side of fossil fuels. For extractive states abroad, one state´s restrictions on supply gives incentives for other producers of fossil fuels to delay their extraction expecting increased overall profits in the future, as opposed to accelerating production as would have been the rational strategy within demand-side regulation (Holtsmark, 2019; Pittel et al., 2014). Taking into account Norway´s commitment to the Paris Agreement, supply-side climate policy is suggested by economic researchers as a suitable strategy for reducing emissions in a cost-efficient manner. And further, considering Norway´s risk of stranded assets and carbon lock-in, supply-side policy could be a strategy for avoiding or moving away from this condition. Finally, considering the Norwegian Paradox and Norway´s role as a front-runner in the international climate regime, it can be argued that

making such drastic national cuts would have meaningful signal effect and increase Norway´s symbolic climate credibility significantly.

As mentioned above, supply-side climate policies can have positive effects beyond short-term reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In a broader context, the International Energy Agency (IEA) stated already in 2012 that the current found reserves of coal, oil and gas were not compatible with the target of limiting global heating to 2℃, warning that two thirds of found reserves needed to stay untouched in order to reach the established sustainability goals (IEA, 2012). In an article from 2014, McGlade and Ekins (2014) found a significant disconnection between extractive states policies endorsing exploration of reserves in new areas, particularly in the Arctic and deep-water areas, and their international commitments to reduce temperature rises. This is because in these areas' fossil resources are harder and more costly to extract, but also because these areas contain vulnerable natural values. They argue that:

> The continued licensing of new areas for oil exploration is only consistent with declared intentions to limit CO_2-emissions and climate change if the majority of fields that are discovered remain undeveloped, which fatally undermines the economic rationale for their discovery in the first place. (McGlade & Ekins, 2014, p. 111).

The authors suggest governments should refrain from encouraging further extensive exploitation of already discovered resources, expensive resources especially, as such incentives are incompatible with limiting global heating to 2℃ (McGlade & Ekins, 2014).

The goal of staying below 1.5℃ temperature rise, determined in the Paris Agreement after McGlade and Ekins (2014) made their suggestions additionally narrows the scope of extracting fossil fuels. In a recent Production Gap Report issued by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) it was found that "Governments are planning to produce about 50% more fossil fuels by 2030 than would be consistent with a 2℃ pathway and 120% more than would be consistent with a 1.5℃ pathway" (UNEP et al., 2019, p. 2). While several governments have already implemented policies to reduce or even restrict the production of fossil fuels (Costa Rica, New Zealand, France), most extractive states, including Norway, are putting forward long-term investment and exploration plans that do not comply with temperature goals agreed upon in the Paris Agreement (NRK, 2019; UNEP et al., 2019). Combining demand- and supply-side climate policy has broader beneficial features because it imposes transformation and system change which is necessary to reduce the risk of carbon

lock-in, stranded assets and pre-empt a green paradox (Le Billon & Kristoffersen, 2019, p. 4). Moderations in Norwegian oil supply through stricter requirements for new licenses and projects lessens the risk for sunk cost in infrastructure as well as found reserves becoming stranded assets should the market for fossil fuel energy move further towards a zero-emission society.

3.6 Scale

As one of the four core concepts constituting modern human geography (place, space, scale, territory (Jordhus-Lier & Stokke, 2017)), scale gives a spatial perspective on social processes and phenomena. According to Herod (2011), understanding the world as scaled gives social researchers a sense of size, power relationships and hierarchy when studying social and political phenomena and processes. Using scale to define limits and categorize the world by order of descriptive size provides terms such as local, national, regional and global, where the local and national are seen as smaller than the global. With size comes understandings of power, for example is the local often considered undermined by influences from the national or the global, which are assumed higher up the spatial hierarchical ladder (Herod, 2011). Viewing the world as scaled provides tools for addressing hierarchy at a spatial level. While scale can, and has been, understood as given geographical sizes separating analytical levels, this thesis will apply scale as a socially constructed concept, in line with the overall epistemological analytical approach in modern human geography. Applying a social constructive approach to scale, society is viewed as organized in hierarchical levels, but these levels are not given by nature, they are socially constructed by society through political and economic processes in a continuous manner (Jordhus-Lier & Stokke, 2017). If scales and scalar levels are socially constructed, they must also be in flux and changeable over time or according to context, meaning the scalar hierarchy may shift.

What then, decides scalar levels, their sizes and how they relate if they are not given but continuously constructed? “We may be best served by approaching scale not as an ontological structure which ‘exists’, but as an epistemological one – a way of knowing or apprehending” suggests Jones (Herod, 2011; Jones, 1998). According to Herod (2011), language surrounds the politics of scale, meaning our conception, discourses and visualizations of the world shape how it´s organized and structured. This mechanism is reciprocal, so that scalar constructs also shape our worldviews and how we envision society, congruent to how in discourse analysis language is understood to both construct and be constructed by society. How we frame society

epistemologically in turn has material effects in shaping sociospatial organization and the societal hierarchy. This again affect peoples and institutions behaviour. Presenting shortly some theoretical and practical understandings of scale, the *national* level has within geographical literature been regarded as coinciding with the nation-state. "The national scale, in other words, is seen to enclose the absolute spaces/territorial expanses of a particular nation-state, even if few so-designated national territorial units really fits the strict definition of nation-states" (Herod, 2011). The size of the national level is traditionally perceived as strictly limited to its nation-state borders, and so it´s traditional hierarchical status is confined to what exists within its territorial borders. The global level is thought of not relations between states, but as a distinguished size above the nation-state, against which 'lower' scales are powerless.

Scalar sizes are not just socially constructed, they are also conceptualized as produced, emphasizing a choice. Globalization might undermine the autonomy of the nation-state, but it was also once implemented *by* nation-states themselves through economic and political actions shifting autonomy and power. Herod (2011) argues that instead of understanding the national and the global level as opposites in a scenario where the global undermines the national in a zero-sum game, "…the connectivity between them means that the national and the global mutually shape how each other is constituted" (Herod, 2011, p. 211).

Scalar analysis brings forward relevant insights for this thesis on two regards. First, because both climate and petroleum politics operate on the full scalar spectre. Imagine, for example the international climate regime and its hierarchy. Nation-states meet at Conference of the Parties (COP), forming a supra-national and authoritative body headed by the UN, a global actor. UN´s power depends on nation-states favour, thus reducing global power over nations. At the same time local sizes such as American states have overrun national policy and implanted policies to reduce emissions in accordance with the Paris agreement. And supra-national institutions such as the EU are heavily involved, is their influencing powers regarded above or sided with Norway´s national jurisdiction? The international climate regime is messy and complicated, and scalar politics is frequently used to 'fix' or 're-fix' scalar variables after which purpose they are serving. Not surprisingly though, given the complexity of climate change; caused by many small and local emissions, which are mostly determined by decisions at a national, regional or even global level, leading to a global climatic heating starting from the atmosphere, which again impacts nature and humans locally, although unevenly across the globe due to both meteorological and societal differences. How we view and categorize

climate change, its driving forces and its effects is important for how we respond to the problem at hand and how climate policy is developed and prioritized following the premise from social constructionism that language has material consequences. Is global warming a global problem far away, is it local and affecting things in my backyard, or even my livelihood? This is important for how states and citizens relate and react to the threat of climate change.

Secondly, scalar analysis is important because discourse analysis which forms the main methodology in this thesis is concerned with how meanings, metaphors, representations, statements, images, stories and so on produce distinct variations of certain events and how they are perceived (Burr, 2015). Dominating discourses have political and material effect on society through linguistic features such as text and language, in the same way that language shape our conceptions of scalar levels in society. Identifying how they are formulated and what purpose they serve is important in order to fully understand the intrinsic nature of discourses shaping society. Are perceptions of scale stabile within prevailing climate discourses or do they shift according to what purpose they are serving? Do contesting discourses apply the same understanding of scalar hierarchy and power relations? Do scale influence discourses so that discourses differentiate based on which scalar level the discourse stems from or is concerned with? These are questions I will seek to answer in the following document and observational study.

3.7 Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is a broad term with numerous definitions and vast literature within human geography, and as such an in-depth examination is beyond the scope of this thesis. Due to the theme of this research and the established focus in CDA of studying capitalism and the neoliberal economy, a short account will be given in order to apply theory of neoliberal governance in the analysis.

In the introduction to their 'Handbook of Neoliberalism', Springer, Birch and MacLeavy (2016) write

> At a very base level we can say that when we make reference to 'neoliberalism', we are generally referring to the new political, economic, and social arrangements within society that emphasize market relations, re-tasking the role of the state, and individual responsibility. Most scholars tend to agree that neoliberalism is broadly defined as the

> extension of competitive markets into all areas of life, including the economy, politics and society. (Springer et al., 2016).

According to Lohmann (2016), included in neoliberalism´s marketisation is also nature, natural resources and climate change itself. He argues that in order to fit the natural environment into the neoliberal economic system, nature has been turned into tradeable units. Further, he addresses how action to combat climate change has been transformed due to neoliberalism and largely through the agency of the state, resulting in the generation of tradeable, priced and ownable units of molecular 'mitigation' (Lohmann, 2016, p. 481). This marketisation is apparent in the EU´s strategy to reduce emission using ETS, and internationally in the Paris Agreements article six (United Nations, 2015). Taking nature and climate into the system of economic markets controlled by industrial and financial powers has transformed something as complex as the atmosphere and administration of ecosystems into an entity for sale and trade by pricing pollution and trading CO_2-quotas. For nature to fit into the neoliberal system it has to be separated into standardized units, which Lohmann (2016) points out are quite different than the units associated with conventional biological systems. Other ways of separating natural units such as species, strain or ecological dispersion tends to serve the purpose of conservation of preservation of nature 'for itself'. For example, environmental philosopher Hverven (2018) argues for policy-makers taking natures intrinsic value into consideration when taking decisions with environmental effect. In contrast, neoliberal natures tend to be categorized into 'ecosystem services', units allowing aggregation, exchange and economic circulation (Lohmann, 2016), resulting in market profit. This also includes climatic sizes, such as cuts in emissions being standardized to serve an economic purpose, rather than an environmental. "Overall, a huge range of 'performative equations' defining a standardized 'climate benefit' unit (t CO_2e, or 'tons of carbon dioxide equivalent') are stretching the spatial, temporal and logical ways of conceptualizing both pollution and climate itself" (Lohmann, 2016, pp. 487-488). He goes on to emphasize the neoliberal discursive use of language, treating ecosystem services as something consistent, having always been there, "awaiting merely the figurative flipping of the switch that would allow the profit motive to be enlisted in their behalf" (Lohmann, 2016, p. 490).

Following the premises set by social constructivist theory, how we talk about nature and climate change affect how it is governed and protected, and by what means. Are natural resources merely waiting for humans to extract them and turn them into profit as Lohmann (2016) ironically suggests, and is the only value of an ecosystem that it provides services for

society? Killoran-McKibbin & Zalik (2016) maintain that extractive activities similarly embodies practices of neoliberalism as a force of commodification of the natural environment. Oil and gas resources are not known to have values for, or even be part of ecosystems and are as such quite fitting for commodification, however extracting fossil resources pose great threats to both the local ecosystem and the global atmosphere affecting the climate. How we adhere to this nature and these ecosystems is important as it decides whether they need protection or not. When putting a price on nature, making it quantifiable and tradeable, it also serves to distinguish between productive or non-productive units of nature. How is neoliberalism visible in the official documents governing petroleum and climate in Norway, and can a neoliberal discourse be found in the climate lawsuit?

4 Placing the Analysis in Relevant Literature

Before presenting the findings from my own document and observational study, I will shortly present previous research investigating this controversy in order to set the academic frame my research sets out from. The controversy between Norwegian climate policy and Norwegian petroleum policy has previously been studied from different angles and contesting discourses identified by social researchers (Alstadheim & Stoltenberg, 2010; Asdal, 2014; Hovden & Lindseth, 2004; Jensen, 2006; Jensen, Jensen, & Skedsmo, 2018; Sæther, 2017).

In an article from 2014, Asdal track government papers to trace how during the 1990s in the political process leading up to the Kyoto Protocol, the political concern for climate change was transformed into concern for the Norwegian macroeconomy, making the welfare state the endangered object instead of nature (Asdal, 2014, p. 2110). By approaching texts issued by offices of public administration she displays how international climate policies became defined as a risk to the international oil wealth and the Norwegian macro-economy. The long-standing de-coupling of petroleum policy from climate policy has been termed 'The Norwegian Paradox' (Alstadheim & Stoltenberg, 2010), playing at the inconsistency between Norway as a front-runner in the international climate regime while at the same time continuously expanding their petroleum industry into new and more vulnerable areas to uphold the current production level. According to Hovden and Lindseth (2004), this contradictive development has been possible through the use of climate discourses highlighting international responsibility as opposed to taking national action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As becomes evident in my analysis, this scalar categorization has had great importance for the debate on Norwegian climate policy also in the last 10 years.

At the end of the 1980´s, environmental and climate issues where high on the agenda in Norway after the launch of UNEP´s report 'Our Common Future', nationally dubbed 'The

Brundtland Report' after the current prime minister who also headed the committee responsible for the report (Asdal, 2014). It was, at the time, public and political consensus that Norway had a responsibility to work for international agreements targeting greenhouse gases, as well as implement national policies to reduce domestic emissions, endorsing the discourse named 'national action' by Hovden and Lindseth (2004). However, in dealing with how, where and with what political tools Norway were to implement in working towards an international climate agreement, which resulted in the Kyoto protocol in 1997, the debate changed drastically. Specifically, it was the Ministry of Finance (MOF) that put forward concerns for how the green policies would influence the Norwegian Economy. "For example, the ministry (of Finance) argued that introducing green taxes could lead to reduced economic activity, increased prices, and reduced competitiveness, and hence curtail economic growth" (Asdal, 2014, p. 2116). Whereas the 'national action' discourse addressed climate crisis as a threat to the Norwegian society, the MOF argued it was green policies rather, that posed a threat to the Norwegian economy and further development of the welfare state. Their concern was not only that proposed national 'green taxes' would have consequences for the price of energy for Norwegian households and industry, but also that a future international convention targeted to reduce CO_2 emissions would have such negative effects. Additionally, it would pose negative consequences for the oil sector, hindering the planned increase in Norwegian oil production (Asdal, 2014). The goal of reducing the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere was framed as in direct opposition to the goal of sustaining economic growth in Norway, and in an attempt to harmonize both ambitions grew the 'thinking globally' discourse (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004).

> At the national level, business leaders and, later, politicians argued that Norway could contribute to reduced emissions globally by exporting oil and gas to replace coal as a fossil fuel abroad. Climate policy initiatives would in this way not be in conflict with continued Norwegian oil and gas production. (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004, p. 66).

While not mutually exclusive, the two discourses provided different paths towards a sustainable, low-carbon future. Through the 'thinking globally' discourse that quickly came to dominate the climate debate Norway could uphold an expansive petroleum industry, all the while maintaining their status as a front runner in environmental matters through the use of flexible mechanisms and their narrative of Norwegian oil and gas as a necessary contribution to carbon reduction by replacing coal industry in other countries. In short, the 'thinking globally' discourse argued for continued exploration on the NCS for three reasons. First,

profit accrued from exporting oil and gas makes up more than ¼ of government revenue and is responsible for nearly half of Norway´s national exports. This has benefited the Norwegian economy and population greatly, and defenders of the status quo claims the modern welfare state will not be possible to finance without revenue from the petroleum sector (Lahn, 2019).

The second reason, which I identify as scalar understandings, is concerned with the origin of emissions. The Paris Agreement clearly states that contributing countries are solely responsible for emissions that are emitted within states borders. Since 95% of emissions from fossil fuels comes from combustion, not production, Norwegian policy-makers considers emissions abroad are not within the scope of Norwegian climate responsibility, although the oil is extracted and produced in Norway. This strict territorial understanding of a global problem is less prevalent in concerns about the rainforest, or climate emissions in general, where the argument falls more in line of an international, common responsibility to cut emissions overall. Finally, the relatively low emissions from oil and gas production on the NCS is a core argument for the thinking globally-discourse. It has frequently been argued that Norwegian oil is cleaner and greener than other producer states', and consequently that Norway should be the last extractive state to stop production, as climate measures are better served with green Norwegian oil on the market than more carbon-intensive oil from other states, constituting a discourse termed 'environmental Norwegian oil' by Jensen et al. (2018). Additionally, the discourse relies on the premise that Norwegian gas has the possibility of substituting coal as source of energy, with much lower carbon-emissions, putting forward Norwegian gas as a 'bridge towards sustainability'.

In a more recent research project resulting in both articles and a 'debate' book in collaboration with other social scientists, Jensen (Jensen, 2006, 2010; Jensen et al., 2018) studied written statements in newspaper media from 2003 to 2005 to map and analyse the climate vs. petroleum debate in Norway. On the relevance of their research they write

> In this context the Norwegian debate on future activity on the Norwegian Continental shelf not just highly relevant, but also especially interesting because it accentuates fossil fuels as a part of the solution. As long as the fuel has Norwegian origins. (Jensen et al., 2018, p. 12, my translation).

and further that

> It can be argued that Norway leads a petroleum policy that reflects our counting on the Paris Agreement to fail, and the earth temperatures to far exceed 2°C, with the

> catastrophic results this will have for great parts of the world´s population and their basis for existence. (Jensen et al., 2018, p. 12, my translation).

I am interested to see if this worldview is evident also in official government papers, but also to investigate possible changes in discourse, or in actors involved in the discourse. In a previous article, Jensen (2006) identify a discourse he terms 'drilling for environment', based on the argument that Norway should keep drilling for oil because it replaces 'dirtier' oil from oil producers with more carbon-intensive production, and hence continued Norwegian oil production can reduce emissions, or at least counteract potential increased emissions. In opposition he finds a variation of the prevailing environmental Norwegian discourse, 'no to drilling' with the core message that Norway should not drill for oil in the Barents Sea for two main reasons: the vulnerable marine environment combined with a high level of uncertainty with regards to accidents and oil spills, and the global need for reductions in emitted greenhouse gases (Jensen, 2006). In a later article from, Jensen (2010) argues the environmental movement in Norway has been victim to a 'discourse co-optation'.

> The empirical phenomena [of discourse co-optation] is concerned with how one discourse [drilling for environment] in a discursive battle reaches into the core components of the opposing discourse [no to drilling], turns the logic around and makes their reasoning their own. While one discourse is strengthened with a new and powerful reasoning, the other is almost accordingly watered, not unlike the logic in a classic zero-sum game: The 'offensive discourse' is not just strengthened in an isolated way, but has cashed in a temporarily 'win' in the discursive battle, relatively to the other discourse. (Jensen, 2010, p. 185, my translation).

According to Jensen (2010) the actors forming the 'drilling for environment' discourse gained ground by taking the environmental argument over from the environmental discourse, thereby presenting themselves as with similar agendas, only different methods. The argument that Norwegian oil is needed in order to reduce climate emissions turns the debate upside down and changes it from 'environment vs. oil' to a debate about whose environmental strategy is most effective. This also allows for avoiding addressing the gap between climate and petroleum policy, as the drilling for oil and reducing CO_2 emissions are now joint by the same strategy. The 'drilling for environment' argument is also based around fear of carbon leakage, as it is assumed that reductions in Norwegian production will be replaced by other petroleum producers. Since Jensen (2006) studies was conducted, the new strand of research investigating the plausibility behind estimations of carbon leakage and opportunities for

supply-side climate policy as discussed in chapter 3.5 has been published, proving Norwegian production cuts actually have an effect on global supply of fossil fuel (Asheim et al., 2019; Fæhn et al., 2018; Fæhn et al., 2017). According to these studies it can be estimated that only two thirds of Norwegian oil cuts are replaced by other oil producers, resulting in one third emission reduction (Fæhn et al., 2018). This is important because it directly disregards the 'drilling for environment' discourse´s reasoning which implies that reducing Norwegian oil production will, as a consequence of carbon leakage', increase total global emissions. Also, the results of these economic analysis refers only to the solid and robust effect in reduced emissions, not accounting for the signal effect which can be expected as a result of the world´s seventh greatest CO_2 exporter (McKinnon, Muttit, & Trout, 2017) reducing oil and gas production for climate reasons.

This knowledge disregarded the 'drilling for environment' core argument, that if we don´t extract someone else will. Is it possible to find traces of the 'drilling for environment' discourse in the official documents and the trial I will analyse? And further, has this new knowledge made the 'drilling for environment' discourse outdated or caused changes to the core argument?

This divide between petroleum and climate governance is not limited to climate policies in Norway. In a qualitative study of discourses prevalent in international climate treaties from Kyoto up to the Paris Agreement in 2015, Aykut and Castro (2017) argue that neither energy nor fossil fuels have been sufficiently 'climatized' to have any real implications for the international climate negotiations.

> Despite being ubiquitous in climate debates, energy issues have rarely been included in official climate talks. The basic treaty and negotiation texts of the climate regime either omit talking about energy issues altogether or frame them in very specific and limited ways, in stark contrast to the way that such issues are discussed by civil society actors and even international organisations. (Aykut & Castro, 2017, pp. 181-182).

Their findings aligns with social constructionism and its focus on language and its role in constituting our social worlds, also materially. By omitting to identify energy issues and their role in climate issues, climate negotiations facilitate discourses such as the Norwegian 'drilling for environment', which would be difficult to uphold had for instance the Paris Agreement especially targeted fossil fuels. It can, however, be argued that this international

agreement could not have been made, had fossil fuels reduction been specified in the document text.

5 Results from Document Analysis: Climate and Petroleum Discourses in 2009 – 2019 Public Documents

The documents studied in this analysis have been sorted by year and type of document. In order to explore changes over time, mainly looking for discursive changes between 2009 – and 2019, documents constituting key and supporting texts are presented in two sections; before and after 2015. A table is provided to outline the content and order of documents.

Shortly on the data material forming the surrounding corpus: Numbered licensing rounds, together with Awards in Predefined Areas (APA) form the two pillars of Norwegian exploration policy on the NCS. Numbered licensing rounds award frontier areas for the least explored areas on the shelf (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019c), where both uncertainty and potential for large discoveries are great. The process is opened by inviting oil companies to nominate blocks, and based on the authorities assessments of these nominations, a proposed announcement is submitted for public consultation (Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, 2019c). On the Directorate of Petroleum´s information webpage norskpetroleum.no, it is informed that the advantages of step-by-step exploration are taken into account in the proposal, and that finally the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum announces the round. How the responses from the public consultation is handled and taken into account is not accounted for. I have included the proposal and consultation letters from five licensing rounds (4 numbered 1 APA) because they show the range between government, environmental organisations and research institutes discourses in cases where climate and petroleum policies meet. One initial step in CDA is to identify when contested issues are presented as undisputable or obvious as 'effects of truth', and to point out what is excluded

from texts (Hay, 2016). In order to see what the government excludes or normalises; it is essential to assess the views of the non-governmental actors.

5.1.1 Table of documents

Nr.	Document	Issued year	Institution
1	Report No. 1 (2009-2010). The National Budget 2010	2009	Ministry of Finance
2	Report No. 21. (2011-2012). Norwegian Climate Policy	2012	Ministry of the Environment
3	Report No. 10 (2010-2011). Update of the management plan for the marine environment in the Barents Sea and the marine areas outside Lofoten	2011	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy
4	The 21. licensing round	2010	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy
5	The 22. licensing round	2012	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy
6	Report No. 41. (2016-2017)	2017	Ministry of Climate and Environment
7	NOU 2018:17. Climate risk and the Norwegian Economy	2018	Ministry of Finance
8	Report No. 1 (2019-2020). The national budget 2020	2019	Ministry of Finance
9	The 23rd licensing round	2014	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy
10	The 24rd licensing round	2017	Ministry of Petroleum and Energy
11	Awards in predefined areas	2019	Ministry of petroleum and energy

5.1.2 Report No. 1 (2009-2010). The National Budget 2010

Norway´s state budget consists of numerous documents, I have chosen to focus solely on Report No. 1, the national budget presented by the Ministry of Finance. This document, which is presented every fall, is the government´s analysis of the economy and their justifications for priorities and budget proposals, and as such provides valuable information on Norway´s economic policy, and their overall political program (Government.no, 2014). Reading and analysing the national budget I specifically looked for representations of climate, nature,

petroleum and economy, how these were perceived separately and in connection to each other. The document is written by the Ministry of Finance and presented by the Minister of Finance as the government´s official politics. On the receiving end is Norwegian citizens, as the national budget lays forward their economic strategy for the entire Norwegian state. One can assume, however, that the average Norwegian does not read the national budget, and so I consider the actual recipients to be journalists, scholars, economists, the political opposition, financial investors, bureaucrats, interest organisations and others with professional interest in the government´s economic strategy. Other citizens then, get their information through one of these channels, in a format I must assume will be influenced by discourse and analysed. When analysing documents using CDA, Skrede (2017) suggests considering what role a text has or might come to have in society. The national budgets are as such the most 'important' document I will analyse, as its content has direct consequences for how Norway should be governed, and because it deals with such broad aspects of the Norwegian society. Although national budgets have to pass through the parliament, what is written in the final national budget will be transferred as political guidelines and have material consequences. Moreover, the national budget can be read more symbolically as giving long-term signals for where the Norwegian economy is going, what areas will be prioritized, and the Ministry of Finance´s own estimations.

The National Budget for 2010 shows that climate issues were high on the agenda. Sustainability is mentioned already in the third sentence, stating that the government will facilitate increased value creation and development across the country, however on the underlying premise of sustainability. Climate change is described as a 'very significant' challenge for the global community, with environmental, social and economic consequences. Sustainable development is dedicated an entire chapter, where it is established that Norway has an ambitious climate policy and should take a leading role within the field of mitigating climate emissions (Ministry of Finance, 2009, p. 178). The governments most important priorities within environmental policies in 2010 is listed as preventing deforestation in developing countries, investing and developing the railway system and other forms of public transportation, environmental technology and measures promoting energy efficiency (Ministry of Finance, 2009, p. 179). It is further stated that:

> The governance of natural resources must be attended to with emphasis on eco-systems. Economic, social and environmental considerations must be seen in relation – across sectors and decision levels. Considerations for sustainable development must be

> attended to within all political areas. (Ministry of Finance, 2009, p. 178, my translation).

Petroleum production and policy is presented within this chapter, with emphasis on emission reduction offshore, in terms of electrification of platforms. There is no mentioning of reduced activity, rather, the oil industry is presented as something static and unchangeable in Norwegian landscape, and measures to reduce its environmental impact is limited to the local environment. It is however mentioned that the CO_2 emissions from Norwegian oil and gas production is low compared to that of other producers, in adherence with the 'environmental Norwegian oil' discourse (Jensen et al., 2018). This suggests a tendency to mention Norwegian impact on global climate change when our contribution is low, however refraining from mentioning the connection between our petroleum industry and climate change when Norwegian contribution is greater, or more contested questionable.

Careful reading of the national budget has found no written linkages between petroleum and climate policies, meaning climate policies did not have implications for governance of the Norwegian Continental Shelf in 2010. The oil and gas industry is mainly mentioned related to economic development, and concerns for continued development with the expected downturn in valuable reserves.

5.1.3 Report No. 21 (2011 -2012). Norwegian Climate Policies

A report to the Parliament is used by the government to present cases for the Parliament on a specific political area, without suggesting new laws or concrete decisions (Government.no, 2019c). Rather, a report to the Parliament bring forward, discuss and provide a frame for future policy and resolutions. The reports on climate and petroleum policies are important as they provide a course for future developments, but also because they decide the government´s official discourse on the subject. This report is presented from the Ministry of the Environment (today the ministry of Climate and Environment), to the parliament, but it´s audience is extended also to environmental organisations, journalists, and people whose business or organisation might be affected by climate policy. I consider it likely that also international actors would have interest in it as it presents the national and international strategy for combating climate change and as such have consequences for the international climate regime. The content will provide the basis for political guidelines on climate change mitigation, presenting targets, scenarios and measures.

In this report climate change is described as "… together with abetment of poverty and hunger by far among the greatest challenges the world is facing (Ministry of Environment, 2012, p. 7, my translation). This is a more serious framing of climate change than the one found in the national budget (Ministry of Finance, 2009), where the MOF described it as very significant. It is coupled with the challenge of reducing poverty and hunger, signifying that these should be considered equally important, and that they should be approached in unison. Climate change is conceptualised as 'a global common problem', placing global warming as an issue at the global scale. The report puts forward targets for Norwegian climate policy, stating that Norway should be a driving force internationally, working towards an ambitious and binding climate agreement that is consistent with the 2°C target.

> Norway´s long standing prioritizing of climate policy and our joint efforts abroad and home gives us trustworthiness as a driving force and bridge builder in the international climate contribution. Our prioritisation of climate policy will also contribute to international agreement on an ambitious climate agreement. (Ministry of Environment, p. 8, my translation).

This statement shows the importance of credibility, it seems evident that if Norway is to have a positive impact on climate negotiations, showing results from national climate measures is important. The reasoning is that since climate change is a global problem it also has to be solved at a global level. A global agreement, however, is determined by national priorities and climate measures, displaying how the global is directly connected to the national. As Herod (2011) writes, the global level of authority is produced by choices and decisions made at the national level.

Aside from working towards an international agreement, the government presents CO_2-pricing and preserving forests as main efforts for reducing emissions. It is stated that carbon pricing will be the most important instrument for combating climate change, and hence the government will continue their work for an international market for climate quotas. The strategy aligns with what Lohmann (2016) calls a neoliberal understanding of nature, as a subject shaped to fit into the open economic market. The intent alone to solve climate change issues through market mechanisms is inherently a neoliberal strategy as market mechanisms are extended into a previously un-economic field. A range of national policies such as technology developments, emissions from auto-mobiles, transitioning to more collective mobility solutions has already, and more will be implemented to reduce national emissions, the report says. Norwegian climate policy should be based on just distribution, international

sustainability, the precautionary principle, joint implementation and the principle that polluters pay. It is also determined clearly that Norwegian climate policies should be profitable policy for the industry sector, enabling new opportunities for Norwegian industries. Close reading of the report supports the suggestion from Aykut and Castro (2017) that climate change is considered a challenge of reducing CO_2-emissions, not a challenge of transforming our carbon-intensive energy system. Although Norwegian petroleum activity is considered a sector where great reductions is needed if Norway is to meet their national targets, the fact that production and export of Norwegian oil and gas in itself is a threat to the global climate is not acknowledged.

In general, the report stakes out international cooperation as crucial for combating climate change and reducing emissions, in continuance of the 'Thinking Global' discourse conceptualized by Hovden and Lindseth (2004). The petroleum sector is not considered in conflict with high climate ambitions. Although emissions from production is minimal compared to emissions from combustion, because Norwegian oil is mostly exported and Norway follows the polluters pay principle, it is not included in this report on Norwegian climate policies. In the chapter on energy, it is established that renewable energy sources are needed, but again with the focus of reducing emissions, not with an intention of transforming the energy system.

> Energy is included as a production factor in all sectors and production processes in society. Energy is used for heating, electric devices, in industrial processes and for transport. Compound and level of energy consumption and production is decisive for the development of emissions in various sectors. Especially, this applies to energy intensive sectors, as for example the petroleum industry, power intensive industry and the transport sector. These sectors make up a considerable portion of the total energy consumption in Norway. Energy efficiency and increased production of renewable energy is important globally in order to reach the target of 2ºC temperature rise. The government has introduced various measures to stimulate energy restructuring. (Ministry of Environment, 2012, p. 188, my translation).

This approach highlights reducing emissions from production, but not refraining from extracting fossil fuel reserves overall. It suggests that governing authorities considers only the negative impact from the petroleum industry up onto the point where it is exported as their responsibility, while emissions from combustion abroad is outside their scope of control. The

impact from petroleum production is described in a fact box explaining why emissions from exported oil and gas is not included in national targets for CO_2-emissions.

Emissions from combustion of exported oil from the Norwegian continental shelf is by contrast incorporated as emissions in the import countries when used there, while emissions from combustion of bioenergy in Norway is accounted for in the export-country. Electricity can involve climate emissions during production, for example in production based on gas or coal. The import of electricity which is based on fossil fuel energy sources does however not affect the Norwegian climate emission budget as emission happen in the producer country. This is leading for what measures that give results in the Norwegian climate budget. (Ministry of Environment, 2012, p. 198, my translation).

The citation above show how Norwegian climate policies coincides with UN accounting of climate emissions, which has a national, territorially limited understanding of greenhouse gas emissions. It seems the long-term goal of limiting global temperature rises is put aside for the aspect of fulfilling the nationally set climate budget. The quote suggests a national approach to climate emissions, divided by country, and not as a global commons problem. On the next page, however, this view is contradicted, when it is pointed out that the effect on global temperature rises does not depend on emissions geographical origin. Greenhouse gas emissions ascending effect is also highlighted in the report. In sum this proves that knowledge is available, the transnational and accelerating effects of climate change are fully known, however not understood to have implications for Norwegian climate policy.

5.1.4 Report No. 10 (2010 – 2011). First Update of the Integrated Management Plan for the Marine Environments of the Barents Sea – Lofoten Area. 2011

This document, while similar to the previously presented reports to the Parliament in its overall shape, is different in that it also serves as a knowledge-based management plan for marine areas. The purpose of such plans is to facilitate value creation while also maintain the natural diversity in these areas (Government.no, 2015), signifying assessment of industrial values and environmental concerns are considered closely connected. Integrated management plans give extensive reports on the environmental condition based on research from relevant research institutions, provide scenarios for different human activities estimated effect on natural environments and put forward an evaluation of the available resources and activities for value creation. As new knowledge is available, the management plans are updated; the

first was issued in 2006, making this the first updated version. Since then two updated plans have been produced, in 2015 and the latest in April 2020. I have chosen to include this document in my analysis because it takes on both climatic, environmental, economic and petroleum-related policy, and so provides a good opportunity to study and compare how the government relate to these different policy areas, and to look for examples of if, and how the gap climate and oil policies is continuously produced and maintained. This particular plan is important as it lays forward much of the scientific knowledge-base for the opening of this marine area that would be announced two years later, and which would come to play an important part in the climate lawsuit.

In the management plan, climate and climatic changes is mentioned quite regularly, but never in connection to carbon emissions. Rather, the text takes a passive form when appointing environmental consequences of climate change, such as marine acidification, increasing ocean temperature or declining sea ice coverage. Global heating is outlined as something unstoppable, a climatic mechanism with negative output for our marine environments. It is neither coupled with the Norwegian petroleum industry or Norwegian emissions in general, but rather presented as an external factor affecting the marine environment, outside the Norwegian states scope of action.

> As is evident earlier in the report the effects on the ecosystem in the Barents Sea are many and various. Some effects come as a result of human activity taking place within the area such as fishing, shipping and petroleum industry. There are favourable conditions for Norwegian authorities to put measures into effect nationally or to initiate international measures to regulate the degree of consequences. Other effects are caused externally. Climate change with consequently increasing ocean temperatures, increased ice melting, ocean acidification and long-range pollution is included in this picture. Here it is to a lesser extent up to Norway alone to control the development. (Ministry of Environment, 2011, p. 111, my translation).

Neither are prospected reductions in climate emissions mentioned, it seems steadily increasing temperatures and worsened conditions for the marine environment is unavoidable. The significance of climate change is also mentioned with regards to the total impact on ecosystems, with concerns that while one environmental impact might not drastically influence biodiversity, the total burden might. The areas in question are described as especially vulnerable, and at risk for irreversible ecological changes. It is further mentioned that additional knowledge on how effects of climate change will affect marine biology in

these areas is highly needed, and how these effects act out in coexistence with other human activities such as fisheries, petroleum activities and shipping. These concerns put forward examples showing that global climate change is sometimes seen in connection with changes in the local environment, connecting global atmospheric changes to local ecosystem changes, and the report highlight ecosystem-services as important to preserve from irreversible changes caused by global heating. “The importance of this marine area with regards to social economic conditions and the value of ecosystem services has received a more prominent position in the knowledge base (…)” (Ministry of Environment, 2011, p. 22, my translation). The use of terms such as ecosystem-services exemplify what Lohmann (2016) refers to as an effect of neoliberal governance of nature, turning environmental entities into production units providing a service or a resource that is profitable and fits into the economic market. I have not found any examples or evidence in the text suggesting that the Norwegian petroleum industry contributes to global heating, which suggests that the divide between climate and petroleum policy is maintained through this document. When considering the petroleum industry´s impact on the environment only produced water, seismological disturbance, emissions of cuttings and emulsion mud are mentioned, that is local pollution. Not either is the link between local and global drawn further to connect climate policies and environmental changes, which the management plan clearly states is out of its mandate (Ministry of Environment, 2011, p. 12).

Petroleum industry and policies are thoroughly reported on, most importantly the highly set standards for environmental impact and local pollution for petroleum activity in vulnerable areas. Zero physical emissions from platforms is a demand to secure the ocean from human activity. The report also brings forward research-based knowledge on societal and economic benefits from petroleum activity, highlighting local value creation and workplaces.

> The petroleum industry includes oil companies, the supply industry and petroleum-directed research and educational institutions. Altogether these make up a substantial part of Norwegian wealth creation and generate workplaces all over the country. In 2009 the petroleum sector accounted for 22% of the value created in Norway and the same year petroleum exports accounted for close to 480 billion Norwegian kroner. (Ministry of Environment, 2011, p. 7, my translation).

These documents are identified as key texts and have shown the approach taken by the government, between 2010-2012, and I now turn to assess other institutions and how they make sense of climate and petroleum policies in documents forming the surrounding corpus. I

look for understandings and discourses in relevant actors responds to the ministry of Petroleum and Energy numbered licensing rounds.

5.1.5 The 21st Licensing Round (2010)

In March 2010, the ministry of Petroleum and Energy issued their proposal for awarding 100 new blocks to a public hearing, extending a line of openness and governance transparency that had started with the 20th licensing round in 2008 (Barentswatch, 2013). This was the second time public institutions and actors had the opportunity to comment on scientific and societal consequences from the proposed licenses, which up onto 2008 had been a process closed for public consultation. The suggested blocks were situated in the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea. The hearing letter was sent out to 138 institutions and organisations, and the MPE received responses from 47 actors. All responses have been read, and a representative selection presented and discussed here.

A common theme in responses from extractive and supplier companies is that they are generally pleased, and positive to this development as 'access to new area is decisive to be able to sustain current production at the Norwegian continental shelf'. This sentence forms a core sentence within the discourse upholding continued oil developments. In the response letter from Statoil (now Equinor), it is highlighted that new areas for petroleum exploration is necessary to counteract the inclining production, and further that predictability and stability concerning licensing rounds are vital for the industry, pointing to oil and gas companies need for long-term investment plans where investments may take years to become profitable.

> In order to maintain the exploration activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf and contribute to counteract the declining production it is decisive for Statoil to gain access to new acreage through predictable licensing rounds. Statoil consider a comprehensive announcement of awards in the 21st licensing round the most important instrument to achieve this in a short-term perspective. (Statoil, 2010, my translation).

With regards to governmental advisory institutions on environment such as the Climate and Pollution Agency (2010) and the Agency of Nature Management (2010) (which later merged and became the Norwegian Environment Agency) their concern is limited to concerns for local pollution. Some of the suggested blocks in both the Norwegian Sea, the Barents Sea and the North Sea are advised against due to the fact that "The potential consequences associated with environmental values such as seabirds, corals, fish in early life stages as well as the

shoreline is considered to be great" (Agency of Nature Management, 2010, my translation). Insufficient knowledge concerning the ecosystems within the marginal ice zone and their vulnerability for oil pollution is drawn forward as an argument for applying the precautionary principle. Further, the requirements regarding coastal preparedness is questioned, as the Climate and Pollution Agency does not consider the current level of emergency preparedness satisfactory in light of a major oil spill. Climate is mentioned with concerns that the mature phase of reserves on the NCS makes petroleum activity more energy-intensive. Combined with awarding new areas for exploration, the Climate and Pollution Agency suggest there may be potential issues for fulfilling national and international climate commitments. They recommend providing further considerations for electrification and coordinated power system operation in order to reduce emissions from oil and gas production. The argument is not drawn further to include change in energy systems or emissions from combustion of Norwegian oil abroad, in line with the territorially bounded understanding of climate emissions applied by the EU and the international climate regime in general.

The Institute of Marine Research (2010) does not mention climate or consequences of climate change in their respond, rather they provide an exhaustive account of the species habited within the suggested areas and how they might be affected by petroleum exploration and production. The Norwegian Polar Institute (2010) begin by asking to be recognized as a respondent to the official hearing, as they were not included among the respondents. They express concern regarding the awarded blocks based on limited knowledge on the marginal ice zone, low preparedness level due to long distances and generally insufficient technology for oil spillage. Climate or consequences of global heating is not mentioned. Their concerns are as such not directly connected to combating climate change, but rather points to a more general issue of the importance of environmental advice being underrated and subject to geological or economic prospects. As Norway is obligated to follow a gradual, knowledge-based process that follows the precautionary principle and secures and integrated environmental governance in (Ministry of Environment, 2006), the concerns put forward by the Institute of Marine Research are of a democratic weakness to the system.

With regards to the Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs), climate impact is a core argument against awarding new licenses, however with varying line of argumentation suggesting the environmental movement included branched discourses. Greenpeace (2010) is rather modest in their advice, following the argument made by governmental institutions, they express concerns for nationally set targets for climate

emissions, although including the overall target of staying below 2ºC temperature rise, which was not mentioned by Climate and Pollution Agency. Nature & Youth and Bellona wrote a joint respond, where the link between petroleum production and climate changes is comprehensively accounted for, however the consequences from combustion of exported Norwegian oil and gas is not mentioned. Their argument that oil exploration and production must be reduced for climate concerns is solely connected to emissions stemming from Norwegian platforms. In their response, Friends of the Earth Norway express concern the status of scientific environmental advice in numbered licensing rounds on the NCS. This is a democratic concern, Friends of the Earth Norway observes a tendency where advisory is asked for, but not taken into consideration in the final decisions, and with limited consequences for the decision-making process as a whole. With regards to climate change and petroleum reserves, Friends of the Earth Norway draws on scientific reports on carbon budget and Meinshausen (2009) estimations of remaining reserves and how much can be produced in order to stay below 2 degrees temperature rises. They question if the suggested licensing round is even compliant with the 2°C target.

The only mentioning of emissions from the combustion of Norwegian oil abroad comes from Changemaker (2010), the youth organization of Christian Church Aid Norway. In their response they specifically point out that they are not concerned with emissions from production of oil and gas, but the greenhouse gas emissions emitted when oil and gas is used outside Norwegian borders, which is the first statement of this kind found in the data material. They further highlight that awarding new area for oil and gas exploration is the wrong incentive for developing sustainable energy sources that are needed in order to solve the climate crisis.

5.1.6 The 22nd Licensing Round (2012)

Moving on to the next numbered licensing round which was announced during the spring of 2012, the overall response from the oil and gas industry was that the suggested blocks were too few. “In order to collect the potential on the Norwegian Continental Shelf it is decisive that oil companies get access to explore in new areas. It is the ordinary numbered licensing rounds that shall contribute to exploration in new areas” (The Oil Industry's National Association, 2012, my translation). With regards to the democratic problem mentioned by Friends of the Earth Norway in the previous licensing round, The Oil Industry´s National

Association (later the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association) puts forward their view that no new information exists that is not already covered by previous assessment reports.

> As we understand it, the MPE asks for new information and not recycling of old arguments. It is therefore not much reason to return to similar considerations previously stated, for example in association with acute emissions of oil and potential damage/risk associated with fish spawning, and later egg and fry stages. (The Oil Industry's National Association, 2012, my translation).

This suggests a tendency to regard scientific environmental advice not relevant if abandoned once before in previous licensing rounds. Instead of making every process of petroleum development as thorough as the last, regarding every environmental impact and security concern, the Oil Industry´s National Association recommend advisory once rejected is not necessary to bring forward again. The MPE clearly states that the nominated blocks have been evaluated in assessment reports, and asks only for new, substantial information that has occurred *after* the relevant assessment report was passed.

There is no mentioning of climate in the responds from the governmental environmental agencies (Climate and Pollution Agency, 2012; Directorate of Nature Management, 2012), their advice is solely focused on the level of local pollution and give an account of potential risks for fish, birds and other species potentially affected. I have not succeeded to find a response letter from the Institute of Marine Research, however the Polar Institute once again asks to be included as a formal respondent in hearings, as they were not approached directly in this numbered licensing round either. Their response recycles many of the arguments made previously, specifically pointing out the relative proximity to vulnerable areas such as Bear Island and the marginal ice zone. In their response, three environmental organizations (Nature & Youth, Friends of the Earth Norway and Bellona) directly confront the argument often made by the oil industries that reduced exploration pace in Norway will incline emissions globally, and that it is unfair to withdraw from producing energy when so many people are still without access to electricity. They state the argument is misleading and shifts focus away from the transition that needs to be made from fossil to renewable energy sources. They further develop their line of reasoning to include the credibility of Norway as a front-runner in environmental negotiations and puts forward concerns that increased oil exploration on the NCS will harm Norway´s environmental and climate legitimacy. The argument of the worlds decreasing carbon budget is drawn forward to make the argument that Norwegian oil might

not be profitable if climate negotiations go the right way. The remaining part of their letter is dedicated to arguments at the local level.

In their response, the umbrella organisation for biodiversity organisations in Norway, SABIMA (2012), express a fundamental resistance towards continued petroleum activity on the NCS. “There is, in our opinion, increasingly clearer information that the earth’s climate does not withstand more than half of the *known* petroleum resources are extracted, which we pre-eminently recognise as ‘significant information’ in this context” (SABIMA, 2012, my translation, their emphasis). Without further clarification, they claim the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has to initiate a significantly reduced extraction rate if they are to take their sectoral responsibility for environment seriously, a statement that builds on Changemakers first mentioning of exported oil and gas in the previous licensing round. Might this mark as the slight start of a new environmental discourse? Lastly, they suggest closing down the arrangement with Previously Awarded Licenses as it is unacceptable due to democratic reasons, following the line of argumentation from the Institute of Marine Research.

I now turn to assess first the government report, Report No. 41 staking out the climate policies and goals for Norway from 2016 an onwards, which are to be met in joint cooperation with the European Union. I further analyse the report written on climate risk for Norway, before taking on the national budget for 2020. Note that since 2013, the Norwegian government is led by the conservative party in different government consolidations, including the Norwegian Progress party, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democratic party. While this paper is aimed at investigating the underlying and long-term structures and power-relations evident in more stable bureaucratic institutions than political parties, the ministries are of course politically managed which has consequences for the overall political direction. This will be further elaborated on during the second part of the analysis.

5.1.7 Report No. 41. Norway´s Climate Strategy for 2030: A Transformational Approach Within a European Cooperation Framework (2017)

This government report to the Parliament is comparable to Report No. 21 from 2011, as it paves out the political strategy, prioritization and targets for Norwegian climate policy, however with updated research and shaped by the right-winged government who took office in 2013. Circumstances had changed severely, since the last report Norway has decided to commit to EU climate targets, and so this report involves a strategy for reducing emissions in cooperation with EU by 2030. By reading and analysing it, I seek to compare it to the

previous report, to be able to assess changes, or stability in the Norwegian climate policy and the discourses that surrounds it. I consider the author, recipients and political importance of this document as equal to those considered in Report No. 21 (2011 – 2012).

In the report, climate change is defined as "… one of our times greatest threats" (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017a, p. 5), which the government is determined to solve in cooperation with the EU. By 2016, Norway had upscaled the process of reducing emissions using the EU ETS, which covers approximately 50% of percent of Norwegian emissions (Government.no, 2019b). What is new in this report is that also emissions not covered by the EU ETS is to be reduced in cooperation with the EU through the Effort Sharing Regulation. The effort sharing regulation sets a total cut of 30% in 2030 compared to 2005. Two national strategical paths stand out; technology and cost-effectiveness. The government aims to create incentives for technological developments and innovations, while at the same time putting a price on carbon to further encourage and arrange for climate-friendly technology. Putting a price on emissions is also a neoliberal mechanism to turn both production and demand towards sustainability. It can also be mentioned that the government emphasize the Paris Agreement as a turning point for international climate cooperation, reinforcing climate goals as highly prioritized.

With regards to oil and gas, the report mainly lays forward solutions for pricing emissions from petroleum production, as oil and gas production is recognized as a large contributor to Norwegian emissions nationally. Steps to reduce emissions from production are estimated to 900 000 tons CO_2 equivalents. Emissions from combustion of exported Norwegian Oil and Gas is not mentioned, neither is negative consequences for the petroleum industry as a result of stricter climate policies. In this climate strategy it is not clearly stated that Norway should be a front-runner in the international climate regime, but it is however stated that "Norway intends to play a leading role in efforts to put an international price on greenhouse gas emissions and develop effective international carbon markets" (Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2017b, p. 23). The change from simply a front-runner for prioritizing climate policies and international cooperation, to specifically emphasizing the aspiration to reduce emissions through market mechanisms is worth noticing. It calls attention to the change in focus, from solving the climate crisis to solving it through mechanisms suitable for Norway. It also strengthens the neoliberal aspect of Norway´s strategy for combating climate change through the economic market. The absence of words such as energy, resources and fossil fuels

confirms Aykut and Castro (2017) findings that political strategies targeting climate change mitigation is characterized by an aim to cut emissions, not reducing fossil fuels.

5.1.8 Norwegian Official Report: Climate Risk and the Norwegian Economy (2018)

The Norwegian Government and the ministries can annually form committees or working groups to look into and produce reports on different aspects of society (Government.no, 2020a). These reports are not dealt with by the parliament, but processed by a ministry and eventually put forward to parliament as a 'Report to the Parliament' or as a proposition (Østbye et al., 2013). The aim is to provide knowledge and suggest strategies for handling a problem or societal challenge, and often works as the first step in a longer political process. Norwegian Official Reports are not written by politicians, but by experts and researchers on the field in question, and their work is based on a mandate given by the government or the ministry. As such, this document falls somewhat outside the scope of this thesis as the writers are neither decision-makers nor civil society but representing research institutions. I wanted to include the document in my analysis however, because it tackles a core element in this thesis, namely the economic consequences of climate change and climate change mitigation, and as it is appointed by the MOF I consider it to be of relevance when considering Norway´s climate and petroleum discourses. According to Østbye et al. (2013), NOU´s are by principle neutral, however the mandate given and authors writing the report will often seek to promote solutions advantageous to their position. "Their views are not only evident through the proposals for measures promoted, but perhaps even more so through the impact of their descriptions of reality that defines what the problem at hand consists of. This sets the premises for the discussion and various solutions" (Østbye et al., 2013, p. 54, my translation). I will study especially the distinction between the authors and the mandate given by the MOF, keeping in mind that also scientist and researchers are under the influence of prevailing discourses. Appointing an NOU with this mandate further demonstrate the point made by Asdal (2014) that the MOF shift focus from concern for nature to concern for what consequences climate change, and the measures to delimit it will have for the Norwegian Economy and the welfare state.

In 2017, the committee put together by the Ministry of Finance presented their Norwegian Official Report (NOU) assessing climate-related risk-factors and their significance for the Norwegian Economy. Both consequences from climate change, climate policy and climate-

related technology was investigated using an economic academic framework. While their mandate is not to suggest measures to reduce emissions, the committee writes in the introduction that

> A better understanding of threats and possibilities connected to climate change and climate policy gives a better foundation for good decisions on for example investments in both the public and private sector. This, in turn, can contribute to a quicker and more gentle transition to a low-emission society. Better understandings of risk can, in addition to helping the climate, contribute to both helping the climate and reducing climate risk. An ambitious and effective climate policy is not just the only remedy to decrease the danger of catastrophic climate change, but can also reduce the uncertainties associated with a transition to a low-emission society. (NOU 2018: 17, 2018, p. 10, my translation).

The notion is that the best way to reduce climate risk is to reduce the risk for dangerous climate change, but also that long-term planning for a sustainable society reduces insecurities regarding societal shift towards a low-emission society. It is further stated that an "… efficient climate policy is the only measure to reduce the threat of catastrophic climate change, and has as such a particularly central role in questions of climate risk management" (NOU 2018: 17, 2018, p. 24, my translation).

In the mandate given by the MOF it was particularly specified that the committee was not to give insights on guidelines for Governmental Pension Fund Global, reduced emissions, climate mitigation or climate adaptation, and neither suggest changes within the petroleum tax system or concerning Norwegian petroleum policy (NOU 2018: 17, 2018). While the restriction concerning the pension-fund is reasoned with as covered by other official reports, and questions concerning climate mitigation and climate adaption considered outside the committees' field of competence, the constraint on petroleum policy is more unclear. As Norway´s largest industry, and especially vulnerable for climate policies due to its high carbon-intensity, it could be argued the petroleum industry should actually be the main concern of a report evaluating economic insecurities in response to climate change. Instead the oil industry was largely excluded from the report and therefore minimally discussed (Lahn, 2019). Climate policies such as carbon pricing aim to reduce the demand for Norway´s main export product, and as such climate policies in itself heightens the risk for Norwegian economy and society. It is a clear example of how distinctly climate and petroleum policies are separated in Norwegian politics, and poses and important question of intent, in that the

gap is specified in the mandate. This emphasizes that while the Norwegian Government and the MOF shows responsibility for economic consequences of climate change and mitigation, the risk of stranded assets and carbon lock-in is not among their concerns. Despite the mandate restrictions the committee actually included an attachment in the form of an article in the appendix giving an account of petroleum companies expected response and adjustment to climate risk. It was also recommended that the financial and petroleum sector be stress-tested in order to map out their resilience in transitioning to a zero-emission society. "It is recommended to establish and maintain a set of scenarios for oil prices, gas prices, CO_2-prices as well as cost-development that can form a basis for stress-testing public investments and assets" (NOU 2018: 17, 2018, p. 119, my translation). According to Lahn (2019), the MOF has confirmed that it will follow up on these recommendations, but has so far yet to release any details concerning these scenarios.

5.1.9 Report No. 1. (2019 - 2020) The National Budget 2020

The national budget 2020 follows the same form and purpose as the 2010 budget (Ministry of Finance, 2009), and by reading and analysing it I look for changes, novelties or similarities to the national budget presented 10 years prior, and the other documents included in the analysis. Note that the National Budget covers multiple political and societal subjects, I have focused only on those connected to the theme of this thesis, studying mainly how concepts like climate change, climate threat, economic consequences and petroleum development is presented and conceptualised. I consider the author, recipients and political importance of this document as equal to those considered in Report No. 1 (2009 – 2010).

Transitioning to a greener Norway is highlighted in the national budget, research and technology development is put forward as main contributors to reduced emissions and green jobs. "It should be easy and profitable to choose green solutions. That is why the government concentrate on railway, public transportation and other measures that give incentives to take green choices" (Ministry of Finance, 2009, p. 5, my translation). This statement points to the consumer as the actor responsible for reducing emissions, while the government will accommodate and provide incentive for choosing environmental solutions. When describing the situation for the petroleum industry, investments are expected to increase considerably during 2020 and then reduce somewhat, however maintaining the current high level of investment in many years to come. Information on future investments in the petroleum industry are presented as a given and opposing views excluded, using what Hay (2016) terms

'truth-effects'. In regard to the expected decreased oil and gas price, the government assures that cost-reductions and efficiency improvements in oil and gas companies has secured the profitable production even with severely reduced prices. Climate change, climate politics or renewable energy is not mentioned in the context of future scenarios for the petroleum industry.

Climate change is defined as "…one of our times main challenges which can only be solved through global cooperation" (Ministry of Finance, 2019, p. 10, my translation). The emphasis on global cooperation suggests a strengthening in the prevailing scalar understanding of climate change and global warming as mainly a global problem, where Norway only plays a minimal role. Playing on this discourse allows for presenting cuts in emissions or consequences of climate policies as grand in a Norwegian context, while the Norwegian contribution to solving the climate issue is minimal at a global scale. This further stress that the most important climate measures for Norway is done abroad, either through negotiating a strong climate agreement, encouraging climate action from other states and paying for emission reductions and sustainable solutions abroad. In the national budget for 2020, the government suggests granting 7 billion NOK to aid-related measures within renewable energy, climate, environment and ocean. This suggests a scalar understanding of the climate crisis as global, and to be solved at a global level. As such it follows that Norwegian efforts are aimed at supporting international agreements and climate mitigation abroad. Further considering Norway´s approach for combating climate change, it is stated in the national budget that important opportunities for sustainable transitions is investments in green technology, the polluters-pay principle and developing markets for zero-emission solutions (Ministry of Finance, 2019, p. 10).

However, most notable about the national budget for 2020 is the strict divide between petroleum and climate. Climate change is not brought forward as causing insecurities for the future investments in Norwegian petroleum sector, neither is oil and gas activity on the NCS linked to Norwegian measures to combat climate change. The paradox is evident, and so is the scalar understandings of climate change as a global problem with global solutions, but also a neoliberal understanding of the solutions needed to reduce emissions. The focus is set on technological innovations and green solutions for independent people and for general Norwegian industry, and incentives will be provided by maintaining and increasing pricing of emissions and polluting industry. The path towards a sustainable, zero-emission society is put forward, and the Norwegian oil and gas sector is not considered a hindrance, nor as a sector

vulnerable for the transition towards a zero-emission society. Opposing views are not accounted for.

5.1.10 The 23rd Licensing Round (2014)

Returning once more to the supporting data material in the form of consultation responses to suggested licensing rounds, starting with the 23rd numbered licensing round was first announced and sent out for hearing in early 2014. As I will return to, this numbered round is particularly important in this context because it evoked great attention as the nominated areas were situated further north in the Barents Sea than any oil rig had ever been before. Additionally, some blocks were placed close to the line of the marginal ice zone, which is defined as a particularly vulnerable area, a politically contested boundary that was redefined and moved just days before the announcement (NTB, 2015). In the hearing letter from Ministry of Petroleum and Energy it is stated that "It is in these areas that the probability of making new, significant discoveries is greatest. Exploration in these areas is therefore decisive in order to maintain the level of production and activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf" (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2014, my translation). The last sentence has reappeared in different shapes in most of the textual sources stemming from the petroleum industry and forms a core sentence in the petroleum industries discourse. In the response letter from the Norwegian Oil and Gas Association (2014), traces from the 'drilling for environment' discourse identified by Jensen (2006) can be recognized.

> The Norwegian Oil and Gas Association will accentuate the importance of awarding licenses in the Barents Sea South East as suggested in this licensing round. It will contribute to secure Norwegian interests in this area. It is of national interest to map geology and make sure that knowledge about the area and its potential resources is known for actors on the Norwegian side of the boundary line. (Norwegian Oil and Gas Association, 2014, my translation).

NEA points out the necessity of instigating an in-depth scientific process to clearly define a line or boundary for the marginal ice zone that covers ice-coverage also in more extreme years. This started a long political process of correctly placing the line of the MIZ on the map, a process still in motion, but actually set to be politically decided on this spring. There is no mentioning of climate and climatic consequences, neither national nor global, which is a change and withdrawal from the previous stance taken by the Climate and Pollution Agency in 2010. Neither the Norwegian Polar Institute (2014) nor the Institute of Marine Research

(2014) mentions concern for global warming and climate change in their responses. The environmental organisations however, forms a more united discourse than previously, seven organisations (Bellona et al., 2014) joined their efforts to demand no awarded blocks through the 23rd licensing round based on lack of professional coherence in regards to the Marginal Ice Zone. Their climatic argument is also advanced, in that they directly approach the known argument made by the petroleum industry that reduced exploration pace on NCS is disunited with solving global poverty and energy problems, and that explorations on NCS is necessary to replace other, more polluting energy-sources. They refer to studies showing reduced Norwegian petroleum production will bring forward actual reductions in global emissions, but also that as Norwegian oil and gas is primarily exported to Europe and North America, its significance for poverty-reduction is minimal.

5.1.11 The 24th Licensing Round (2017)

Moving from the 23rd to the 24th licensing round is a leap of three years of which significant changes happened in the climate regime, most significantly the enactment of the Paris Agreement and the publishing of the IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C. I have applied a specific focus on look for possible effects of these events in the consultation responses to the 24th licensing round.

For the first time in a hearing on numbered licensing round, the Norwegian Polar Institute (2017) addresses concerns on climate changes, indicating a step towards a more climate-oriented discursive approach.

> The Norwegian Polar Institute wishes to emphasise that the need for updated and precise knowledge is necessary for understanding how climate change will affect environmental values and vulnerability, and to which degree petroleum activity will affect these values in light of expected changes. (Norwegian Polar Institute, 2017, my translation).

The total amount of stress is pointed out also by the NEA, pointing out that increased petroleum activity will be added to the total oceanic burden caused by climate change. The NEA takes the critique even further when questioning democratic and economic processes leading to the 24th licensing round:

> The Environmental Agency is missing an explanation of what evaluation forms the basis for the suggested awards in the 24th licensing round, and what possible

> biodiversity consequences has been assessed or will be assessed before licensing and announcements of awards, cf. the Nature Diversity Act §7. We also consider it necessary to do an exhaustive preliminary assessment of the potential for economic profitability of potential industrial development in the Barents Sea before licenses are awarded. An evaluation of how the profitability and demand risk will be influenced by the targets set in the Paris Agreement should be included. (Norwegian Environment agency, 2017, my translation).

Their argumentation is far along the line of the environmental organisations, raising the question of economic value, and questioning the assumptions from Ministry of Energy and Petroleum that status quo will continue, and that oil and gas will be as valuable in the market in the future. The call for a socio-economic analysis is similar to the one made by the environmental organizations in preparations for the climate lawsuit, where they had two economists investigate the basis for socio-economic value (M. Greaker & Rosendahl, 2017). NEA consider possible pollution and ecological risk weighed up against positive societal consequences, and so their concerns in 2017 seems to be that ecosystems might be disturbed without any societal value, as the petroleum industry is facing reduced demand and increased competition from renewable energy, particularly after the enactment of the Paris Agreement. By 2017, ENGOs are strengthened even further in their argumentation, and it seems their discursive frame is more completed than before. Their climatic argument points directly to the fact that consumption rather than production is the main cause of petroleum-related emissions, and that if the goal is to cut emissions, an important measure is to reduce the *supply* of fossil energy.

> It is nevertheless not the extraction, but the combustion of Norwegian oil and gas that cause the major part of emissions. Emissions from Norwegian oil and gas burned abroad makes out almost ten times Norwegian yearly emissions. If the goal is to cut climate emissions one of the most important measures is to reduce the supply of fossil energy. (Friends of the Earth Norway et al., 2017, p. 3, my translation).

With this, research on supply-side climate policies to reduce CO_2 emissions is for the first time mentioned as an argument for reduced explorative activity on the NCS in a hearing round subsequent to a suggested licensing round. The ENGOs also draw on their now in motion climate lawsuit and warn against MPE facilitating further exploring in the Barents Sea while the outcome of the trial is still awaited.

The increased pace in petroleum activity is evident not just from the point of view of environmental institutions and organisations, also fisheries organisations is questioning the number of blocs awarded.

> For us, it seems like there are almost panicky conditions in the government apparatus to achieve a speeding up of oil development in order to create workplaces for unemployed oil workers in the south. No matter what the cost may be with regards to the marine environment and fisheries: valuable fishing areas must be taken to use by the oil industry. As usual, there is also this time thin material included in the hearing, including maps so poor that it takes a lot of work to be able to exactly affirm where the individual blocks are located. (Nordland Fylkes Fiskarlag, 2017, my translation).

While ENGOs, environmental institutions and fishing organisations view the Paris Agreement as an argument for reduced oil and gas exploration, the citations above hold connotations to the literature on green paradoxes which suggests extractive industries might set in motion new activity in order to harvest their resource before demand is significantly reduced and profits limited (Pittel et al., 2014).

5.1.12 Awards in Pre-Defined Areas 2019

In order to provide a broad basis for analysis I will lastly include the hearing round and responds to the awards in predefined areas in 2019, as licensing round 24 in 2017 is the last numbered round on the Norwegian shelf. As noted earlier, the APA rounds are annual licensing rounds awarding blocks in what is called ‘mature’ areas, where geological circumstances are known and activity or installations for exploration is already in place. Because they are ‘mature’, awarding these areas does not require the same standards for specialised processes as in numbered rounds, where to a greater degree new area is opened for oil and gas exploration. In APA 2019, democratic and sustainable governance of natural resources is further questioned by different actors, as both public and more private institutions vocal their scepticism towards the APA process.

> The Institute of Marine Research is critical to today´s APA arrangement as this is a governance mechanism based on fragmented evaluations of the ecosystems condition, in stark contrast to the integrated ecosystem-based approach that since 2006 has been the cornerstone in the integrated management plans for Norwegian marine areas. Integrated management based on ecosystems, evaluating the total consequence of all

> human activity is founded in the Johannesburg Declaration of 2002 which Norway has ratified, and has in the last ten years been advanced internationally through the process of ecosystem analyses (IEA) through ICES and other international organisations. (Institute of Marine Research, 2019, my translation).

Their climatic discourse is also strengthened, and connections between fossil fuel energy, the effect of climate change on oceanic acidification and effects on marine ecosystems is made specific.

> The latest report from IPCC issued in 2018, which scientists from Institute of Marine Research has contributed to, show among other things that a quick reduction of the worlds consumption of oil and gas is necessary if global warming is to stay below 1.5 degrees. In light of the greatly increasing material of knowledge on global climate change and its consequences for marine ecosystems which we now have, we consider it necessary to include the also the total burden in greater areas and the effects on global climate when assessing new awarded licenses both in connection to APA and more generally. (Institute of Marine Research, 2019, my translation).

Also the NEA (2019a) suggests that the climate risk in expanding oil and gas activity further north needs to be made clearer through economic and ecological stress-testing, as reduced demand for oil and gas as a consequence of the Paris Agreement puts the petroleum industry at risk. It is also referred to the public report on climate risk, pointing out the necessity for evaluating the significance of increased activity on NCS. They suggest the expansion of the APA-area to be evaluated against the scenario of 50% global reductions by 2030, to be able to estimate the future value of these developments.

With regards to the accelerated pace of petroleum exploration on NCS discussed above, the tension from hearing respondents seem increasingly agitated. First, the NEA (2019a) questions the licensing process as nine blocks nominated in APA 2019 was included in the 24th licensing round only two years ago.

> The numbered licensing round covers immature parts of the continental shelf. According to the petroleum report these areas are characterized by limited geological knowledge, lacking infrastructure and often great technical challenges. The Environment Agency request a further explanation as to how these blocks have gone form immature to mature in two years. (Norwegian Environment Agency, 2019a, my translation).

They further refer to a report issued by the Office of the Auditor General, which recommended greater transparency and openness in the process of nominating blocks and handing out licenses (Office of the Auditor General of Norway, 2019). The democratic issue at hand seems to cause tension between these two public institutions. The local office of the fisheries organisation 'Norges Fiskarlag' also questions the increased pace in their responds, though in a more informal way.

> When one register that the ministry in its hearing includes great areas both in the Barents and the Norwegian sea that are placed far outside todays structures, there is reason to question if the terms 'mature areas', 'known structures' and 'most known geological areas' are particularly real arguments for opening. (Nordland Fylkes Fiskarlag, 2019, my translation).

The fisheries organisation is accusing the MPE of distancing themselves from their own governing framework by expanding licensing practices beyond their own conventional principles.

Lastly, the environmental organisations state clearly that they consider APA 2019 to be a direct hindrance for green transition, in terms of emissions from production and combustion, financial risk and fear of stranded assets. They point to reduced oil production as a measure for reducing CO_2 emissions on a global scale and refer to research on supply-side policies that has shown robust effect on climate mitigation by reductions in Norwegian oil production.

5.1.13 Chapter Summary

This document analysis of key texts and a surrounding corpus of supporting documents from licensing rounds has shown a great diversity of conceptualisation of the climate issue, solutions for mitigation, understandings of the connections between petroleum and climate policy, however most of all it has shown the actors greatly diverging worldviews, values and discourses. The relevant themes introduced vary from economic, democratic, climatic, fishing to biodiversity concerns. In a time perspective, there are discursive changes prevalent, most significantly with regards to the formation and shaping of an environmental discourse directly targeting emissions from exported Norwegian fossil fuels. Subsequently, there can be observed a development where scientific and advisory institutions become more united in their discursive frames, while also moving in direction towards the environmental organisations discourse by steadily putting more emphasis on climatic and economic

consequences from continued investments on the Norwegian Continental Shelf. Finally, the analysis shows how governing institutions, mainly the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Climate and Environment as well as the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy are positioned within a discourse maintaining oil exploration in Norway, while showing a tendency to avoid approaching contested issues such as the Norwegian climate paradox. In the next chapter I analyse the results from observational studies of the climate lawsuit and explore how these discourses play out when directly appointed in the courtroom.

6 Results from Observation Studies: The Climate Lawsuit

In this chapter the results from my observational studies of the climate lawsuit is presented thematically and analysed with comparisons to findings from the text and document study above. The trial took place during two weeks of November 2019, from Monday November 5th to Thursday November 14th, with total seven days in the courtroom. As mentioned earlier, the civil action lawsuit was brought forward by Greenpeace and Nature & Youth, with legal support from The Norwegian Grandparents Climate Campaign and Friends of the Earth Norway. On the defendant side was the Norwegian state, represented by the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. This was the second round in the courtroom, the Norwegian State had already won the first round in the district court, and as the environmental organisations attempt to appeal their case directly to the supreme court was denied, the lawsuit was now to be tried before the Borgarting Court of Appeals. Decided by the central themes that emerged in the document analysis I have categorized this chapter into five main topics; environmental, scalar, economic, democratic and governing aspects of the arguments exchanged in the climate lawsuit. I consider these topics to make up the core foundation of discourses apparent in the debate on climate and petroleum policy in Norway. However, this disposition largely excludes argumentation considering the legal aspects with regard to interpretations of the Constitution, as well as arguments regarding similar cases internationally, a delimitation done intentionally with concerns to the scope and overall theme of this thesis.

6.1 The Environmental Organizations Argumentation, Worldview and Legal Case

In her opening statement, the legal counsel for Nature & Youth started with a pathos-laden reasoning for why the environmental organizations had seen it necessary to file a lawsuit against the Norwegian state. The core lies in concern for climate change and the consequences

in the shape of heat records, floods, sea-level rise, more extreme weather in general and how it will conflict society in terms of migration, food shortages and changed circumstances for agriculture. Climate change was defined by the legal counsel as *the* greatest threat towards humanity today. The Ministry of Petroleum and Energy´s decision to award licenses that aim at starting production in 2035 is described as a societal failure, she further remarked that courts of law have a constructive function and called on the court to step forward to practice societal conservation to preserve society as it is today for the posterity. As §112 in the Norwegian Constitution entail that nature and climate has precedence, according to the ENGOs it must mean that something else must yield, and the legal counsel directly stated that this case is about desisting from extracting fossil resources based on scientific knowledge on climate and environment. This reasoning is based on the juridical concept of 'negative obligation', or a passivity duty, which entails that a law involves a duty to abstain from something. The organisations interpret §112 to have negative obligations for the Norwegian Government, meaning the states responsibility to protect current and future citizens right to a healthy environment compel it to refrain from extracting petroleum reserves.

6.1.1 Environment

The environmental aspect of argumentation put forward by the plaintiffs was based on scientific knowledge, mainly from IPCC climate reports. Testimony on the causes and consequences of global warming was given by two climate scientists with technical presentations using charts, tables and scientific evidence. Although the scientists presented reliable and peer-reviewed research, mostly gathered from IPCC reports, scientists also belong to discourse and their participation in the climate lawsuit can be read as an inclination to adhere to the discursive perceptions of the environmental organisations. According to Nature & Youth and Greenpeace, human activity, mainly through overconsumption and the use of non-renewable and carbon-intensive energy sources has caused the accumulated levels of CO_2 in the atmosphere to rise above natural and safe levels. Global warming has accelerated CO_2-levels since the middle of the 19th century, and today we can see the beginning of climate change in our surroundings. The Egos acknowledged the asymmetry of climate change, as mainly caused by wealthy countries, but predominantly affecting poorer nations. Norway is one of the world's wealthiest countries, much because of exporting oil and gas from the NCS while sufficiently provided with cheap, low-carbon energy from hydropower. They argued therefore that reducing Norwegian emissions is therefore a moral responsibility, while also crucial in order to avoid unacceptable climate change.

As one of the main premises for transformation into a low-carbon society is a shift from extractive to renewable energy sources, oil and gas production must cease to occur at one point in time, or at least be reduced to a bare minimum (Muttit et al., 2016; UNEP et al., 2019). With the world´s oil, gas and coal reserves far preceding carbon budget estimations, decline in fossil production cannot be delayed any further. Planning for petroleum licenses not operative before 15 years in the future is therefore a speculation, a bet against the world achieving the goals agreed upon by the Paris Agreement (Jensen et al., 2018). More concretely, the exploration licenses add to the environmental impact on already burdened and especially vulnerable areas, experiencing the local consequences of global warming in the shape of ocean acidification. In a more long-term perspective, possible findings from licenses will cause emissions during production, and to an even greater degree emissions during combustion after export which will add to total amount of emissions in the atmosphere and accelerate global warming. To conclude, Nature & Youth had taken out the lawsuit because accelerated global warming caused by oil and gas production in Norway, increases and extends the extreme weather conditions and their devastating consequences, further depriving Norwegian citizens of their right to a sustainable natural environment. In a global context, the organisations held that Norway has moral obligations to take lead in the transition towards a zero-emission society after having profited so vastly on previous oil and gas production.

6.1.2 Scalar Understanding

The environmental organisations apply a worldview of strong connections between local, national and global causes and effects of climate change, with a conscious view on how events at these different levels have reciprocal effects across scalar dimensions. Emissions emitted abroad in foreign countries are assumed to have consequences for local Norwegian nature, and vice versa, Norwegian local emissions cause global warming and rising global temperatures. In contrast with the prevailing standpoint within EU and what is agreed on by international climate regime (United Nations, 2015), the discourse surmise that more than one actor can be responsible for greenhouse gas emissions. In the case of the climate lawsuit the ENGOs never argued that the responsibility of countries importing and using Norwegian petroleum products should be disregarded, only that Norway to, as the producer needed to share the responsibility and become aware of their option to not introduce the market for more oil. Greenpeace and Nature & Youths worldview considers the Norway as a nation an autonomous size in the international climate cooperation, or at least with ability to act against adopted policies from the EU and the UN. They also consider Norwegian impact on other

parties involved in climate negotiations significant, as they suggest reductions on the NCS might have symbolic effects for other states and their approach to mitigating climate change.

6.1.3 Economy

The economic arguments for reduced oil-activity presented in the courtroom by the ENGOs can be assumed drawn from those forming the theoretical background for carbon budgets, the green paradox and supply side policies. The discursive line of reasoning is that the Norwegian state is taking immense economic risk by facilitating and investing in an industry that the global climate regime is struggling to dissolve, which they claim is not just environmentally, but also economically unfair with regards to future generations. As called attention to in the document analysis, the environmental institutions govern natural environments and resources based on the trade-off between societal advantages and the environmental impact (Norwegian Environment agency, 2017). Some environmental effect is tolerable, but the greater the impact, or risk of impact in vulnerable areas, the greater the demand for positive effects for society. Drilling for oil and gas comes at great potential risk for the local environment should there occur an oil spill, and with certain environmental risk caused by greenhouse emissions both during production, transportation and combustion phases. As studies show a declining market for oil and gas, this will affect decisions made by environmental institutions so as to avoid the contamination of natural environments without positive consequences for society. This point was drawn forward by the leader of Nature & Youth in his deposition, with concern that the Norwegian government is facilitating and investing in an industry that is not only harmful for the environment, but in addition without certain aspects of profit.

In addition, the organisations put forward an argument of economic risk of due to potential stranded assets in the shape of both reserves and infrastructure. They urged the court to consider where it is reasonable to place national investments seeing as we are finding ourselves on a path towards dangerous global warming; In an industry mainly responsible for greenhouse emissions and which is on the path towards reduced demand, or perhaps placed in renewable energy sources where investments can contribute to the green transition while also building up and securing an industry relevant in the zero-emission society. Similar to discourses evident in the document study, the ENGOs did not directly address core arguments put forward by the government concerning workplaces, the future of the supplier industry or what consequences reduced oil export revenue would have for the Norwegian welfare state. Lastly, Supply-side climate policy and theories suggesting reduced oil and gas production on

the NCS might serve as a cost-effective climate measure was mentioned once during the trial, and only briefly as a supporting argument. Although without explicitly applying the academic term, the environmental organisations legal counsel directly called attention to effects recognised in the green paradox literature.

> Petroleum extraction has traditionally been a question of environment vs. economy. This is the historical standpoint. But the world is not the same anymore. We do not have the time to use utilize our reserves. We have to hurry to extract our reserves before the market for this asset is gone. Petroleum production requires enormous investments in the initial phase, meaning we are risking great losses when the [zero-emissions] transition comes. This stimulates increased consumption, because actors will want to sell even without profit. You cannot earn profit and damage the climate at the same time. It is therefore reasonable to ask if the Norwegian state should bet on the goals of the Paris Agreement not being reached. (Field notes, 05.11.2019, my translation).

6.1.4 Democracy

The democratic argument made by Nature & Youth and Greenpeace is more complex. First, there is an argument that the courts have a responsibility to review democratic decisions made by politicians. As stated on the first day in court by legal counsel for Nature & Youth, 'This is why we have a constitution'. Because even bureaucracies and elected politicians make mistakes, and when they do the courts can correct them according to the constitution. Another aspect drawn forward is the democratic time-aspect, while politicians usually plan up against the next election, the legal system has a greater opportunity for making difficult, more long-term decisions with considerations also for future generations. Greenpeace and Nature & Youth claim the parliament has violated the constitution by handing out new extraction licenses in vulnerable areas and in the context of climate change and argue that the courts have a *legal* responsibility to correct democracy from making poor decisions.

Second, there is an argument made that the process leading to exploration and production of oil and gas, i.e. the progress in the executive work led by MPE and NPD is closed for access and leaves little room for external control, similar to findings the document analysis. The ENGOs argued that while a path for gradual distribution of access to respectively search, test-drill and finally drilling for oil and gas exists, much of the process is locked to the decision to award exploration licenses. All attempts to withdraw drilling licenses after said licenses were

in the environmental organizations experience met with the respond that ‘it is too late’. In her deposition, the leader of Friends of the Earth Norway said that working with oil from an environmental perspective was frustrating, and that she regards institutions governing national oil and gas resources as canned, closed and not attentive to environmental advisement, especially not in licensing processes. She did not agree to the states statement that environmental advice is closely attended to and claimed the MPE listened more to the industry than to environmental science. She also argued there had been a worsening in this particular process, as it was the first time the MPE did not listen to environmental advice and adhere to award blocks that were advised against by public institutions. MPEs practice of proclaiming open processes when those seeking partaking are excluded or not listened too was called a deception, and Friends of the Earth Norway’s leader closed by claiming the licensing process is based only on the petroleum industry´s premises, and that calling it knowledge-based is disgraceful.

6.1.5 Environmental Governance

One aspect of the climate lawsuit was not directly related to future emissions and environmental impact, but to the process of governing Norwegian petroleum resources and the process leading up to the 23th licensing round. In advance of the trial, Greenpeace engaged two economists to go through the financial foundations that the management plan for Barents Sea South was based on, The economists wrote a report on what they deemed to be gross and misleading mistakes in economic estimations (M. Greaker & Rosendahl, 2017). Their main item of objection was the absent discounting of future income from oil and gas production. In short, it means that estimated scenarios for profit were presented in present value instead of converted to future value which the two economists asserted was the correct and most sensible way to present future earnings. When the economists calculated estimations and converted to present value, the result was reduced with more than a hundred million NOK. Another error brought out was that estimations applied an oil price of 120 $, although at the time for handing out licenses, the oil price was at 40 $. The plaintiff argued estimations were deliberately aggregated to present an unrealistic profitable project, relenting to display the great risks associated with the suggested licenses. Another two mishaps were drawn forward, the first showed miscalculations in estimations for future new jobs, the second that calculations estimating profit had not included CO_2-pricing on emissions for production (M. Greaker & Rosendahl, 2017). As pricing emissions is the first and foremost climate measure instigated by the current government, probability is they will be raised in the future to reduce

greenhouse gas emissions. CO_2-pricing should not just be included in estimations to show future expenses; increasing CO_2-pricing changes the circumstances for oil and gas extraction because it moves the boundaries for unprofitable projects and the risk of stranded assets.

Because infrastructure and installations on the NCS are so expensive, extracting oil is currently profitable even at very low oil prices. This is essential for old or 'mature' installations where more energy is used to produce each entity of oil, but also when assessing the profitability of new activity. An increased CO_2-price would presumably alter what can be considered profitable projects, and so from the plaintiff´s view it was highly problematic not to include such estimations in their future scenarios. In order to make estimations evaluating potential stranded assets, realistic estimations of future oil prices are essential. Having presented the five main themes from Greenpeace and Nature & Youths standpoint as plaintiffs, I now turn to assess the arguments put forward by the Norwegian state, represented through the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy.

6.2 The Norwegian State, Represented by Ministry of Petroleum and Energy Argumentation, Worldview and Legal Case

The Norwegian state, represented in the courtroom by attorney general Sejersted, contradicted many but not all statements made by the ENGOs. The main matter of dispute was the interpretation of the constitution and §112, which the attorney general interpreted as a general text of a statue, not completing a material boundary. As the verdict from the district court disagreed with the states interpretation, their secondary argument was that even *if* the ENGOs interpretation was viable, there has to be set a material threshold for how much pollution or environmental impact should count as a violation of §112 (LB-2018-60499, 2020). Their argument was therefore that as these licenses represented only tiny proportions of the total global emissions of CO_2, and further that no oil reserves had so far been found, meaning the total emissions from petroleum from this block might even turn out at zero, these 10 blocks did not exceed a material threshold for §112.

6.2.1 Environment

On the fifth day in court, the attorney general made it clear that the Norwegian state has not breached the Paris Agreement, and was still on track to meet their agreements. But Norwegian oil export has nothing to do with Norway´s commitment to the climate agreement. On the contrary, it was stated that the Norwegian government lead a responsible climate policy and

had implemented a number of climate measures. The controversy between Norway as an oil exporter and a frontrunner in climate negotiations was directly approached and discounted. This is a direct transcript of my observational notes:

> The environmental organisations criticise Norwegian climate policy. But the case is not about that. The government has implemented numerous measures on climate mitigation, the government leads a responsible climate policy. The question at hand is a strike at Norwegian climate policies. This is Norway´s most important industry. Maybe we have more efficient CCS technology in the future. Important to recognize that temperature rises comes from total emissions, independent of time. It is therefore not an argument that emissions will be emitted later in time. The lawsuit is an attack on the relation between petroleum and climate. Norwegian climate and petroleum policy are referred to as a double standard and as the Norwegian Paradox. There is no contradiction here. The world is requesting more energy. Norway is a stable supplier of gas to Europe. The world will extract and be in need of oil and gas far into the future. Either we produce, or someone else will. There is majority for this petroleum policy in both the Parliament and in the Government. There is differing views on what forms the core of this court case. For the state this is about jurisprudence, correct division of powers and judicial interpretation of the Constitution. The actors involved are in conflict over terms and worldviews. (Field notes, 12.11.2019, my translation).

The first section speaks of the Norwegian states understanding of greenhouse gas emissions and their accumulating effect. The extract shows how the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum acknowledges and continues to maintain the gap between petroleum and climate policies. It takes use of arguments from the 'green Norwegian oil' (Jensen, 2006) discourse by emphasizing the worlds increasing demand for energy and upholding that reduced Norwegian extraction will not influence the total supply of fossil fuels. 'If Norway does not produce, then someone else will' is the core sentence in the 'green Norwegian oil' discourse, which seeks to undermine the significance of Norwegian oil in a global perspective, while its economic significance nationally is amplified.

The standpoint from MPE was additionally that the concern for emissions was overstated, as there has yet to be made significant oil finds in the blocks in question. While the ENGOs upheld as part of their argument that petroleum exploration in the Barents Sea signalled a new and fresh effort of prolonging and developing the Norwegian petroleum industry, the general

attorney focused on illustrating what a small part of the oil and gas industry was actually under debate.

> Oil activity in the Barents Sea is not a novelty, there has been explorations ongoing since the 1970´s, and a total of 581 blocks have been awarded in the Barents Sea, in addition to activity on the Russian side of the boundary. This is pointed out to illustrate the minimal part of the petroleum industry that is actually up for debate in this court case. Important to specify that it has been 3.5 years since this decision was made, and in the meantime comprehensive exploration has taken place in this area. There are two things to be mentioned in this regard; no commercial findings have been made yet, and only gas has been discovered. It has been a disappointment so far. One can have diverging opinions on this outcome, but there have been no environmental consequences from exploration so far. We are therefore discussing only possible, future impact. (Field notes, 05.11.2019, my translation).

The states take on time and emissions is not straightforward to unwrap. By emphasizing the failure to discover commercial findings are they suggesting that the state does not expect to find oil and gas resources with the awarded licenses? Or were they upholding that §112 could not be applied to stop future pollution or emissions? In such a scenario the paragraph could only be applied to award penalties *after* environmental harm had occurred, which would severely reduce its function to preserve nature for future generations. Another aspect is their take on current and future emissions. The ENGOs argument is that planning for future emissions is in fact *worse* with reference to climate change, as the world is currently at a point where emissions needs to peak and be reduced yearly. Considering the environmental boundaries for the atmosphere and the accumulating effect of greenhouse gases, emissions are thought to cause more harm in the future because the remaining carbon budget will be drastically reduced. The argument from the MPE is in contrast that rising temperatures are a result of the total amount of CO_2 emitted into the atmosphere, discounting the knowledge that emissions have cumulative effects.

6.2.2 Scalar Understanding

The attorney general stated that the climate problem is global, not local. In stark contrast to the petroleum governance process or the economic foundation for accelerated petroleum production, when assessing the climate problem, the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum asked the court to take on the overall picture. The global energy-demand is increasing which has to

be dealt with while transitioning to renewable energy and phasing out fossil fuels. This will be done by putting a price on extractive resources and by capturing CO_2 from the atmosphere. What is important for the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is to make sure implemented climate policy is effective, both in effect and price.

The Norwegian governments take on emission-responsibility adheres to that employed by both the UN, the international climate regime in shape of the Paris Agreement and the EU. Each country is responsible for emissions emitted on their soil or within their national borders, meaning Norway is not responsible for emissions from the combustion of exported Norwegian oil and gas. Using this system is aligned with the 'polluters pay' principle and is arranged to secure a universal method and avoid double-counting emissions or mitigating efforts. It also confines with the EU ETS which reduces emissions from where they are emitted, not where the source of emission originates. How the opposing parties view this exact responsibility is crucial to the outcome of the trial as it speaks to the core principle under debate. If Norway is not responsible for emissions caused by burning Norwegian oil abroad, then the entire case falls because emissions from Norwegian production amount to only 95% of total emissions.

6.2.3 Economy

The environmental organisations argued that market insecurities for future oil revenues should be considered and emphasized before awarding new licenses, however the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum contended this aspect as not legally relevant. The attorney general agreed that future profitability was an issue for debate, however further that "This has been a tremendously profitable industry this far, but this is not a legal issue for consideration" (field notes, 13.11.2019). I have not found any in-depth argumentation as to why this is not considered relevant, rather the Norwegian state dismisses the argument as irrelevant because the §112 does not include language suggesting limits for profitability. Concerning the argument put forward concerning the climatic effect of reduced Norwegian oil production, the MPE referred briefly to contradicting research concluding Norwegian cuts could not be considered efficient climate policy. This, it was pointed out, is supported by reports made by the International Energy Agency, as well as by the majority of the Norwegian Parliament. The argument follows the previously explored argument on carbon leakage, emphasizing that if Norway should reduce its production, other producers will quickly increase their production to fill in the drop in supplies.

6.2.4 Democracy

During the first trial in the district court, much time was spent from the attorney generals' side to argue for why this question was of political, not legal art, and hence belonged with the politicians in the parliament, not in a courtroom. The state argued this case should never had been brought to the justice system and voiced concerned for a tendency of Americanisation of the justice system, with the implication that anyone could take their case to court if they did not agree with political decisions. The attorney general criticized Greenpeace and Nature & Youth for bringing political feuds before a judge because it undermines political decisions and the national democratic institutions and values. Following this argument, the attorney general issued concerns for what doors could be opened internationally should lawsuits like this become commonplace and accepted. Could it pave the way for other states who suffered from consequences from global warming to take legal action towards Norway, seeing as Norway has, like other states, contributed to increased global emissions? Like the opposing side, the state is warning of an attack against our democratic institutions, although from a different perspective.

6.2.5 Environmental Governance

The attorney general proclaimed no procedure mistakes were made in the process of opening and awarding licenses in the 23rd numbered round on NCS. In my field notes I have quoted the attorney saying 'It is easy, everything has been done by textbook. There are no mistakes, and if one disagrees it is the entire system that has to be attacked' (field notes, 05.11.2020). The lack of discounted estimations in the assessment report was intentional, and numbers presented in scenarios were not put forward as discounted. The MPE had not held back information or wronged the public by putting forward misleading estimations for future profit, as the given amounts did not try to pass as discounted. With regards to the estimations, the MPE put forward that the prevailing petroleum governing regime does not request budgets at this degree of accuracy because of the limited geological knowledge. An overall economic assessment is made later in the process through PUD and PAD (plans for development and operation), and the stated assured that sufficient opportunities for influence were given at a later stage in the process.

At different stages of an extraction process, different requirements to specific knowledge are required, in line with the gradual, knowledge-based process. According to the MPE, valid and thorough assessments formed the basis of the report, including exhaustive analyses of

environmental consequences for ocean and air pollution. Further, the attorney general argued too much time had been spent discussing this topic, especially since these alleged mistakes had been presented to the Norwegian parliament, who concluded the undiscounted profit estimations were not of relevance. According to the MPE possible mistakes are nonetheless irrelevant, as they are part of the assessment report on the Barents Sea South which merely opened up the area for future oil and gas exploration. The environmental organizations had taken Ministry of Energy and Petroleum to court because of their decisions connected to the 23rd licensing round, an autonomous governing process. In court, they stated disagreement with the opposing sides view that the opening of the Barents Sea had direct consequences for future governance and asked that the 23rd licensing round be seen isolated and detached from any possible mistakes made in the assessment report. This reasoning is contradictive to the Ministries approach in consultation letters for licensing rounds, where each process is connected to both assessment reports, as well as previously licensing rounds, made clear by the MPE only requesting new information.

This concludes the observational analysis, and textual analysis at large. I now proceed to identify prevailing discourses and to further discuss the most significant findings and their political and material implications for supply-side climate policies in Norway.

7 Discussion

It has been difficult to decide on how to start and organise this discussion. This thesis comprised multiple themes and aspects to begin with, and even more has come to when assessing and analysing my data material. Starting out, I anticipated finding more or less clear and distinctly separated discourses advocating for and against continued Norwegian oil extraction, which at this stage seems simplistic and unobtainable. Contrary to my initial expectations, the discourses found in the documents reviewed and by observing the climate lawsuit are multifaceted, complex and consists of a great many components. The prominent actors in the climate and petroleum landscape do not speak with one unified voice, instead discourses, and the worldviews of actors within each discourse deviate greatly over time and in different contexts. Although this makes my job as a researcher complicated, it confirms the premises from social constructionism that our perceptions of the world are socially produced and subject to diverse interpretations and understandings (Burr, 2015).

Based on the data material gathered and tendencies that have emerged in the analysis I categorize based on standpoint and implications for changed policy, consequently three prominent discourses in the political landscape concerned with issues central for supply-side climate policy has been identified. The ‘status quo’ discourse consists of the governing institutions Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, the Ministry of Climate and Environment and the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, in addition to oil and gas companies and organisations. It is discursive components, values and worldview establish the importance of continuing todays development of the petroleum industry mainly to sustain the Norwegian economy at its current level. The ‘managed decline’ discourse consists of environmental organisations, with Nature & Youth, Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth Norway making up the dominant figures. The discursive components, values and worldview of this discourse demonstrate the urgent need for reduced oil activity through limiting the scope of awarded licenses on the Norwegian shelf, mainly to reduce the risk for dangerous climate change. Finally, the ‘scientific research’ discourse consists of public scientific and advisory institutions such as the NEA, the Norwegian Polar Institute and the Institute of

Norwegian Marine Research, supported by a number of individual climate scientist and economists. This discourse finds itself outside the traditional 'oil – no oil' continuum but holds an intermediate position from where it emphasizes the need for strengthening the impact from environmental research, especially with regards to biodiversity and the local environment. I consider this last discourse the most critical with concerning potential opportunities for supply-side climate policies because while the former discourses appear quite static, this discourse has been subject to discursive changes over the 10 years explored in this thesis, and so I would consider it significant should this discourse increasingly approach either side of the political landscape.

In this chapter I discuss the findings from my discourse analysis thematically in connection with theory presented in chapter 2 and 3 and place the three discourses perspectives within each topic. I further identify different barriers and opportunities for implementing supply-side climate policy in connection to these themes.

7.1.1 The Norwegian Paradox and the Separation of Petroleum and Climate Policy

The data material shows clearly that from 2010 until 2019 climate and petroleum policy is strictly and intentionally separated in the documents issued from governing institutions. Governing institutions has continuously argued for the importance of ambitious and efficient climate strategies, but Norway´s export of oil and gas is not understood as contradicting ambitious climate goals. Neither is reduced oil production regarded an opportunity for reduced global emissions. The so-called 'Norwegian Paradox' is thus clearly visible, continuously reproduced and rarely reflected on within the 'status quo' discourse upheld from governing authorities. I have found next to no discussion of why the authorities does not consider this a contradiction despite recurring arguments from opposing actors, rather the topic of continued oil exploration is presented as something given and taken for granted, dismissing opposing arguments pointing out alternative future scenarios. The gap is upheld by a scalar 'fix,' in that the importance of the Norwegian petroleum industry economically is magnified in a national context while the global climate impact is downplayed and considered insignificant. To elaborate, when the Norwegian government lays forward plans for future oil activity the income from the petroleum industry is presented as crucial for the Norwegian economy and for maintaining the welfare state as we know it. When considering the global implications of greenhouse gases stemming from Norwegian petroleum industry, this impact

is regarded as small or insignificant in a global context, because it amounts to such a small part of the total global emissions. The 'status quo' understands Norwegian oil industry is big at nationally, small globally. By contrast, the environmental organisations emphasised in the climate lawsuit that all emissions can be considered small when isolated, because global warming is caused by the accumulated total of many small sources of greenhouse gases. The 'managed decline' discourse considers it reasonable to object the legitimacy of destroying the environment, as long as it happens bit by bit. With regards to the 'scientific research' discourse, it can be interpreted as acknowledging the discrepancy between oil and climate policy, however only referring to implications for national climate targets, and local consequences for natural values within the Norwegian territory, see for example NEAs most recent consultation responses (Norwegian Environment agency, 2017, 2019a).

Taking a step back and considering the bigger, more long-term picture where Norway is committed to a course leading to a zero-emission society based on energy from renewable or low-emission sources, it seems the governing institutions does not consider developing the national oil industry a hindrance for achieving this goal. Continued oil production for the foreseeable future, or at least until market mechanisms necessitate changes, meaning continuing the status quo, is not considered at odds with this development. Rather it is taken for granted that Norway is to continue producing oil and gas as long as it is economically profitable, striving towards a market-led phase-out of fossil fuels. The environmental organisations constituting the 'managed decline' discourse on the other hand, considers the premise of continued oil exploration as constructed by governing institutions. In the 10 year period explored in this thesis, their concern for implications resulting from separating petroleum and climate policies increases significantly and reaches a peak after the 23rd licensing round when they decide to bring legal charges against the Norwegian state for violating the Constitution. As actors within the 'scientific research' discourse is mainly concerned with national implications of oil production, I have found less data to analyse their stance on the global shift towards low-emissions societies.

The continuous reproduction of the 'Norwegian paradox' and the 'status quo' discourse´s ability to exercise dominance on this issue and hence a reluctance to address possible negative consequences caused by the 'gap' between petroleum and climate policy forms a great barrier for implementing supply-side climate policy in Norway. I hold that connecting petroleum to climate policy is still of the most important obstacles to overcome if supply-side policies are to be seriously regarded as a climate strategy in Norway. Because the 'scientific research'

discourse is yet to include sufficiently this aspect of the political debate, their potential turn towards either of the opposing discourses might pose as an important change in the political landscape. Another aspect of opportunity is the result from the climate lawsuits final round, which is scheduled to appear for a full panel hearing in the Norwegian Supreme Court this November. Although the outcome from the court of appeals was in favour of the state, the verdict sided with the environmental organisations view that emissions from exported oil should be considered within as within the scope of §12 in the Norwegian Constitution (LB-2018-60499, 2020, p. 20), hence supporting their assertion that climate and petroleum policy should be considered jointly. Should the verdict fall from the supreme court fall in favour of the environmental organisations, it would be regarded as support for the 'managed decline' discourse and providing a legal foundation for their view that petroleum and climate policy can no longer be approached separately in Norwegian governance. The exact, practical consequences is not clear, but it could be assumed that future licenses on the continental shelf must increasingly consider the climatic consequences of exported oil before awarded.

7.1.2 Democracy

The democratic aspect of the analysis takes on the importance of democratic governing processes and how these are understood and judged differently by actors involved in the political processes. There is also an issue of disagreement regarding the occurrence of the climate lawsuit, where the 'status quo' discourse contend the lawsuit in itself is an attack on the democratic principles separating law and politics, and the 'managed decline' discourse on the other hand claiming the necessity of the lawsuit lies is driven by an democratic failure which the courts have a responsibility to correct.

It is incorporated in Norwegian law that environmental concerns, a knowledge-based approach, the precautionary principle and the total environmental burden of human activity should be taken into consideration before industrial developments are made (LOV-2009-06-19-100, 2009). How these principles are weighed and what implications such concerns have for human activity is however regarded vastly different within the different discourses. The environmental organisations, as well as the scientific advisory institutions regard these principles to entail that nature and natural values should have some precedence over short-term societal and economic benefits. The governing authorities stand on this is however somewhat unclear, even after assessing numerous reports, plans, budgets and the climate lawsuit. In some instances, I have found the government is accentuating their knowledge-

based approach to environmental values and emphasizing their traditions for strict environmental protection and governance. On the other hand, I find recurring instances (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016) of the authorities asking for, but then disregarding scientific advice without explanation, for the benefit of oil and gas companies, which is supported by findings in the report from the Office of the Auditor General of Norway (2019). It suggests that the strong traditions for a sustainable and knowledge-based approach functions more as a standardized routine, a perfunctory act without any concrete consequences for the initial proposals. This further implies a strong tendency of adhering more to oil companies' requirements than to environmental considerations, and hence an asymmetric power relation between advisory institutions and the Ministries governing Norwegian petroleum resources.

Lastly, it is important to appoint the aspect of democratic governance regarding the totality of the Norwegian exploration policy. While the MPE, supported by oil and gas companies and their branch organisation considers the current policies decisive to uphold petroleum activity on the Norwegian continental shelf, both environmental organisations and advisory and scientific institutions (at least recently) report that they regard the processes for awarding licenses problematic. This especially refers to the process of awards in predefined areas (APA) where ENGOs and advisory institutions primarily argued that this process needed to be opened for public consultation. Nevertheless, even after a public hearing on APA was enacted, organisations and institutions upheld that this process does not sufficiently facilitate the knowledge based approach that environmental governance requires, particularly because it involves no step of nomination and is generally considered a closed process(Institute of Marine Research, 2019). Consequently, they argue for the termination of this part of the exploration policy.

In conclusion, the different discourses regard the success of the Norwegian environmental governance system quite differently, and they consider variously how these democratic principles are fulfilled. In addition, it is evident that how these discourses, primarily limited to petroleum, economy and climate issues advance their discourses to 'fit' into their argumentation regarding the climate lawsuit. The 'status quo' discourse which is opposed reducing petroleum activity is also opposed to bringing such issues into the legal system. The 'managed decline' discourse, it can be claimed is attempting to use the legal system for their benefit and for raising their issue to another level.

7.1.3 Economy

Considering the economic aspects of the political landscape dealing with oil extraction and climate policies has proven rather complex. As a background, both petroleum and climate policy are governed with principles of profitability and efficiency as the oil industry is maintained as the most important Norwegian export revenue, and the climate policy constructed to achieve cost-efficiency and protect the Norwegian economy from avoidable stress. From this, one could deduct that concerns regarding the future profitability of Norwegian oil export would put into effect pathways away from oil and towards more secure future sources of income. Rather, the opposite approach is evident, and as is clear from the mandate given in NOU 2018:17, Norwegian authorities does not consider the profitability of the oil industry at risk or subject to the transitions developing through increased climate policy. The 'status quo' discourse places high value on workplaces, continued high income to the Norwegian welfare state and the survival of the petroleum industry. As reserves on active extraction sites are reaching a more mature state, they are in need of new area and new reserve discoveries to maintain the current production level. It is evident from both document studies and observation of the climate lawsuit that governing authorities expect the market for oil and gas to maintain a level where Norwegian petroleum is profitable in a long-term perspective. It can be argued that this expectation is contradicting the aims set by the Paris Agreement and consequently, that their scenarios put forward might actually prevent the Agreement to be fulfilled, following CDA theory´s assumption that society is shaped by discourses visions and understandings of the social world.

The 'managed decline' discourse places high value on reduced emissions, as well as investments in making this obtainable. The environmental organisations anticipate the Paris Agreement´s success, and therefore plans accordingly, meaning they foresee an imminent decline in the market for fossil fuels coupled with an upswing in the market for renewable energy sources. Because they relate to this scenario, they warn against further investments in this industry, suggesting solutions where Norway plans a head and prepare for market decline by placing investments in more sustainable industries. They argue for steering the economy in the direction for fulfilment of the Paris Agreement, but also ask for the Norwegian state to show solidarity with future generations by allocating resources to what they regard are more future-oriented sectors. The 'scientific research' discourse is to a large degree in unison with the 'managed decline' discourse on this issue, as there are examples of NEA questioning the profitability of licenses awarded by the MPE. However, while the environmental

organisations apply a global solidarity foundation for their views, the advisory institutions confine only to concerns on a national scale.

The aspect of risk of stranded assets, conceptualised as material investments or resources once considered valuable, but turned redundant due to either external events or market changes is, to some degree introduced by all three identified discourses, however with vastly differing solutions. Environmental organisations argue the risk is greatly prevalent with concerns that potential economic resources for investments in renewable energy solutions are wasted on petroleum investments with uncertain outcomes. Their solution to avoid such risk is to relocate investments to more sustainable industries. The 'status quo' discourse however argues for expanded acreage in order to explore new reserves and as such avoid leaving costly technology and infrastructure unutilised or potential resources untapped. The 'scientific research' discourse is not so much concerned with stranded assets, they however call for estimations of future profitability to be included in the assessment of licensing rounds, which suggests they acknowledge the risk of market changes making investments less profitable. This is relevant in their evaluation of petroleum developments because they make their decisions partly by weighing societal benefits up against environmental impact. As such, the prevailing risk of stranded assets constitutes both a barrier and an opportunity for supply-side climate policy, depending on the dominant discursive frame applied. In this instant, I regard stranded assets as a barrier since the 'status quo' discourse exercise hegemony over the alternative discourses.

7.1.4 Neoliberal Governance

In both key- and supporting texts analysed, as well as the data gathered from the climate lawsuit the Norwegian government employs what Lohmann (2016) refers to as a neoliberal approach to natural entities and climate change at large. It seems evident that natures market value, rather than it´s intrinsic value is emphasised in governing documents, as potential 'value creation' is frequently upheld as the main reason for scientific research in marine areas. This comes in addition to Norway´s strategy to use market mechanisms to mitigate climate change. This follows the stance taken by the EU, which first and foremostly seeks to mitigate climate change through market mechanisms, using quotas and putting a price on emissions. The Norwegian government has voluntarily decided to adhere to the EUs approach for climate mitigation and is as such independently responsible for its approach and its repercussions. As established by Asdal (2014) Norway played an influential part in shaping the current

neoliberal strategy through the process leading up to the Kyoto Protocol. This is further supported by Herod (2011) in his argument that global and supra-national sizes does not occur in a vacuum, but is rather produced by decisions made at a national level. This all entails that even though Norway reduces emissions in cooperation with the EU, it cannot shift the responsibility of their climate policy on supra-national institutions but stands accountable for the results of their strategies. The verdict from Borgarting Court of Appeals specified this, when it supported the environmental organisations argument that Norway can be held responsible for the emissions caused by exported Norwegian oil and gas (LB-2018-60499, 2020), in stark contrast with the overall policy applied by the EU.

7.1.5 Knowledge Production

The framework on social constructionism and discourse analysis provides tools for investigating how knowledge is produced, maintained, made sense of and how greatly it can differ. It is striking when reading text produced by opposing discourses in the petroleum/climate debate that both sides refers to scientific and knowledge-based approaches, however there is great disagreements as to what is considered reliable and relevant knowledge. Environmental organisations all the way back to 2010 argue for considering oil Norwegian Oil production in connection to marine consequences of climate change in the Barents sea, at the same time Norwegian advisory and scientific institutions point to this knowledge with concern for fulfilling national targets for climate mitigation, however the government discounts of this knowledge categorically, referring to their decision to leave eventual petroleum reductions to market mechanisms.

Another main aspect made visible in the discourse analysis is the different attitudes with regards to what emphasis to put on scientific knowledge on marine environments and how petroleum activity will affect these. Although the MPE and NPD continuously puts forward the importance of taking scientific advise into consideration when managing industrial activity in the marine areas, the response from both environmental organisations and most importantly the advisory institutions is that their research, recommendations and cautionary advice does not have real implications for the petroleum industry (Institute of Marine Research, 2019; Norwegian Environment agency, 2017; Office of the Auditor General of Norway, 2019). One aspect of this is the frame set in all consultation letters from the MPE stating that ‘only new and relevant knowledge is necessary to report back to the ministry.’ Does it mean that the exploratory processes build on each other and that knowledge once

disregarded, is forever regarded irrelevant when it comes to awarding new areas? Considering the complex nature of nature, it seems unlikely that previous scientific knowledge will not be important to assess repeatedly, especially considering consequences of climate change which is constantly changing and accelerating in a non-linear fashion. Additionally, in the climate lawsuit, the attorney general made a distinct point of demanding the 23rd licensing round to be seen in isolation from previous licensing rounds and the integrated management plan opening new acreage and facilitating the licenses later awarded in the Barents Sea. This is considered contradictive to the argument made in the process of revising scientific advice for suggested awards, where the Ministry of Petroleum and Energy upholds that previously state knowledge is unnecessary as these processes build on earlier awards and knowledge included in the integrated assessment reports. It displays how emphasis and argumentation is altered to fit in with the discursive line of argumentation.

7.1.6 Path Dependency

A question asked at the onset was, can the failure of the Norwegian state to fully address the economic and climate risk of continued oil exploration be explained by path dependency theory? Based on my analysis I argue that the 'status quo' discourse maintaining and accelerating the pace of oil activity on the Norwegian continental shelf bears some indication of past events setting in motion a sequence of deterministic patterns. First, it is evident by governments declination to address the economic risk of continued petroleum investments in a political landscape striving towards reduced emissions and a zero-emission society. By neglecting these transitions and continuously re-shaping their worldview so as to fit into a future scenario where the oil industry has a place in the Norwegian economy despite extensive research indicating the opposite, it is clear that the petroleum sector finds it difficult to envision alternative pathways.

A recurring and most significant argument in the governing documents is the important role the oil industry has in forms of technological expertise, economic value for the Norwegian welfare state and as an employer for the supplier industry and oil workers around the country (Ministry of Environment, 2011). While these are obvious and very important concerns, the magnitude of their importance for Norway also suggests a state of path dependency because of how reliant the Norwegian state has become of an industry that from many instances has been presented with an end-date (Fouquet, 2016; Muttit et al., 2016; UNEP et al., 2019). This importance is, by contrast, minimally reflected in the environmental discourse, which stresses

the future economic risk by investing in a declining market, but scarcely acknowledges the current implications reductions in oil activity poses for the Norwegian Economy. That the Norwegian oil industry bares symptoms indicating path dependency indicates that a shift towards reduced oil activity and increased investments in renewable resources requires more than viable arguments for greenhouse-gas emissions. To elaborate, I argue based on the analysis that the current carbon-intensive economic structure is too locked, or so deeply established that it will not be transformed if the purpose is solely to reduce greenhouse emissions.

Second, the social aspect of path dependency, pointed out by (Kuzemko et al., 2016) suggests the existing values, laws and pattern of institutional arrangements have an important role to play concerning why innovation and change usually happens within the existing system instead of appointing alternative pathways or novel systems. This is also evident when studying governing documents, as strategies for reducing emissions in the petroleum sector only goes as far as to seek reductions within the existing system and neglects to assess solutions involving a more fundamental transition to new sources of energy. Two aspects must be appointed in this regard. The petroleum sector, more specifically the state-owned oil company Equinor has recently put forward new strategies for addressing climate change and reducing their emissions through both large investments in renewable energy (wind power) and by putting forward extensive plans for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS). However, while the proposal for renewable investments and electrification of oil rigs is estimated to reduce Equinor´s emission per produced unit of energy with at least 50%, this number includes all of Equinor´s activity, including oil and gas production, which is planned to continue the current pace of development (NTB, 2020a). By 'adding' low-emission energy production to the total mix, Equinor facilitates upholding their petroleum activity, reducing the amount of emissions emitted per produced unit of energy, while the grand total of emissions emitted is left unchanged.

Simplified, CCS entails capturing CO_2 from industrial production and storing it under the Norwegian continental shelf to keep from being emitted into the atmosphere. A proposal with a price tag of 6,9 billion NOK was addressed by the Norwegian Parliament this spring (Government.no, 2020c), even though technology allowing CCS is still not sufficiently demonstrated. Additionally, and in line with path dependency theory (Kuzemko et al., 2016), this innovation does not step outside the current regime, but seek adoption within the existing

petroleum industry, because CCS allows for continued oil activity by aiming to remove emissions from production.

7.1.7 Carbon Lock-In

Analysing indications of carbon-lock in follows many of the same aspect as evident for assessing symptoms of path dependency. It can be argued that the unwavering argumentation employed by the 'status quo' discourse can to some degree be explained by mechanisms of carbon lock-in. Both by how dependent the Norwegian economy is of the petroleum industry, and by how firmly it refuses to acknowledge alternative pathways. It seems, as suggested by Unruh (2000) that reinforcing mechanisms at both technological (electrification of platforms and CCS, the supplier industry, expertise in offshore drilling), organisational (The Norwegian Oil and Gas association primarily) and institutional (exploration policy from the MPE, disregarding what is brought forward as meaningful scientific advise) contributes to support continued oil production, by disregarding the negative environmental, societal and economic consequences of oil production. I argue this, in combination with the effects of path dependency makes out an essential barrier for potential supply-side climate policy in Norway.

7.1.8 Possible Green Paradox

The responses from the fisheries organisations and NEA to the most recent licensing rounds informs that the current pace and scope of MPEs exploration policy is considered accelerated and premature. Not only is the government not showing signs of reducing activity, it seems they are increasing while awarding record-high numbers of new exploration licenses (NTB, 2019). According to Sinn (Sinn, 2008, 2012), this behaviour is symptomatic for actors seeking to maximise their resource potential before climate policy causes meaningful market changes and reduce the value of their asset. To correctly identify a Green Paradox requires an economic, quantitative analysis and is not within either the scope, capacity or scientific design of this thesis, however based on the findings in my analysis I hope future economic research can provide insightful answers. I have found a tendency of the Norwegian state increasing the exploration pace and volume of licenses awarded despite expectation of future increased CO_2-pricing targeting fossil fuels. This development has caused critical questions from environmental organisations, which is to be expected from their goal of a 'managed decline,' but questions also appear in the data material from scientific and advisory institutions. To be clear, whether this tendency of acceleration is driven by the industries fear of stranded assets

and the intention to export oil and gas resources before market changes caused by climate policies reduces the profitability of oil and gas, cannot be certified in this research, because it will require data material examining if emissions have accelerated.

There are however telling indications that point in the direction of a green paradox. First, there is the NEAs consultation response from 2019 (2019a), where they challenge MPEs evaluation of areas going from immature to mature in only two years, indicating a turn away from the established, step-by-step process. This is supported by the fishing organisations statements in the same consultation round where they argue the MPE is upscaling awards without legitimate considerations taken to other industries (Nordland Fylkes Fiskarlag, 2019). Secondly, there is general discussion found in the data material questioning the acceleration of awarding licenses. Third, there is discursive discord relating to whether governing authorities properly adhere to scientific advice from consulted parties, suggesting an overall tendency to assign greater importance to the request from the petroleum industry than institutions advocating for climatic and local environmental consequences. The worldview and components of the 'status quo' discourse facilitates and legitimates these tendencies, despite alternative discourses claim that these policies of accelerated oil-exploration increase greenhouse gas emissions.

As previously mentioned, a core sentence within the 'status quo' discourse states that 'the industry is dependent on new acreage in order to maintain the current level of production on the Norwegian Shelf'. This citation informs that the presumption made by economic scholars on viable instruments for supply-side climate policy, as well as the strategy acted on by the environmental organisations to make the government retain new licenses is potentially effective, should it succeed. As the petroleum industry is depending on new areas and finding significant new reserves to uphold the current production level, withholding such licenses would steadily reduce the activity on the Norwegian Continental Shelf, and hence the emissions from exported Norwegian oil and gas. This increases the importance of the 'climate lawsuit,' as it points directly to awards in licenses. Additionally, it connects to the theory of green paradoxes, as supply-side policies are suggested by Sinn (2008) as a solution to avoid this phenomena.

7.1.9 Scale

I have found scale and scalar understandings to constitute main aspects of the discourses involved in this debate. As initially expected, both discourses line of reasoning rely on quite

specific understandings of the relation between local, national and global sizes, their level of authority and their significance for Norwegian climate and nature. First, the environmental organisations see close connections between the local – global – back to local, in terms of Norwegian petroleum industry in the Barents Sea south east having consequences for the accelerating global heating, which in turn has a negative effect on the local marine environment in the Barents Sea. This discourse also emphasises the influence of Norwegian emissions globally, despite the fact that they constitute only 0.12 percent of total global emissions. This argumentation is greatly based on assumptions of signal effect and 'responsible climate governance', an argument it which must be specified has little robust research to support it yet. However, it is also based on an understanding of national emissions as independent of national territorial borders, as they consider emissions from combustion of Norwegian oil abroad relevant to Norwegian climate policy. This understanding is contrary to the one upheld by the EU, however supported in the verdict by the Borgarting Court of Appeals. Further, the environmental organisations reflect minimally on the relation between Norway and supra-national sizes such as the EU, suggesting they do not consider the EU an authoritarian influence in Norwegian climate or petroleum policies.

The 'status quo' discourse sees scalar sizes rather differently. Their line of reasoning follows a strict of 'national' to apply on to activity unfolding within state territorial borders. As such, emissions from North Sea oil used after export is not relevant to Norwegian climate policy but falls into the responsibility of the end user. This discourse understands climate change as something external (global) which is not set in connection with activity on a local level, hence climatic consequences such as sea-level rise and ocean acidification is not seen in connection to Norwegian oil production, and as such outside their reach of influence, see chapter 5.2 (Ministry of Environment, 2012). And, as previously stated, this discourse considers the national importance of the petroleum industry to be immense, while its climatic consequences at a global level is considered minimal and not significant.

7.1.10 Discussion Summary

In summation, the discussion shows how three different discourses operate in this political landscape and what implications their facets have for supply-side climate policies. The 'scientific research' discourse aspires to highlight inconsistency in how the state adheres to scientific advice on environmental consequences of oil and gas activity. This aim and direction of this discourse provide an opportunity for supply-side climate policies because it

functions as a scientifically founded link between petroleum and climate, and in the 10 years explored this discourse has become more visible, and speaks more clearly on the environmental effects from Norwegian Petroleum Industry. However, this discourse make visible a barrier, which is that the actors associated are experiencing sinking response and acknowledgement for their viewpoints. The 'managed decline' discourse, with the conviction that Norway must reduce its petroleum activity on account of climate change, has a clear agenda and takes use of not just ecological, but also economic and democratic aspects to advance their worldview. The environmental organisations ability to spread their views through media, consultation letters, and not least the climate lawsuit points to an opportunity for supply-side climate policies should they succeed in increasing their dominance in the public debate. A profound barrier, however, is that the 'managed decline' discourse has not sufficiently dealt with the main concerns for their opposing discourse, which is mainly the survival of the welfare state, and preserving the industries workplaces. As research points to difficult conditions for the entire industry should it not succeed in sustainable transformation, there is an unused potential for 'discourse co-optation' regarding economic risk, something the environmental organisations could take us of to turn the debate to their advantage.

The 'status quo', as the name suggests, is found within governing institutions taking formative decisions with material outcomes for Norwegian petroleum industry and climate policy. This discourse enjoys the political dominance in the political landscape, and so in itself, it poses as a barrier for supply-side climate policies because of its convictions and worldviews that hinders such a strategy by maintaining the divide between petroleum and climate policies. The data material gives foundation for suggesting this discourse is affected by tendencies of path dependency and effects of carbon lock-in, which combined with fear of stranded assets enhances Norway´s carbon entanglement and makes it more comprehensive to turn away from the status quo.

8 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research shows how the main obstacle for implementing supply-side climate policies is the worldview of the 'status quo' discourse and its dominance in Norwegian climate governance. The Norwegian governing institutions' conviction that it is possible to move towards a zero-emission society while continuing to develop the national oil industry bears strong indications of path dependency and a state of carbon lock-in. The size of Norwegian oil reserves is continuously produced through language by the governing authorities. The analysis also shows that in cases of continued oil and gas exploration, institutions relation to scientific, environmental advice is often superficial. The Norwegian paradox, as in striving towards emission reduction while continuing to prolong the endurance of fossil fuels, is upheld by disregarding alternative pathways and recycling arguments despite being confronted with this inconsistency. The data material provides evidence for suspecting the appearance of a green paradox, on account of accelerated petroleum explorations despite warnings of reduced market profitability. Finally, there is foundation for contending that actors within the 'status quo' discourse makes decisions based on the assumption that the Paris Agreement will not succeed.

The threat of hazardous global heating draws closer every day. I must admit, at the onset of this research I expected to arrive upon a more positive result. I could have written a thesis on what is preventing Norway from taking actions towards supply-side climate policies, but I honestly thought there would be great opportunities and so I wanted to explore both. And while I have identified some promising tendencies, most of all the fact that scientific and advisory institutions are increasingly vocalising their concern regarding petroleum developments, I fear that this is simply not enough. My analysis show that the Norwegian state is constantly adjusting their climatic discourse to conform to their most prudent concern: the survival of the petroleum industry. While alternative discourses confront shortcomings, exposes inconsistencies and presents advantages of alternate pathways, the 'status quo' discourse has been more or less impervious since 2009. And at the centre of this discourse lies the deep-rooted conviction that extracting fossil fuels from the Norwegian continental shelf is

not related with climate change mitigation. As this worldview holds a discursive predominance in the political landscape, the status quo continues for the foreseeable future. This means that if implementing supply-side climate policies in Norway is the goal, the means by which to achieve it is to make it inconceivable to discuss climate policy without addressing oil. This can happen through discursive change, by the alternative discourses strengthening their position, perhaps by discourse co-optation, advance their arguments and finding new grounds for their values in the courtroom, in the parliament but perhaps most importantly by continuing the discussion and every day expanding their reach. With discursive change comes social change.

9 Epilogue

Due to the global pandemic and the following economic crisis this spring, I wish to address shortly the recent developments in the Norwegian Petroleum Industry. Because of the oil prices historic fall, descending to the point where some producers in lack of storage were forced to pay to get rid of their oil (NTB, 2020b), concerns for future investments in the oil and gas sector has led to a state-financed, crisis package with a potential price tag amounting to 8 billion NOK (NRK, 2020). In path dependence theory, external shocks are presented as a way out of a static condition if it sufficiently alters the structural landscape (David, 2000), and at the onset of the economic crisis scholars and political commentators speculated whether Covid-19 would function as a shock treatment for the fossil fuel industry. “Low and unpredictable oil prices can make renewable energy appear as a more attractive alternative” wrote Dag O. Hessen, professor in biology and author eight days after Norway went into lockdown (Hessen, 2020). Three months and various extensive tax cuts later, I find it safe to assume that not even a global pandemic was enough of a shock to treat the Norwegian carbon entanglement. Before completing this thesis, I want to point out three aspects of these last month’s developments that I consider reinforcing the relevance of this research and its discoveries.

First, I find highly interesting the decision made by the Minister of Oil and Energy to reduce Norwegian oil production in cooperation with OPEC in order to stabilize the market (Government.no, 2020b). A pillar understanding in the ‘status quo’ discourse is that Norwegian oil exports are so modest in a global context that reductions has no market effect, making this action counteractive to the discourse conviction.

Secondly, this process has shown active use of discourse co-optation (Jensen, 2010), by politicians advocating for tax-cuts for the petroleum industry on the account of sustaining workplaces and industries with an important role in transitions towards sustainable societies. This argument is however contested in scientific research, witch rather points to innovation being difficult to achieve if the landscape is stable. By drawing on ‘green transitions’ the

‘status quo’ discourse causes confusion and strengthens its arguments at the expense of both ‘managed decline’ and the ‘scientific research’ discourse. The argument of sustaining workplaces is contested, seeing as further investments increasingly ‘locks’ this industries to the fossil fuel regime, where the space for future workplaces is disputed.

Finally, a core understanding in the ‘status quo’ discourse is that while climate policy is initiated and regulated by the state, the petroleum industry is to be left subject to the forces of market mechanisms, meaning the demand for fossil fuels should determine the pace of investments and the durability of this industry. The parliaments majority decision to use state regulation mechanisms to interfere and ‘bail out’ the oil industry from a position of stagnation counteracts the previous conviction and shows quite contrary that politicians are willing to enforce state regulation, however in the interest of saving the industry. “The special treatment of the oil industry is therefore a case in point of how difficult it is to reduce the dimensions of an existing industry, even when profitability changes” (Normann & Lahn, 2020).

The events taking place this spring confirms the conclusion in this thesis that the ‘status quo’ discourse dominating decisions taken by governmental institutions is ‘locked’ to the petroleum industry and that this state is continuously reproduced through language.

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Appendix

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

Masteroppgave Sigrid Vigdisdatter Berg

Referansenummer

513502

Registrert

23.10.2019 av Sigrid Vigdisdatter Berg - sigridvb@uio.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Universitetet i Oslo / Det samfunnsvitenskapelige fakultet / Institutt for sosiologi og samfunnsgeografi

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Hege Merete Knutsen, h.m.knutsen@sosgeo.uio.no, tlf: 22855952

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Sigrid Vigdisdatter Berg, sigridvigdisdatter@gmail.com, tlf: 90735283

Prosjektperiode

01.11.2019 - 30.06.2020

Status

02.06.2020 - Vurdert

Vurdering (2)

02.06.2020 - Vurdert

Bekreftelse på status

NSD har vurdert endringen registrert 01.06.2020.

Vi har nå registrert 30.06.2020 som ny sluttdato for forskningsperioden.

NSD vil følge opp ved ny planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er

avsluttet.

Lykke til videre med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Gry Henriksen
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

02.01.2020 - Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen, så fremt behandlingen gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet 02.01.2020 med vedlegg, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD.

Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html

Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige personopplysninger frem til 31.05.2020.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger med grunnlag i at oppgaven er nødvendig for formål knyttet til vitenskapelig eller historisk forskning. Hovedforhandlingene i søksmålet vil bli streamet på internett, og det er rimelig å anta at det vil være journalister tilstede i rettsalen og at det blir referert til saken i media.

Prosjektet skal innhente personopplysninger gjennom en kritisk diskursanalyse av offentlige statelige dokumenter som underbygges gjennom observasjon av hovedforhandlingene i søksmålet Greenpeace og Natur og ungdom vs. Staten.
Ved slike forhandlinger vil personene som deltar, uttale seg som representanter for organisasjoner eller staten. På bakgrunn av dette vurderes personvernulempen å være svært lav veid opp mot prosjektets samfunnsnytte.

Prosjektet har som mål å identifisere og analysere ulike diskurser innenfor norsk olje-, energi- og klimapolitikk.

Behandlingen har hjemmelsgrunnlag i personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav e), jf. art. 6 nr. 3 bokstav b), jf. personopplysningsloven §§ 8 og 9.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

- om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a)
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenelige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle

formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19). Vi viser til vurderingene over hvor det argumenteres for at personvernulempen er lav.

Den nytten de registrerte vil ha av å få informasjon målt opp mot den lave personvernulempen det er å bli registrert i forskningsprosjektet vurderes å være lav. Samtidig er det snakk om hovedforhandlinger i et søksmål som vil bli streamet på internett, og deltakerne er offentlige personer som en må kunne anta at vedkommende vet at henne/han kan bli gjenstand for forskning. Samtidig er det rimelig å anta at det bli referert til saken i media. Det vil derfor være uforholdsmessig at forsker skal gi informasjon om observasjonen hun gjør. NSD finner at det kan unntas fra informasjonsplikten etter art.14 nr.5.b)

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Gry Henriksen
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)