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## Norway in an identity crisis?

*A discourse analysis of how Norway's national identity and role-adoption impacts the behavior and approach of the country in international climate politics*

Thea Hoff Gulbrandsen

Master Thesis in Sociology

University of Oslo  
Department of Sociology and Human Geography  
Faculty of Social Sciences

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## Abstract

Climate change has over the last couple of decades come to be acknowledged by political leaders and decision makers around the world as one of the most serious threats facing humankind, and planet earth. The existing knowledge regarding the phenomenon has largely been accumulated by the use of natural sciences, but a growing number of research contributions are now looking to the social sciences to investigate the various social processes interlinked with climate change.

Several of these contributions concern themselves with discourses, which are claimed to have the power to determine the range of actions and solutions thought of as appropriate to address the climate change issue. Within the field of international climate politics, it has been pointed out how discourses are interlinked with the national identity and role-adoption of states, and that these factors serve as a foundation for the behavior and approach of nations within this context. In this regard, Norway has been highlighted as an especially interesting case to study, primarily because of efforts to take on the role of a climate leader, while at the same time being a significant producer of oil and gas. This has been claimed to constitute a paradox, as these positions are generally regarded as contradictory within the field of climate politics. The earlier contributions regarding this topic are often interdisciplinary in nature, building on knowledge from various fields within the social sciences. This study borrows knowledge from international relations, political science, and social psychology. It does, however, primarily build on perspectives rooted within the field of sociology.

In this study I conduct a qualitative discourse analysis, building on an overarching theory of discourse as well as theoretical assumptions gathered from earlier contributions regarding national identity, role-adoption, and the behavior and approach of states in international climate politics. Through searching for lasting representations and narratives, the following overarching research question is answered: *How does Norway's national identity and role-adoption impact the country's behavior and approach in international climate politics?* The data material consists of submissions and statements made on behalf of Norway to The United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change - which constitutes the main channel for international climate politics – during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement (2005-

2015). Additionally, the material includes transcripts from interviews with Norwegian representatives which participated in the negotiations during the studied period.

In the first chapter of the analysis, I explore the national identity discourse of Norway in international climate politics, through the use of the following subsidiary research question; *Which identities are used to construct Norway as a nation within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations?* The findings indicate that four primary identities were used to construct Norway in the submissions and statements, these narrating the nation as a developed, Annex I country, an Umbrella Group Country, A country strongly concerned with the consequences for climate change, and a cooperative country. In the interview transcripts three additional identities were uncovered, representing Norway as a unique country, a neutral country and a trustworthy country. A storyline is discovered of Norway as a “small” country, which is constructed relationally through the use of significant “others” in which the country thus distances itself from.

In the second chapter of the analysis, Norway’s role-adoption in international climate politics is explored. The subsidiary research questioned answered in this chapter is: *Which roles does Norway adopt and perform in the UNFCCC negotiations, and how does these roles relate to the nation’s identity discourse and role prescriptions within this context?* Through the submissions and statements, it is uncovered that Norway takes on the role as a climate leader, a generous aid-giver, and a policy entrepreneur. A role conception as a petroleum producer is additionally discovered, and in the interview transcripts there were also found signs of role-adoption as a bridge-builder. Signs of cognitive dissonance is discovered between the roles as a petroleum producer and a climate leader, which is discursively managed through the “small” storyline as well as the narration of Norway as an “ambitious petroleum producer”.

The third chapter explores the last subsidiary research question: *What kind of - and which specific - solutions to the climate change problem is promoted by Norway in the negotiations, and how does these relate to the country’s national identity discourse and role-taking within the UNFCCC context?* It is found that Norway primarily promotes solutions which are global, technological, and cost-effective in nature, resonating with earlier research where there has been uncovered an ecological modernization discourse and an economism discourse in relation to Norway’s climate policy. It is lastly discussed how these solutions relates to Norway’s roles as a climate leader and a petroleum producer within this context.

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### List of Abbreviations

UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
CBDR-RC	Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Capabilities
COP	Conference of the Parties
ADP	Ad hoc working group on the Durban Platform for enhanced action
AWG-KP	Ad hoc Working Group on further commitments for Annex I parties under the Kyoto Protocol
AWG-LCA	Ad Hoc Working group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
CMP	Conference of the Parties Serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol
GHG	Greenhouse Gases

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Figure 1. Assumed connection between national identity, expectations stemming from the external environment, role-adoption, and the following behavior and approach of a country within a given context.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Relevance of thesis

Climate change is drastically changing our world. The impacts of the phenomenon include rising sea levels, global warming and extreme weather occurrences causing deadly droughts, floods and other natural disasters (Leichenko & O'Brien, 2019: 22). The scientific knowledge about climate change has primarily been accumulated by the use of natural sciences. These sciences have traditionally been considered the most fruitful for studying the phenomenon, which was clearly marked in 1988 when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established (Dunlap & Brulle, 2015: 1). The dominant understanding of climate change within the natural sciences is as a phenomenon linked to rising concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere due to human activities. The activities in question are however reduced to that of fossil fuel consumption, deforestation, and land-use changes that contributes to GHG emissions (Leichenko & O'Brien, 2019: 63).

By reducing human activities to a “black box”, one risks overlooking the many integral social processes that contribute to climate change, thus creating a significant gap in the knowledge about the many aspects of the phenomenon. As greatly explained by Dunlap & Brulle:

The primary driving forces of global climate change are embedded in social structure and institutions, cultural values and beliefs, and social practices. Thus, efforts to ameliorate and adapt to global warming will require understanding of these social processes at various scales from the global to the local, all fundamental domains of sociology (2015: 16).

Contributions such as Lever-Tracy (2008) and Koehrsen et al. (2020) points out that although the social sciences now make up an increasingly more substantial part of the research on processes related to climate change, the sociological field in particular remains reluctant to explore the topic. The importance and urgency of the climate change problem, combined with the marginalized role of sociology within this research field sparked my initial interest for exploring the topic in this thesis.



## 1.2 Background

There exists a broad global consensus that climate change constitutes a modern-day crisis that needs to be dealt with (Hajer, 1995: 1). There is, however, less consensus around the appropriate solutions aimed at tackling the environmental problem. Questions concerning what kind of a problem climate change is, and what solutions should be implemented to address it has made this phenomenon a political issue (Dryzek, 2013: 3).

Climate change was initially introduced on the political scene in the late 1980s, when decision makers around the world started to recognize the phenomenon as potentially destructive for populations and societies (Fermann, 1997: 11). In 1987 the UN published a report called “Our Common Future”, nicknamed The Brundtland Report after its chairman Gro Harlem Brundtland. This report served as a basis for the increasing debate around environmental concerns during this time, and for the launch of environmental politics in the 1990s (Hajer, 1995: 8-9). In 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio several countries joined a treaty named the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which were to lay the foundation for international cooperation to address climate change as an environmental problem. By 1995 the countries under The Convention – as it is commonly called – had begun meeting at annual negotiations (UNFCCC, 1, no year), referenced to as Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to reach an agreement for “an internationally regulatory framework for climate change” (Lahn & Rowe, 2015: 129).

After two years of negotiations, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997 (UNFCCC, 1, no year). The aim of the protocol was to enforce a legal obligation on developed nations to set clear targets to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG), building on the principles set by the UNFCCC of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Capabilities (CBDR-RC). This entails the notion that industrialized states have historically contributed more to GHG emissions than developing countries, and therefore have a larger responsibility to reduce their share of emissions and work towards halting global warming. CBDR-RC also refers to the higher capacity of these countries to devote resources to the issue, as a result of their developed economies (Thakur, 2021: 367). The developed countries committed to reducing their emissions of GHG by the Kyoto Protocol were labeled “Annex I parties” (Lahn & Rowe, 2015: 129).

The Protocol was however not implemented until 2005 and leading up to its first commitment period stretching from 2008-2012 heated discussions and lack of consensus among parties characterized the yearly negotiations (Thakur, 2021: 368). In 2007 during the 13<sup>th</sup> COP in Bali it was decided that a new agreement on “the future of the climate regime” were to be reached by the 15<sup>th</sup> COP in 2009, but also here parties were unable to agree on major topics and the Conference are now known as one of the great deadlocks within international climate politics (Rudolph et al., 2010: 201). The result of the Copenhagen Conference was instead a public political accord, referenced to as the Copenhagen Accord (Thakur, 2021: 368), where parties pledged to keep global warming to below 2 degrees to avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change (Lau, Lee & Mohamed, 2012: 5281). Two years later, in 2011, a sub-body of the Convention; the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), was given the comprehensive assignment of drafting a new framework for a legal climate agreement by the 21 COP in 2015 (Thakur, 2021: 368). This agreement is now known as The Paris Agreement. Signed by 194 out of the 198 parties under the Convention, it represents a landmark within international climate policy, and “charts a new course in the global effort to combat climate change” (UNFCCC, 1, no year). The period stretching from 2005-2015 – from the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol to the signing of the Paris Agreement – thus represents a highly important decade in the politics of climate change.

Within the social sciences, several voices have argued for the importance of focusing on discourses when studying the field of international climate politics (Hajer, 1995) (Dryzek, 2013) (Norgaard, 2011), based on their power to shape the overarching understanding of a social phenomenon, which lays the foundation for which solutions are thought of as appropriate to address it (Leichenko & O’Brien, 2019: 61-62). Foreign policy constitutes an arena where nations are given the opportunity to construct who they are through communication. In this way international climate politics – and foreign policy in general – can be seen as a form of identity politics, where the nation constructs or builds itself through narratives and representations conveyed and reinforced through discursive practices. As such national identity and international politics stands in a constitutive relationship to each other (Jensen, 2016: 166). The national identity discourse of nations has further been claimed to lay the foundation for role-adoption, by creating conceptions of how the nation should act and behave within a given context (Holsti, 1970: 245-246). The impacts of national identity and role-adoption on the behavior and approach of states within international politics constitutes a

growing field of research, in which the theoretical foundation often lies in the intersection between international relations, political science, sociology, and social psychology (Leira et al., 2007) (Alexandrov, 2003) (Holsti, 1970).

Within the field of international climate politics, several contributions concerned with national identity and role-adoption highlight Norway as an especially interesting case of study. Eckersley (2016) constitutes an example of such a contribution, pointing out how Norway is often recognized as a climate leader within the politics of climate change. Norway is the country with the most ambitious targets in its negotiation coalition, referenced to as The Umbrella Group. This is interesting, as Norway is considered to have more reason to avoid such a role within this context, as the nation's economy is largely dependent on its fossil fuel production, an industry not often thought of as environmentally friendly (p. 183). This is often referenced to as "the Norwegian paradox" and has been the focus within a number of earlier research studies, some important examples being that of Andresen & Butenschøn (2001), Eckersley (2013), Lahn & Rowe (2015), Boasson & Lahn (2016), and Gloppen & Rakner (2015). It has been claimed that Norway finds itself in an identity crisis as a result of these two roles not being easily compatible in nature (Jensen, 2016: 163), presenting a discursive challenge for the nation within the context of international climate politics (Eckersley, 2016: 191).

### 1.3 Research questions

Building on these earlier contributions, I wish to explore how Norway's national identity discourse and role-adoption within the UNFCCC context impacts the country's behavior and approach in the negotiations, which constitutes the main forum for international climate politics. This overarching research question will be explored through the chapters of the analysis, which are based around three subsidiary research questions, chronologically listed below:

1. *Which identities are used to construct Norway as a nation within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations?*
2. *Which roles does Norway adopt and perform in the UNFCCC negotiations, and how does these roles relate to the nation's identity discourse and role prescriptions within this context?*

3. *What kind of - and which specific - solutions to the climate change problem is promoted by Norway in the negotiations, and how does these relate to the country's national identity discourse and role-adoption within the UNFCCC context?*

The time period chosen for this study is the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement (2005-2015), primarily based on the many significant milestones within this decade for international climate politics. I have chosen to primarily analyze submissions and statements made on behalf of Norway to the UNFCCC negotiations during the studied period, which mainly entails policy suggestions fronted on behalf of the nation. Although these documents may seem scientific in nature, they are immersed with meaning and indication regarding Norway in international climate politics. They also represent a form of data which I have noticed as lacking within the existing research on this topic. Additionally, the data material includes interviews with Norwegian representatives which attended the negotiations during the studied decade.

#### 1.4 The structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into seven chapters. Following this initial introductory chapter where I have presented the relevance, background, and motivation of the study, I move into the second chapter which entails my theoretical foundation and assumptions. The theoretical framework is constituted of an overarching theory of discourse, and perspectives concerning national identity, role-adoption and the behavior and approach of nations in international climate politics. In the third chapter I present and argue for the use of discourse analysis as the chosen methodological approach for exploring the research questions in the analysis, which starts at the fourth chapter and concludes with the sixth chapter. In these three chapters I chronologically explore Norway's national identity discourse, role-adoption, and following behavior and approach within the UNFCCC negotiations. Lastly, in chapter seven, I provide a brief conclusion and summary to the study and its primary findings.

## 2 Theory

In this chapter, I will present the theoretical foundation of the thesis. To start, I will introduce the overarching theory of discourse that underlies this study and serves as a base for the methodological approach presented in the next chapter. Following this, I will present the theoretical assumptions that formed the base of my analysis. These assumptions are drawn from theoretical and empirical contributions concerned with national identity, role-adoption and the behavior and approach of nations in international climate politics. Listing these different perspectives, it becomes apparent that this study rests on an interdisciplinary theoretical foundation. I will borrow knowledge from fields such as political science, international relations, and social psychology. I will, however, try to stay mainly in the lane of environmental and political sociology.

### 2.1 Discourse theory

Before embarking on a study of discourse, it is essential to highlight that the theoretical and methodological foundation upon which discourse analysis rests should be regarded as a "package deal". The central premise following this notion is that a discourse analysis must build on - and not be detached from - its theoretical foundation (Jensen, 2016: 19). This foundation mainly contains philosophical assumptions regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world, which one must accept in order to conduct a discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 12).

Although a discourse analysis's methodological and theoretical foundation should be integrated and placed within the same overarching framework, a researcher can combine elements from different perspectives to create a "tailor-made" package for one's study. This is not just allowed but also encouraged, as different perspectives contribute to broader insight and a better understanding of a social field (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 12). This is the case for this study, where I incorporate perspectives concerning national identity, role-adoption, and the behavior and approach of states in international climate change negotiations.

#### 2.1.1 The main premises of discourse theory

When approaching the field of discourse theory, a fitting place to start is with the ideas of the "founding father" of discourse analysis; Michel Foucault. Central to Foucault's concept of discourse is the view that knowledge is socially constructed and, therefore, not something that

should be seen as an objective reflection of "truth" or "reality" (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 22). Instead, "reality" is seen as a discursive construction, where different regimes of knowledge decide what is true and what is false (Dillon, 2014: 375). This view of knowledge and truth reflects the core ideas in social constructivism, which constitutes the primary philosophical premise in discourse theory (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 13).

Following this socially constructivist foundation, another fundamental premise of discourse theory is a critical stance toward what is regarded as truth. Since reality is a discursive construction, our knowledge about the world can never be viewed as objective (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005: 176). The world is, from this perspective, constructed socially through discursive action, manifested in social processes where people categorize and represent their views of the world through social interaction (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 14).

With the power to decide what is true or false, discourses also shape what is regarded as appropriate behavior (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 14), and can thus be regarded – and studied - as preconditions for action (Neumann, 2008: 62). This is achieved through determining the "linguistic frame of reference" of a debate and is often referred to as *the power of discourses* (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 65). This power includes deciding how and whether a particular issue is to be questioned, determining which people are authorized to draw upon the discourse, and laying general normative constraints upon the actors within a shared social field (Jensen, 2016: 14). These normative constraints are not external to the individual actors but internal in their social actions, and they can thus be seen as structuring their behavior by both enabling and constraining their actions (Hajer, 1995: 48). This is commonly referenced to as the "duality of structure" (Giddens, 1984: 25).

In this regard, it should be emphasized that although discourses are relevant to study as preconditions for action through their power to set the linguistic frame of reference, they cannot completely determine behavior. By focusing on discourses, one can explore what is regarded as "appropriate" or "natural" actions within a specific context. One can – in other words - uncover the behavioral outcomes that an actor will consider to be "available" in a given context, but as there always – at least in any normal event - will be multiple possible outcomes, a study of discourses can only aim at uncovering the range of these outcomes (Neumann, 2008: 62).

Another important attribute linked to discourse is the competition for dominance or hegemony. This notion entails that multiple discourses can exist within every social field, competing for the right to decide what is true and false by promoting their specific regime of knowledge (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 22). This competition for dominance occurs within the context of established institutions through the practices of actors (Hajer, 1995: 60). Which discourse is accepted as “true” is closely tied with power and politics (Leichenko & O’Brien, 2019: 61) (Dillon, 2014: 376). It is essential to emphasize that discourses are sometimes overlapping in their nature, so one can often find common elements among even the seemingly more contrasting discourses. This entails that although the perspective of “reality” that is fronted through a specific discourse may be contrasting and not easily comprehensible to those who subscribe to a different discourse, one can – in most cases - still find “common ground” between the two perspectives (Dryzek, 2013:10). Discourses are also flexible and can change according to cultural, social, and political shifts (Leichenko & O’Brien, 2019: 62).

### 2.1.2 Defining discourse

The term discourse has a variety of different definitions attached to it. Foucault famously defined the term in the following way:

“We will call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation [...] it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined.” (Foucault, 1972: 117)

This definition views discourses as a wide collection of linguistic practices that is linked to networks of social interactions and that entails narratives about how the world is constructed (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 65). It may, however, also be defined more broadly as "a system of representation that is made up of norms, rules of conduct, institutions, and language that influence and legitimize perspectives and meanings over others" (Leichenko & O'Brien, 2019: 62), or more abstractly as a "shared way of apprehending the world (Dryzek, 2013: 9).

For the case of this study, I have chosen to use the following definition of discourse, presented by Maarten A. Hajer in his book "The politics of environmental discourse." Here the term is defined as "...a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities" (1995: 44). This definition is somewhat more specific and, therefore, more analytically operational than the definitions above while

still being in line with the overarching Foucauldian view of discourses as located "somewhere above the individual texts that comprise it" (Jensen, 2016: 14). The definition also allows for an understanding of knowledge which entails a degree of realism, while still accepting the core premises of social constructivism. By applying a more realist form of social constructivism to environmental problems, they can be viewed as phenomena that contains both objective and socially constructed aspects. This contradicts the "strong" version of social constructivism and is based on the ontological assumption that: "There is a real world out there, which varies with perception (Klein, 2002: 6)".

### 2.1.3 Applying discourse to the field of international climate politics

Several arguments have been made within the scientific research field for why one should focus on discourse when studying international environmental politics. Hajer & Versteeg (2005) point out how discourses have the power to create the context for discussing climate change by shaping the overarching understanding of the environmental problem as a social phenomenon. Therefore, it becomes essential to focus on the language used to explain climate change because the arguments that are used - although they can often seem scientific and objective - are full of indication and meaning (p. 176-177). Leichenko & O'Brien (2019) make a similar argument, emphasizing the importance of studying how climate change is understood as a problem since this affects the range of solutions regarded as appropriate. To explore these understandings, one must look at the discourses they are reflected through, which can be found in the texts and in the language that is used to talk about the environmental problem (p. 61-62).

Dryzek (2013) claims that the existence of contrasting and competing understandings of climate change is the reason why politics regarding this topic exists (p. 9), and in his earlier work with colleague Stevenson they argue for the importance of studying discourses in international environmental politics in the following way:

The main justification for emphasising discourses is the coordinating role that discourses play, especially when formal centres of authority are weak – the normal case in international politics. Discourses are consequential because they can coordinate the actions of large numbers of individuals who never need communicate with each other directly (...). If there is such a thing as international society (...), then its rules



are shared norms which are the product of discourses. (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2012: 191)

An argument for studying environmental discourses in a Norwegian context can be found in Hovden & Lindseth (2004), where it is argued that the power of discourses to decide the "linguistic frame of reference" plays a crucial part in the politics of climate change, a notion that is often underestimated, especially in Norwegian climate policy (p. 65-66). Several other contributions have also highlighted Norway as an especially interesting case to study when it comes to environmental politics (Eckersley, 2013) (Eckersley, 2016) (Boasson & Lahn, 2016) (Bang & Lahn, 2020) primarily because of its efforts to be a leader within climate politics while at the same time being a major producer and exporter of oil and gas, which has been seen as a contradiction. Tønnessen (1997) points out that Norway is especially interesting to look at through a discursive lens, as the country is both among the nations least exposed to the immediate impacts of climate change and among those nations where the implementation of stringent emission reduction policies would prove costly. Based on these factors one would expect the country to be among the least interested in the process towards achieving an ambitious international climate agreement. It therefore becomes important to study how the nation's efforts to be recognized as a climate leader is discursively legitimized and managed within this context (p. 113).

## 2.2 Theoretical assumptions

The theoretical assumptions presented in this section served as the starting point for my analysis of Norway's national identity, role-adoption, and following behavior and approach within the UNFCCC negotiations. As previously mentioned, it is encouraged to incorporate elements from different perspectives, as this helps to produce comprehensive knowledge about a specific research field. In the case of discourse analysis, it is, however, important that these perspectives not be detached from the theoretical foundation of the thesis. I will therefore illuminate how these perspectives fit within the overarching theory of discourse that underlies this study.

### 2.2.1 National identity

In the first chapter of the analysis, I explore the identities that are used to construct Norway as a nation in the international UNFCCC negotiations during the decade leading up to the 2015

Paris Agreement. In more simplified terms, I will explore *who* Norway is within the context of international climate politics. To do this, I will build on theoretical and scientific contributions regarding national identity.

Firstly, defining both the term nation and the term identity seems necessary. To explain the first concept, I turn to the work of political scientist Benedict Anderson, who, in his book "Imagined Communities," defines a nation as:

(...) An imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (2016: 6)

When one defines a nation as an imagined community, the premise that follows is that the nation is real insofar as someone is convinced of it; meaning they believe and emotionally identify with it. This resonates with the sociological "Thomas theorem", which entails the notion that a phenomenon is real as long as someone conceives it as being real (Merton, 1995: 380). Such convincing requires people to believe in the cultural narratives representing the nation, essentially making it a "system of cultural representations" (Wodak, Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, 2009: 22), which are conveyed textually through discourse (Jensen, 2016: 164). These narratives are essential for a state's national identity and should, according to Hønneland (2010), be understood not only as "reflections about the world, but rather (as) constitutive of the self" (p. 6). A similar point is brought forth by Hall & Gay (1996), who claims that a nation creates its identity through "the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present to its past, and imaginaries which are constructed of it", and that these narratives are presented and reinforced in the discourses used by individuals in different institutional contexts (p. 613). National identities are in this way discursive constructions (Wodak et al., 2009), conveyed through narratives and representations (Leichenko & O'Brien, 2019: 62), about who the nation is and – as the next paragraph will explain – who it is not.

In this study, as in previous studies regarding national identity (Eriksen & Neumann, 2011) (Jensen, 2016) the concept is understood as relationally constructed. The relational premise of a national identity entails that it is created and shaped *in relation* to other, contrasting identities (Eckersley, 2016. 184). An identity is in this way dependent on the existence of an

“other”, or several “others” in which it can construct itself as different from. As Jensen (2016) states;

“...identity is always to be understood in relation to something that it is *not*. So to speak of what is Norwegian, or European, or developed, involves constituting other identities or sets of identities of whatever is non-Norwegian, non-European or indeed underdeveloped” (p. 163).

This relational premise is crucial both for the creation of identities on the micro scale (Tajfel, 2010) (Turner, 2010) (Stets & Burke, 2000), as well as for the creation of identities on the macro scale. The difference between these two types of identities is that the latter is constructed and shaped by a given collective instead of a single individual (Eckersley, 2016: 184). By understanding national identities as primarily relational, and always constructed by either explicit or implicit reference to that, or those in which it is different from, these identities can be studied empirically where they are articulated, which is through discourse (Jensen, 2016: 174).

The premise that follows when one understands identity as relational, is that it is also flexible and open to change. This happens when the relationship between the “self” and the “other” is transformed (Wodak et al., 2009: 11). An important aspect in this regard is the concept of binary oppositions, in which an identity discourse often contains several of. A binary opposition can be understood as consisting of two contrasting social categories, where one is highly valued, and the other is not. The relationship between these two categories is however never stable or fixed, and therefore need to consistently be reinforced discursively (Jensen, 2016: 164). An example of such an opposition – which I will revisit in the analysis – is “small/ big”.

This overarching conception of national identity is useful for studying the behavior of states in the international climate change negotiations. Leira et al., (2007) makes the claim that international politics should be understood as “identity politics”, through which narratives and representations about the nation is created, conveyed and reinforced (p. 9). A similar point is fronted by Jensen (2016), who claims that foreign politics constitutes a bridge between the national and the international, which provides the nation the opportunity to construct who it is, and thereby also how it should behave within this context. It follows naturally from this that there cannot exist an “objective” national identity, separated from contextual factors. As

identities are discursive constructions, they are created and conveyed through communication within a given context, which in this case is international politics. In this way, national identity and international politics stands in a constitutive relationship to each other (p. 164-167). International politics are dependent on nations conveying their identities, and the nations are dependent on this context to construct their identity in relation to each other.

Theys (2017) argues that states can inhabit several identities which are constructed through the social interaction with other actors, and that these identities lay the foundation for both the interests and behavior of the nation within a given context. By conveying who it is within a context, the nation also implies what it wants, thereby signaling it's interests. Additionally, as identities are discursive constructions, they inhabit the power to determine the range of actions deemed appropriate within the given context. Based on this, one can say that identities create a "logic of appropriateness", which entails social norms for what is regarded as appropriate behavior (p. 37). A similar link between the identity and actions of a nation can be found in Robyn Eckersley's study (2016) and is presented as follows: "If the identity of country X is declared to be Y, then X must conduct itself according to the role and logic of appropriateness associated with the attributes of Y because this is who X is" (p. 184).

Based on the scientific and theoretical contributions concerning national identity one can make the following assumptions about Norway in the international UNFCCC negotiations; Firstly, that Norway inhabits one or several identities which is constructed discursively and relationally – through cultural narratives and representations – by actors within the UNFCCC context. Secondly that these identities create a specific "logic of appropriateness" which shapes what is regarded as appropriate behavior for the nation, and which roles it is suitable for the nation to adopt or take on.

### 2.2.2 Role-adoption

In the second chapter of my analysis, I explore the roles that Norway adopts and enacts within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations. This section thus contains my understanding of the role concept, which builds on earlier theoretical and scientific contributions.

As presented in the last section, roles are understood as related to identity through the "logic of appropriateness", which creates a bandwidth for the positions the representatives of the nation conceives as suitable to take on within a context. These role conceptions contributes to

lay an initial foundation for the adoption of role's within the given context (Eckersley, 2016: 184). To define the role concept further I turn to the work of Herbert Mead (1934), often regarded as the founding father of role theory. According to this perspective, for an actor to be able to take on a role, she first needs to be self-aware of how "others" perceive her. This ability makes up an individual's "me." The ability to then react to other's perceptions of oneself is linked to an individual's "I" (p. 173-178). Together, these abilities enable an actor to realize its "self" in society (Klose, 2018: 1147). The act of role-taking can, in other words, be understood as an adjustment of an individual's behavior to fit the expectations of others (Holsti, 1970: 236-237).

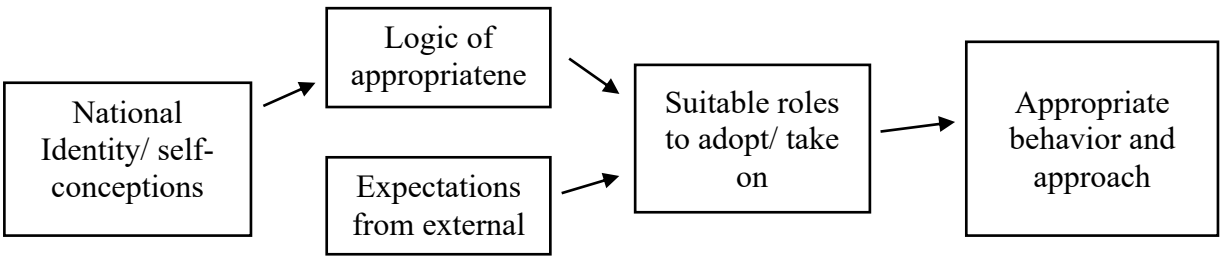
Further, the term role can be seen as consisting of two components: role prescriptions and role performance. Role prescriptions refer to the expectations and norms prescribed to a specific position, and thus the position (or role) can be defined as a "system of role prescriptions". These expectations are given by the external environment, and can be prescribed by e.g., cultures, societies, or institutions. On the other hand, role performance refers to how the holder of a specific position chooses to act based on the prescriptions attached to it (Holsti, 1970: 239-240). In this regard, it should be clarified that the understanding of roles in this study are in line with the discursive concept of "subject positions", as presented by Hajer (1995). This concept provides a critique to the role concept, which suggests that an actor is always able to "choose" whether take on – and act out a role. This is however not the case, as roles are shaped by identities – which are discursive constructions – and the efforts of the external environment to position the actor through discourse. Roles can therefore be seen as a product of discourse, in which actors are dependent on to make sense of their reality (p. 53).

Although role theory traditionally has been used to describe micro-scale social phenomena, such as everyday individual behavior, a growing body of research has applied this theoretical foundation to explore and explain social behavior on the macro scale. Within the scientific field of international politics, it has been claimed that the behavior of governments is largely affected by the policymakers' role conceptions in the given field. In other words, the role performance of governments – understood here as their general foreign policy behavior – often coincides with the perceptions they hold regarding which kind of decisions, commitments, and actions are appropriate for their nation, which in turn stems from the nation's identity discourse within the given context (Holsti, 1970: 245-246).

Within the field of international climate politics, Eckersley (2013) has contributed to the growing body of research using role theory. She argues that the role conceptions of a nation create a bandwidth that both constrains and enables the creative powers of political leaders to narrate national responsibility for climate change (2013: 394) and claims that “...international role performance takes place within a system of role prescriptions that includes self-defined role conceptions and the role prescriptions emanating from the “external environment” (Eckersley, 2016: 240)”.

Based on the scientific contributions within the field of role theory, I move into the analysis with the following theoretical assumptions; firstly, that Norway’s behavior and approach within the UNFCCC negotiations are influenced to some degree by the role(s) that the nation takes on. Secondly, that the role performance of Norway in these negotiations are shaped by both the nation’s identity through the “logic of appropriateness”, which creates the bandwidth for which positions the country regards as suitable to take on – and role prescriptions in the form of expectations stemming from the external environment.

Before moving into the next section of this chapter, where I provide a brief overview of earlier theoretical and scientific contributions regarding Norway’s national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics, I will give a visual representation of the assumed connection between national identity, the expectations from the external environment, a nation’s role-adoption, and its following behavior and approach within a given context in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** Assumed connection between national identity, expectations stemming from the external environment, role-adoption, and the following behavior and approach of a country within a given context.

### 2.2.3 Norway's national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics

As will be further explained in the next chapter, the first step in my research process was an extensive reading of earlier scientific and theoretical contributions regarding the topic of interest; Norway's national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics. This section presents a brief overview of these contributions, which also served as a starting point for my analysis. They provided me with some theoretical assumptions for which identities has been consistently fronted of - and by - Norway, as well as for which roles the nation usually adopts and enacts within this context.

Leira et al. (2007) constitutes a valuable contribution in this regard with the presentation of some identities which has been consistently promoted through discourses regarding Norway in international politics (p. 9). The most robust self-conceptions in this regard are that of Norway as:

- A small country
- A peaceful country
- An aid-giving country who shares its wealth
- A strong supporter of the UN and international cooperation
- An outsider country, by being positioned outside the EU state system
- A country with ideals and interests that coincide, meaning that the country serves itself by serving all and working for "the common good"

These identities are related to Norway in international politics in general. However, a number of them have also been found in the narratives and representations regarding the nation in international climate politics, with the study of Eckersley (2016) as a prime example. In this contribution, it was uncovered that the national identity discourse of Norway portrayed the nation as a cooperative country eager to commit itself to work for "the common good." It was also claimed that the Norwegian discourse views climate change as profoundly concerning, which in part is due to the nation's self-conception as an arctic nation where the effects of the phenomenon are rapid, visible, and alarming (p. 191). The melting of polar ice and glaciers that have been there for hundreds of thousands of years are clear examples of these evident changes. The concern for these climate changes is reinforced by the Norwegian idealization of nature, a crucial part of the country's nation-building in the nineteenth century that created a broadly shared concern for conservation (Lahn & Rowe, 2015: 12).

A number of the identities presented by Leira et al. (2007: 9) were also rediscovered by Lahn & Rowe (2015), like the identity of a small country and an outsider country. Additionally, the self-conception of Norway as a neutral country was uncovered in this study. It was suggested that these identities made it available for the nation to take on the roles of “bridge-builder,” “policy entrepreneur,” and “generous economic contributor” within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations. As a bridge-builder, Norway seeks to find common ground between parties so that agreements can be reached (p. 135). This role has consistently been tied to Norway in international politics (Leira et al., 2007: 10). As a policy entrepreneur, Norway seeks to provide new and innovative ideas to the negotiations. Lastly, the role of a generous economic contributor is performed by making – and fulfilling – substantial economic commitments. According to Lahn & Rowe (2015), these three roles have made it possible for Norway to take on the overarching role as a “frontrunner” within international climate politics (p. 133-135).

Several studies have found that Norway actively seeks to take on the role of a frontrunner (Gloppen & Rakner, 2015) (Andresen & Butenschøn, 2001) (Tellmann, 2012) (Sæverud & Wettestad, 2006), a climate leader (Boasson & Lahn, 2016) (Jensen, 2016) (Eckersley, 2013) (Eckersley, 2016) and a pioneer (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004) within international climate politics. Eckersley (2016) has suggested a connection between the country’s efforts to be recognized as a pioneer within this context to the “legacy” that previous Norwegian pioneers - such as Fridtjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen – have created for the nation (p. 194). Another pioneering figure often referred to within the context of international climate politics is the previous Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, which during the 1980s became known within this context for her leadership in the launching of the UN’s World Commission on Environment and Development, which produced the “Brundtland Report” (Andresen & Butenschøn, 2001: 338).

As previously mentioned, according to earlier research, suitable roles are determined by role conceptions of available positions - created by identities through the logic of appropriateness - and expectations stemming from the external environment. In this regard, Eckersley (2016) points out that in 1992, an obligation was put on developed nations by the UNFCCC to take on greater responsibility for limiting the damages caused by climate change, and claims that this has resulted in an expectation for these countries to adopt “... a more outward-looking state role conception and national imaginary that is able to serve both the national and other



communities whose fates are tied in with decisions made by national policymakers (p.181)”. As a developed nation, this obligation would apply to Norway and constitutes an expectation for the nation to take on a leading position within international climate politics.

The self-conception as an aid-giving country that shares its wealth with the less fortunate – which according to Leira et al. (2007), was consistent in discourses related to Norway in international climate politics, was also rediscovered in the study of Eckersley (2016). Here it was tied to a feeling of responsibility that stems from Norway’s position as one of the richest countries in the world. This was in turn tied to Norway’s “rags to riches” story, which entails the industrial transformation from a relatively poor country dependent on farming and fishing at the start of the 1900s to one of the wealthiest nations in the world by the end of the century (p. 192).

This transformation would not have been possible had it not been for the discovery of oil just off the country's coast. The petroleum industry is strongly linked to Norwegian nation-building because it helped create its welfare state. The industry is a significant source of employment for the population and an essential contribution to the national economy. "The Norwegian Model" is often used to refer to the democratic way the nation's petroleum industry has been managed, with a strong focus on the benefits from the industry being directed back to the Norwegian population. Among other measures taken to achieve this overarching goal was the creation of an oil fund, now named "The Government Pension Fund – Global" (Bang & Lahn, 2020: 1001).

As a result, an additional consistent identity relating to Norway in international climate politics is that as an oil nation, which Eckersley (2016) found has led to the nation feeling responsible for developing environmentally friendly options for fossil fuels. To achieve such a goal, the country has devoted itself to creating new and innovative technologies and mechanisms, with a tax on carbon and Carbon Capture and Storage as prime examples. By doing this, Norway has taken on the role of a technological pioneer (p. 193). Several studies have argued that the identity as an oil nation and the role as a “frontrunner” constitutes a paradox for Norway in climate politics, often referred to as “The Norwegian Paradox” (Gloppen & Rakner, 2015) (Boasson & Lahn, 2016).

This paradox has been claimed to present a discursive challenge for Norway within the field of international climate politics, as the identity of an oil nation makes the role as a petroleum

producer suitable for the country, which stands in a contradictory relationship with the role as a climate leader (Eckersley, 2016: 191). When an identity comes under pressure or is challenged by external forces, cognitive dissonance or discomfort can arise, which, if not resolved or managed, can lead to the disruption or destruction of said identity. In such cases, the given identity needs to be upheld. This is achieved discursively by articulating the identity as consistently and explicitly as possible (Jensen, 2016: 162–169).

Based on the overview of earlier theoretical and scientific contributions regarding Norway's national identity discourse and role-adoption in international climate politics, I bring the following assumptions into the analysis: Firstly, a variety of identities are fronted through discourses of Norway in international politics. The most established identities within the context of climate politics narrate and present Norway as a cooperative, small, outsider, neutral, aid-giving, arctic oil nation that views climate change as a serious concern and is committed to working for the “common good.”

Secondly, these identities - together with role prescriptions within the UNFCCC - make some positions suitable – and expected - for Norway to take on within this context. Earlier research claims that Norway primarily takes on the role of a frontrunner – which it seeks through secondary roles such as bridge-builder, policy entrepreneur, and generous economic contributor. Similar roles related to Norway are that of a climate leader and a pioneer. Earlier research has also claimed that the identity as an oil nation and the role as a climate leader or a frontrunner creates a “paradox,” which leads to cognitive dissonance for the country. If this paradox exists within the data material, I assume that Norway will try to uphold its preferred identity by articulating it frequently.

#### 2.2.4 The approach of nations in international climate politics

So far, my theoretical assumptions primarily entail the notion that national identities and role prescriptions stemming from the external environment determine the range of positions suitable for a country to take on and enact within a given context. Additionally, how a nation chooses to act based on the expectations tied to a role is further referred to as role performance. In this way, national identities and roles can be studied as preconditions for behavior, as they contribute to mapping out the range of actions and solutions available for a country within a given context. In the third and last chapter of the analysis, I explore which

policy solutions seem available for Norway to promote in the negotiations, based on its national identity discourse and role-adoption within the context of the UNFCCC. In this regard, I will use this section to present a brief overview of earlier scientific and theoretical contributions regarding the approach of nations within international climate politics.

Leichenko & O'Brien (2019) provides a fruitful initial contribution, presenting four overarching discourses related to climate change and the range of solutions they create. These discourses include a biophysical -a critical -, dismissive-, and integrative understanding of climate change. The biophysical discourse – which is claimed to be the dominant discourse related to climate change - views the phenomenon as a problem caused by a rising amount of GHGE in the atmosphere caused by collective human activities. The discourse builds heavily on climate change science to understand the phenomenon and assumes that extensive and reliable research will result in effective policy solutions. Technological innovations are regarded as crucial strategies for tackling the climate change problem within the biophysical discourse, as well as individual behavioral changes that lead to more sustainable practices (p. 63-67).

The critical discourse sees climate change as a problem mainly caused by the global capitalist economy, which pushes economic growth at all costs, leading to the unsustainable usage of resources. The solution to the problem within this discourse is to challenge the economic system and the power structures it creates. Within the integrative discourse, climate change is viewed as a complex problem connected to political, economic, and social processes, making the appropriate solution a holistic approach to changing society, from individual beliefs to institutions, to support sustainability. Lastly, within the dismissive discourse, climate change is not viewed as a problem; therefore, no solution is necessary (Leichenko & O'Brien, 2019: 63).

These differing understandings of climate change show how discourses can lay the foundation for solutions to address the problem. As the biophysical discourse is claimed to be the most prominent, I assume this will also be prevalent within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations. To develop some additional assumptions about the approach of nations in international climate politics, I turn to Eckersley (2016). She notes that the previously mentioned obligation put on developed nations to take on greater responsibility for limiting the damages caused by climate change can be seen as an encouragement for these countries to

adopt the identity as an “ecological state,” and the role as a climate leader (p.181). To adopt – and internalize - the national imaginary as an ecological state, a country has to place management of environmental risks as its primary goal, which stands in stark contrast to the welfare state, where providing social services to its citizens is the core imperative (Meadowcroft, 2005).

Nations have varied substantially in their response to the expectation to become an ecological state and take on the associated role as a climate leader and there exists a diversity of theories that explains why developed nations would be reluctant to take on these responsibilities. One of these theories, which can be classified as a post-Weberian theory, hypothesize that environmental concerns will remain peripheral to national policymakers unless they can be linked to core state imperatives that have emerged over the evolution of the state, such as economic growth and modernization. This suggests that developed nations can take on the role of climate leaders if they succeed in framing and legitimating environmental policies in terms of, for example, an ecological modernization discourse (Eckersley, 2016: 181). This discourse builds on ecological modernization theory, a sociological, environmental perspective that explores how economic growth and industrialization can be combined with environmental protection and how policy solutions to the environmental crisis can benefit the modern market economy (Fisher, Jasny, Redmond & Heaume, 2021: 335).

The ecological modernization discourse emerged in Western industrial societies in the 1980s (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007: 129) and gained ground as the dominant policy discourse in the environmental domain by the 1990s. It is argued that the discourse became popular because of its win-win logic, where climate change is not seen as the first sign of doomsday but rather a challenge that can be solved by further innovation, which in turn can lead to economic growth (Hajer, 1995: 262). Hovden & Lindseth (2004) identified a form of ecological modernization in their discourse analysis of Norwegian climate policy, which they labeled "thinking globally." This discourse argues that GHG emissions should be reduced through international and cost-effective solutions instead of taking "national action" by setting unilateral domestic targets. The study claims that the thinking globally discourse has held a dominant position in Norwegian climate policy since the 1990s. The thinking globally discourse follows the win-win logic of ecological modernization by promoting the export of Norwegian oil and gas to replace coal as fossil fuel abroad. In this way, the reduction of GHG emissions and national economic growth can be accomplished simultaneously (p. 66-77).

Similar to the ecological modernization discourse is the discourse of economism, which was discovered by Tønnessen (1997) in Norwegian climate politics in the late 1990s. Within this discourse, everything is reduced to economic measures, and the only actions considered rational are those that stimulate self-interest and economic growth (p. 109).

Based on the overview of earlier scientific and theoretical contributions regarding the behavior and approach of nations in international climate politics, the following assumptions follow me into the analysis; firstly, that different understandings of the climate change phenomenon lay the foundation for solutions regarded as appropriate to address it. The biophysical understanding of the problem has been found to be dominant in this regard, so I assume this will also be prevalent in the data material. Secondly, I assume that the expectation of adopting the national imaginary as an ecological state and taking on the role of climate leaders will be evident in the data material, as this expectation applies to Norway as a developed nation. I also assume that this will influence the range of solutions available for the nation to promote in the negotiations. In relation to this, earlier contributions have identified an ecological modernization discourse, and an economism discourse within the context of Norwegian climate policy. Therefore, I assume that these discourses will be prevalent in the data material and influence the solutions promoted by the country.

### 3 Method

This chapter presents the methodological approach that underlies the analysis in the following chapters. In line with previous studies exploring Norway's national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics, such as Eckersley (2016) (2013), Jensen (2016), and Lahn & Rowe (2015), discourse analysis has been chosen as the approach. The approach was considered favorable for this study because of its unique capacity to uncover representations and narratives related to different social phenomena (Jensen, 2016: 20).

The chapter is structured into four sections. The first section contains a brief description of discourse analysis, and the reasoning for why the approach was chosen for this study. In the second section, I present my data material, before providing an explanation of the steps in my research process in the third section. The fourth and last section includes some potential limitations to the chosen approach.

### 3.1 Discourse analysis as a methodological approach

Providing a short definition of how a discourse analysis should be conducted and what it should contain is not an easy task. This is simply because such a description does not exist. There are many ways to conduct a discourse analysis, and perhaps even more social fields in which the approach can be applied (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 9). Although the approach is multidisciplinary in nature, one can still list a few overarching characteristics. These mainly include the origin and aim of the approach. Discourse analysis belongs to the social constructivist tradition within the social sciences. As this tradition rejects the existence of one single and objective "reality," it commonly views what is regarded as "truth" with a critical lens. As a result, discourse analysis focuses on how socially constructed realities and truths are produced and reinforced through communication – most commonly in the form of spoken and written language (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005: 176).

Although discourse analysis can be used to study a multitude of social phenomena, it has been argued that the approach is exceptionally well suited for exploring the politics concerning climate change (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 78). This is because of the global, gradual, and diffuse nature of the social phenomenon, which opens it up to multiple interpretations and ways of understanding (Hulme, 2009: 68). The claim that climate change is a diffuse phenomenon should be taken to mean that it is not something that can easily be seen or touched, in contrast to many other threats facing humans in their daily lives. This should not be taken to mean that climate change is not a threat and that the consequences of the phenomenon are not devastating. But climate change is also a gradual threat, and most people will not experience their immediate surroundings threatened by it for some years to come (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 78). Because of these factors, climate change cannot exist as a problem “on its own,” as most people would not acknowledge it as an immediate threat in their daily lives. It, therefore, relies on being represented through concepts, terms, and scientific knowledge. Consequently, climate policy is dependent not only on actors and their interests but also on the power of the discourses that emerge from the various representations of the environmental problem (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 78).

This study concerns itself with how the identities and roles both prescribed to – and taken on by Norway in international climate politics shape the country’s behavior and approach within this field. It was, therefore, necessary to choose an approach that would allow me to explore these factors and the link between them. In this regard, discourse analysis is well suited for

analyzing the political dynamics within climate politics on an international scene where states have to reflect on who they are and what they want (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005: 182-183). In line with the social constructivist tradition, discourse analysis regards the study of texts as crucial for exploring the production and reinforcement of social relations and social identities (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 95).

The approach also has the capacity to uncover the links between identities, social roles, norms, and national interests through the study of policy papers, which make up the most significant part of the data material. This is done by illuminating the ways in which policies - understood as directives for action - are expressions of national interests and how an actor's identity - and the social roles and norms this identity gives rise to - legitimates these interests. In other words, the approach makes it possible to uncover the constitutive relationship between policy and identity, which makes them both relevant to study as preconditions for action. (Eckersley, 2013: 383).

### 3.2 Data collection-, and material

I used two data sources for the discourse analysis: The first source is documents of Norwegian contributions to the international climate negotiations held by the UNFCCC. These documents were in the form of formal submissions to the negotiations either as a country, a group of countries, or a formal negotiation block, and text versions of verbal statements and speeches made in the process. The second data source is transcripts from interviews with four Norwegian representatives who participated in the climate negotiations during the studied decade (2005-2015), which I conducted during the spring of 2022.

The data collection process for this study has been approved by “Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (NSD)” (“the Norwegian Center for research data”).

#### 3.2.1 Submissions and statements

An essential preliminary step in conducting a discourse analysis is to delimit the text selection to study (Neumann, 2008: 65). My analysis will primarily be based on submissions and statements made on behalf of Norway to the international UNFCCC negotiations, which can be classified as policy papers. According to Hajer (1995);

Analysing policy papers become important even if they do not include "hard" new proposals or legislation. It becomes imperative to examine the specific idea of reality or of the status quo as something that is upheld by key actors through discourse. (p. 55)

Official policy papers also fall under primary texts, to which discourse analysis gives methodological priority. These papers can be categorized as primary texts because they fulfill the three following criteria: firstly, they hold the official power to set a political standpoint; secondly, they are publicly published for everyone to read; and lastly, they clearly formulate suggestions for policies and thereby also identities (Hansen, 2006).

To further delimit my text selection, I have chosen to focus on the period between 2005 and 2015. This I have done for two main reasons. Firstly, this decade represents a significant period in international climate politics. It covers crucial milestones such as the Kyoto Protocol entering into force in 2005 (8 years after its adaptation in 1997), the Copenhagen negotiations in 2009, which ended in a deadlock, and lastly, the adaptation of the Paris Agreement in 2015 (Kuyper, Schroeder & Linnér, 2018: 344). Secondly, the choice of time period stems from an attempt to differentiate my study from earlier research contributions focusing on the same topic. Several studies have explored the discourses surrounding international environmental politics, focusing on earlier decades, such as the '80s, the '90s, and the early 2000s (Hajer, 1995) (Tønnessen, 1997) (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Many studies have also been conducted focusing on discourses related to Norway's identity and role conception in international climate politics during the early 2000s, with Andresen & Butenschøn (2001) and Hovden & Lindseth (2004) as two prime examples.

Studies such as Eckersley (2013) (2016) and Boasson & Lahn (2016) do focus on the same topic, and approximately the same period as this study. However, in these cases, the choice of data material differs. These studies primarily use sources such as national speeches, conference presentations, and official government websites. The study of Lahn & Rowe (2015) presents a study that focuses on roughly the same time as this study and has similar data material, which includes interviews with Norwegian climate actors and statistics gathered from the UNFCCC (p. 128). To my knowledge, the study does, however, not include submissions and statements made on behalf of Norway in the UNFCCC negotiations. Thus, I have yet to come across a study with both the same data material and time frame as my study.



The submissions and statements were made to the various sub-bodies of the UNFCCC. The bodies from which texts are collected include the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (hereafter SBSTA), the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (hereafter SBI), the Ad Hoc Working- Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (hereafter AWG-KP), the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention (hereafter AWG-LCA), the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (hereafter ADP), the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (hereafter CMP), and lastly the supreme decision-making body of the Convention: The Conference of the Parties (hereafter COP). In the period between 2005-2015, these bodies worked collectively towards developing policies and guidance to support Parties in the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and towards establishing the Paris Agreement in 2015 (UNFCCC, 2, no year).

The submissions and statements were mainly collected from the UNFCCC website. Texts from 2014-2015 were collected through the UNFCCC submissions and statements search portal (UNFCCC, 3, no year), and contributions from earlier years were collected through the various archives on the website (UNFCCC, 4, no year). However, some technical issues presented themselves in the search for these texts, mainly in the form of links that led to error pages. These difficulties made me reach out to individuals in the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, who provided me with several documents, hopefully filling most of the gaps that the technical issues created in my data material. However, some gaps may still exist, potentially affecting my results.

In total, I collected 79 documents. 68 of these were submissions, and 11 were statements. Of these, 16 submissions and 1 statement were sent to me by the Ministry of Climate and Environment, while the remaining 62 texts were collected through the UNFCCC website. The fact that a large majority of the documents collected are submissions is reflected in the analysis, where a majority of the segments used as examples are gathered from the submissions.

### 3.2.2 Interview transcripts

The data material also includes transcripts from four interviews with Norwegian representatives who participated in the UNFCCC negotiations during the studied period

(2005-2015). The interviews were conducted by me during the spring of 2022. One of the primary theoretical assumptions underlying this study is that identities are conveyed through discourses – in the form of cultural narratives and representations – by actors in specific institutional contexts (Jensen, 2016: 164), which in this case is the UNFCCC negotiations. The interviewees represent such actors and have – to a differing degree – participated and contributed to fronting Norway's views and policy suggestions in the negotiations. This constitutes the reasoning for the interviews.

The number of informants in the study is four. A potential risk I am running by having relatively few informants is that it becomes hard to generalize the findings. On the other side, the interview guide for this study was relatively short, and the interviews typically did not last more than an hour. After approximately three interviews, I noticed that the informants provided me with much of the same knowledge, indicating that the saturation point was met (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2019: 148). Having relatively few informants also made it possible to spend more time analyzing each interview in a thorough way.

The informants were primarily identified based on the search of the publicly published participation lists of the various COPs on the UNFCCC website. I reached out to the potential informants either by e-mail or phone call and provided a brief description of the study. Those who expressed an interest in participating were sent a detailed document containing further information regarding the study and their rights as an informant (See Appendix B). An interview study has several ethical dilemmas attached to it, mainly caused by the fact that one in such a study explores the private life of people and then publishes these descriptions for the public eye to see. It is, in this regard, important to follow a number of ethical guidelines to ensure that the rights of the informants are upheld. I have, therefore, chosen to reflect upon two topics often highlighted as ethically crucial in an interview study; informed consent and confidentiality (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2019: 102).

Several precautions were taken to ensure informed consent: Firstly, the informants were encouraged to read the information document before the interview. Two copies of the document were then brought to the interview, where the informants were asked if they had read it and if they had any questions regarding it. The informants were then asked to sign one of the documents and were offered to keep the other one. Three interviews were held physically, and one was held via the video conference website “Zoom.” In this case, I

requested that the informant send a confirmation that they had read and consented to the contents of the information document via e-mail before the interview started.

To ensure confidentiality, meaning that the informants were kept anonymous, I recorded the interviews using a voice recorder or a mobile application (Nettskjema Diktafon), which allowed me to record the interviews without them being saved on any of my personal devices. They were instead directly imported into a secure online form so that only I could access them. When transcribing the interview recordings, I left out any details that could have been used to identify the informants (such as specific positions they had held in the UNFCCC negotiations). I have also chosen not to provide details about my informants other than that they acted as Norwegian representatives in the UNFCCC negotiations during the period stretching from 2005-2015. This is because I, through the interview process, sensed that the representatives constituted a close-knit community, having worked together for many years. This makes them easily recognizable to each other and to other former Norwegian representatives. Additional information about the informants is therefore left out to avoid potential recognition. In the analysis, the informants are given the “names” Informant 1, Informant 2, Informant 3, and Informant 4 to keep them as anonymous as possible.

The interviews were semi-structured, with an interview guide containing three central themes I wanted to talk about, and a few related follow-up questions related to each topic (see Appendix C). I wished to make room for exploring each informant's unique experience with the UNFCCC negotiations and the potentially differing representations and narratives concerning Norway in international climate politics.

All of the interviews were conducted in English. The reason for this was primarily to avoid the risk of losing representations and narratives in the translation of the transcripts, which I would have had to do if I had conducted the interviews in Norwegian. English is also the primary language used in the UNFCCC negotiations, which made it more natural for my informants to talk about their work in this language.

### 3.3 Discourse analysis of Norway in international climate politics

As previously stated, there are several different ways to conduct a discourse analysis. The most fruitful approach will vary according to the theoretical foundation, data material, and

research questions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 12). Here, I will try to clarify the chosen approach for this thesis, which I have attempted to tailor-make to fit best my study. This I have done by borrowing knowledge and analytical tools from various research contributions, mainly the works of Hajer (1995), Jensen (2016), Hønneland (2010), Neumann (2008) and Johannessen, Rafoss & Rasmussen (2018).

Hajer (1995) states that the most productive way to analyze the discourses that concern themselves with defining an environmental problem is to explore the "regularities and variations in what is being said (or written) and try to understand the social background and the social effects of specific modes of talking" (p. 44). To understand the social background of my data material, I have sought to develop a thorough grasp of the field I'm studying. According to Neumann (2008), a researcher's knowledge of the area in focus of the study, referred to as cultural competence, is crucial for a successful discourse analysis (p. 63). To develop this competence, I conducted an extensive reading of earlier theoretical and scientific contributions concerning international climate politics and Norway's participation in this field. This can be regarded as the first step in my research process. Although I put a lot of time and effort into immersing myself in this area, reading everything would, as Jensen (2016) states, be "relatively impractical in the normal course of events" (p. 149). Consequently, this study faces the unavoidable risk of overlooking relevant texts.

The extensive reading of theoretical and scientific contributions formed the foundation for the analysis of this study, which thus can be categorized as primarily deductive. In a deductive research process, the theoretical framework of the thesis is decided before the analysis is conducted and is used as an analytical tool to help highlight the interesting aspects of the data material (Johannessen, Rafoss & Rasmussen, 2018: 37). Analytical tools should in this regard be taken to mean specific questions you ask of the data, which makes the details in the texts that you as a researcher are interesting in, more prominent (Gee, 2011). In a way, the thesis's theoretical foundation was used as a tool to "get to know" my data material. As the analysis progressed, it became more inductive or data-driven in its nature, as I discovered nuances within the material.

The data consisting of submissions, statements, and interview transcripts have been read systematically and thoroughly. I started by analyzing the submissions and statements, which I worked through chronologically, beginning with the oldest. This was done partly to achieve

an orderly analysis process but also to uncover potential developments in Norway's identity, role-adoption, and following behavior and approach within the studied decade. Following this, I analyzed the interview transcripts, mainly searching for differences and similarities to the findings from the submissions and statements. In the analysis, I have used two primary analytical tools to help me "make sense" of the data material: representations and narratives. These specific tools have been chosen based on earlier research contributions that explored Norway's national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics (Jensen, 2016) (Eckersley, 2016) and will be further explained in the following section.

### 3.3.1 Representations and narratives

Broadly, my analysis will be a search for the most prominent representations and narratives regarding Norway's national identity and role-adoption within the UNFCCC context. It is explored to what degree the discourses conveyed through these representations and narratives shape the country's behavior and approach in the negotiations during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement (2005-2015).

A representation is, in this study, understood as a linguistic description of a phenomenon. When a phenomenon – such as climate change or Norway as an imagined nation – is represented, social meaning is given to it. A representation should, however, not be understood as a complete, objective, and true description of the given phenomenon. Such a description does – in line with the social constructivist perspective – not exist. A representation is, therefore, only one *way* of describing the phenomenon, in which some aspects of it are included and highlighted, while other aspects are downplayed or simply left out (Johannessen, Rafoss & Rasmussen, 2018: 53). When a specific linguistic representation is presented consistently, the language that is used in relation to it becomes gradually institutionalized and normalized. A discourse regarding a social phenomenon commonly contains one dominant representation and several alternative representations (Neumann, 2008: 61-70).

The understanding of narratives in this study were presented in the previous chapter as stories about a social phenomenon, which connects certain imaginaries to it (Hønneland, 2010: 6). Such imaginaries are essential components in the creation of identities, and these narrations are conveyed and thereby reinforced in discourses presented by actors in different contexts (Hall & Gay, 1996: 613). A specific sort of narrative that I will make use of in the analysis is

storylines. This concept is defined by Hajer (1995) as: “a generative sort of narrative that allows actors to draw upon various discursive categories to give meaning to specific physical or social phenomena (p. 56)”.

Storylines have the power of reducing the discursive complexity of a problem, making it possible to activate an entire discourse by uttering a specific element. Consumers of a text accept a storyline because it “sounds right”. Three main criteria have to be fulfilled for a storyline to sound right. Firstly, the argument supporting the storyline needs to be perceived as plausible. Secondly, the actor using the storyline and the practice in which it was produced must be trusted by the consumers. Third and lastly, the storyline must be acceptable for an actor's discursive identity (Hajer, 1995: 62-63).

### 3.3.2 Coding and Codebook

To help me categorize the narratives and representations regarding Norway’s identity, role-adoption, and following behavior and approach within the UNFCCC negotiations in an orderly way, I chose to use the analytical technique of coding. When coding, a researcher focuses on capturing the interesting parts of the data material through extensive reading. The technique is as such well suited for qualitative studies and allows the researcher to focus on the topics of interest in the data (Mihas, 2019: 2). The primary codes applied were developed before the analysis of the data material and stemmed from the reading of earlier theoretical and scientific contributions relating to the topics of interest in this study. As the reading of the data material progressed, the deductive codes were supplemented with inductive ones as the material revealed interesting nuances. The data material was coded using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo.

A list of the applied codes with an attached definition as to how and why the codes are used is called a codebook. Although there are no definite rules for the exact design of a codebook, Mihas (2019) suggests that it should contain the following components: description, origin, importance, example, counterexample, and reflection. The description should constitute a short instruction as to how the code should and can be applied, the origin should explain where the code stems from (whether it is deductive or inductive), and the importance refers to why the code is relevant and necessary for the analysis (p. 3).

An example should then be given in the form of a segment to which the code can be applied, followed by a counterexample in the form of a segment where one could risk applying the code mistakenly. I have, however, chosen only to provide a counterexample of codes where I have found several examples that could be confused with their description (see Appendix A). Lastly, a reflection is provided to the codes that have developed or changed during the coding process, with a short rationale as to how and why.

### 3.4 Potential limitations of the approach

I have attempted to frequently and consistently reflect on the potential limitations concerning my data collection and approach up until this point. However, some additional challenges concerning discourse analysis need to be addressed. One of the most prevalent critiques against discourse analysis as an approach – which in general applies to all qualitative social science methods – is that one cannot easily claim any generalizations based on the findings (Payne & Williams, 2005: 295). Because of the social constructivist foundation that discourse analysis rests upon, which in short views reality as a social construct, critical voices have also pointed out that any findings presented in such studies can only be seen as yet another representation of the social phenomenon in question (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 32).

Faced with this paradoxical challenge of discourse analysis, it becomes easy to question the relevance of the method and the findings from it. Jensen (2016) presents a counterargument to this by claiming that just because “truth” and “reality” are discursive constructions, they are not irrelevant to study. Discourses become important from the moment they are regarded as politically relevant, as they contribute to producing a particular reality. The aim of a discourse analysis should not be to uncover anything other than discourses, such as an objective reality, ulterior motives, or hidden agendas. These are things we cannot observe – at least not by the use of this method (p. 166-167). Discourses are nonetheless essential to study, as they often represent the “status quo,”; a taken-for-granted way of viewing reality that has real social consequences (Hajer, 1995: 55). By bringing them out of the shadow and into the light, one “opens them up” for discussion (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 165).

In this regard, it should be noted that I am not attempting to revolutionize the research field concerning Norway’s national identity and role-adoption in international climate politics. Instead, I hope to contribute to the general knowledge accumulation within the field by

building on previous studies to highlight similarities and differences and potential new observations. This makes the study valuable, despite the fact that the findings cannot be used to make generalizations or uncover causal relationships (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 227).

Another challenge that applies to discourse analysis is the so-called “frame problem,” which is described by Gee (2011) in the following way:

Any aspect of context can affect the meaning of an utterance. Context, however, is indefinitely large, ranging from local matters like the positioning of bodies and eye gaze, through people’s beliefs and previous interactions, to historical, institutional, and cultural settings. No matter how much of the context we have considered in offering an interpretation of an utterance, there is always the possibility of considering other and additional aspects of the context, and these new considerations may change how we interpret the utterance. (p. 31)

The challenge in relation to this is where one as a researcher should draw the line when considering the contextual aspects of the “utterance” or segment of written language that one is studying. As previously mentioned, one of the first steps in the research process for this study was a “deep dive” into the earlier scientific and theoretical contributions concerning the topic of interest: Norway in international climate politics. This can be seen as a precautionary measure taken to ensure I had a firm grasp of the context within which the data material was produced. Still, I could have always read more and done more to understand the context, and this could potentially have influenced my interpretations of the data material. That is the unavoidable nature of the frame problem.

One way to lift the quality and validity of a scientific contribution is transparency, which mainly entails that methodological and theoretical choices should be presented and thoroughly reasoned (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 120). This I have tried to do consistently throughout the thesis, as well as in the analysis in the following chapters.



## 4 Norway's national identity discourse in the UNFCCC negotiations

This chapter is devoted to exploring – and providing an answer to the following research question: “*Which identities are used to construct Norway as a nation within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations?*”

The theoretical assumptions underlying the analysis in this chapter primarily entails the notion that a nation inhabits one or several national identities which is constructed discursively and relationally – through cultural narratives and representations – by actors within a given institutional context. In this study, the institutional context is the UNFCCC negotiations, where government officials represent the country and speak on its behalf. It is further assumed that the national identity discourse of Norway serves as a foundation for the behavior and approach of the nation within this context, by contributing to determine the range of appropriate roles and solutions within the climate negotiations. This will be the focus of the two following chapters.

This chapter is structured into three sections. The first section contains the findings from the most substantial part of the data material, which entails the submissions to - and statements made - during the multilateral negotiation process of the UNFCCC during the studied decade (2005-2015). The second section includes the findings from interviews with Norwegian representatives that participated in the negotiations during this period, which supplement and nuance the findings from the document analysis. The last section discusses the findings in light of earlier research to uncover similarities and differences. This structure applies to all three chapters of the analysis.

It should be emphasized that the findings in the analysis are within the scope of the thesis and that this is not an outline of all narratives and representations regarding Norway's national identity discourse in international climate politics. Rather, it highlights the most prominent and lasting narratives and representations that I have found. It should further be pointed out that the identities uncovered in the analysis – as discourses in general – are not objective entities waiting to be identified. They are analytically constructed by me, through plausible interpretation of the data at hand. This notion also applies to the findings presented in the two following chapters of the analysis.

## 4.1 Findings from submissions and statements

Through the analysis of the submissions and statements, I discovered 4 identities that were used consistently to discursively construct Norway in the negotiations. These identities or self-conceptions are - as I will argue - linked in various ways by narratives and representations, conveyed through the texts, related to Norway in international climate politics.

An interesting initial finding in the analysis of the submissions and statements was the representation of Norway as an individual. This was especially prominent in the submissions, which in a majority of the cases started with a version of the following paragraph:

Norway welcomes the joint invitation from the chairs of the AWG-KP and the AWG-LCA, to submit views, on the need for additional meeting time, and how to best advance the negotiations towards the UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun in Mexico at the end of this year (submission to the AWG-KP 11, 2010).

Through the use of the phrase “Norway welcomes”, the nation is firstly represented as “Norway”, and thereby separated from the other nations in the negotiations. It is clarified that the contents of the submissions reflect the views of Norway, as opposed to the views of any of the other parties under the UNFCCC. Already here, the nation is outlined discursively in relation to the other countries in the negotiations. Additionally, the nation is narrated as a homogeneous entity, with the capability of inhabiting and expressing feelings. This is reflected in the following paragraph gathered from a statement made by Norway to the SBSTA in 2015:

Norway is disappointed that after more than two years of hard work on the Review, Parties were unable, not only to forward a recommendation to political level on further action. But also to agree on our report on the outcome of our intensive work on the 2013-2015 Review in the Sub-committees.

By stating that “Norway is disappointed”, together with other commonly used phrases in the submissions and statements such as “Norway is mindful”, “Norway is pleased” and “Norway looks forward to”, the nation is reduced from a country consisting of millions of individuals to

a single actor in the negotiations. It is not surprising, yet important, that Norway presents itself as an individual within this context. The representation of the nation as a single, unitary entity is a condition for participating in international affairs, which after all is a negotiation process between nations. Norway, like any other country in the world, is conceived of as a single actor that is part of an international system, which consists of a number of state-actors. Still, this way of narrating the country as an individual with feelings constitutes an important foundation for the country's national identity discourse within this context. Norway is now created as an individual, capable of inhabiting an identity.

Now that Norway has been narrated as a certain "someone", it's time to direct the focus to "who" the nation is within the UNFCCC negotiations. The first identity uncovered represented Norway as *a developed Annex I country*. An example of the construction of Norway using this identity can be found in a submission to the AWG-LCA 1 in 2008, where it is written that: "In the context of a global ambitious agreement where developed countries undertake substantial commitments, Norway intends to cut global emissions equivalent to 100 percent of its own emissions, becoming a carbon neutral nation within 2030". Here Norway is represented as developed, and this is done to contextualize and reason the nations "substantial" commitments in the negotiations. This can be seen as a clear sign of the discursive construction of Norway within this context. It creates an outline of who and what the nation is, and just as importantly, who and what it is not. A line is in this case drawn between Norway and the countries that are not "developed". These countries were prescribed other – and to some degree contrasting – identities in the Norwegian submissions and statements, such as "developing countries" and, in some cases, "least developed countries".

The identity as a developed country shares the same prescribed nature as the representation of Norway as a single entity. It is not a construction of Norway's choosing, but a category it is placed within whether it would like it or not by the Convention. The same prescribed nature applies to the Annex I identity, which were given Norway by the Kyoto Protocol, primarily based on level of industrialization. Based on this contextual knowledge, I have chosen to name the identity "developed Annex I country", even though these two self-conceptions were never promoted in the same segments of the documents. They are, however, overlapping in nature.

Although the categories of “developed” and “Annex I” are prescribed to Norway by the external environment, it is still interesting to explore in which way the nation uses these categories. What social meaning does Norway attempt to give the identity as a developed Annex I country? In the submission to the AWG-LCA the identity as a developed nation is used to reason ambitious emission reduction targets and becoming a carbon neutral state within the year 2030. The identity as an Annex I country was only prominent in the submissions but were seldom referenced to explicitly. More often, it was clarified that Norway belonged to this category when the country submitted views together with other Annex I countries. An example of this was a joint submission made by Australia, Belarus, Canada, the European Community and its Member States, Iceland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Russian Federation, Switzerland and Ukraine regarding “Information relating to possible quantified emissions limitation and reduction objectives as submitted by Parties”. The submission started with the following paragraph:

This paper contains updated information provided by Annex I Parties relating to their possible quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives (QELROs). It contains values or ranges of these pledges, the base year to which they refer, and information on their status (submission to the AWG-KP 9, 2009).

With the construction of Norway as an Annex I country, a line is again drawn between the country and other nations in the negotiations; in this case, those who are not Annex I countries. These were referred to as "Non-Annex I" countries in the documents. In a similar way, it was on multiple occasions also clarified that Norway were a part of the negotiation coalition called "The Umbrella Group". Reference to Norway being a part of this group were not evident in the submissions, but a majority of the statements - 9 out of 11 to be exact - were made together with this coalition. I will therefore argue that the second identity used to construct Norway in the negotiations is that of *an Umbrella Group Country*. Again, a line is drawn between Norway and countries that are not part of this group, as well as other negotiation groups within the UNFCCC. The following paragraph is gathered from the opening statement made by the group to the ADP in 2015:

Umbrella Group countries are in Paris to negotiate. We are eager to start work straight away, and work constructively with all Parties on bridging options for the agreement

and decision. We have confidence in the CoChairs to guide Parties' work, recognising that modes of work may vary between groups.

Similar to when Norway submitted by itself, The Umbrella Group also narrated themselves as a group of individuals, capable of expressing common feelings when addressing issues and matters in relation to the negotiations. In this regard, it should again be highlighted that although this way of representing the group is important for discursive construction, it is also necessary and obliged by the UNFCCC that these countries present themselves as a group of single entities.

The third identity that I will argue was used to construct Norway in the negotiations were that of *a country strongly concerned with the consequences of climate change*. This was first and foremost done by referencing to the climate change problem using phrases and words such as "important issue," "serious challenge," and "urgent problem." Consider the following segment from a submission made by Norway to the 11th COP in 2006 as an example:

Climate change is one of the most important global issues facing us today. Norway recognizes "that climate change is a serious challenge that has the potential to affect every part of the globe" (FCCC/CP/2005/L.4/Rev.1) and notes with concern recent scientific reports on the increasing urgency of the problem we face.

Such phrases and words create a representation of climate change as a dangerous threat that should be taken seriously. Simultaneously, Norway is constructed as a nation that views climate change as a "serious challenge". This can be considered as a necessary starting point to constructing the nation as strongly concerned with the consequences of climate change. After all, to be concerned with the consequences of the phenomenon, one has to be concerned for the phenomenon itself. As the segment above reflects, the narration of climate change as a severe threat was often done with reference to scientific publications, the most frequently drawn upon being the reports from IPCC, as the following submission to the AWG-LCA 1 in 2008 reflects:

Norway believes that to avoid dangerous climate change, global temperatures must rise no more than 2 degrees above pre-industrial level. According to IPCC this means that global emissions have to peak no later than 2015 and have to be reduced at least

by half no later than 2050 compared to 1990. Industrialised nations have to cut emissions by 25-40 percent already in 2020. As stated in the programme of the AWG on Article 3.9 of the Kyoto Protocol that achievement of these reduction objectives by Annex I parties would make an important contribution to overall global efforts required to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention.

One can here argue that reference to science is done to underpin the representation of climate change as a potentially dangerous ecological problem. This is here done by referencing to the goal of keeping the global temperature increase to no more than 2 degrees above pre-industrial level". If this goal is reached, one can based on the segment above assume that climate change – and the consequences of it - will not be dangerous. Reference to the 2-degree goal thus serves to narrate climate change as dangerous, it's consequences as potentially damaging and Norway as a nation that is concerned by the phenomenon. The 2-degree goal was consistently referenced to in the submissions and statements. Here it's importance is highlighted by reference to it being the "ultimate objective of the Convention". More often the goal was referenced to as the 2-degree target, as in the following segment gathered from a submission to the ADP in 2014: "Our starting point is that the 2015 agreement should be guided by the two-degree target and be based on the most recent scientific knowledge. The agreement needs to build in a science based approach and allow adjustments over time". Here it is also clarified that Norway viewed science – and specifically the IPCC – as an appropriate foundation for the 2015 Paris Agreement.

It seemed like Norway was narrated as especially concerned about the unequal consequences of climate change. In a submission to the SBI in 2013, the following was written:

It is the poorest and most vulnerable people that are at most risk and suffer the most in the presence of any crisis, including climate-related events. Yet science tells us that the poorest and most vulnerable benefit less from efforts taken to address risks. We need to ensure that our efforts to tackle climate change do not leave anyone behind. In this regard Norway is committed to work to place women and children at the center of disaster risk planning processes at all levels.

Again, science is referenced to highlight the potentially damaging consequences of climate change. Science is also used here to support and underpin an issue that Norway views as

especially important in the negotiations. In this segment, the issue is the unequal effects climate change has on different social groups, specifically the poor and vulnerable. An additional focus is put on women and children, suggesting that they are among the most vulnerable in the event of a climate related crisis. It is here made clear that Norway as a nation both acknowledges the unequal impacts of climate change and are committed to reducing this inequality. This was also evident when the nation made statements together with the Umbrella Group, which typically concluded with a version of the following paragraph: “Umbrella Group countries are strongly committed to empowering women, and strengthening gender equality and promoting gender- responsive climate policies under the UNFCCC (Statement to the SBI 43, 2015)”. As is evident here, the concern for climate inequality in these statements were specifically in relation to gender-inequality.

The fourth identity that was uncovered in the coding of the submissions and statements were that of Norway as “*a cooperative country*”. This identity was uncovered in segments where Norway represented itself as being cooperative or showed strong support towards cooperativeness. Cooperation seemed to be a highly important element for Norway in the negotiations during the studied decade, as is reflected in a submission made to the 11<sup>th</sup> COP in 2006, where it was written that: “In order to effectively address global climate change, we need to ensure “the widest possible cooperation and participation in an effective and appropriate international response”. The Dialogue must be guided by this overall aim”. Here cooperation is referred to as an overall aim, implying its significance for Norway in the negotiations.

The findings from the submissions and statements have now been presented, and as I have tried to show, 4 identities were used frequently and consistently to construct Norway in the UNFCCC negotiations during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement in 2015. Through representations and narratives Norway was discursively constructed as:

- *A developed Annex I country*
- *An Umbrella Group country*
- *A country strongly concerned with the consequences of climate change*
- *A Cooperative country*

In the following section, I will present the findings from the analysis of the interview transcripts, which I will use to highlight nuances within the already presented identities, as well as to search for new additional self-conceptions used by Norwegian actors to construct the nation in the UNFCCC negotiations.

## 4.2 Findings from interview transcripts

All of the identities used to construct Norway were rediscovered in the interview transcripts. Additionally, three new self-conceptions were uncovered.

All informants narrated Norway as a nation concerned with climate change and its potentially severe consequences. The country was represented as strongly committed to halting the global temperature increase, thereby saving the planet from the most damaging environmental impacts. Informant 1 said the following concerning this:

...First of all the issues we worked with in that period (2005-2015) was building a solid, international framework for climate cooperation. To make sure that we are able to meet the goals of the convention in a binding, international agreement that everyone contributes to. Because we know from science – and it has to be science based – that having an agreement where only some have commitments will not take us to a temperature level where we can safeguard ourselves and future generations. We know that very, very clearly from science. So having international agreement at the end of those mandates, that contributed to an international arena where everyone has commitments was very important for Norway.

Similar to the findings from the document analysis, reference to science was also used here to underpin and highlight the severity of the climate change problem, the importance of reaching the 2-degree target, and the matters Norway regards as crucial; in this case, the development of a solid, international framework for climate cooperation. One can argue that the identity as a cooperative country is actively used by the informant to construct Norway here, with the multiple references to this element being especially important for the country within the negotiations.



The identity as an Umbrella Group country was also frequently used by several of the informants. When referencing to Norway as part of the negotiation group, informant 2 said the following: "Yeah, I mean the main thing they have in common is that they are Annex I countries, developed countries, that are not part of the EU." It is clarified here that the identity as an Umbrella Group country is knitted together with being a developed Annex I country. It is also suggested that these identities are the main thing Norway has in common with the other countries in the Umbrella Group, as well as being positioned outside the EU. Another interesting nuance to the identity as an Umbrella Group country was presented by informant 2, who said the following:

Norway is a rich country and is very much a part of the kind of block of rich countries in the negotiations, so Norway is coordinating within what is called the Umbrella Group, which is the US and... most of the rich countries that are not part of the EU is part of the Umbrella Group, and traditionally they have been seen as one of the main kind of laggards or troublemakers in a sense in the negotiations. In the sense that they have been very kind of... well a lot of the countries in the group are not particularly progressive.

Here the identity as an Umbrella Group country seems to prescribe Norway with the traits of being a "rich country," a "laggard," a "troublemaker," and "not particularly progressive." Other informants narrated the negotiation group as "big" and "powerful," such as informant 4, who said the following: "It's a group of very powerful countries. In the negotiations it's of course "one country, one vote," but still US, Canada, Russia, Ukraine... all of these very, very big countries with a lot of say in international negotiations". It can seem like being "big" is closely knitted to being "powerful" and having a lot of influence in the negotiations.

From the findings presented above a narrative is fronted which portrays Norway as a rich and powerful country that is part of a negotiation group consisting of big countries that are known to have a lot of say in the negotiations and not a very progressive approach. However, a consistent find was the construction of Norway as different or unique from the other countries in The Umbrella Group. Informant 4 stated the following: "We're not in the EU, we're in the Umbrella Group, but we are a small country in the Umbrella Group so we're easy to ask to do certain tasks." Here Norway is referenced as being small, and this distances the nation from the rest of the negotiation group, which was characterized as big on numerous occasions. By

being small, Norway is in this segment narrated as *a unique country*, which I will argue is the first additional identity used by the informants to construct the nation.

The informants constructed Norway as unique through the promotion of two secondary self-conceptions; firstly, the self-conception as a small country. Reference to the country being “small”, was primarily done to separate or "distance" it from the other countries in the Umbrella Group, such as in the example above. The second self-conception promoted was that of Norway as a country placed “outside the EU”, which served to place the country in a unique position compared to many other countries in the negotiations. These self-conceptions were occasionally active in the same segment, such as in the quote from Informant 4, where it is suggested that these two factors combined make Norway especially equipped for “certain tasks”.

Norway was further constructed as *a neutral country* by the informants, which I will claim is the second additional identity uncovered in the interview transcripts. The following statement from Informant 1 reflects this self-conception:

First of all, Norway is seen as a quite neutral country. We do not have very sort of...to much self-interest. We are not a big economic power, which means that we are ... we have some capacities, but we are not a major economy, we are not a part of those very powerful nations. Which means that we are quite neutral.

Again, Norway is depicted as small, this time by referring to the size of the nation's economy. As a consequence of the country not having a "major economy," it is seemingly regarded as not especially powerful in the negotiations, making it "quite neutral". This contradicts the previous narrative of Norway as a part of the rich and powerful countries in the UNFCCC. Norway is distanced from these countries by being small, making the nation both unique and neutral.

Norway being small was also on several occasions linked to the nation being cooperative, such as in the following statements from informant 2: “We are a small country, so we want to strengthen international cooperation, we want to strengthen the UN, and we want to be seen as kind of a force for good in the world”. Being small is here linked to a wish to be a country that strives for international cooperation, and to be a force of good in the world. When asked

about what being a force of good entails, and why Norway would want to strive for this, informant 2 said the following: “We have this whole legacy of being a small, independent nation that wants to make a difference in the world, that connects with important elements in the national identity, like Frithjof Nansens role when he helped refugees.”

Once again, Norway is narrated as unique in the sense that it is a small country, but in this instance, it also seems connected to being independent and wanting to make a difference in the world. The following reference to a Norwegian and his humanitarian efforts, together with the claim that this reflects the nation’s identity, makes it seem like such efforts is what one would strive for to make a difference in the world, and also what makes Norway “a force of good”. Informant 1 also emphasizes that Norway had a strong humanitarian focus in the negotiations:

Norway had a very basic position, that what we agree on on adaptation loss and damage has to be protected priority towards the poor and vulnerable. Which means that we worked on for an example getting decision texts related to vulnerable people, not only vulnerable countries, but vulnerable people. Because you know that there’s a difference between vulnerable countries and those who are vulnerable in those countries, right? And this is particularly important to adaptation, as you know that the poorest and most marginalized communities and people are most at risk. So, we often insert language related to gender, to indigenous people, to other vulnerable communities and poor communities, so we want to have that.

Similar to the findings from the submissions and statements, a narrative of Norway as a country especially concerned with the unequal consequences of climate change was promoted by the informants, specifically in regard to the poor and vulnerable.

Several of the informants also narrated Norway as “*a trustworthy country*”, which I will argue is the third – and final - additional identity used to construct the nation in the negotiations. This was also done through the reference of Norway being a small nation, as informant 3 made clear in the following statement: “We’re a small country... we depend on the UN, and that kind of builds trust”. It can here seem like Norway depends on the UN because of its small size, and that this makes the nation trustworthy. Another way Norway was constructed

as trustworthy was by reference to the nation's "straightforward" nature. This was explained by informant 1 in the following way:

I think also Norwegians have a benefit of being quite direct. Being diplomatic is not about necessarily talking in the clouds but being quite honest. Simple, pragmatic solutions is something that... we are not ... as a nation I think we are not very bureaucratic. So because we are a small country ... and because we you know ... being exposed to difficult circumstances and need to find ways around things. So I think that is sort of embedded in the Norwegian nature to be quite pragmatic and find practical solutions to complex issues. and then in that way I think we also have some benefits. Our English is also quite simple, we do not use that many words and I think that is actually a benefit in international negotiations.

Informant 1 further clarified that Norway's pragmatic nature and simple English made other countries conceive of it as trustworthy by explaining that; "in some culture's wordiness, if you use too many words, is seen as a display of something that you need to hide". This seemed to be strengthened by the nation once again being narrated as small. The narration of Norway as a small nation was – as the segments in this section suggests – used very frequently by the informants. Through this narrative, the nation is discursively constructed as unique, neutral, and trustworthy. The narrative is in this way a storyline, evoking several different, but interlinked discursive elements related to Norway's national identity in international climate politics by the use of one single phrase: "small".

One last additional identity was uncovered in the interview transcripts but was used vaguely and inconsistently by the informants. It is therefore not included as one of the most prominent identities. An example of the use of this identity can be found in a quote from Informant 4:

...Even if we are a big petroleum producing country, even Greenpeace or WWF or others, they are still viewing us as quite neutral and quite factual in the negotiations. Outside the negotiations it's a different ballgame. So, it again goes that we have built trust over years and that goes to all the Norwegian negotiators, not just me.

Here Norway is constructed as "a big petroleum producing country" in the negotiations. An interesting find in this segment is the way this identity is connected to the identities as a

neutral and trustworthy country. It can seem like inhabiting the identity as a big petroleum producing country would originally make Norway less neutral and factual in the negotiations. However, since Norway has focused on building trust over the years, it can inhabit the identity as a petroleum producing country and still be conceived as neutral and factual. Another interesting find in this segment is the narration of Norway as a *big* petroleum producing country. This narrative breaks with the storyline of Norway as “small”, and therefore unique, neutral and trustworthy. This is also reflected in the segment, where the informant has to clarify that the country can be big, while still being neutral and trustworthy.

The findings from the interview transcripts have now been presented, which has mainly served to highlight nuances and connections within the already uncovered identities. Based on the findings one can additionally draw the conclusion that 3 additional identities were used to construct Norway in the negotiations by the informants. These identities represent the nation as:

- *A unique country*
- *A neutral country*
- *A trustworthy country*

In the following section, the findings from both the document analysis and the interview transcripts will be discussed in light of earlier research to uncover similarities and differences.

### 4.3 Discussion

The findings from the submissions, statements and interview transcripts largely coincide with earlier research regarding Norwegian national identity discourse in international climate politics. The first finding revealed how Norway constructed itself as an individual in the submissions and statements through phrases such as "Norway welcomes," "Norway is disappointed," and "Norway is pleased," which made it seem like the nation was a homogeneous entity capable of expressing feelings. According to Jørgensen & Phillips (1999), this is a way to structure the nation discursively as an autonomous whole. When structured as an individual, an outline of the nation is created. With this, an "inside" and an "outside" of the country appears, defining what it is and is not. This fulfills the relational premise of a national identity discourse, which requires the existence of "others" from which it is different (p. 180).

Norway was further constructed by 4 predominant identities in the submissions and statements, and three additional identities were evident in the interview transcripts. Together that makes 7 identities used to construct Norway during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement in 2015. It was further pointed out that the identity as “a developed Annex I country” was prescribed to Norway within the UNFCCC context. The same can be said to apply to the identity as “an Umbrella Group country”. The nation is regarded as developed in a global perspective and has therefore been categorized as an “Annex I country” by the Convention during the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC, 5, no year). Similarly, all parties within the UNFCCC are organized into five regional groups, with Norway belonging to the “Western European and Other States”. This formed the basis for the Umbrella Group Coalition, which was formed after the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC, 6, no year). In this way, the identity as “an Umbrella group country” is also somewhat imposed on Norway, as the framework of the UNFCCC context lays the foundation for the negotiation groups.

Because these identities are “given” to Norway by the UNFCCC, it can be discussed whether Norway (and with Norway I mean the actors that represent Norway in the negotiations, and who have contributed to producing the texts) uses these identities to construct itself in the negotiations, or whether it is the UNFCCC that uses these identities to construct Norway. The imposed identities can be said to come with a lot more “baggage” than the self-selected identities, as they have already been given social meaning by the institution that prescribed them. Then again, as was pointed out in the findings, it is still interesting to explore to what extent Norway chooses to embrace or distance itself from these identities. There was for an example never explicit reference to Norway being an Annex I country in the submissions, or in the statements. Additionally, the findings from the interview transcripts indicated that Norway actively tried to distance itself from its identity as an Umbrella group country.

The remaining identities largely coincide with earlier research regarding Norway’s national identity discourse in international politics. The identity of Norway as “a country with a strong concern for the consequences of climate change” can be said to correlate with the research of Eckersley (2016), where it was found that the Norwegian discourse consistently narrates climate change as one of the biggest threats to the world. Her study also found that science regarding climate change - especially the reports from the IPCC - were treated as authoritative (p. 191-194), which was also evident in this study.

Reference to the IPCC reports were consistent in the submissions and statements, and the informants as well expressed a highly accepting attitude towards climate science, highlighting the importance of the outcomes in the negotiations being based on science. Here parallels can be drawn to the biophysical discourse presented in the work of Leichenko & O'Brien (2019), which entails an understanding of climate change as an increase in GHG caused by human activities, where positivistic science is considered the only appropriate foundation for policies aiming at tackling the problem. The IPCC is in this study presented as a prime example of such science (p. 65). This overarching understanding of climate change lays the foundation for the solutions regarded as appropriate to address the environmental problem, which was reflected in the findings, where Norway clearly stated that the approach underlying the Paris Agreement in 2015 should be built on science.

Norway seemed especially concerned with the unequal consequences of climate change, specifically in regard to the poor and vulnerable, which was further connected to a wish to be a force of good in the world. This coincides with the research of Leira et al., (2007), where it is found that Norway views itself as an altruistic aid-giver with a moral responsibility to enforce a “regime of goodness”, rooted in the moral principle that those who have more, should share with those who have less (p. 16). Norway regards itself as a privileged country, with the discovery of oil just outside the nation's coast a few decades ago, making it one of the richest in the world (Eckersley, 2013: 389). This coincides with the findings in this study, with the portrayal in the transcripts of Norway as a rich country. It also correlates to Eckersley (2016), who claimed that “Norway's understanding of its international responsibility to address climate change is intimately tied to its broader overseas development philosophy that seeks to reduce inequalities of wealth, income, and opportunity in the world and close the development gap» (p: 192). One of the informants connected Norway's wish to be a “force of good” to the humanitarian work of Fridtjof Nansen. This also coincide with Leira et al. (2007) where it is claimed that Nansen's efforts to help refugees after the first world war has contributed to a legacy to work towards poverty reduction that Norway strives to live by (p. 11).

The construction of Norway as “a cooperative country” also coincide with earlier research. Once again, a parallel can be drawn to the study of Eckersley (2016), where it was stated that this trait is intrinsically linked to the nation's character (p. 194). It can also be compared to the self-conception Norway is said to inhabit as “UN's best friend”, presented by Leira et al.

(2007), where it is claimed that Norway wishes to strengthen the UN by supporting the institution, and building up under international cooperation (p. 20). In the analysis of the interview transcripts, one of the informants also expressed that Norway wanted to strengthen the UN and linked this to the nation being small and dependent on international cooperation. This can be linked to the work of Meadowcroft (2005), who claims that the support and strive towards cooperation when it comes to international climate politics can be seen as an attempt to internalize the identity as an “ecological state”, and thereby accepting the environmental responsibilities that follow with it (p. 12-13).

The reference to Norway being small was consistently and frequently used by the informants to narrate the nation as unique. This was also done by referencing to the nation being placed outside of the EU. This can be found in the study of Boasson & Lahn (2016), where it was stated that Norway being positioned outside the EU has made it possible for the nation to be an active and independent actor in international climate negotiations (p. 201). It also coincides with the research of Leira et al. (2007) who claim that “being small” and “being an outsider-nation” make up two of the most robust and well-known self-images Norway inhabits in international politics, which has contributed to the nation being regarded as “exceptional” or unique within this context (p. 9-10). The question that arises based on this then is why these self-conceptions was not evident in the Norwegian submissions and statements to the UNFCCC. If they really are that robust, shouldn't they also have been prominent here? Jensen (2016) offers a potential answer to this question, by pointing out that these self-conceptions are so well-known that they are “often implicit rather than explicit in a given discourse, functioning rather as premises in a given debate...” (p:168). Based on this, one can assume that the identities were so “taken for granted” to the Norwegian representatives that they didn't consider them necessary to incorporate in the texts. The question that remains then is why these self-conceptions were so explicitly articulated in the interviews.

The identity as “a trustworthy country” can also be found in earlier research. Lahn & Rowe (2015) found from interviews with Norwegian climate actors and NGO representatives that Norway inhabits a self-image as trustworthy and dependable within the UNFCCC negotiations (p. 133). However, the aspect of Norway being trustworthy because of its straightforward nature seems a pretty original find in that it did not appear when searching through earlier research contributions. By being direct and pragmatic, it seemed like the nation gained the credential of honesty, which again made it trustworthy in the negotiations.



Being a small country in the negotiations further strengthened this. Because Norway is a small country, it depends on international cooperation and the UN. This, together with its pragmatic nature, makes it trustworthy to other nations in the negotiations. This also correlates with the study of Lahn & Rowe (2015), who claimed that Norway being small within the context of the UNFCCC make it appear less threatening to other states. As a result, Norway is seen as having little self-interest and, therefore, neutral (p. 135). The identity as a neutral country can consequently also be said to correlate with earlier research.

Norway was also constructed as neutral as a consequence of the nation being “not very powerful” in the negotiations. This was once more done by referencing to the size of the country, this time in regard to its economy and related “economic power”. This portrayal of the nation seemed contradictory to the earlier narration of Norway as a rich country, with a membership to a group of big and powerful countries – namely The Umbrella Group. Norway was also constructed as “a big petroleum producing country” by one of the informants. One can in this regard see the outline of two colliding storylines in relation to Norway’s national identity within the UNFCCC negotiations. The first storyline is evoked by the reference to Norway being “small” and is tied together with the identities as a cooperative, unique, neutral, and trustworthy nation. The second storyline is evoked by the reference to Norway being “big”, which is tied to the identities as a big petroleum producer, and a rightful member of the rich and powerful countries in the Umbrella Group.

It becomes clear that the categories “big” and “small” composes a binary opposition within this context. As pointed out by Jensen (2016), the two terms in such an opposition always stands in hierarchic relation to each other, where one of the terms is more valued or sought after than the other (p. 164). Based on the findings in this chapter, there is no doubt as to which of the terms is most sought after in the discursive construction of Norway as a nation within the UNFCCC negotiations. The findings in this study suggests that Norway is actively constructed as small, which was mainly done by “comparing” it to the other countries in the Umbrella Group. In this way, the countries in the Umbrella Group are used as the “other”, in which Norway can construct itself as the opposite. This once again touches on the relational premise of a national identity (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 180).

The question that remains then is why Norway would want to distance itself from the “big” storyline, and consequently also the Umbrella Group. One of the informants referenced to the countries in this coalition group as the main “laggards” and “troublemakers” in the

negotiations. This could serve as a potential reason for why Norway would not want to be associated with this label. One can also discuss whether this is the first sign of a Norwegian identity crisis in the data material. As stated by Jensen (2016) when an identity comes under pressure it tends to be articulated clearly and consistently (p. 162–169). This seemed to be the case with the informants, who frequently and explicitly drew on the “small” storyline to uphold the identity discourse of Norway as a trustworthy, unique, cooperative and neutral country. In the submissions and statements on the other hand there were less signs of cognitive dissonance.

Discourses are – as pointed out by Dryzek (2013) – overlapping in nature, and one can often find common ground between the most contrasting of perspectives (p. 10). The two contrasting storylines share the narrative of Norway as a country strongly concerned with climate change and its consequences. They also share the biophysical understanding of climate change, which serves as an initial foundation for the solutions thought of as appropriate to address the environmental problem.

Now that I have explored the national identity discourse of Norway in the international climate negotiations, I will move into the next chapter of the analysis, where I explore how these identities contribute to create a foundation for the nation’s role-taking within the UNFCCC.

## 5 Norway’s role-adoption in the UNFCCC negotiations

In the previous chapter a total of 7 identities were presented, which I argued was used consistently and frequently to construct Norway in the UNFCCC negotiations in the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement in 2015. These findings lay the foundation for the analysis in this chapter, where I will attempt to answer the following research question: *Which roles does Norway adopt and perform in the UNFCCC negotiations, and how do these roles relate to the nation’s identity discourse and role-prescriptions within this context?*

The theoretical assumptions that underlie the analysis in this chapter primarily entails that the identities used to construct Norway within the UNFCCC context lays the foundation for role-adoption, by deciding the range of positions deemed appropriate for the nation to take on. A national identity thus creates role-conceptions – conceptions of which roles it is suitable for the nation to take on – through the logic of appropriateness. The role-taking of the nation is

further influenced by role-prescriptions in the form of expectations stemming from the external environment. These two factors constitute a foundation for which actions is regarded as suitable for the nation given its role within a context. How the nation chooses to act based on the expectations tied to a specific role is further referred to as role performance.

## 5.1 Findings from submissions and statements

The most prominent role conception uncovered in the submissions and statements was that of Norway as *a climate leader* within the UNFCCC negotiations. An example of the role conception was evident in the following segment gathered from a submission to the AWG-KP in 2008:

Norway is committed to achieving positive results in this process to continue to take the lead together with other Annex I Parties in reducing global emissions, and to ensure that a new global framework succeeds the Kyoto regime without a gap.

By stating that Norway will "continue to take the lead" in combating climate change, the nation firmly positions itself as an already active leader in the negotiations. It's not just something that the country strives to be, it is something it already is. The role conception of a leader were further linked to the identity as a developed, Annex I country, as well as to that of an Umbrella Group country. Consider the following paragraph gathered from a statement made on behalf of the negotiation group to the ADP in 2015:

An ambitious outcome also means finding ways to reflect differentiation that are consistent with modern day realities, and incentivise all Parties to contribute to this global effort. We cannot get where we need to go, by doing what we have always done. As developed countries, we will continue to lead. But others with high capacity must join us. And all countries should progress in the same direction over time.

In this segment, the identity as a developed, Annex I country - which all the members of the Umbrella Group share - lays the foundation for the role conception the countries seem to have of being leaders in the negotiations. It appears as if this specific identity makes it natural - if not expected for Norway to take on the role of a climate leader. This expectation was

expressed explicitly in a submission by Norway to the AWG-KP in 2009, where it was written that: “Developed countries have to take the lead in combating climate change and should therefore take on more stringent reduction targets than domestic reduction projections”. Here the expectation of developed countries being climate leaders is formulated as an obligation, with the use of the phrase “have to take the lead”.

It seemed like being “ambitious” was strongly interlinked with the role as a climate leader in the negotiation texts. The segment above is an example of this, where it is demanded that developed countries be leaders by taking on “stringent reduction targets”, which in other words can be referred to as strict or firm goals. Another example is a submission to the AWG-KP in 2008, where it was written that: "The Norwegian proposal on auctioning allowances is further based on the view that all developed country parties should take on commitments in the type of ambitious quantified emission targets and effective compliance mechanisms”. This segment suggests the existence of an expectation for developed countries to set ambitious goals in the negotiations, and the construction of Norway as a developed nation was often done as a way to contextualize and reason the nation’s ambitious commitments in the submissions and statements. The expectation to set ambitious targets was in a similar way linked to being an Annex I country, such as in the following segment from a submission to the AWG-KP in 2009, where it was written that: "In addition to ambitious targets by Annex I countries, emissions in developing countries have to deviate substantially from business as usual to achieve a two-degree goal." Here it can seem like being ambitious to a larger degree is expected from - and linked to - Annex I countries than developing countries, although these countries are also urged to increase their ambition.

Based on these findings, it is perhaps not surprising that the expectation of “being ambitious” seemed to also apply to The Umbrella Group. In a statement made to the ADP in 2015, the group stated: "We arrive in Paris fully conscious of our responsibility to deliver a new, ambitious legal agreement that sets the world on course to avoid the dangerous impacts of climate change." Here the expectation of being ambitious is formulated as a “responsibility”. This way of formulating the expectation was also evident in submissions made by Norway alone, as in the following segment from a submission to the COP 20 in 2015: "Norway's government bases its policy on the responsibility to help safeguard the planet and on the precautionary principle. There is broad Parliamentary support for pursuing an ambitious climate policy, both nationally and internationally". Here the expectation of being ambitious

is not linked to any identity prescribed by the UNFCCC. It is linked to Norway as a nation, making it seem like the nation regards itself as responsible to be a leader regardless of it being a developed, Annex I country, and an Umbrella Group country.

One can, based on these findings, argue that setting ambitious goals and targets can be seen as a way of “performing” as a climate leader in the negotiations. The role performance of a nation is as previously stated influenced by both role prescriptions in the form of expectations stemming from the external environment and role conceptions of suitable positions based on the national identity discourse within the context. Being ambitious and being a climate leader seems to be intrinsically linked to Norway’s prescribed identity as a developed, Annex I country within the negotiations. One can also see signs of expectations – and obligations – stemming from the UNFCCC for countries such as Norway to be climate leaders and act ambitious. Based on this, it appears as if Norway has adopted the role as a climate leader within the UNFCCC negotiations, and is performing this role by setting ambitious targets, and edging other parties to raise their ambition.

The second role conception uncovered in the analysis of the submissions and statements was that of Norway as *a generous aid-giver*, which was performed by pledging substantial forms of aid to various causes in the negotiations. The form of aid most commonly given was economic funds, reflected in the following segment from a submission made to the COP in 2014:

The bulk of Norway’s support for adaptation activities in developing countries is mainly channelled through the general contributions to multilateral development institutions, including through the UNDP and international financing institutions. Support is given to the following main thematic areas: disaster risk reduction, food security, climate services and agriculture. Africa received the largest share of this support, more than 40 % of the total adaptation expenditures in 2013. Among countries, Ethiopia, Zambia and Malawi received the highest amount of funding for climate change adaptation.

Here Norway is credited with being an important contributor to adaption measures in developing countries. This finding was consistent throughout the submissions and statements. One can claim that the identity as a developed nation is active in the construction of Norway

in this segment, with a focus on support being given to “developing countries”, which makes it clear that Norway does not belong to this group. It also clarifies that developing countries are in need of aid, and that this aid is to be given by developed countries. The main thematic areas in which support is given makes it clear once again that Norway has a firm humanitarian focus in its climate policy, and that this is reflected in its role performance as an aid-giver. This became strongly evident in the same submission to the COP in 2014:

Extreme natural disasters such as droughts, earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons and floods also hit in 2013 millions of people worldwide. Norway contributed through funding of the United Nations humanitarian organizations and funds, the Red Cross system and non-governmental humanitarian organizations to relieve acute distress and save lives after a series of natural disasters. Amongst others, Norway contributed extensively to alleviating acute suffering and to help people restore livelihoods as quickly as possible when Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines on November 8 in 2013.

Here Norway highlights the importance contributions to humanitarian causes has been given in the nation’s climate finance. In fact, the contributions to these causes seemed to constitute one of the main focuses when it came to economic support given to climate adaptation. The following segment gathered from a submission to the COP in 2013 serves to strengthen this assumption:

Climate finance is a key element in finding solutions to the challenge of climate change. Norway’s financing of climate related projects and programs in developing countries has increased significantly over the past years, from an already high level. Our main priorities the last few years have been reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, renewable energy and sustainable management of natural resources, and adaptation with particular focus on food security and disaster risk reduction.

In addition to food security and disaster risk reduction, it is here clarified that the primary focus for Norwegian climate finance is to be aimed at the following issues: the reduction of emissions from deforestation, and the promotion of renewable energy and energy conservation. Out of these three issues, the one most consistently referenced to in regard to

contributions and support given from Norway during the studied decade was reduction of emissions from deforestation. This is reflected in a submission to the COP in 2014:

The Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) constitutes by far the largest part of Norway's mitigation assistance. In 2013 about USD 350 million was disbursed from NICFI. In 2014 the total budget for NICFI is approx. USD 484 million. The Government has confirmed Norway's intent to continue to finance REDD+ annually at least at current levels until 2020, i.e. approx. USD 484 million.

Contributions to REDD+ (Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation + promoting forest conservation and forest carbon stocks in developing countries) was frequently referenced to throughout the studied period, and although economic contributions to other causes were often substantial, it was in relation to reduction of deforestation emissions that Norway made its most generous pledges. In a submission to the COP in 2014 it was clarified that "NICFI is the largest REDD+ donor globally" and in a submission to the COP in 2013 it was written that: "Norway pledged USD 1 billion for REDD+ for the fast start period. This commitment has been fulfilled». This was the most substantial economic contribution mentioned in the submissions and statements during the studied decade.

Support in the form of economic funds was not the only aid given by Norway in the negotiations. The country was also consistent in offering support in form of "knowledge", including information and experiences. This was most commonly done in regard to the nation's experience with Carbon Capture and Storage, as reflected in the segment below gathered from a submission to the SBSTA 29 in 2008:

Norway welcomes the proposals of several Parties at SBSTA at its twentyeighth session on means to enhance the capacity building and facilitate the sharing of information on CCS in geological formations. Norway has extensive experience in storing CO<sub>2</sub>. Over the last 12 years a total amount of 10 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> have been stored in the Utsira Formation under the North Sea. We would like to share this experience with other Parties and welcome further collaboration on capacity building in this area. We believe that the Norwegian experience could be of interest and we welcome this opportunity to give a short description of the work we have done so far.

Here Norway is positioned as an experienced actor in the negotiations, with its long experience in storing CO<sub>2</sub>. The implementation and capacity building of CCS was one of the causes that Norway expressed the strongest support for throughout the studied decade. The mechanism was often referred to as one of the most important solutions for climate change mitigation. In a submission to the SBSTA in 2010, it was written that: “According to the IPCC, CCS has, after energy efficiency, the second largest potential for global emission reductions”. Once again, reference to science is used to highlight matters that Norway views as important in the negotiations and is used as a foundation for which policy should be formed. Here one can see clear signs of Norway inhabiting the assumed role conception of a “*policy entrepreneur*”, which is performed through pitching innovative solutions in the UNFCCC negotiations. In this regard, it seemed to once again exist an expectation for Norway to take on this role, based on the nation’s classification as a developed, Annex I country:

Article 2 (a) (iv) of the Kyoto Protocol encourages Annex I Parties to “implement and/or further elaborate policies and measures in accordance with its national circumstances, such as [...] research on, and promotion, development and increased use of [...]carbon dioxide sequestration technologies and innovative environmentally sound technologies”. Norway has made CCS an integrated part of our national climate change mitigation policy. (Submission to the SBSTA, 2010)

Here an expectation stemming from the Kyoto Protocol is presented, which encourages Annex I countries to be in search of environmentally friendly technologies to develop and implement. This makes it highly appropriate for Norway to devote considerable effort when it comes to CCS and makes it more natural for it to present such solutions in the negotiations. As an Annex I Norway is after all only doing its part by following the expectation to seek and develop such technologies. Norway expressed clear and strong support for the Kyoto Protocol on several occasions in the data material. The following example is from a statement made to the AWG-LCA in 2010:

Norway has always been, and still remains, a strong supporter of the Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol is a strong legal structure that has struck the necessary balance between clear and unambiguous commitments to reduce emissions, and the need for flexibility



in implementation through the creation of carbon market mechanisms that benefit both developed and developing countries. It also contains rigorous provisions for MRV and a mechanism to ensure compliance. The first years of operation have proven that the system also works in practice.

The fact that the Kyoto Protocol is the source of the role prescription to act as a policy entrepreneur, make it seem like Norway accepts this role, and views itself in accordance with it. The segment above also reflects another solution that the nation expressed strong support towards in the negotiations, the creation of carbon market mechanisms.

The third, and final role conception that was uncovered in the analysis of the submissions and statements were that of Norway as a “*petroleum producer*”. This conception was the least prominent in the data material and seemed closely linked to the role conception as a policy entrepreneur, based on the fact that it was commonly used to contextualize and reason Norway’s commitment to the development and implementation of the CCS technology. This is reflected in the segment below, gathered from a submission to the ADP in 2014:

Due to its large mitigation potential, Norway has prioritized the development of carbon capture and storage as a mitigation option. As a petroleum producer Norway strives to reduce the emissions from the production and refining of petroleum. The carbon capture and storage projects already in operation, the Sleipner and Snøhvit projects, and the approved Gudrun project, are in the petroleum sector. Norway has taken steps to disseminate information and lessons learned from these projects, including through international fora such as the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum and Clean Energy Ministerial, and through bilateral cooperation with both developing and developed countries. We also see the usefulness of sharing experience and discussing options for mitigating GHG emission through the use CCS under the Workstream 2 Technical Expert Meetings.

As is evident in this segment, the role as a petroleum producer is used to reason Norway’s efforts to develop technologies and mechanisms which can contribute to reduce the emissions within the sector. One can see a clear connection between this role conception and the construction of the nation as a big petroleum producing country, which was presented in the previous chapter and constituted the least consistently promoted identity in the interview

transcripts. It is interesting that the following role conception as a petroleum producer was also vaguely and seldom fronted in the documents, and that when it was promoted, it was used to back up under the much more consistently fronted role conception as a policy entrepreneur. It suggests that “performing” as a petroleum producer within the context of the UNFCCC entails working towards reducing the emissions within this sector.

Based on the analysis of the submissions and statements, I have argued that Norway adopts four primary roles in the negotiations, through presenting plausible signs of role conceptions, role prescriptions, and role performance. The roles’ positions Norway as:

- *A climate leader*
- *A generous aid-giver*
- *A policy entrepreneur*
- *A petroleum producer (vaguely)*

The next section contains the findings from the interview transcripts, which serves to nuance and supplement the findings in this section.

## 5.2 Findings from interview transcripts

Through the analysis of the interview transcripts, all the presented role conceptions were confirmed. Additionally, one further role conception was discovered. In the interviews, the informants articulated the roles adopted by Norway in the negotiations very explicitly compared to the submissions and statements. An example is the following description of Norway as a frontrunner, formulated by Informant 2:

I think ever since the climate negotiations started Norway has had very explicit goals of being an active part of the negotiations, and being a “foregangsland (frontrunner country)” and that has been official Norwegian policy since... well at least since the early 1990’s.

Here it is made clear that Norway has had a clear ambition of taking on the role as a “frontrunner” in the negotiations for several decades. This was further explained by Informant 2 with a reference to a former Norwegian political leader:

...The most significant political leader in Norway for several decades – Gro Harlem Brundtland – was a leading figure in the whole process leading up to the adoption of the UN climate change convention, right? So, it was always important for Norway to be seen as kind of following up on the legacy of Gro and taking an active part in that.

Here reference is made to the efforts Brundtland devoted during the period leading up to the establishment of the UNFCCC, and it is claimed that this has created a legacy of being a “leader” within climate change politics, which Norway strives to live up to. This can be compared to the findings in the first chapter, where it was uncovered that Norway’s focus on climate inequality in the negotiations could be seen as a way of living up to the humanitarian work of Fridthjof Nansen. It is clear that Norway finds it highly important to live up to – and continue the work of its pioneers, and the reputation that their work has given the nation.

In regard to this, reference was also made to the nation’s role conception as a generous aid-giver, which was here linked to the nation being a climate leader. Informant 2 formulated this in the following way:

The idea of Norway’s independence being partly about the ability to play a role internationally I think has always... I mean for a long time it’s been there. And it has later kind of manifested itself in the ambition to be a leader on aid, and development assistance, and on climate change and other things.

Here Norway’s ambition to be a climate leader is seen as interconnected with a wish to be a leader when it comes to aid-giving. Based on this, taking on the role as a generous aid-giver can be regarded as a way of “performing” as a climate leader. The strive to be a leader, both in regard to giving aid and in regard to climate change, is linked to the nation’s independence. As in the findings from the submissions and statements, the aid most frequently referenced to by the informants was in the form of economic support in the negotiations. Informant 3 made a point of the nation often over-achieving when it comes to economic commitments:

We don't fail our economic commitments, so when commitments are made we normally do our part and probably on a couple of occasions more than our part, which is trust-building.

As well as highlighting that the nation often gives more than they commit to, it is highlighted that the nation always meets its economic commitments, and that this contributes to the nation being perceived as trustworthy. This find supports the identity of Norway as a trustworthy country and shows how this identity is reinforced by the nation's role performance as a generous aid-giver. Informant 1 also made a point of Norway's support to negotiations - specially to developing nations – contributing to the nation being perceived as trustworthy:

We are very trusted... within finance for an example, and support for developing countries. We are one of those nations that actually contribute with our report funding to the UN... in the range of what we are expected to do. Very many countries have big backlog of their commitments to contribute to the budgets of the UN, but Norway is a very solid and trusted contributor. So we are in a way a nation that has been following the rules. Just an example, the deadline for the NDC's for 2020 was in February, February 9th. Norway was basically one of the very, very few countries that actually complied with the deadline. So very, very few countries do that, and this is something that we do.

Here it is again hinted to the existence of a role prescription, in the sense that Norway is expected to contribute with funding to the UN. Norway is portrayed as a nation that not only meets, and at times exceeds these expectations, but also complies with the rules and the deadlines to a higher degree than many other countries. This makes the nation a trusted and dependable contributor. Once again, the claim can be made that Norway's role as a generous aid-giver strengthens its identity as a trustworthy country in the negotiations.

There were additionally found support for the role conception of Norway as a petroleum producer in the interview transcripts, which also here seemed to be closely linked to the role conception as a policy entrepreneur, especially in regard to the CCS mechanisms. This was clearly articulated by Informant 4:

In a sense CCS is a good example on how by being very technical, very concrete, you can solve difficult political issues. And this is actually due to the petroleum activities,

because we wouldn't have CCS without it... so there's a lot of positive experiences that we have had in Norway because of our petroleum productions. Because we have experience with introducing measures, trying new things that other countries have not tried or does not know how to implement.

Here Norway is again positioned as an actor with a lot of experience in the negotiations, mainly in relation to its development and implementation of new measures, such as CCS. The role as a petroleum producer is here narrated as a trait which has given Norway the opportunity to be a policy entrepreneur, by creating solutions to petroleum related GHG emissions.

In addition to finding support for the already uncovered roles, there were also found signs of the assumed conception as a *bridge-builder*, which entails working to find middle-ground between parties in the negotiations so that agreements can be reached. Informant 4 articulated this role conception in the following way:

We see ourselves as a small country, we are not really a small country, but we like to think so. And that means that we see ourselves as... we always try to find the middle-ground. So that's why we're always constantly looking for solutions instead of stating positions. Most often you will find that we have quite broad submissions, quite flexible and that we have tried to weigh different issues against each other and that means that we also in the negotiations will have created this role for Norway.

As this segment reflects, Norway is narrated as a country that strives to find middle-ground so that parties can reach agreements in the negotiations. This is linked to the nation's self-conception as a small nation, which seems to place the country in a position where it is uniquely equipped to do so. Another interesting find in this segment is the claim that Norway likes to view itself as a small country although it "in reality" is not. This confirms the findings in the last chapter, where the country was found to prefer the "small" storyline, which evoked a narrative of Norway as a cooperative, trustworthy, unique and neutral country.

Based on the segment above, one can assume that because of the role-adoption as a bridgebuilder, the nation tends to avoid promoting clear positions in the negotiations. This was however not always the case, as Informant 2 made clear:

I think that Norway wants to be seen as kind of a constructive partner that helps everyone to reach agreements, so it's always been important for Norway to act more as a kind of facilitator to try and get everyone to agree than to push their own very specific positions. At least that's how they would describe their own role, right? But in some cases Norway also has very specific positions that they push and try... and can be quite hard in the negotiations on those.

Here it is clarified that Norway does promote certain clear positions in the negotiations. As previously established, the nation was in this regard consistent in promoting mechanisms such as CCS and carbon markets. However, Informant 2 also made it clear that Norway's role as a bridge-builder often weighed heavier than the promotion of solutions, by stating that: "the overarching goal for Norway is always to kind of reach agreements, so Norway will never be the ones that kind of holds up agreements or makes the negotiations difficult".

It became evident from the interview transcripts that Norway was often given chair positions in the negotiations, which strengthened the nation's capability to find middle ground between parties. This seemed to be linked to the identity as "a unique country", in terms of being placed outside the EU. Informant 3 formulated this position in the following way:

We've always taken specific roles, and we're situated in a place where it's easier to ask us to do particular things, and normally Norwegian ministers are asked to chair difficult issues in the negotiations, because we're between the EU and some other western countries when it comes to placements.

It also seemed like Norway was deemed uniquely equipped for these chair positions based on its identity as a neutral country, as Informant 4 made a point out of:

You won't see this from the documents... that there have been a lot of Norwegians having specific roles within the UNFCCC, as like chairs or leading the negotiations and so on. This is again because countries see us as quite neutral and quite attentive to the needs and understanding of other countries, especially smaller countries. We are not like the US or Australia or someone that wants to protect their own interests all the time. We are trying to get the best solutions possible given the circumstances.

Here the US and Australia is used as a “significant other” in this regard, in which Norway is constructed as different from. This can be compared to the findings in the last chapter, where Norway was discursively constructed as different from the Umbrella Group by the use of the “small” storyline. The US and Australia are additionally both members of this coalition group, so the discursive construction is indeed very similar. In this segment, however, these countries are used to construct Norway as different by being “more equipped” to chair the negotiations, which in turn makes it possible for the nation to perform the role as a bridge-builder in the negotiations. A similar use of the US to construct Norway as “different” was promoted in the following segment by Informant 2:

Most countries recognize Norway ... they have competent negotiators, they put a lot of resources into the negotiations, so they have people who know them and who have been following them for a long time. And they are quite well respected among other countries. And they are not like, big like... if the US is called on to chair the negotiations, then everyone perceives them as “oh, they are a powerful player, they have their own interests”, but Norway is more unassuming or... “uskyldig (innocent)”. Not having those kind of big power interests in a sense that other countries do. So they are easier to call on, to lead the negotiations.

Once again, big is connected to being powerful, and therefore not neutral and in some way less trustworthy in the negotiations. By narrating Norway as small with the use of US as the significant “other” the nation seems to gain trust by being perceived as neutral and not so powerful, and therefore trustworthy. The use of a significant other to construct Norway as unique was also used in relation to the nation’s role as a petroleum producer. Informant 4 said the following in regard to this:

I’ve talked to a lot of negotiators about this, and they find it very interesting in a positive way that big petroleum producer like Norway can have the role in the negotiations that we have. We are very ambitious on targets, we are very ambitious on emission reduction targets... very firm on that issue, we have never wavered on that. We have also said that we are doing this at the same time as we are producing oil and gas. So, we are reducing our emissions, and at some point, there has to be of course...net zero here, but they find it kind of positive that we are not like...maybe

like Australia that just says “no no”. We are trying to find solutions where we can do both. But we have never gone strictly against for instance...we have never used petroleum as an excuse or as a reason for not moving forward, it’s not been a very hard stop for us somewhere. We have always said that we are ambitious, we want to cut maximum as we can.

Here Australia is again used as the “other”, this time in which Norway is created as a petroleum producer who is ambitious, while Australia becomes a petroleum producer who is not ambitious. Similar to the previous chapter, where one of the informants stressed that Norway could in fact be a big petroleum producing country and still be trustworthy and neutral, it here seems like an effort is being made to stress how Norway can be a petroleum producer and still be ambitious in the negotiations. As being ambitious has previously been linked to the role of a climate leader, one can imply that the informant is clarifying that Norway can be both a climate leader and a petroleum producer. This suggests that the role as a petroleum producer and the role as a climate leader are not originally compatible in their nature – resonating with the signs of identity crisis in the last chapter - and that discursive effort is necessary to “make them compatible” and avoid cognitive dissonance. This would offer an explanation as to why the “small” storyline is so explicitly fronted by the informants, as this storyline reflects the preferred identity discourse of Norway, which contributes to make the roles as a generous aid-giver, a policy entrepreneur, a bridge-builder, as well as the overarching roles as a climate leader and a frontrunner, available for the nation to take on.

### 5.3 Discussion

The findings in this chapter coincide with earlier research to a high degree. The first role conception uncovered in the analysis was that of Norway of a “a climate leader”, which aligns with studies such as Boasson & Lahn (2016), Jensen (2016), and Eckersley (2013) (2016). This role seemed to primarily be connected to Norway through its prescribed identities as a developed, Annex I country, and thereby also to its identity as an Umbrella Group country. There were discovered signs of role prescriptions in the form of expectations for Norway to be a leader in the negotiations, and to set highly ambitious goals. This coincides with Eckersley (2016) who notes that the UNFCCC put an obligation on developed countries in 1992 to take on a greater responsibility in reducing the damages – both irrevocable and potential – caused by climate change (p. 181). The obligation was reinforced during the



implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in 2005, when developed nations were encouraged to “take the lead” in combating climate change due to the notion of CBDR-RC (UNFCCC, 7, no year).

Although a clear role prescription can be said to exist that makes it expected for Norway to be a climate leader because it is a developed, Annex I country, the findings seemed to suggest that the nation viewed itself as responsible for being ambitious in the negotiations regardless of these prescribed identities. This was supported in the interviews where it was highlighted that Norway strived to be a “frontrunner” country, and that this was partly because of its wish to live up to the “legacy” of Gro Harlem Brundtland. This coincide with earlier research, the study Lahn & Rowe (2015) being an example, where it was found that Norway has actively sought the status as a “frontrunner” in international climate change politics, and that this can be linked to the pioneering example that was set by the former Norwegian prime minister (p. 131-133).

The find that suggest Norway inhabits a conception as an ambitious leader in climate politics regardless of the role prescriptions imposed by the UNFCCC also coincide with the study of Eckersley (2016). This study finds that Norway views itself as particularly responsible for being a leader in combating climate change, and that this is partly based on the nation’s self-conception as a “good state”, and its role as a big petroleum producer, which has made the country especially focused on finding climate friendly solutions within this sector (p. 192). This also agrees with the findings in this study, where the nation’s role conception as a petroleum producer seemed to lay the foundation for the strong promotion of the CCS mechanism, and thereby also for the adoption of the role as a “policy entrepreneur”.

The role conception as a “policy entrepreneur” also coincides with the study of Lahn & Rowe (2015) who found that Norway performs this role in the negotiations, mainly by introducing new and innovative ideas, and that this role performance contributes to make the overarching role as a frontrunner available to the nation (p. 134). One can also see the link between the role as a policy entrepreneur and a frontrunner in the findings in this study, where it was pointed out that the expectation placed upon Norway – as an Annex I country - to strive towards the implementation of innovative policy solutions contributed to the country being among the first to gain knowledge and experience regarding new technology measures, such as CCS. Norway’s focus on the development and implementation of the CCS mechanisms can

also be said to coincide with the study of Eckersley (2016), where Norway was referenced to as a technological pioneer (p.193).

Eckersley (2016) has additionally pointed that a role-prescription exists for Norway to act as a generous aid-giver, in the form of an expectation prescribed by the Kyoto Protocol on developed countries to provide assistance to developing countries when it comes to mitigation and adaption to climate change (p. 181). The findings in this study revealed that the aid most commonly given was in the form of economic funds to causes in the negotiations. This coincides once again with the study of Lahn & Rowe (2015), who found that Norway takes on the role of a “generous economic contributor” in the negotiations, especially when it comes to contributions to REDD+ (p. 135), which agrees with this study, where the most substantial economic commitments were pledged to the reduction of emissions from deforestation. The informants in the study also highlighted how Norway gained trust as a nation by always fulfilling their economic commitments.

As well as supporting REDD+, Norway also gave substantial economic aid to several humanitarian organizations and seemed especially committed to supporting food security and disaster risk reduction in developing nations. This coincide with the research of Leira et al., (2007) where Norway is referenced to as a champion when it comes to giving aid to the poor and vulnerable (p. 16-17). One can also draw a parallel to the study of Norgaard (2011), who claims that substantial aid given to humanitarian causes contributes to uphold an image of Norway as an “innocent” nation, working for the “common good” (p. 215).

As well as giving aid in the form of economic contributions, the findings also revealed that Norway was consistent in offering support in the form of “knowledge”, entailing primarily information and experience. This was most commonly done in relation to the country’s extensive experience with the CCS technology. This also coincide with the study of Leira et al., (2007), where it is claimed that Norway positions itself as a “manager of knowledge”. It is here pointed out that the offering of aid – primarily to developing nations – contributes to strengthen and reinforce an image of these nations as “behind” Norway in development. By offering aid in the form of knowledge, Norway becomes a manager and “keeper” of the information that these countries lack (p. 18).

The research of Leira et al., (2007) also supports the find of Norway as a bridge-builder (p. 10) which was the last role conception to be uncovered in the analysis. This role conception

was only evident in the interview transcripts, which one of the informants provided a possible explanation to when pointing out the fact that Norway's chair position is not visible in the submissions and statements. By inhabiting the position as a chair in the negotiations, Norway seemed to be in a unique position where it had the opportunity to work for agreements among parties in the negotiations.

The nation seemed to be considered as especially equipped for chairing in the negotiations, which was once again linked to the identity as a unique country, both by being positioned outside the EU, and by being small. This once again coincides with the study of Lahn & Rowe (2015), where it was found that Norway adopts the role as a "bridge-builder" in the negotiations, and that this position is available for it because of its reputation as trustworthy, as well as its small size which "makes it appear less threatening or beholden to self-interest than larger countries in the negotiation" (p. 135). The preference of the "small" storyline can therefore also be said to coincide with earlier research.

The informants once again constructed Norway as different from "big" and "powerful" countries such as the US. Additionally, Australia was used to construct Norway as an ambitious petroleum producer. This can be compared to the study of Eckersley (2013) who compares the discursive construction of responsibility for climate change between Norway and Australia. In this study it is pointed out that the two countries initially share many similarities in regard to international climate politics, with them both being members of the Umbrella Group, strong supporters of the Kyoto Protocol, and major fossil fuel exporters. However, the mitigation targets of the two countries are radically different, with Norway being among the most ambitious in the world, and Australia being among the less ambitious of the developed countries. This is claimed to stem from the differences in national identity and role conceptions, with Norway striving to be a force of good in the world, while Australia regards itself as a good international citizen, but not a leader. This has resulted in these two countries diverging significantly in their response to the expectation put on developed, Annex I countries to internalize the self-conception as ecological states and adopt the roles as climate leaders (p. 394-395).

The construction of Norway as "an ambitious petroleum producer" with the use of Australia as the "other" was further seen as a sign of discursive management to avoid cognitive dissonance stemming from tensions between the roles as a climate leader and a petroleum producer. This resonates with earlier research regarding the "Norwegian Paradox" (Norgaard,

2011) (Jensen, 2016). By stressing that Norway could be ambitious – and thereby enact the role as a climate leader - while still being “a big petroleum producer” it was made clear that these two roles were not originally compatible in nature.

## 6 Norway’s approach in the UNFCCC negotiations

In the previous two chapters, I have explored and discussed the identities that were used to construct Norway within the UNFCCC negotiations, and how these – together with expectations stemming from the external environment - have laid the foundation for role-adoption and behavior – in the form of role performance - within this context. In the third and final chapter of the analysis I explore how these factors are linked to the solutions promoted by the country in the climate negotiations, through the use of the following research question: *What kind of – and which specific - solutions to the climate change problem is promoted by Norway in the negotiations, and how does these relate to the country’s national identity discourse and role-adoption within the UNFCCC?*

This chapter relies on the theoretical assumptions that discourses have the power to shape the understanding of a phenomenon such as climate change, and that this contributes to map out which – and what kind of – solutions are viewed as suitable for the environmental problem. As identities – and the roles they contribute to shape – are discursive in nature, it is also assumed that these will impact the approach of a nation within the given context. The findings in the first chapter revealed that the biophysical understanding of climate change was prevalent within the data material. It is therefore assumed that this discourse will have an impact on the range of solutions promoted by Norway in the negotiations.

### 6.1 Findings from submissions and statements

The first and most robust find in regard to what type of solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations was that of a global effort, which the country expressed clear support towards frequently. This is reflected in the segment below gathered from the following submission to the COP in 2006:

Norway believes that all issues of importance for our cooperative efforts to combat climate change should be considered. As mentioned above, we find it extremely

important to have as a goal that we should work towards a truly global response to the climate change problem.

As this segment reflects, Norway has been a supporter of measures on a global scale to combat climate change from the beginning of the studied period. This segment shows clear sign of the narration of Norway as a cooperative country, who is eager to work together with other countries to reach a common goal. A global effort built on international cooperation was often reasoned as necessary with reference to the logic that collective action would bring more substantial results than individual actions. This is reflected in the segment below, gathered from a submission to the ADP in 2012:

Enhancing Parties' individual targets and actions alone may not deliver the necessary mitigation efforts up to 2020. Furthermore, an overall role of the UNFCCC and the workplan should be to stimulate more action collectively, than the sum of individual actions by Parties. This can be achieved through collaborative efforts and partnerships, as well as through mechanisms and systems in an UNFCCC framework. The workplan should stimulate collaborative efforts with a view to catalyzing action, without necessarily developing new mechanisms or frameworks under the UNFCCC. Any new mechanisms should be negotiated under the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Durban Platform. Global strategies will be necessary and should be a major part of the work.

As is stated here, clear support was shown from Norway towards *global strategies*. It could be regarded as a given that Norway supports international cooperation, a global effort, and the implementation of global strategies. After all, the UNFCCC negotiations are international in character, which leads to international solutions. However, Norway was consistent in the support towards solutions which targeted global GHG emission reductions as opposed to national emission reductions. Several global strategies were consistently promoted by the country in the submissions, some more prominently than others. The solution most commonly – and strongly - promoted by Norway was that of a *global carbon market*. As is reflected in the segment below from a submission to the ADP in 2014, the narration of collective action as more efficient and fruitful than individual action seeped into the reasoning for this strategy:

An international agreement should promote more action collectively than the Parties can deliver individually. A good way to achieve this is through the use of national,

regional and international carbon markets. The use of carbon markets allows more ambitious contributions than would otherwise be possible.

Here the promotion of carbon markets is linked to increased ambition, which in the previous chapter was linked to Norway's role as a climate leader. This segment suggests that the implementation of carbon markets will allow the country – and potentially other countries as well – to significantly raise their ambition, thereby performing as climate leaders in the negotiations. In this segment one can also see signs of the role as a policy entrepreneur, which is performed by promoting innovative policies and technologies. Here one can also see a link between the role as a climate leader and the role as a policy entrepreneur, as Norway is promoting carbon markets to increase ambition.

The implementation of carbon markets was linked to increased ambition consistently through the documents. The following segment is gathered from a statement to the AWG-KP in 2010:

Enhanced and improved carbon market mechanisms have direct relevance on the level of Annex I countries' emission reduction targets. We need progress on the discussion on market mechanisms in order to increase the ambition level, and need time for this in AWG-KP.

Here it is clarified that the countries which will have the potential to raise their ambition with the implementation of carbon markets are developed, Annex I countries such as Norway. The promotion of so called “market-based mechanisms” were frequent in the Norwegian submissions. Two factors that seemed especially important for the nation in this regard was the development of a “carbon price”, and “an emission trading system”. The following submission to the ADP in 2014 is an example of this:

Most international analyses point to carbon pricing as the most important policy instrument in the work to combat climate change. Carbon pricing gives incentives to reduce emissions, finance climate measures and stimulates development and deployment of new climate friendly technology. Prices should reflect costs, including for externalities. Thus, about 80 per cent of Norway's domestic emissions are part of the European Emissions Trading System (EU-ETS) or/and subject to a tax on greenhouse gases. Norway believes that the best way to reduce emissions on a global

scale in line with the two degree target is to set a global price on carbon. A global price on carbon will ensure cost effective mitigation actions between different countries and regions and secure equal treatment of all emitters and all countries.

Once again science, this time in the form of “international analyses” and reference to the 2-degree target, is used to underpin the causes and solutions Norway promotes in the negotiations. Another interesting aspect in this regard is the clarifying that Norway’s domestic emissions are already a part of the emission trading system, and that a tax on GHG has been implemented. In this way, Norway is represented as a “pioneer” or a “frontrunner”, by being ahead of other countries when it comes to implementing mechanisms. This can also be linked to the previously presented role prescription put on developed nations to devote effort and resources to the development and implementation of “climate friendly technology”, thereby taking on the role as a policy entrepreneur. Additionally, this segment reinforces Norway’s support to solutions which are targeted towards global emission reductions, as opposed to national.

*Technological solutions* were consistently promoted by Norway in the documents. Besides a global carbon market, CCS was the solution most frequently pitched by the nation. CCS was previously linked to the roles of a technological pioneer and a policy entrepreneur. It was however also linked to the role as a petroleum producer. The necessity of CCS as a solution were often framed through a focus on securing a sufficient energy supply, such as in the segment below gathered from a submission to the SBSTA in 2008:

In our view, it is crucial that we welcome, promote and contribute to research, innovation, development, testing and dissemination of new technologies that will help us mitigate climate change. This requires increased focus on renewable energy and energy efficiency. But we must also meet the challenge of securing a sustainable future energy supply by reducing the emissions from the production and use of fossil fuels. CCS is one of the most promising technologies to achieve that. This technology will complement other climate change mitigation actions by providing an option for using fossil fuels, including coal, during the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Here CCS is presented as a solution with the potential to secure a sustainable energy supply and assist countries in their transition to low-carbon economies. CCS and carbon markets

were in this regard often referenced to as so-called *win-win solutions*. An example is the following segment gathered from a submission to the AWG-LCA in 2008:

Norway welcomes the opportunity to explore alternative solutions and frameworks under the AWG-LCA in this respect. Undoubtedly being a win-win technology, we propose that the workshop that is to be held in Poznan gives priority to the question of deployment of carbon capture and storage. We are also aware that there are important issues regarding carbon capture and storage that need to be further assessed. These issues must be an integral part of the further assessment on how to facilitate the deployment of carbon capture and storage at a global scale.

As is reflected in this segment, the solution most frequently referenced to as a win-win solution was CCS. In a segment from a submission to the AWG-LCA the following year, in 2009, it was explained what such a solution entailed:

Deep cuts in global emissions are necessary to avoid dangerous climate change. Information about greenhouse gas emissions and removals, GHG categories and emission trends worldwide is essential to be able to implement the most efficient tools and measures to reduce emissions globally, including identifying actions that reduce both emissions and costs at the same time, so called win-win solutions.

In this segment it is clarified that win-win solutions are measures with the potential to reduce costs and emissions simultaneously. Such measures were often referred to as *cost-effective solutions* in the documents and were highly promoted by Norway in the negotiations. Along with carbon markets and CCS, another solution that was said to have a substantial cost-effective potential were that of REDD+, which primarily aims at reducing emissions from deforestation. This is reflected in the following segment gathered from a submission to the AWG-LCA in 2012:

It is increasingly clear that without REDD+ delivering at or near its near full potential, we will not reduce emissions to the levels needed by 2020 to reach the two degree target. While global deforestation rates fell in the period 2005-10, in large part due to cuts in Brazil, large additional cuts are needed by 2020. According to some sources, REDD+ could provide as much as one third of the cost-effective emission reductions



required by 2020 to put us on a credible two-degree path. Demand for verified REDD+ emission reductions is essential both to realize the upper ranges of current mitigation pledges, and to increase the ambition level and thereby close the mitigation gap.

Here the importance of REDD+ as a solution is once again underpinned by reference to science and the 2-degree target. The solution was also claimed to have the potential to benefit the population in developing countries, such as in the segment gathered from a submission to the SBSTA in 2014:

We have further observed that REDD+, if implemented in a sound way, can have significant positive social, environmental and governance impacts, benefiting indigenous peoples, local communities and the wider population of developing countries.

Again, the impact of Norway's identity as a country concerned with the unequal consequences of climate change is visible in the nation's attempt to provide aid to the population in developing countries. Norway was highly consistent in promoting solutions that were both environmentally friendly and stimulated development in countries. This is reflected in the segment below gathered from a submission to the COP in 2013:

There is a positive and expanding offer of demand-driven assistance to countries interested in taking advantage of climate-friendly development opportunities. It includes i.a. the UN the Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) combining poverty eradication and environment at the local level, and the broad UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) with emphasis on macroeconomic adjustment, jobs and social policy. These initiatives create enabling conditions for climate-friendly development in each participating country. Norway is highly supportive of the contributions such initiatives provide. A practical approach to creating enabling conditions, fuelled by national self-interest, will stimulate increasing flows of private and public investment to a climate-friendly, low emission and inclusive economy. It bridges UNFCCC and development processes (notably UN post-2015) while broadening the foundation for enhanced climate ambitions.

Here climate-friendly development opportunities are promoted as solutions with the potential to reduce both emissions and poverty in countries, reflecting Norway's recognition of these two challenges as issues that can be combated simultaneously.

The findings from the submissions and statements have now been presented, which suggests that during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement, Norway was most consistent in the promotion of solutions of the following nature:

- *Global strategies*
- *Technological solutions*
- *Win-win solutions/ cost-effective solutions*

The specific solutions most frequently promoted in this regard were a global carbon market, CCS and REDD+. In the following section the findings from the interview transcripts will be presented to highlight nuances to the findings in this section.

## 6.2 Findings from interview transcripts

The promotion of global measures, especially in regard to market-based mechanisms were rediscovered in the analysis of the interview transcripts. Informant 1 formulated this in the following way:

And emission wise, of course when we can work internationally and cooperate on emission reductions, we can do more. We can set more ambitious targets. So, for us market approaches indeed is a way of making sure that we can be as ambitious as possible.

As is evident, the same reasoning is used here as in the submissions and statements; implementation of carbon markets equals increased ambition and the possibility to set more substantial targets for the nation. In this way, the implementation of such mechanisms can once again be linked to Norway as a climate leader in the negotiations. The strive for “global strategies” or international solutions was further tied in with a narrative of Norway as a unique country, as elaborated on by Informant 1:

Some countries, they need to have their international solutions framed within the national law, which means that... it needs to be approved by the parliament or whatever kind of decision-making system back home. This is not the case for Norway, so very often we adapt to international solutions rather than the opposite way around. This means that we can actually have international framework that we aspire to. It doesn't need to comply completely with the rules we have in Norway. So, we can have solutions internationally that we can strive towards. And this is a little bit different from what we see from many other countries, where there's much more complete alignment.

In this segment, Norway is represented as a country that has a unique capacity to strive for international solutions. As in the negotiations text, the "market-based mechanism" most often referenced to by the informants was that of carbon markets, which entailed a price on carbon and an emission trading system. Informant 2 explained the importance of carbon trading for Norway's climate policy in the following way:

So, what happened with the system that was established in the UNFCCC and the Kyoto protocol in the 1990s was that it allowed Norway to talk about climate policy quite separate from oil policy. So, I think that kind of separation was something that Norway actively worked to make happen. Norway was a very strong proponent of the system of carbon trading and helped establish the system of carbon trading in the Kyoto Protocol. So, it wasn't just something that ... a lucky coincidence, it was something that Norway actively helped establish. But once that was in place, it allowed Norway to play kind of a progressive role in the climate change negotiations, and not care too much, or not mix the role in the climate change negotiations with the role of an oil producer, because it helped keep them separated.

Here some contextual background is provided regarding the establishment of the UNFCCC system and the Kyoto Protocol. It is claimed that Norway has been a promoter of carbon trading since the beginning of the negotiations, and this is linked to the role as a petroleum producer. It is also suggested that the system of carbon trading has allowed Norway to separate oil and climate policy. The promotion of carbon markets was also linked to CCS by informant 2:

Yeah, there was a lot of discussions about CCS especially, whether it could be used for carbon trading. So I think that was the clearest example in that period of time of Norway taking a specific position and being quite strong on that because of its role as an oil producer. But otherwise, its remarkably absent in a sense... so it was not something that Norway needed to talk about in the negotiations, and it was not something other countries kind of challenged Norway on in the negotiations. And I think that has a lot do to with how the whole climate change regime was set up during the 1990s when they decided that emissions should be accounted the way that they are accounted.

Once again, reference is made to the establishment of the UNFCCC system, this time in regard to the way of accounting for emissions. Additionally, a potential explanation as to why the identity as an oil nation, and the role as a petroleum producer was remarkably absent from the submissions and statements is provided. It is here claimed that this is not something Norway “needed to talk about” in the negotiations during the studied decade, because of the emission accounting system which was established during the 1990’s. Informant 1 gave an elaboration regarding emission accounting:

We report on the emissions that oil production does in Norway ... and this is nothing that Norway decides, this is the international book of 780 pages of how you do your greenhouse gas inventory, which is reported to the UNFCCC. This is IPCC methods that we have agreed on. This is very important. So, what we do with climate policies in Norway is to make sure that we set targets for our economy, and our emissions that we are responsible for. We are not responsible for the burning of Norwegian exported petroleum. We are not responsible for those emissions.

It is here clarified that the emissions Norway exports are not included in the nation’s emission accounting, making the country “not responsible” for these emissions. As the exporting of oil and gas is made possible by carbon markets and CCS, this would provide an explanation as to why Norway is such a strong promoter of these solutions in the negotiations. The promotion of these solutions can therefore not only be linked to the role conceptions as a climate leader, frontrunner, and a policy entrepreneur, but also to the role as a petroleum producer. The role as a petroleum producer was also linked to the promotion of REDD+ as a solution. Informant 2 explained this in the following way:

It was very important for the government in 2007 to be seen as green and progressive and doing something for climate change. But it was very difficult to do something domestically to actually reduce Norwegian emissions. And that has a lot to do with its role as an oil producer, right? Because we have very high emissions because of our oil production, we have high emissions from oil production in Norway, and that makes it difficult to take on very ambitious targets other than buying emission credits from other countries. And so, this idea of putting a lot of money into rain forest protection became an idea that was kind of an easy compromise between the green part of the government, like SV and Erik Solheim, and the part of the government that was very much more protective of the oil industry and so on, which was the labor party, Jens Stoltenberg and so on. And so this idea to “okay, it’s difficult to reduce emissions in Norway, but at least we can put a lot of money into this thing that no one is against”, right? Just protecting rain forests.

Here it is suggested that Norway’s promotion of the REDD+ mechanism in the studied period is a way for the country to be ambitious – and thereby perform the role as a climate leader – without needing to commit to stringent domestic reduction targets, which is made difficult because of the nation’s role as a petroleum producer. Additionally, the role performance as a generous aid-giver is once again linked to the role-adoption as a climate leader. Since it’s difficult to commit to stringent domestic emission reductions, Norway is seeking to perform the role as a climate leader through being ambitious on an international scale and pledging substantial economic contributions to REDD+ becomes a way to achieve this.

### 6.3 Discussion

As stated in the first chapter of the analysis, the biophysical understanding of climate change has been consistently evident in the data material, with reference to positivist science and to climate change as caused by rising concentrations of GHG in the atmosphere. The IPCC has historically been used as a scientific foundation within the UNFCCC, so it is not surprising that the biophysical discourse is found to be dominant the negotiation texts, and in the transcripts (UNFCCC, 1, no year). It is, however, important as the understanding of climate change provides an initial foundation for what type of solutions is regarded as appropriate to address it. Within the biophysical discourse a focus is put on technological measures, rooted and reasoned for with earth-system science (Leichenko & O’Brien, 2009: 63-67). This

coincides with the findings in this study, where science – specifically reference to the IPCC and the 2-degree target – was used consistently to highlight the solutions that Norway fronted as the most appropriate for tackling climate change. The solutions most frequently promoted was also technological measures, specifically CCS and the implementation of a global carbon market.

The promotion of CCS and carbon markets can be viewed as signs of the thinking globally discourse, found in the study of Hovden & Lindseth (2004). Within this discourse a focus is put on solutions that can be implemented on an international scale, and that is cost-effective and technological in nature. The focus on demand of energy also coincides with this discourse, with the framing of the export of Norwegian oil and gas to developing countries as a valuable solution for reducing emissions on a global scale and help these countries transition to low-carbon economies in an environmentally friendly way (p. 66). This was also found by Eckersley (2013) who pointed out that while the contrasting national action discourse, which highlights domestic efforts to reduce emissions, views the country's oil and gas production as something that stands in the way of the nation's ability to play a leading role in international climate politics, the thinking globally discourse views the Norwegian petroleum industry as more environmentally friendly than that elsewhere. Consequently, the production of oil and gas on Norwegian soil becomes a solution to halt climate change, rather than an obstacle that stands in the way of achieving this goal (p. 389).

This also resonates with the “drilling for the environment” discourse presented by Jensen (2016) which plays on the narrative that if anyone should be drilling for oil, it should be Norway, as the nation has the adequate technology to ensure the drilling be done in an “environmentally sound” way (p. 170). It also resonates with the work of Kristoffersen (2015) who argues that Norway frames continued domestic oil production as beneficial for the environment, and for the population in developing countries (p. 154). In this way, the narrative of Norwegian oil production relates to Norway's identity discourse as a nation working for the “common good”, which in the case of international climate politics entails helping developing countries "jump over the most polluting stages of development" by providing Norwegian oil as a more climate-friendly option than other fossil fuels such as gas (Eckersley, 2016: 192). This can be seen as an extension of Norway adopting the role of an aid-giving nation, which in this instance is performed through exporting oil and gas to developing countries.

Cost-effective solutions were referenced to as “win-win” solutions in the data-material, as they contributed to reduced emissions while at the same time stimulating national economies. Such win-win logic highly resonates with the ecological modernization discourse (Hajer, 1995: 262), which the thinking globally discourse falls under (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004: 76). Cost-effective solutions also coincide with the economism discourse identified by Tønnessen (1997), where aspects regarding climate change is reduced to economic dilemmas, and solutions are regarded as either profitable or non-profitable. The promotion of a carbon price is a strong sign of this discourse and represents the motive that underlies considerations regarding emissions within this perspective. What could have been a moral question of whether it is right or not to continue with activities that negatively impacts the climate becomes an economic question of whether the country is willing to “pay the price” for its carbon emissions (p. 110).

Carbon markets, CCS and REDD+ were all pitched as examples of such win-win solutions. REDD+ in particular was claimed to have the potential to benefit the population and general development of countries, while at the same time reducing emissions. Such measures were referenced to as “climate friendly development opportunities” in the submissions and findings, which were linked to simultaneous emission and poverty reduction in developing countries. This resonates once again with Eckersley (2016) who found a discourse of “tackle poverty through development”, where Norway views itself as responsible for tackling climate change and poverty, partly by acting as a “technological pioneer” and introducing measures which are said to stimulate economic and climate friendly development (p. 191).

These three solutions were linked to the role-adoption as a climate leader and a frontrunner in the data material. Carbon markets were presented as a strategy which would allow Annex I countries in particular to raise their ambition, REDD+ constitutes a cause in which Norway can act as an ambitious climate leader through pledging generous amounts of economic support, and with the development and implementation of CCS, Norway is positioned as an experienced actor who is ahead of other countries when it comes to “climate friendly technologies”. The solutions were, however, also linked to Norway’s role as a petroleum producer.

In the two previous chapters, the identity as a big petroleum producing nation and the following role as a petroleum producer were largely absent from the submissions and statements. The findings in this chapter presented a potential explanation as to why, with the informants referring to an emission accounting system that were established during the 1990s, which made countries only responsible for the emissions on their own soil, and not those exported to other countries. Because of this accounting system, Norway is not considered responsible for its exported emissions. This find coincide with earlier research, mainly the study of Bang & Lahn (2020) who argued that the accounting system established by the Convention – which was reinforced in the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol - allowed Norway to keep oil and climate policy separated. It also made it possible for the nation to continue its production and export of oil and gas, and still act as a leader within international climate politics by setting and reaching ambitious goals (p. 1001). This separation of oil and climate policy is clearly evident in the data material, where the construction of Norway as a big petroleum producing country, or the signs of role conception as a petroleum producer were few. This decoupling is further made possible by global carbon markets – entailing an emission trading and a price of carbon – which makes it possible for Norway to export oil and gas, and still meet its emission targets by buying credits (Sæverud & Wettestad, 2006: 94), which provides an explanation for the strong support of this mechanism found in the data material.

The established accounting system thus allows Norway to keep the identity as a big petroleum producing country, and the role as a petroleum producer largely out of the negotiation texts, thereby avoiding potential cognitive dissonance caused by the tensions between this role and the adopted role as a climate leader. In the few instances where reference was made to the nation inhabiting a role conception as a petroleum producer, it was represented in an opportunistic way, as a factor which has given the country the chance to be a policy entrepreneur and a frontrunner when it came to the development of environmentally friendly technologies such as CCS. The cognitive dissonance was however more prominent in the interviews with the informants. A potential reason for this could be that they in this context were directly confronted with questions about Norway as a petroleum producer, as opposed to within the context of the UNFCCC negotiations, where this was not something the nation “needed to talk about”. In this case, the informants made discursive effort to make the two roles compatible, drawing on the “small” storyline and using other petroleum producing



nations to construct itself as an “ambitious” petroleum producer, thereby aligning this role with the role as a climate leader.

In this study confirmation has been found of the assumed expectation for Norway – as a developed nation - to internalize the identity as an ecological state and adopt the role as a climate leader, which were found by Eckersley (2016). In this regard, a hypothesis was posed suggesting that framing environmental policies through core state imperatives which has emerged over the evolution of the state, such as economic growth or modernization would serve as a necessary foundation for adopting the role as a climate leader (p. 181). This can be said to resonate with the findings in the data material, where Norway draws on an ecological modernization discourse and an economic discourse to promote solutions to climate change, which were all linked to the nation’s role-adoption as a climate leader or a frontrunner. Through the promotion – and support - of these solutions Norway is able to perform the role as a climate leader, simultaneously as the nation can continue its production and export of oil, which is legitimized through a focus on meeting the energy demand in developing countries while assisting them in the transition to low-carbon economies.

## 7 Conclusion

In this thesis I have explored how Norway’s national identity discourse and role-adoption has impacted the behavior and approach of the country within the context of international climate politics, more specifically in the negotiations held in conjunction to the UNFCCC, during the decade leading up to the international Paris Agreement in 2015. This overarching research question was answered through three subsidiary questions which were addressed chronologically in the three chapters of the analysis. Through conducting a discourse analysis of submissions and statements made on behalf of Norway to the negotiations - as well as interviews with Norwegian representatives - I searched for prominent representations and narratives.

The theoretical basis for the thesis entailed an overarching theory of discourse which included the primary assumptions of discourses as preconditions for action, with the power to shape the overarching understanding of a phenomenon, and thereby deciding the range of actions and solutions regarded as appropriate to address it. Additionally, national identity was introduced

as a discursive concept, constructed relationally through representations and narratives by actors within specific contexts. The national identity discourse of a country was further assumed to contribute to shape the roles thought of as suitable for the nation to adopt, and along with expectations stemming from the external environment, these factors were regarded as a foundation for the policy behavior and approach of Norway in international climate politics.

In the first chapter of the analysis the identities used to construct Norway within the context of the UNFCCC were explored, and the findings from the submissions and statements indicated that the nation was mainly represented as a developed, Annex I country, an Umbrella Group country, a country strongly concerned with the consequences of climate change and a cooperative country. The transcripts revealed three additional identities, in which Norway was represented as a unique, trustworthy and neutral nation. The nation was also – although less consistently - constructed as a big petroleum producing country by the informants. The nature of these identities was discussed, and it was highlighted that the identities as a developed, Annex I country and as an Umbrella Country were prescribed to Norway within the context of the UNFCCC, whereas the remaining identities were more self-selected. In this regard, it was explored to what degree the nation seemed to embrace or try distance itself from the prescribed identities.

It was discovered that the nation constructed itself as relationally different from the countries in the Umbrella Group, with the use of the binary opposition and storyline “small”. With this storyline, the preferred identity discourse of Norway as a cooperative, trustworthy and neutral nation were evoked. This served to distance the nation from the “big” countries, which were prescribed personality traits such as “rich”, “powerful”, “self-interested”, “laggards”, and “troublemakers”. It was also discussed whether the efforts to discursively distance itself from the other countries belonging to the same coalition group could be seen as a sign of an identity crisis in relation to Norway in the climate negotiations. In this regard, it was illustrated how the “small” storyline was drawn upon by the informants when referencing Norway as a “big petroleum producing country”. In this instance, it was stressed how Norway could be a big petroleum producing country, and still be a trustworthy and neutral nation, making it appear as if these identities were originally contrasting in nature, resonating with earlier research contributions regarding “the Norwegian paradox” (Eckersley, 2016) (Gloppen & Rakner, 2015) (Jensen, 2016).

The analysis in the second chapter was built on the findings in the first chapter to explore which roles Norway adopted and performed in the UNFCCC negotiations, with a focus on how these roles were linked to the nation's identity discourse, as well as to role prescriptions stemming from the external environment. In this regard, four role conceptions were discovered in the documents, positioning Norway as a climate leader, a generous aid-giver, a policy entrepreneur and – to a more inconsistent degree – a petroleum producer. Additionally, signs were found for the assumed role as a bridge-builder in the interview transcripts. The role as a climate leader was linked to a role-prescription put on developed nations under the Kyoto Protocol to take the lead in combating climate change, but it was also revealed that Norway seemed to view itself as responsible for taking a lead within international climate politics regardless of this prescribed identity. The role performance as a climate leader was primarily linked to setting ambitious targets in the negotiations, as well as to encourage other nations to raise their ambition.

A role prescription was also found in relation to the position as a policy entrepreneur, in the form of an expectation put on developed nations by the Kyoto Protocol to devote resources to the development and implementation of environmentally friendly technologies and measures. Norway primarily performed the role as a policy entrepreneur through the promotion of technologies such as CCS and carbon markets. Additionally, the nation performed the role as a generous aid-giver by pledging substantial forms of support to various causes in the negotiations. The primary form of aid pledged was in the form of economic funds, with the most generous amounts devoted to REDD+, aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation. Aid was also provided in the form of knowledge and information, primarily regarding Norway's experiences when it came to the CCS technology, which served to position the nation as an experienced actor, resonating with roles as a technological pioneer and a manager of knowledge found in earlier research (Leira et al., 2007) (Eckersley, 2013).

The signs of the role conception as a bridge-builder – which was found only in the transcripts – were explained as primarily performed through representatives of the nation taking on chair positions in the negotiations, which placed them in a unique position to work for agreements among parties. This was linked to Norway's identity as a trustworthy and neutral nation, which made the nation recognized as uniquely equipped for this task. The role conception as a petroleum producer was the least consistent discovery in this chapter and was – when mentioned – framed in an opportunistic way, as a position which made the role as a policy

entrepreneur suitable for the nation to adopt and perform. In the transcripts one could see signs of the potential tension between the roles as a petroleum producer and a climate leader, as it was stressed how the nation could be a big petroleum producer, and still be ambitious in the negotiations. In this regard, Australia was used as the “other” in which Norway was constructed as an ambitious petroleum producer.

In the third – and final – chapter of the analysis I explored what kind of – and which specific solutions were promoted by Norway in the negotiations, and how these related to the nation’s national identity discourse and role-adoption within this context. Initially, a biophysical understanding of climate change was found in the data material, which were confirmed in the strong promotion of solutions grounded in earth-system science such as the IPCC reports. Three primary types of solutions were consistently promoted by Norway during the decade leading up to the Paris Agreement, these being global, technological, and cost-effective in nature, resonating with earlier discoveries of economic and ecological modernization discourses relating to Norway in climate politics (Tønnessen, 1997) (Hovden & Lindseth, 2004).

The most consistent solutions fronted in this regard were that of a global carbon market – entailing a price on carbon and an emission trading system – CCS and REDD+, which were linked to Norway’s role conceptions as a policy entrepreneur, a generous aid giver, as well as the overarching roles of a climate leader and a frontrunner. They were however also linked to the role as a petroleum producer. Through a focus on meeting the energy demand in developing nations, the promotion of a global carbon market and CCS allowed the nation to act as a climate leader, while still producing and exporting oil and gas. The establishment of an emission accounting system helped contribute to this, as Norway is only held accountable for their domestic emissions. As it is difficult for the nation to commit to ambitious emission reductions on a national scale due to its petroleum production, REDD+ can be seen as a cause in which Norway positions itself as an ambitious climate devoted to reducing emissions on a global scale.

The establishment of an emission accounting system was linked to a “decoupling” of oil and climate policy, which served as a potential explanation as to why the identity as a big petroleum producing nation, and the role as a petroleum producer were so inconsistently fronted in the data material. This separation allowed Norway to avoid cognitive dissonance as a result of the tensions between these two roles, by “not needing to talk about” their role as a

petroleum producer in the negotiations. There was, however, more sign of cognitive dissonance in the interview transcripts, with a potential explanation being that in this context the informants were confronted with questions regarding Norway as a petroleum producer. To manage and resolve these tensions, the informants made discursive effort to align the role as a petroleum producer with the preferred national identity discourse of Norway, drawing on the “small” storyline and narrating Norway as an “ambitious petroleum producer” by the use of other countries in which it constructed itself as different from.

The study of discourses is – as previously stated – important to study because of their power to uphold a specific status quo (Hajer, 1995: 55), and to determine the range of actions and solutions regarded as appropriate to address a social phenomenon. By identifying these discourses, and “bringing them into the light”, one opens them up for discussion (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999: 165). In this study I have explored the national identity discourse of Norway in international climate politics, and how the construction of the nation contributed to lay an initial foundation for role-adoption, and the following behavior and approach of the country leading up to the signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015. In a world where the impacts of climate change already affect the lives of millions, it is important to be aware of the social processes that lies behind the considerations of potential solutions to the environmental problem. In this regard theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches within the social sciences are well equipped to explore these social processes. Sociology – a field found to be lagging behind the rest of the social sciences in the exploration of processes relating to climate change – has the unique capacity to uncover the constructed nature of belief systems relating to climate change, and how these systems are “used to sustain particular interests and limit the range of policy options” to address the issue (Dunlap & Brulle, 2015, p. 32). This thesis should therefore be regarded as an encouragement to further research on this important topic by the use of sociological approaches and theoretical frameworks.

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**Word Count\*:** 34036

\*References, appendices, abstract, abbreviations, acknowledgements and table of contents excluded.

## 9 Appendices

### 9.1 Appendix A: Codebook

#### Codebook Master Thesis

Codes are listed in the order they are introduced in the analysis chapters. All codes include description, reflections around origin and reasoning for their importance for the study, as well as an example of a segment where the code can be applied. For some codes – when deemed necessary to avoid confusion around the appliance, origin, or importance of the code – a counterexample and an additional reflection of the code are included.

#### Analysis, Chapter 1: Norway's national identity discourse in the UNFCCC negotiations

##### **Norway as an individual**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway constructs itself as an individual in the negotiations. It does not apply to segments where the term “Norwegian” or “Norway” is used, without the nation being narrated as a homogeneous entity capable of expressing feelings.

Origin: The background of the code is deductive and is derived from the literature on national identity, which states that the narration of the nation as an individual is crucial for the discursive construction of it. However, the focus on the construction of the nation as capable of expressing feelings is an inductive aspect of the code.

Importance: This code is relevant for the study, more precisely for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations.

##### Example:

- «Norway is mindful that adaptation policies and measures are highly contextual and will be shaped differently from country to country. Any further commitment to adapt must therefore be based on generic principles» (Submission to the ADP – Workstream 1 (2)).

##### Counterexample:

- “Carbon capture and storage is an integral part of the Norwegian mitigation strategy. The Norwegian government’s strategy for implementing carbon capture and storage technologies has been to introduce a combination of means such as financial support and regulation (requirements in permits)” (Submission to the AWG-LCA 4).

### **A Developed, Annex I Country**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) constructs the nation as a “Developed Country” or as an “Annex I country”, through narratives and representations. It does not apply to segments where the term “developed nation” or “Annex I country” is used without reference to Norway.

Origin: The background of the code is deductive and is derived from the literature on national identity. It builds on the relational premise of an identity, where one differentiates between the “self” and the “other”. The code “Developed, Annex I Country” also stems from the initial reading of contributions regarding Norway in international climate politics.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations. It will help me uncover the identities used in the negotiations to construct Norway as a nation. It will also help illuminate who the “other” is in this context.

#### Example:

- «In the context of a global ambitious agreement where developed countries undertake substantial commitments, Norway intends to cut global emissions equivalent to 100 percent of its own emissions, becoming a carbon neutral nation within 2030” (Submission to the AWG-LCA 1).
- Norway is committed to achieving positive results in this process to continue to take the lead together with other Annex I Parties in reducing global emissions, and to ensure that a new global framework succeeds the Kyoto regime without a gap (Submission to the AWG-KP 6).

#### Counterexample:

- “The suggestions and views put forward here do not prejudice outcomes for the Kyoto Protocol. They can be the starting point for a new legally binding agreement capturing targets and actions, whether in parallel to the Kyoto Protocol or as a single treaty for Parties with mitigation targets and actions, both developed and developing” (Submission to the AWG-LCA 14).

- “To ensure credibility Norway finds it particularly important to establish an independent verification system for reported emissions reductions as well as defined reference levels. We believe that a verification mechanism for REDD should be similar to the expert review system that Annex I countries have established under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol and in decision 19/CP.8 on inventory review guidelines under the UNFCCC” (Submission to the AWG-LCA 4).

### **An Umbrella Group Country**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) constructs the nation as a “An Umbrella Group Country”, through narratives and representations. This code also includes the statements given on behalf of the coalition group. It does however not include the submissions made together with only some of the countries in the coalition group.

Origin: The background of the code is deductive and is derived from the literature on national identity. It builds on the relational premise of an identity, where one differentiates between the “self” and the “other”. The code “Umrella Group Country” also stems from the initial reading of earlier contributions regarding Norway in international climate politics.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations. It will help me uncover the identities used in the negotiations to construct Norway as a nation. It will also help illuminate who the “other” is in this context.

#### Example:

- «We’re not in the EU, we’re in the Umbrella Group, but we are a small country in the Umbrella Group so we’re easy to ask to do certain tasks» (Interview 3 – transcript).
- “So we sit with them every morning, if we weren’t in the Umbrella Group we would have to coordinate with the environmental integrity group, which is Switzerland, Lichtenstein and Mexico, Korea, Georgia. So it’s a smaller group, smaller countries. Less access to information. So we sit with powerful guys, and we can’t coordinate with the EU, because EU won’t let us” (Interview 3 – transcript).

#### Counterexample:

- “Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, and the United States are pleased to make this submission on the costs, benefits and opportunities for adaptation under different drivers of climate change impacts, including the relationship between adaptation and

mitigation under ADP workstream 1, as invited in FCCC/ADP/2013/L.2.”

(Submission to the ADP – Workstream 1).

Reflection: In the starting phase of the coding process, I included the submissions where Norway submitted together with some of the other members of the Umbrella Group. As I went back to adjust this code, I only considered segments where Norway (or the representatives) referred to itself as part of “The Umbrella Group” and segments where The Umbrella Group spoke on behalf of Norway.

### **A country concerned for climate change, and its consequences:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) represents or narrates the country as a nation that acknowledges climate change as a “dangerous”, “urgent” or “important” issue. The code can also be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) references to climate change as a highly important/time pressing issue, with damaging consequences.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway’s national identity in international climate politics, where it has been claimed that the Norwegian discourse acknowledges climate change as a serious threat.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities that Norway constructs in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- “Climate change is one of the most important global issues facing us today. Norway recognizes “that climate change is a serious challenge that has the potential to affect every part of the globe” (FCCC/CP/2005/L.4/Rev.1) and notes with concern recent scientific reports on the increasing urgency of the problem we face” (Submission to the COP 11 (2)).

### **Concerned for the unequal consequences of climate change:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) represents or narrates the country as a nation concerned with the unequal consequences of climate change.

Origin: Inductive. This code was applied after the start of the coding process.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities that Norway uses to construct itself in the international negotiations. It’s related to the code “A country concerned with climate change, and its consequences”.



Example:

- “Further, The IPCC Special Report “Managing the risks of extreme events and disasters to advance climate change adaptation” confirms that the poorest and most marginalized people are the most vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate. Norway considers that all countries have an obligation to protect and give priority to these people in their respective adaptation policies and planning processes, including in national budgeting. A new agreement should seek to underpin this responsibility” (Submission to the ADP, 2013).

**Norway referencing to science:**

Description: This code applies to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) references to science in the texts. An additional focus is put on the way scientific reference is used to underpin the nation’s concern for climate change and climate inequality, as well as how it is used to highlight issues the nation considers important in the negotiations.

Origin: Deductive/ inductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway’s national identity in international climate politics, where it is claimed that the Norwegian discourse views climate science as authoritative. The additional focus as to how science is used to construct the nation’s identity is however an inductive aspect of the code.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities that Norway uses to construct itself in the international negotiations.

Example:

- “We need to operationalize the goal of limiting global warming to not more than 2 degrees. According to the IPCC fourth assessment report, a global emission reduction of 50 to 85% by 2050 is necessary” (Norway, Opening statement Bonn, 2010).

**Norway as a cooperative country:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) represents or narrates Norway as a cooperative country in the negotiations through, for an example, segments where clear support is shown for cooperation. It does not apply to segments in the negotiations where Norway simply uses the term “cooperation”, without constructing themselves as cooperative.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway’s national identity in international politics, where one of the identities that has been consistently uncovered is that of Norway as “a cooperative country”.

Importance: This code is relevant for the study, more precisely for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities that Norway uses to construct itself in the international negotiations.

Example:

- “We are dependent on international cooperation. We are a small, open economy, which means that we as a country in many areas seek international cooperation. Which means that we are eager to get solutions on the table. So, I think that is a big strength for Norway, that we have this sort of backbone in the international cooperation, and we depend on international solutions in many, many areas, including on climate change» (Interview 1 – transcript).
- «In order to effectively address global climate change, we need to ensure “the widest possible cooperation and participation in an effective and appropriate international response”. The Dialogue must be guided by this overall aim (Submission to the COP 11(2))”.

### **A Large Emitting Country**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) constructs the nation as a “Large Emitting Country”, through narratives and representations.

Origin: The background of the code is deductive and is derived from the literature on national identity. It builds on the relational premise of an identity, where one differentiates between the “self” and the “other”. The code “Major Emitting Party” is inductive, and stems from coding the data material.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations. It will help me uncover the identities used in the negotiations to construct Norway as a nation. It will also help illuminate who the “other” is in this context.

Example:

- “Norway’s emission reduction target for 2020 is an emission reduction of 30%, as stated in our letter of association with the Copenhagen Accord. As part of a global and comprehensive agreement for the period beyond 2012 where major emitting Parties agree on emission reductions in line with the 2 degrees Celsius target, Norway will move to a level of 40 per cent reduction for 2020 based on 1990 levels (Submission to the AWG-LCA 15).

### **Norway as a small, and therefore unique:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) represents or narrates the nation as a “small country” in the texts. It does not apply to segments in the negotiations where the term “small country” is used, without it being connected to Norway as a nation. There will be a focus on how – by the narration of Norway as small – the country is constructed as unique in the negotiations.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding national identity, where one of the consistent identities found was that of Norway as a small country.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- “We are a small country so we want to strengthen international cooperation, we want to strengthen the UN, and we want to be seen as kind of a force for good in the world. So I think all of those things very much played a role” (Interview 2 – transcript).

Reflection: The focus on how Norway was constructed as a unique country through the narration of it as being “small” became a focus point in the analysis after the coding process had started. This is as such an inductive aspect of the code.

### **Norway as placed outside the EU, and therefore unique:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) references to Norway being a nation in a unique position, with regards to being placed outside the EU.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding national identity, where one of the consistent identities found was that of Norway as an outsider country in international politics, and therefore unique or exceptional.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identity discourse that Norway constructs in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- «We’ve always taken specific roles, and we’ve... we’re situated in a place where it’s easier to ask us to do particular things, and normally Norwegian ministers are asked to chair difficult issues in the negotiations, because we’re between the EU and the .... some other western countries when it comes to placements” (Interview 3 – transcript).

### **Norway as a neutral country:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) narrated or represents the nation as a neutral country in the negotiations.

Origin: Inductive. This code was added to the codebook after the start of the coding process.

Importance: This code is relevant for the study, more precisely for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities that Norway uses to construct itself in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- First of all, Norway is seen as a quite neutral country. We do not have very ...sort of...to much self-interest» (Interview 1 – transcript).

### **Norway as a trustworthy country:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) represents or narrates the nation as “trusted” or “trustworthy” in the negotiations.

Origin: Inductive. This code was added to the codebook after the start of the coding process.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities used to construct Norway in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- As well... they notice that we're a small country... we depend on the UN, and that kind of builds trust (Interview 3 – transcript).

### **A petroleum producing country:**

Description: This code is to be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) constructs the nation as a petroleum producing country.

Origin: This code is deductive and stems from earlier research regarding Norway's national identity in international climate politics, where it has been claimed that Norway within this context inhabits the identity as an oil nation.

Importance: This code is relevant for the first chapter in the analysis, where I explore the national identities used to construct Norway in the international negotiations.

#### Example:

- But it means also that.... even if we are again a big petroleum producing country, even Greenpeace or WWF or others, they are still viewing us as quite neutral and quite factual in the negotiations (Interview 4 – transcript).

## Analysis, Chapter 2: Norway's role-taking in the UNFCCC negotiations

### **Climate leader:**

Description: This code is to be applied to segments which suggest the existence of role conception, role prescription, or role performance of Norway as a climate leader in the texts. It can also be applied to segments where strong support is shown to ambition and ambitious outcomes in the negotiations.

Origin: Deductive/ inductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway's role conception, role prescriptions, and role performance in international climate politics, where it has been claimed that Norway takes on the role as a leader. The additional focus on "ambition" is an inductive aspect of the code.

Importance: Relevant to the second chapter of the analysis, where Norway's role conception and role performance in the UNFCCC negotiations are explored.

### Example:

- "An ambitious outcome also means finding ways to reflect differentiation that are consistent with modern day realities, and incentivise all Parties to contribute to this global effort. We cannot get where we need to go, by doing what we have always done. As developed countries, we will continue to lead. But others with high capacity must join us. And all countries should progress in the same direction over time" (Umbrella Group closing statement, 2015).

Counterexample: The following could mistakenly be considered an example of this code, as Norway states that it will remain a "champion", which is linked to being a "winner", and being someone who is "in the lead". It is however not clarified here that the nation sees itself as a leader in the negotiations, nor is it clarified that the nation takes on more than is demanded of them in this segment, which is related to climate finance:

- «Norway will remain a champion of approaches where support is linked to verified achievement of climate results, in particular emission reductions. Climate finance flows must be linked to concrete mitigation and adaptation action so as to deliver effective results with crucial development gains » (Submission to the COP 20).

**Generous aid-giver:**

Description: To be applied to segments which suggest there exists a role conception, role prescription, and role performance for Norway to be a generous aid-giver in the negotiations. This code includes segments where it is made clear that Norway pledges different types of aid, and that these commitments have been met.

Origin: Deductive/ Inductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway's role conception and role performance in international climate politics, where it is claimed that the country inhabits the role as a "generous economic contributor" in the negotiations. However, the focus of the code was expanded to also consider segments where Norway pledged other types of support than economic, such as knowledge and information.

Importance: Relevant to the second chapter of the analysis, where Norway's role conception and role performance in the UNFCCC negotiations are explored.

Example:

- "Efforts by developing countries should be supported and enabled by technology and substantial financial support and capacity-building from developed countries in a reliable and predictable manner, and in accordance with the national circumstances and capability of the receiving countries" (Submission to the AWG-LCA 4)

**Policy entrepreneur:**

Description: This code is to be applied to segments which suggest the existence of a role conception or role prescription related to Norway being a "pitcher of solutions" in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway's role-conception and role performance in international climate politics, where it has been claimed that Norway takes on the role as a policy entrepreneur in the negotiations.

Importance: Relevant to the second chapter of the analysis, where Norway's role conception and role performance in the UNFCCC negotiations are explored.

Example:

- With its large potential for reduction in CO2 emissions, Norway considers a broad implementation of CCS technologies as an important, new option in a global strategy to achieve the long term goal of the Convention. Establishing a safe and sound framework for the implementation of CCS projects under the CDM could give an important contribution to a broader dissemination of such technologies (Submission to the SBSTA 27).

**Petroleum producer:**

Description: This code will be applied to segments where it becomes clear there exists a role conception, role prescription of Norway as a petroleum producer, and segments where role-performance on the basis of being a petroleum-producer is prominent. The code does not apply to segments where other countries are referenced to as petroleum producers.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway's role-conception in international climate politics.

Importance: This code is relevant for the study, more precisely for the second chapter of the analysis, where I explore the roles that Norway seems to inhabit/ have taken on in the negotiations.

**Example:**

- “Due to its large mitigation potential, Norway has prioritized the development of carbon capture and storage as a mitigation option. As a petroleum producer Norway strives to reduce the emissions from the production and refining of petroleum. The carbon capture and storage projects already in operation, the Sleipner and Snøhvit projects, and the approved Gudrun project, are in the petroleum sector” (Submission to the ADP-Workstream 2(2)).
- Yeah, there was a lot of discussions about CCS especially, whether it could be used for carbon trading. So I think that was the clearest example in that period of time of Norway taking a specific position and being quite strong on that because of its role as an oil producer (Interview 2 – transcript).

**Bridge-builder:**

Description: To be applied to segments which suggest the existence of a role conception, role prescription, or role performance for Norway to be a bridge-builder (working for the agreement between countries and parties) in the texts. The code also applies to segments where Norway emphasizes the importance of – or shows strong support to - finding common ground between parties in the negotiations. It does not apply to segments where Norway shows support for international collaboration. Segments where it is implied that Norway inhabits chair-positions are also to be included under this code, as this can be seen as a way of performing the role as a bridge-builder.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding Norway's role conception and role performance in international climate politics, where it is claimed that Norway inhabits the role

as a “bridge-builder” in the negotiations, and that this is linked to the nation taking on chair positions.

Importance: Relevant to the second chapter of the analysis, where Norway’s role conception and role prescriptions in the UNFCCC negotiations are explored.

Example:

- “... A benefit we have is that we also use a lot of facilitators, which gives us of course a unique position to find middle ground, because that is obviously the role of a facilitator, that talk is indeed ... come to an agreement on issues. So I think that the way that we are both seen in the world, and the way we act in the world is a asset that gives us a position to find solutions to which parties indeed can agree (interview transcript – 1).
- «And also... it’s important also that you know... you won’t see that from the documents... that there have been lot of Norwegians having specific roles within the UNFCCC, as like chairs or leading the negotiations and so on” (Interview 4 – transcript).

### Analysis, Chapter 3: Norway’s approach in the UNFCCC negotiations

#### **A global effort:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses support for “a global effort” in the texts.

Origin: Inductive. Was implemented after the coding process started on the basis of this code showed up frequently in the texts.

Importance: Relevant for the third chapter in my analysis, where I explore what type of – and which specific – solutions that seems available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- We believe that the general concept for mitigation in the 2015 agreement should be: o Commitments for all Parties to limit and reduce GHG emissions o Governed by common multilateral rules, with appropriate flexibility for implementation o Differentiated according to national circumstances o Contributing to the global effort (Submission to the ADP, 2014).



**Global strategies/ measures/ solutions:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support towards global strategies/ measures/ solutions in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Is derived from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, where a “thinking globally” discourse was uncovered.

Importance: Relevant for the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what type of – and which specific – solutions that seems available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- And emission wise, of course when we can work internationally and cooperate on emission reductions, we can do more. We can set more ambitious targets. So, for us market approaches indeed is a way of making sure that we can be as ambitious as possible (Interview 1 – transcript).

**Technological solutions:**

Description: To be applied when Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support for technological solutions in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Derived from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, where a biophysical, and an ecological modernization (thinking globally) discourse was uncovered.

Importance: This code is relevant for the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what kind of – and which specific – solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- The most important condition to facilitate an increase in the development and implementation of climate friendly technologies is to give polluters economic incentives to mitigation. This can be done efficiently by introducing a price of carbon, either through a tax or a system of cap-and-trade (Submission to the AWG-LCA 5).

**Win-win solutions/ Cost-effective solutions:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support towards win-win solutions or cost-effective solutions in the texts.

Origin: Deductive/ Inductive. Stems from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, where a biophysical, and an ecological modernization

(thinking globally) discourse was uncovered. The focus on cost-effective solutions as synonymous with win-win solutions is an inductive aspect of the code.

Importance: Relevant for the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what kind of – and which specific – solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- Deep cuts in global emissions are necessary to avoid dangerous climate change. Information about greenhouse gas emissions and removals, GHG categories and emission trends worldwide is essential to be able to implement the most efficient tools and measures to reduce emissions globally, including identifying actions that reduce both emissions and costs at the same time, so called win-win solutions (Submission to the AWG-LCA 5).

### **A global carbon market:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support for the implementation and development of a global carbon market in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, and how solutions are linked to the nation's identity discourse and role-taking within this context.

Importance: Relevant to the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what kind of – and which specific – solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- Include the use of carbon markets • The agreement should allow Parties to use international carbon credits to meet their commitments, under conditions that ensure no double claiming, real emission reductions and sound governance. • Carbon markets can also be an effective instrument for providing international support to countries with limited capabilities (Submission to the ADP).

### **CCS:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support towards the implementation and development of Carbon Capture and Storage in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, and how solutions are linked to the nation's identity discourse and role-taking within this context.

Importance: Relevant to the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what kind of – and which specific – solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- And it's true that we have been one of the few countries that have consistently pointed out this, that CCS needs to be part of this solution. It goes a little bit against technology neutral approach that we always have preached... but it has been so difficult to get recognition for CCS as a climate mitigation effort, that we chose to do it anyway. Because you kind of need some champions sometimes that stands firmly and for many years (Interview 4 – transcripts).

### **REDD+, and general deforestation/ land use change emission reductions:**

Description: To be applied to segments where Norway (or representatives on behalf of Norway) expresses clear support towards the implementation and development of the REDD+ mechanism, and towards reducing emissions from deforestation and land use change (LULUCF) in the texts.

Origin: Deductive. Stems from earlier research regarding the approach of Norway in international climate politics, and how solutions are linked to the nation's identity discourse and role-taking within this context.

Importance: Relevant to the third chapter of the analysis, where I explore what kind of – and which specific – solutions seemed available to Norway in the negotiations.

Example:

- The new agreement must build on the structures and decisions already made. In particular, the future mitigation potential from reduced deforestation must be captured. It is important to continue to develop an international REDD+ mechanism in a way that allows it to be integrated in the new agreement (Submission to the ADP 1).

## 9.2 Appendix B: Information – and consent form

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet:  
***“Split identity? – A Discourse Analysis of Norway’s  
Engagement in the International Negotiations leading up to  
the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2005 – 2015)”***

Dette er en forespørsel til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å innhente informasjon om Norges rolle og deltakelse i internasjonale klimaforhandlinger. I dette skrivet gir jeg deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

### **Formål**

Formålet med prosjektet er å utforske hvordan Norge balanserte rollen som klimaleder og petroleumsprodusent i internasjonale klimaforhandlinger i tidsperioden mellom 2005 – 2015.

For å gjøre dette tenker jeg å utføre en tekstanalyse (kritisk diskursanalyse) av bidrag og uttalelser som ble sendt inn av Norge til forhandlingene i tilknytning til FN sin klimakonvensjon i denne tidsperioden. I tillegg ønsker jeg å gjennomføre et fåtall intervjuer for å samle inn ytterligere informasjon fra personer som har vært til stede under disse forhandlingene.

*Jeg ønsker å gjennomføre intervjuene på engelsk (med mindre du ikke er komfortabel med dette). Bidragene og uttalelsene som skal analyseres er sendt inn på engelsk, og ettersom en diskursanalyse sentrerer seg rundt bruken av – og meningen bak ord, virket det da som et naturlig valg å skrive studien på dette språket for å sikre at denne meningen ikke gikk tapt i oversettelsen. Ettersom engelsk også er språket som blir brukt i forhandlingsmøtene har antakelig også mye av arbeidet rundt foregått på dette språket, noe som forhåpentligvis medfører at det virker naturlig for deg å snakke om disse temaene på engelsk. Hvis ikke er jeg åpen for å avholde intervjuet på norsk, for deretter å oversette transkripsjonen (så direkte som det lar seg gjøre) til engelsk for bruk i studien.*

Studiens forskningsspørsmål er følgende:

- Hvordan balanserer Norge rollen som klimaleder og rollen som petroleumsprodusent i internasjonale klimaforhandlinger?

Forskningsprosjektet er en masteroppgave i tilknytning masterprogrammet i Sosiologi ved Universitetet i Oslo.

### **Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?**

Universitetet i Oslo – institutt for sosiologi og samfunnsgeografi er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

### **Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?**

Du har fått forespørsel om å delta i denne studien på bakgrunn av din deltakelse/ tilstedeværelse under forhandlinger i tilknytning FN sin klimakonvensjon i tidsperioden 2005-2015. Informasjonen som gjelder din deltakelse i disse forhandlingene, har blitt innhentet fra offentlig publiserte dokumenter på FN (UNFCCC) sine nettsider.

Planen er å intervju ca. 5 personer med erfaring fra disse forhandlingene, for å innhente kunnskap og informasjon omhandlende Norge sin deltakelse i internasjonal klimapolitikk i denne tidsperioden.

### **Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?**

Metoden som brukes i denne studien er hovedsakelig tekstanalyse (kritisk diskursanalyse), med intervju som supplement metode. Intervjuene kommer til å være semi strukturerte, og vil baseres rundt din deltakelse i forhandlingene i tilknytning Klimakonvensjonen.

Det er forventet at intervjuene kommer til å vare i underkant av en time. Med din tillatelse vil det bli tatt lydopptak av intervjuet, for å sikre at den endelige transkripsjonen reflekterer den innhentede informasjonen på en helhetlig og nøyaktig måte.

### **Det er frivillig å delta**

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

### **Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger**

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- *Kun student (Thea Hoff Gulbrandsen), samt hoved – og biveileder (Manjana Milkoreit og John Nathaniel Parker ved institutt for sosiologi – og samfunnsgeografi ved Universitetet i Oslo) vil ha tilgang til de innsamlede opplysningene.*
- *For å sikre dine personopplysninger kommer navn, e-postadresse, samt eventuelt telefonnummer til å anonymiseres fortløpende, ved at de erstattes med en kode som lagres sikkert ved bruk av Lagringshotell (Sikker ekstern tjeneste for lagring av data i tilknytning Universitetet i Oslo). Lydopptak av intervjuet kommer til å utføres og lagres ved hjelp av Nettskjema – diktafon (tjeneste i tilknytning Universitetet i Oslo), som gjør at opptaket umiddelbart krypteres, og kun kan lyttes til inne på Nettskjema tjenesten.*

*Deltakerne i denne studien vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i den endelige utgaven av denne studien. De vil bli referert til som f.eks: «en ansatt ved et departement som var til stede under følgende klimaforhandling på vegne av Norge», eller «en deltaker på vegne av Norge i følgende klimaforhandling».*

### **Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?**

Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 25.mai 2022 (25/05/2022). Personopplysninger omskrives og lydopptak slettes ved prosjektslutt.

### **Dine rettigheter**

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg, og
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

## Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra Institutt for sosiologi – og samfunnsgeografi ved Universitetet i Oslo har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

## Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

Prosjektansvarlig/ forsker:

- Thea Hoff Gulbrandsen, Student på masterprogrammet i Sosiologi ved institutt for sosiologi – og samfunnsgeografi, Universitetet i Oslo. E-post: [theahg@student.sv.uio.no](mailto:theahg@student.sv.uio.no) / Mobilnummer: +47 46921470

Hovedveileder:

- Manjana Milkoreit, Postdoktor ved Institutt for sosiologi – og samfunnsgeografi, Universitetet i Oslo. E-post: [manjana.milkoreit@sosgeo.uio.no](mailto:manjana.milkoreit@sosgeo.uio.no)

Biveileder:

- John Nathaniel Parker, Førsteamanuensis ved institutt for sosiologi – og samfunnsgeografi, Universitetet i Oslo. E-post: [j.n.parker@sosgeo.uio.no](mailto:j.n.parker@sosgeo.uio.no)

Universitetet i Oslo sitt personvernombud: E-post: [personvernombud@uio.no](mailto:personvernombud@uio.no)

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til NSD sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på epost ([personverntjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personverntjenester@nsd.no)) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

*Thea Hoff Gulbrandsen*

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## Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «*Split Identity?*», og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- Å delta i intervju

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

### 9.3 Appendix C: Interview guide

#### **First theme: Informants own participation in the negotiations**

Opening questions to start conversation:

1. Which experiences do you have in relation to the UNFCCC climate negotiations?
  - a. How many years did you attend, and which negotiations were you a part of?
  - b. Which themes did the negotiations you participated in revolve around?
  - c. What was your role in these negotiations? What responsibilities did you have?

#### **Second theme: Norway's national identity and role in the climate negotiations**

1. Which roles do you think Norway had or purposefully took on in the negotiations you attended?
  - a. Was there a strategy for how Norway should act or conduct itself in the negotiations? What was the goal for the delegation/ ministry you were a part of in the negotiations? What were you working for?
  - b. What do you think other countries thought Norway's role was or should have been in the negotiations?
2. Do you think there were dimensions of Norwegian national identity that shaped the countries behavior/ approach in the negotiations?
3. Did you get the impression that there were certain views, themes or goals that it was important for Norway to highlight and/ or work for in the negotiations you participated in?
  - a. Did Norway typically present these views alone or as a part of for an example The Umbrella Group?
  - b. Did these views/ themes/ goals change much during the time when you participated in the negotiations? Ask more generally about the decade. They can have followed the negotiations for a long time even though they didn't physically attend the meetings.

### **Third theme: The Norwegian Paradox**

*Only bring up if it hasn't come up naturally under the last two themes.*

1. How does Norway relate to the fact that they are a relatively large petroleum producer in these negotiations? Is it a theme/dilemma that often comes up?
  - a. How did that fact effect your own work? What was your perceptions of Norway's role vs other countries perceptions? What do you think that other countries thought that Norway's role was or should be?
  - b. How has the fact that Norway is a petroleum nation affected your work?
  - c. How has it shaped Norway's negotiation goals and strategies vs how has it affected your relationship to other negotiation participants?
  - d. How did you balance this role with the other roles you mentioned?