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**Declaration**

I, Camilla Skar, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

**Date.....**

## **Acknowledgements**

The process of writing this master thesis has been challenging, but also a great source of learning. I would like to thank my supervisor Elana Wilson Rowe for all help and guidance. I really appreciate your patience and effort. I would also like to thank my former supervisor John Andrew McNeish for his help earlier in the process. To all my interviewees; thank you for sharing your knowledge and perspectives with me. I also owe great thanks to those who have helped me babysit my daughter, allowing me to free time to work on my thesis. Finally, I would like to thank my daughter Leona for putting up with a busy mother these last few weeks.

Oslo May 5th 2012

Camilla Skar

## **Abstract**

REDD+ is perceived to be the among the most appropriate measures available for the collective effort to reduce global emissions, due to expectations of cost-efficiency, quick reductions of emissions, and multiple benefits. The NICFI is intended to be Norway's contribution to REDD+, with the common goal of stabilizing global temperatures. This thesis seeks to assess the process that lead to the NICFI, and to investigate possible motivations for this policy. At the time prior to the initiation of the NICFI, REDD+ increased in importance internationally, and the Norwegian government was under domestic pressure to contribute. The NICFI is perceived to have been important for the international development of REDD+. The Norwegian government has a pronounced goal of Norway being an environmental pioneer. Based on what I argue is an identity as an altruistic donor, one perceives the NICFI to be altruistically motivated. However, I argue that there are several spin-off effects that may benefit Norway, among them the possibility for offsetting and improved relationships with developing countries. I also argue that Norway has an interest in reproducing its positive identity, and that there are indications of Norway seeking status related to climate issues. The NICFI is perceived to have increased Norway's status in the international climate negotiations. I argue that these spin-off effects may function as motivational factors for the NICFI.

## **List of abbreviations**

AWG-LCA:	the Ad-Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention
CBFF:	Congo Basin Forest Fund
CDM:	Clean Development Mechanism
COP:	Conference of the parties to the UNFCCC
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF:	the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FIP:	the Forest Investment Program
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
IPCC:	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IR:	International Relations
JI:	Joint Implementation
NGO:	Non- Governmental Organization
NOK:	Norwegian kroner
NICFI:	the Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative
REDD+:	Reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
SIT:	Social identity theory
UNDP:	the United Nations Development Programme
UNEP:	the United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC:	the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-REDD:	the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries

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## **1.0 Introduction**

Climate change has posed a new challenge on the world's states; international cooperation and joint efforts are necessary to avoid consequences that will affect all states. The perceived urgency of climate change has put climate policy on the political agenda throughout the last twenty years. Even though climate change is stated to be the most pressing challenge of our time, one can see a varying degree of response to this challenge. To understand what makes some states contribute to the common effort of reducing climate change, one needs to investigate what motivates countries to take action.

Most international relations (IR) theories explain foreign policy behavior to be based on interests. Hence the motivation to pursue a policy is whatever is in the state's interest. There are however different approaches to what the interests are, and where they come from. When it comes to climate change one should presume that, due to the expected severe consequences, it is in the interest of all states to cooperate to limit the scope of climate change. Accordingly, one could expect that all countries with the capacity to contribute would do so. However, we are in a situation where some refrain from taking action. Hence we can't explain the behavior of those who do cooperate, and contribute, solely on the basis of being motivated by the interest in limiting climate change –when others with the same interest do not contribute.

Foreign policies are products of human decision makers, who represent the state and its inhabitants, and seek to pursue what is perceived as the state's interests. Understanding states' foreign policy behavior is not only about assessing the outcome; the policies and actions. To obtain a deeper understanding it requires looking into the context and motivations of a policy. The process of decision making does not take place in a vacuum, but is influenced of a range of factors, among them; norms, identity, interests, and role and position in the international system. A country's foreign policy also tells us something about how it wishes to appear, and how it sees itself. Although, in a world of increasingly complex interdependencies and interests, it is difficult to reveal any one "true" motivation behind foreign policy behavior. It is nonetheless a worthwhile pursuit to identify what may be a range of possible overlapping and interconnected motivations, rather than abandoning the question completely. In this thesis I

aim to analyze the various motives behind Norway's large engagement in efforts at climate change mitigation through REDD+.

What we today know as REDD+ was initiated back in 2005. REDD+ is an umbrella term for measures to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. It quickly gained wide support as an important measure to reduce global emissions. The support was particularly strong among developed states, which saw this as an opportunity to achieve large reductions of emissions at a low cost. Since 2007 REDD+ has been part of the international climate framework. Norway announced its commitment to REDD+, the Norwegian International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), on Bali the same year. The Norwegian government promised to allocate up to 3 billion NOK annually. To compare, the USA allocated 1 billion dollars (approximately 5, 7 billion NOK) over a two year period from 2010 (USAID, 2010). To put this into perspective, the GDP of the USA in 2010 was 14 586 billion USD, the Norwegian GDP was 417 billion USD (World Bank, 2012). The point of this comparison is not to discuss why the US is not allocating more, but rather to demonstrate that Norway is making a large contribution, not just relative to its size, but also compared to the big powers.

### **1.1 Research question**

Different theories within international relations explain foreign policy behavior differently. Through applying a selection of theoretical approaches I find most suitable on my empiric findings, I have sought to answer the following questions:

How was the process behind the Norwegian commitment to REDD+ through the NICFI?

What are the motivations for this substantial contribution?

### **1.2 Thesis structure**

Through analysis of official documents and newspaper articles, and through conducting semi-structural interviews with relevant actors I have sought to get an overview of the context for and process through which the NICFI was developed, as well as to identify motivational factors.

The first part of my research question is dealt with in the background chapter. To contextualize the NICFI, I will account for international principles of climate policy and the development of REDD+ internationally. To position this foreign policy effort, I will discuss what Norway's role in the international system is, and how Norway as a small state has

gained increased influence in the field of climate and forest. Through an assessment of Norwegian climate policy and the process behind the NICFI, I will provide the reader with insights of the domestic context and show that the NICFI was established after pressure from environmental organizations and the political opposition. Nonetheless, the principles of REDD+ and the NICFI are consistent with established principles of Norwegian climate policy. This background information and contextualization is relevant when moving on to discussing the motivations of the Norwegian policy.

In the theory chapter, I discuss different theoretical approaches to the question of motivation. Rather than limiting my scope of analysis to one theoretical approach, I cast a broad net and identify several different concepts relating to motivation that fit together with my empirical material.

In chapter five, I will analyze the officially stated motivations, and through a theoretical discussion show to how these are presented as being motivated primarily by altruism. I will then turn to discussing possible additional motivations. My findings indicate that the NICFI have several positive spin-offs. This includes the possibility for future offsetting, less pressure to make domestic reduction of emissions, increased international influence and improved relationships with partner countries. I also argue that the NICFI strengthens the Norwegian identity as an altruistic good guy and pioneer within climate policy, and has elevated Norway's status in the international climate negotiations. These positive spin-offs, whether they were part of the initial motivations or not, may have developed into motivational factors of the initiative.

### **1.3 Objective and motivation for choice of topic**

The aim of this study is to gain a wider understanding about what motivates states' foreign policies, and in particular to assess what motivated the Norwegian government to establish the NICFI. Studies of international relations have traditionally dealt more with matters of security and power. These approaches do not seem adequate for explaining climate policies, which leads me to look for other sources of motivation. As pointed to earlier, I find it interesting that countries with presumably common interests in limiting the scope of climate change react differently. Internationally, there seems to have been a reluctance of taking the lead in the climate negotiations, which may explain the limited concrete action. This makes it even more interesting when a small state like Norway takes an international initiative, and plays a

leading role. Understanding the different motivations for a policy is important because it reveals the complexities of policy making, and how policy makers are affected by a range of factors when making decisions. Through identifying additional motivations we are also made aware of the different functions this policy has, in addition to its main objective. Through this thesis I seek to demonstrate that the NICFI is not only an altruistic contribution to the international efforts to limit climate change. It also serves Norwegian interests.

#### **1.4 Limitations**

One limitation of this study lies in the fact that it is hard to distinguish motivations and spin-off effects. This study indicates that spin-off effects, and that awareness of spin-off effects may be part of the basis on which the authorities make decisions and form policies. However, I cannot prove beyond doubt that these are among the conscious motivations. I can only suggest how they can function as motivational factors. There are clearly aspects of Norwegian foreign policy where this identity is not manifested, including where economic interests are at stake. But these areas of Norwegian foreign policy do not seem as central to the perception of what Norway is.

## **2.0 Background and process**

Throughout the thesis I will discuss the motivational factors for Norway's substantial contribution to REDD+. In order to understand the Norwegian contribution and Norway's status in international relations in the field of climate policy, it's important to present background information of the context and processes the Norwegian initiative is a part of. First I'll briefly present some of the dominating principles in international climate policy. These principles function as guidelines for when action should be taken, and what kind of action is suitable. Secondly I'll present and discuss REDD+; the process leading up to REDD+, what REDD+ is and important actors and interests. I'll also present a summary of some of the main points in the REDD+ decision text that was finalized in Cancun, 2010. Then I turn to a discussion of what Norway is in the international system. Seeing the Norwegian international contributions in the context of Norway being a small state is interesting for the later discussion of motivations. Next is a section of Norwegian climate policy, where I'll look at the more general goals, which may explain why REDD+ has become an important area also for Norwegian climate policy. I'll discuss the process, and show to how the Norwegian contribution to REDD+ has wide political support. In the last section I'll discuss the government's goals for the NICFI in particular. This background chapter is meant to introduce the reader to REDD+, Norwegian climate policy and the NICFI in order to better follow the discussion of theoretical insights relating to motivation in the subsequent chapter.

The issue of climate change has been on the agenda over the last twenty years. Even though there have been some scientific uncertainties, there has grown a quite strong consensus, both scientifically and politically, that action to reduce emissions is needed to limit the rise in global temperatures. In spite of the consensus, there has been no easy process reaching agreements that actually lead to action. When forests appeared on the agenda, it seemed like there finally was an approach that could gather wide support; REDD+. The UNFCCC climate change conferences have, since 1992, been an arena for international cooperation on climate issues. Negotiations were introduced in 1995 to strengthen the global response to climate change. The Kyoto Protocol was ratified in 1997, setting legally binding emissions reduction targets for developed countries (UNFCCC (a), n.d.). During the UNFCCC negotiations in Durban in 2011, it was decided to extend the commitments of the Kyoto Protocol for a new period beginning in 2013, although not all Kyoto I signatory states have agreed to participate.

Among the other results of the Durban conference was the launch of a green climate fund, and work was continued on building institutions that were laid out in the Cancun agreements the year before (UNFCCC (b), n.d.). One of the criticisms of the international climate negotiations is that they have not resulted in real action, and even when agreements are reached, there is no or little money allocated to implement. REDD+ is, one may claim, the exception. Even if systems for finance remain one of the unsolved issues of REDD+, there has been some funding, and pilot projects are established.

## **2.1 International principles in climate policy**

The development of international environmental law and norms has been rapid over the last thirty years. Vogler (2008) point to a number of principles that are central for international climate policy. These principles are important for understanding the rationale for taking action and the design of the chosen measures. The following principles are also important for the Norwegian climate policy. The precautionary principle states that one shall take action even before having full knowledge or scientific certainty. This means that if there is a likelihood of a practice being harmful, it should be terminated or altered. When it comes to climate change, because the consequences may be so severe, it is considered as the right thing to do to show precaution, rather than postponing action while waiting for scientific evidence. REDD+ is one such measure. Even if there are some uncertainties connected to the scale of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and some uncertainties as to how effective REDD+ will be to reduce these emissions, based on the precautionary principle it is acknowledged as an important measure. The principle of early action is central. To avoid the most severe effects of climate change rapid reductions of emissions are necessary. The other aspect is the cost of climate change; the longer one waits to take actions, the higher the cost of reducing emissions and adapting to climate change will be. Therefore REDD+ is considered an appropriate measure, it's believed to contribute to rapid reductions of emission and to be cost-effective. The polluter pays principle, related to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, is a prerequisite for REDD+ and the Norwegian climate- and forest initiative. It is a common understanding of the responsibility of polluters, mainly the “developed world”, to pay the costs of pollution, and now take the cost of climate change. This includes financing measures in other countries to contribute to solving this global problem. 1992 Earth Summit was central in establishing norms, including Agenda 21; environmental “best practice”. “Best

practice” states that one shall choose the best available, least harmful methods, to limit effects on nature. One shall also choose the measure that is most proper to solving problems, based on the best available information. Another principle that is relevant to REDD+ is Principle 21. It establishes the principles of sovereignty over national resources and state responsibility over external pollution. As REDD+ may be perceived as an interference with national sovereignty over natural resources, it has been important to emphasize this principle in the REDD+ agreement text. Sustainable development has been a keyword for the normative framework since 1992, and is also central for REDD+. The core of the principle of sustainable development is that one in development and economic growth shall consider how the environment and natural resources, while covering the current needs, also are preserved to meet the needs of future generations (Vogler, 2008). For REDD+ this is relevant in the big picture of climate change, to avoid severe climate changes that can alter the life conditions for future generations. But it is also relevant on the local level. Preserving natural forests also is important for securing biodiversity and access to environmental services and resources for future generations. We can recognize these principles in pro-REDD+ arguments, which only demonstrates their significance in international climate policy.

### **2.2.0 Background of REDD+**

REDD+ (Reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries) was initiated by Costa Rica and Papua New Guinea on behalf of the Coalition of Rainforest Nations, and then proposed to be part of the post-Kyoto solution at COP 13 at Bali in 2007. The aim is reduction of emissions from reduced deforestation and forest degradation. It's estimated that approximately 20 % of global emissions are due to deforestation and forest degradation. Tropical forests are the most efficient to store carbon and these forests are threatened by rapid deforestation. REDD+ has since been part of the UNFCCC negotiations. During the first negotiation it was mainly scientific and technical aspects that were debated, and the negotiations moved on to aspects of implementation in 2008 (Peskett & Yanda, 2009). An agreement text on REDD+ was reached in COP 16 in Cancun in 2010.



### **2.2.1 What is REDD+?**

REDD+ is an umbrella term for local, national and international efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. The core idea behind REDD+ is payment for performance, meaning that payments will be relative to achieved reduction of emissions. This gives forest owners and users an incentive to manage forests better, and clear less forest. Carbon credits are meant to provide an income, compensating for loss of income from former activities. Unclear and contested land rights are a challenge for implementing a REDD+ system, and land ownerships, and hence ownership to carbon, must be clarified (Angelsen, 2009). Developing countries will, with international supports, develop national REDD+ strategies, including national dialogue processes, capacity building and strengthening institutions, as well as establishing pilot projects. In the second phase the countries will implement policies and measures, according to the national strategies. This phase will continue to be financed through international finance instruments. In the third phase payment for performance is introduced. The finance mechanisms are still to be agreed upon, but both market and non-market solutions are possible (Angelsen et al. 2009).

In addition to reduced emissions, REDD+ is also expected to lead to so-called multiple- or co-benefits. There are expectations of benefits for biodiversity, if REDD+ succeeds in strengthening natural forests. There are also social and economic benefits connected to REDD+. Among these are contributions to development, strengthening of the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples and national institutions. These benefits are frequently used as pro-REDD+ arguments, but the success depends heavily on the quality of implementation and control. Even though these benefits are part of the international guidelines, they are not part of any legally binding agreement. There are also risks connected to REDD+, among them the risk for increased pressure on land outside areas “regulated” by REDD+ activities. Unclear definitions of forests may lead to conversion of natural forests into plantations. Insufficient involvement of forest dependent people may lead to conflicts over land and increased poverty among these groups. Local communities may also suffer from increase in land rents and food prices, due to scarcity of agriculture land in areas where REDD+ is implemented (Huettner, 2010).

### **2.2.2 Main actors**

There are four main groups of actors involved in REDD+; developing and developed countries, NGO's and the private sector. I'll also shortly mention the role of the UN. Even if

reduction of emissions is the primary aim of REDD+, the various actors also hold other motivations for being involved in REDD+.

Many developing countries have been skeptical towards REDD+. Among the concerns are a fear of negative impacts on the economy due to land use change and conservation of forests, and loss of sovereignty connected to the implementation of internationally negotiated and agreed policies. There are also concerns, both on the side of developing countries and NGO's that the potential flow of money may contribute to corruption and displacement of poor people –indigenous peoples in particular. How REDD+ should be financed is still up to debate, but developing countries and NGOs fear that if a market based solution with tradable quotas is chosen, there is a risk that developed countries will refrain from reducing emissions domestically on the scale that is necessary to achieve the desired effect. Despite the many concerns, many developing countries also see REDD+ as a possibility. Not only a possibility for reducing emissions, but also as a source of income and a contribution to increased development. To include reduction of emissions from deforestation is uncontroversial, but it has been debated if reduction of emissions from forest degradation also should be included. Countries with low degrees of deforestation, but high degradation (many countries in West Africa) favor the inclusion of forest degradation in REDD+ (Peskett & Yanda, 2009). It is noteworthy that countries as Brazil and Indonesia, being countries with growing economies, are placed in the same category as many least developed countries. These two countries are not traditional recipients of aid, at least not Norwegian aid, but are among the partner countries of the NICFI. Developing countries were earlier more or less ignored in international environmental policymaking. But as one have acknowledged that the future behavior of these states may have a big impact on environmental conditions, it has become clear that they must be included. This has given developing countries more bargaining power in environmental-, and later climate, issues than in other fields of international policymaking. In global problems like climate change, where the solution is to reduce global emissions, the participation of developing countries is necessary. Here developing countries are in a position to influence the process, because the developed countries depend on their cooperation to meet the goals. In other matters, of less concern or consequence for developed states, developing countries have less influence internationally (DeSombre, n.d.). REDD+ as is seen as a win-win situation, with possible gains for both developed and developing countries. But the developed countries are dependent on the developing countries for results, because the developing countries control the resource in question (forests as carbon sinks). Because Brazil

and Indonesia both are among the countries of highest percentage of tropical forest coverage, and also among the countries with the highest rate of deforestation they are in a position to demand financial support to initiate measures, even if not being traditional aid recipients.

Most developed countries have been positive to REDD+ as part of the post-Kyoto agreement. They argue that including reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is necessary for stabilizing global temperatures. Developed countries argue that REDD+ is a cost beneficial contribution to the global reduction of emissions, and that the total global reductions necessary will be too costly unless REDD+ is part of the solution (Peskest & Yanda, 2009). The social and environmental co-benefits, as development and securing biodiversity are also heavily used arguments. Another reason for this positive approach, not so much spoken of by developed countries' governments, is the possibility REDD+ gives for offsetting domestic reductions (buying emissions reductions abroad and having it count towards a developed country's emissions reductions target). As domestic reductions will be more costly, they argue that the money should be put where the positive effects will be the highest. By offsetting reductions, developed countries could also escape the potential negative side-effects on domestic industry and economy. Norway, a big contributor to REDD+ has stated ambiguous goals of becoming climate neutral in 2030, but is criticized for the plan of offsetting 1/3 of the reductions. Norway, being a major producer of oil and gas, contributes considerably to global emissions. The USA is criticized for planning for insufficient reductions, and for offsetting a large proportion of the reductions. The EU may offset up to 50% of all reductions (Peskest & Yanda, 2009). If REDD+ is included in an international quota system, it will have a large potential for offsetting. As long as the system for financing REDD+ isn't in place, and the question of a fund based or market based approach with quotas is unclear, there is an uncertainty of the overall effect of REDD+ on reducing global emissions. If REDD+ mainly becomes a system for offsetting emissions from developed countries, it will mean that the reductions achieved through REDD+ are balanced by emissions elsewhere, and the total reduction will be less.

Several environmental NGOs are also critical to REDD+ due to concerns about offsetting. They fear that REDD+ will fail to reduce global reductions of emissions, as long as developed countries pay their way out and fail to make sufficient domestic reductions. There are also concerns that REDD+ may have a negative effect on biodiversity, if monoculture plantations are included in the scope of REDD+. Other environmental NGOs see REDD+ as a possibility of bringing attention and funding to conservation of rainforests. Common for all

environmental NGOs are claims of high social and environmental standards in the implementation of REDD+. Development NGOs have generally not been so active in the debate around REDD+. Some oppose it, on the same grounds as the environmental NGOs. Indigenous People's organization has been the most active in opposing REDD+. They fear that REDD+ may give authorities an incentive to violate indigenous rights to land and resources. Some do see possibilities for their own people in REDD, and claim that social safeguards, which can guarantee that their rights, are respected in the implementation (Peskest & Yanda, 2009).

The UNFCCC function as an arena to facilitate negotiations and the design of agreements, as well as a force to drive negotiations forward and follow up on implementation. The UNFCCC has no enforcement mechanisms, and cannot in itself set mandatory limits on emissions for the individual countries. The agreements reached through negotiations, namely the Kyoto Protocol, are however considered legally binding. Annex I countries, which consists of industrialized countries and countries in transition, must regularly report to the UNFCCC on the national inventories of greenhouse gas. Non-annex I countries are developing countries, which are not obliged to reduce emissions, unless developed countries finance the reductions. As a note to the discussion about Brazil and Indonesia above, they both are non-annex I countries, and hence not obliged to reduce emissions (UNFCCC (c), n.d.). The UN-REDD Programme was established to assist developing countries plan and implement national REDD+ strategies. FAO, UNDP and UNEP provide knowledge and expertise to the national UN-REDD programs. At the international level UN-REDD seeks to build consensus and knowledge about REDD+. It developed common approaches, methodologies, tools and guidelines for the REDD+ readiness work (UN-REDD, n.d.).

Private actors in the carbon market are anxious to include REDD+ projects in the market, hoping for cheap credits to be sold for a good profit in the market. Corporations and businesses motivated by Corporate Social Responsibility are also positive to REDD+, as "the package" of REDD+ is appealing; reduced emissions, biodiversity and social co-benefits. The private sector favors a project based approach to REDD+, rather than being run by governments. If REDD+ is included in a quota system, and organized as projects, it opens the door for private interests. Many see REDD+ as a possibility to make good money on the quota market, as quotas from REDD+ are perceived as cheap to produce. The logging industry lobby to include "sustainable forest management" in REDD+, and other private actors to get plantations included. This is opposed by a number of NGOs and indigenous

people's organizations, who argue that this will benefit private interests while having a negative effect on biodiversity and local communities. Including private actors would further threaten the rights of marginalized groups (Peskett & Yanda, 2009).

### **2.2.3 The REDD+ decision text**

The Ad Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) presented a draft for a decision text on REDD+ during COP 16 in Cancun in 2010. An agreement on the text was reached, despite protests from Bolivia. The main remaining aspect of the REDD+ framework is the question of financing, to which no decision has been made so far. This is also one of the most debated aspects of REDD+. Some key points of the decision that concerns REDD+ are the following (my selection):

- Developed countries should take a leading role in domestic reduction of emissions, and provide technology, capacity-building and funding to developing countries.
- The aim is to hold the increase in global temperatures below 2degrees over pre-industrial levels.
- Human rights should be fully respected in all climate change-related actions.
- All action should be country driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and transparent, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, societies and ecosystems.
- Parties should collectively aim to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss.
- Parties should reduce human pressure on forests that result in greenhouse gas emissions, and address drivers of deforestation.
- All actions should be carried out in accordance with Annex I, and the safeguards should be supported and promoted.
- The scope of REDD+: reduction of emissions from deforestation, reduction of emissions from forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- Parties should develop a national action plan, establish reference levels, and a forest monitoring system, a system for providing information regarding safeguards.
- Actions should be coordinated with social and economic development, to avoid negative impacts on the development.
- The UN Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples should be considered.
- Finance: Funds may be provided may come from a variety of sources; public and private, bilateral and multilateral. A significant share of the multilateral funding (for adaptation)

should flow through the Green Climate Fund. The Green Climate Fund is established, but to this date there are no agreements or commitments to financial contributions from developed countries.

Some key points from Annex I to the agreement, relating to guidelines and safeguards in the REDD+ framework, include:

- REDD+ participation should be country-driven and optional, and respect sovereignty.
- It should be consistent with parties' goals of sustainable development. REDD+ should be result based.
- REDD+ should respect the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and promote the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders.
- REDD+ should promote natural forests and biodiversity. (UNFCCC, 2010)

The REDD+ decision text gives a good impression of what REDD+ is envisioned to be, and how it should function. In the decision text the importance of natural forests, human rights, the rights of indigenous peoples, the right of developing countries to develop, and the sovereignty of participating states are emphasized. I argue that the emphasis on rights and safeguards in the REDD+ decision text serves several purposes. First of all, it is a reassurance towards the involved actors and stakeholders that REDD+ seeks to avoid negative consequences, and enhance positive side effects. This is necessary for the involvement of developing countries. It also serves to place the responsibility of these risks and possibilities with the implementing actor; the developing countries. Finally emphasizing rights, multiple benefits and social safeguards also contribute to legitimizing and increasing the support to REDD+ in developed countries who, in one way or the other, are to finance REDD+. Even though there are risks connected to REDD+, and still some uncertainties connected to the efficiency of the measures, policy makers around the world are seeing it as a possibility for quick reductions. If REDD+ is successful in reducing and halting deforestation and forest degradation, it is claimed that much of the necessary reductions of emissions can be covered through these measures. Also, if successful, REDD+ can contribute to strengthen biodiversity that is threatened by deforestation and forest degradation. The idea of REDD+ is that it also shall contribute to strengthen institutions, and rights of local communities and indigenous peoples in REDD+ countries, and contribute to poverty eradication and development. However, the REDD+ decision text is not a legally binding document, but rather a set of guidelines. The implementation of REDD+ depends highly on the capacity of each country.

Norway was among the countries pushing the hardest for the inclusion and monitoring of safeguards (Interview 3). Norway has been involved in the international work of developing REDD+ since the beginning, first at the more technical level. Since the announcement of the NICFI in 2007 Norway has taken a more active role in international policymaking (Interview 6). I've now given an introduction of the development of REDD+, as a background for understanding the international context of the NICFI. I will now turn to a discussion of what Norway is in the international system. This is relevant to understand perceptions of Norway's role, and to put the Norwegian climate and REDD+ policy into context.

### **2.3.0 What is Norway in the international system?**

Norway is a small state that actively participates in the international system. It is not limited to working in its own region; on the contrary the areas where the government has stated that Norway should put its mark are all on global issues. Even though being a small state, Norway wishes to contribute internationally, and the government has even stated that Norway should be a pioneer in the field of environment and sustainable development (Ministry of Finance, 2008). The Norwegian mentality is quite self-centered, as probably applies for most countries. There is a perception of Norway as important, and an expectation that Norway should play a central role internationally in most matters of national interest. The reality is that Norway is a small country, with little influence or power in most fields.

Norway, typically for a small state (Hey, 2003), primarily works through multilateral organizations to pursue own interests and goals. Norway, being a country of limited power and influence, compared to the big powers, favors a system of international law, regimes and norms that secure stability and the rights of all actors. One may say that Norway in many ways is a typical small state in the manner of approaching these interests and goals, but that these (interests and goals) may often be "a-typical" for a small state. Since WWII Norway has played an active role internationally, and not only constrained to matters of national self-interest. Foreign aid, and later peace-operations and peace-negotiations, and matters of sustainable development and climate change have been areas of central involvement. Norway has combined the approaches of policy formation through multilateral organizations with "practical" approaches bilaterally. It is important to notice that Norway does not only seek to participate and contribute, but wishes to stand out as a leading country within the targeted areas (Curtis, 2010).

### **2.3.1 Constraints as a small state**

Many claim that the power rules in the international system. The big powers most often set the agenda and dominate the processes. Small states are often constrained by dependencies or loyalties to bigger powers. Norway stands quite freely compared to many other small states in that sense, but is still constrained by limited influence and power. Small states like Norway have a harder time getting their ideas and initiatives through, unless they are backed by bigger powers. If the initiative is in line with the policies of big powers there is a possibility for it to be picked up, but if an initiative goes against the interests of big powers it is very unlikely, as the big powers tend to ignore smaller states when it is convenient (Hey, 2003).

### **2.3.2 Possibilities as a rich small state**

Where less wealthy small states are constrained by domestic needs, a rich country as Norway can pursue goals that are unrelated to national self-interests. If one should make a further classification within the group of small states, Norway would certainly be classified as a rich, democratic and internationally active small state. As stated by one of my interviewees; Norway is a small and rich country, and this allows us to take the lead in issues of climate change (Interview 8). Based on the case study of REDD+ that follows, I argue that the wealth, and willingness to contribute internationally, has given Norway a more central role and more influence in international processes. It is well known that Norway is a rich country that often contributes; hence it is a good strategic move to involve Norway. But Norway is still forced, or has chosen strategically, to limit the areas of focus. Instead of attempting to play a central role in all fields simultaneously, focusing on some areas and concentrating the resources gives a higher effect, and increases the likelihood of achieving results. By focusing on the same areas over time, Norway has built up competence and also built a reputation that gives a stronger position within these fields, and possibly more influence.

Norway is being more noticed for working for global issues like poverty reduction, rights and climate than for promoting own interests in the international system, and hence is seen as a “good guy”. Norway, being a country with no colonial history or former strategic interests in the South, may be more trustworthy in its claims to be working for the interests of others. It is the host country for the Nobel Peace Prize. Also Norway is a quite “clean” country, with hydro-power covering most of the country’s need of electricity. Despite being a petroleum-



producing state it seems like Norway has achieved to hold on to this “clean” image. This contributes to the trustworthiness of Norway when claiming to work for “greater” interests, without any self-interest. As Norway is not seen as a strategic player concerning own interests in these matters, Norway achieves to promote the issues without being seen as any kind of threat or being biased. Working through the “correct” channels and supporting rule of law also contributes to an image of Norway as being “in the force of good”. This though is probably just as much connected to Norway’s size and limited power, as discussed earlier, a deed of necessity. As Norway is relatively independent, it is free to pursue own lines of interests. But it is still not very likely that Norway openly opposes the majority or the big western powers in international processes. One aspect is that, if standing alone it has little effect, but it’s also caused by coinciding interests in most fields. Norway in the international system can be compared to a marginal political party. It is part of the system, but has no real power base to force through own views. It has to team up with bigger actors.

Norway has been a more passive supporter of international processes, not being a country that has been active with regards to delivering suggestions or claims. In the international climate negotiations Norway has long had an active role, but it has been more based on technical contributions. The current government made a political choice about changing this approach. One aspect was to focus on a few areas, among them forest. The other one was to work more directly on international policy formation (Interview 6). Taking a more proactive, and even leading, role as Norway has done with regards to REDD+ is quite untypical for a small state. This may reflect a change in the perception of own role and potential influence internationally. Norway is a small country seeking, expecting and, at times, achieving influence internationally. It is a typical small state in its approaches, but has interests that are a-typical in the general understanding of small state foreign policy. As Hey (2003) claims, established democracies do not use foreign policy to achieve legitimacy, but rather to seek popularity. Norway definitively seeks to distinguish itself in a positive manner. By standing out within its chosen fields, it demonstrates to itself and to others that it is not only size that matter, that Norway is to be reckoned with as a significant actor no matter its size. It may be seen as an attempt to compensate, to demonstrate that even if we are small, we are important. Having discussed Norway’s role in the international system, and how Norway’s wealth probably allows it to pursue rather a-typical small state interests, it is now time to take a closer look at Norwegian climate policy.

## **2.4.0 Norwegian climate policy**

It is the aim of the government that Norway should make a considerable contribution to reducing global emissions, in coherence with the goal of limiting an increase of global temperatures to 2° C. The Norwegian climate political goals are to be carbon neutral by 2050. Norway was the first country to establish a goal of carbon neutrality; Norway shall commit to reduce global emissions at a level equivalent to 30 % of Norwegian emissions in 1990; and the government has stated that Norway seeks to over-fulfill its commitments to the Kyoto Protocol. To reach these goals, Norway has developed a strategy with three components; an improved international climate-agreement; that Norway should contribute to reductions of emissions in developing countries and in countries with rapid economic growth (like China and India); and an intensified commitment to reduction of domestic emissions. Up to 2/3 of the reductions shall be domestic (Ministry of Environment (c), 2007). Norwegian climate policy is based on the international principles that I have accounted for at the beginning of the chapter. On April 25<sup>th</sup> this year the government presented the new, and long awaited, “Klimamelding”. This is an important document that functions as a framework for the further Norwegian climate policy. As the document was presented at a time when I was about to finalize my thesis I’m not going into the content of the document, but I can point out that the government is hanging on to the goal of making two thirds of the reductions at home.

### **2.4.1 Klimaforliket 2008**

In 2007-2008, the government parties (Det Norske Arbeiderparti, Senterpartiet & Sosialistisk Venstreparti) together with three parties from the opposition (Høyre, Kristelig Folkeparti & Venstre) negotiated an agreement on Norwegian climate policy known as “Klimaforliket”. This agreement is an important document for the current Norwegian climate policy, and is the result of compromises on climate policy across the party lines.

The parties to the climate agreement agree that Norway shall play an active role in securing international support to measures aimed at reducing deforestation in developing countries. It is a pronounced goal to inspire other states to take on bigger commitments, and that Norway

should take on a leading role in the development of a new international climate agreement, and in reducing emissions and developing a more climate friendly society. The agreement continues by stating that it is important for the legitimacy and trustworthiness of Norwegian international climate policy that Norway fulfills its commitments to domestic reductions, development of technology and demonstrates that economic growth is possible while reducing emissions. The parties agree that Norway should be a driving force for international support for reduction of deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. The parties also agree that Norway shall commit to financial contributions up to 3 billion NOK annually to efforts aimed at reducing deforestation of tropical forests. These commitments shall not reduce finance for development aid, and shall come in addition to the commitments Norway have to the Kyoto Protocol. The parties hope this commitment will influence central developing countries before the climate negotiations in 2009. The parties to the agreement argue for involving REDD in a future international agreement, and that that Norway's contribution to REDD+ will be part of its future commitments ("Klimaforliket" 2008).

The climate agreement demonstrates broad political support to the NICFI. Broad political support, and support from environmental organizations made forests a "politically safe", even popular, measure to commit to. The climate agreement also indicates that much of the current climate policy probably would be carried on in the case of a change of government.

### **2.5.0 Background for the Norwegian Forest and Climate Initiative**

At the climate change negotiations in Bali in 2007 (COP 13), Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg announced a Norwegian commitment to REDD, including a promise of finance up to 3 billion NOK annually. The main objective of the Norwegian climate policy is to contribute to a post-Kyoto binding agreement of reduction of emissions, with the aim of limiting the rise of global temperatures to 2° Celsius above the pre-industrial level. The NICFI shall be a contribution to reaching this goal.

Sustainable development and poverty reduction are among the main priorities of Norwegian foreign and development policies, and also an important objective of the NICFI. According to the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development, 350 million people, of which 60 million are indigenous peoples, depend almost entirely on forests for their survival.

These people are among the poorest and most marginalized groups (Ministry of environment (a).n.d.).

### **2.5.1 How did forest become important?**

In 2007 the Norwegian government was in negotiations with the opposition parties over Norwegian climate policy. In September 2007 the environmental organizations Rainforest Foundation (Regnskogfondet) and Friends of the Earth Norway (Norges Naturvernforbund) sent a letter to the government urging them to allocate 6 billion NOK annually to finance pilot projects aiming at reducing deforestation. The organizations argued that findings indicated that climate changes were happening on an even faster rate than earlier predicted, and that the chances of reaching the goal of a maximum 2° C increase in global temperatures depended on early action. Norway has been, and still is, committed to this goal. They stated that to follow up the prime minister's statements internationally, that rich countries must bear the costs of saving the climate, Norway should commit. Research indicated that early action would be cheaper and more efficient than later action, and measures to reduce deforestation offered a possibility to achieve early and cost-effective reductions of emissions (Rainforest Foundation & Friends of the Earth Norway, 2007). Much indicates that the government initially was interested in focusing on domestic reductions of emissions, and hence was skeptical to this suggestion. The first political party to officially support the suggestion was Høyre. In the negotiations it became a demand from the opposition parties to allocate money to measures reducing deforestation. When Stoltenberg announced the initiative at Bali it came as a surprise for the environmental organizations; as one of the interviewees stated "we're not that used to getting what we ask for, at least not so quickly" (Interview 1). The negotiations over the Norwegian climate policy took place during a time when climate was high on the agenda, both politically and in the media. The UN Climate Panel and Al Gore were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their contributions to knowledge about climate change in 2007. One year earlier the so called Stern report was published, highlighting measures to reduce deforestation as the most cost-effective measure, as well as the measure with potential for quickest results. In the UNFCCC negotiations, forests became an important issue in 2005, and in the time leading up to the next meeting in Bali in 2007, there was a group working to develop a structure that could be included in a post Kyoto agreement (Interview 6).

### **2.5.2 Goals and strategy of the NICFI**

The NICFI is an integrated part of the Norwegian climate policy, and is intended to support the overarching goals. Among them is, as mentioned before, to limit the increase of global

temperatures to 2° C the most important. . The Climate and Forest Initiative must be coherent with and support this goal. In Proposition nr. 1 to the Storting (Ministry of Finance, 2008)) it is stated that inclusion of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation should be in a new climate convention. The NICFI is based on the goal of taking early action to achieve cost-effective and verifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. The NICFI should contribute to conservation of natural forests to maintain their carbon storage capacity (Ministry of Environment (e), 2009). Through its international Climate and Forest Initiative, the Norwegian government aims at supporting efforts to slow, halt and eventually reduce greenhouse gas emissions resulting from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD+)( Ministry of Environment (d), 2011). Promoting sustainable development and poverty reduction are overriding objectives of Norwegian foreign and development policies, and policy documents argue that it is important that the Climate and Forest Initiative also contributes to this (Ministry of Environment (a), 2008). The objectives of the NICFI are coherent with the international guidelines and objectives of REDD+. Safeguards to secure that negative effects of REDD+ on environments and development, as well as rights are stated as important for the Norwegian government. And it is particularly emphasized that the NICFI should contribute to sustainable development. Hence REDD+ and the NICFI are often referred to as “the new aid”.

Rather than limiting the Norwegian contribution to one or two approaches, the government seeks several. These cover different aspects of REDD+, but are connected. Progress in one approach is likely to influence the others. There is a high degree of interdependence between what happens on the different levels, and all are important for driving REDD+ forward.

To achieve its objectives, Norway is pursuing four main tracks; 1) Playing an active role in the international negotiations under the UNFCCC, seeking both to identify innovative solutions and to help create consensus around those solutions; 2) Entering into large-scale partnerships with key forest countries to demonstrate that real action on a national level is possible and to encourage large scale emission reductions even before a REDD+ mechanism is agreed upon under the UNFCCC; 3) Contributing to the design and establishment of an integrated architecture of multilateral REDD initiatives to help ensure broad and early progress on REDD+;4) Financing NGOs, research institutes and civil society organizations to provide analyses, pilot projects

and demonstrations supporting the REDD+ negotiations and learning through field experiences (Ministry of Environment (d), 2011: 3).

The framework for REDD+ is developed in the work done internationally, also in the negotiations. As Norway wishes not only to contribute concretely through financial support, but also is seeking to play a part in the formation of the REDD+ framework and mechanisms, it is important to be active in the international processes. Norway seeks to influence the policy process of finalizing an international agreement on REDD+, by contributing on information on the emerging mechanisms and through the examples of established national REDD+ agreements. NICFI seeks to influence the international policy process by contributing to the development of mechanisms and giving examples from bilateral agreements with REDD-countries. The Norwegian government seeks to make an impact on international negotiations and to contribute to the international development of a REDD+ framework (Tipper, 2010).

The Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative works with and through partners, and is involved with both international REDD+ policy formation and national REDD+ programs. The UN REDD Programme, the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, REDD+ Partnership, Forest Investment Program and the Congo Basin Forest Fund are important multilateral initiatives in the development and implementation of REDD+. The initiative supported the establishment of UN REDD. The allocations from the initiative are mainly channeled through these multilateral initiatives. The initiative also works bilaterally. (Ministry of environment (e), 2009). Among Norway's partner countries are; Indonesia, Brazil, Guyana, Mexico and Tanzania. These are countries that have established or are in the process of establishing national REDD+ programs (Ministry of Environment (b), n.d.). NICFI sees the cooperation with partners, developing countries participating in REDD+, as a way to develop and demonstrate trust, through mutual commitment and dialogue. Advocacy activities are aimed at increasing the motivation among developed countries to support REDD+, and the willingness and capacity of developing countries with tropical forests to commit to REDD+ (Tipper, 2010). Through working "hands on" in bilateral partnerships, Norway is contributing to the practical implementation of national REDD+ programs. As stated Norway sees this as an important basis for input to the international process of developing REDD+.

Norway intends to play a part in developing the new climate regime, making use of experiences from the Climate and Forest Initiative. A central goal of the Climate and Forest Initiative is to contribute to developing a credible system for monitoring, assessment,

reporting and verification (Ministry of Environment (a), 2008). Norway also seeks to contribute to establishing a common price on carbon. Contribute to reducing the increase in emissions in other countries (through quotas, CDM and JI), contribute to a sustainable development. An important part of the commitment is also to help developing countries to adapt to climate changes (Ministry of Environment (c), 2007). NICFI aims at cooperating closely with NGOs, both strategically and in partner countries, as well as cooperation with research institutions. This is due to the high level of expertise and capacity of many Norwegian and international NGOs after many years work on climate- and forest related issues. “Close cooperation with NGOs will therefore be essential to our success” (Ministry of Environment (b) n.d.). As REDD+ is still in a phase of uncertainties connected to structures and methodology, research is essential for finding the best solutions. One can see from the strategies that Norway is taking a wide approach, seeking to play a role in all the major levels of the development of REDD+.

### **2.5.3 Perceived effects of the NICFI**

There seem to be quite high expectations of the effects of the NICFI. Tipper claims that Norway’s combined (political, financial and institutional) effort through NICFI have had a stimulating effect on the progress of REDD+ internationally. By making use of a phased approach, one perceives that Norway has demonstrated a possible solution for financing mechanisms. Through funding and supporting the establishment of multilateral initiatives as UN-REDD, FCPF, FIP and to a lesser degree CBFF, Norway has been in front of setting up an international funding framework, which includes more than 40 countries involved in preparatory work (Tipper, 2010). It is believed that the Norwegian initiative may have had a positive influence on central developing countries in the climate negotiations, and built trust (referring to the period leading up to the Meeting of the Parties in 2009). (“Klimaforliket”, 2008). The government sees the NICFI as of great importance for the international development of REDD+: “Since its inception in April 2008, the Climate and Forest Initiative has established a series of ground-breaking partnerships with key forest countries and contributed to significant advances in the development of a REDD+ mechanism under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)” (The Ministry of Environment (d), 2011).

By pursuing several approaches, the Norwegian contribution in the different fields probably have reinforced each other. Through the promise of large financial contributions, Norway “earned” a central position in the negotiations, and increased influence. The Norwegian

financial contribution is also claimed to taking the process a step ahead. The bilateral partnerships, representing early action in practice, and provide examples and experiences contributing to develop REDD+. Norway has also contributed heavily by funding multilateral initiatives, and hence building the international framework. There is talk of the importance of the initiative for building trust among developing countries, and that the Norwegian initiative would inspire other developed countries to contribute. Regarding this, the Norwegian initiative at least shows developing countries that developed countries, here represented by Norway, are willing to come up with more than words. The initiative apparently has had less success on bringing more developed countries on board. There is still little money on the table, and the most difficult part of the negotiations, regarding financing, is still unsolved.

## **2.6 Concluding remarks**

This chapter gives an insight to both the international and Norwegian context of the NICFI. At the time of the announcement of the initiative climate had been high on the political agenda for a while. The climate issue was also given much attention in the public debate. Within climate policy there are many complexities and different interests, making it difficult to find solutions that attract wide enough support. Even though there has been some opposition and skepticism among developing countries and NGOs, REDD+ has emerged as a measure that is supported by the majority, and therefore it has been possible to achieve greater progress and commitment than in other parts of the international negotiations. The main objective of REDD+ is to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The inclusion of safeguards and the emphasis on multiple benefits in the REDD+ decision text contributes to legitimizing REDD+, and probably aims at reassuring its critics. In a way it can be read as a guarantee of the further positive effects of REDD+, and it's presented as a measure that will be beneficial for all actors involved. As the success of achieving the different goals of REDD+ depends on the capacity of the individual country, by stating the importance of rights and safeguards so clearly in the decision text, the international REDD+ system in a way has covered its back as well. Because if these goals are not achieved, -if REDD+ in some countries turn out to have negative consequences on biodiversity, development or social rights, one can argue that it is not due to flaws in the framework, but rather in the implementation. By 2007 it was clear that REDD+ would be part of the future international commitment, and it was presented as the most appropriate, and even a necessary



measure, to reach the goals of maximum 2° Celsius rise in global temperatures. Norway at the time was in a process of negotiating a shared platform for its climate policy. After being urged by environmental organizations, and then pressured by opposition parties, the government apparently at a point prior to the Bali conference decided to commit to REDD+ through the NICFI. Prior to this the government had been more focused on domestic reductions, but as I will discuss later the government was convinced that REDD+ was the “right” measure on the basis of expectations of quick and large reduction, cost-efficiency and the promise of multiple benefits. With the promise of annual allocations up to 3 billion NOK, Norway made the first commitment of its kind. Norway seeks to contribute to the development of REDD+ on several levels, and has through its contribution marked itself as an important actor internationally.

### **3.0 Why do states do what they do? A theoretical discussion**

In this thesis I will examine what motivations the Norwegian government could have for their substantial contribution to REDD+ through the NICFI. As theory is the basis of IR, I have aimed at writing a theory chapter that, through different approaches, can help analyze my empirical findings, and answer my main question about what motivates the Norwegian climate policy regarding forest. Neumann and Sending (2010) argues that insights from both realism and constructivism are useful for understanding the complexities of international relations. Wæver (2011) supports this view, and states that a good approach to theory is to see theory as a model that can be applied on empirical examples to assess structural similarity, and that one can combine different theories. Rather than seeking one “truth” by applying only one theoretical approach, I will through my empirical material explore how different aspects can be presented as examples of what the theories seek to explain. It became clear early in my field work and data collection that several different kinds of parallel motives were at play.

The first part of this chapter explores one framework for understanding Norway’s position in international relations- that of Norway as a ‘small state’ with a ‘small state foreign policy’- as context for exploring what sorts of motivations may be relevant (see discussion in background chapter). I then begin my exploration of possible motivations, discussing first the idea of altruism as Norway’s foreign policy concerning aid and climate policy is perceived by the public to be based on altruistic motives. I continue to explore a related shaper of foreign policy behavior, namely norms. I then turn to the question of identity and interests, which in the constructivist spirit I treat as interrelated. I will argue that in the case of Norway and the NICFI, the Norwegian identity as an altruistic aid donor and environmental pioneer has played a central role in shaping the Norwegian policy. However, I do not wish to overlook the potential relevance of other schools of IR thought and briefly discuss how realism and liberalism provide some useful insights for my study relating to economic interests and the interplay between domestic and international interests. In the last part, I turn to a motivating factor that is gaining increasing attention in international relations literature and discuss the role of status, and how actors seek acknowledgement and recognition. I will argue that status is important for the Norwegian government, and that they through the NICFI have achieved status and increased influence- a topic which will be explored in more detail in the analysis chapter that follows.

### 3.1 Norway's place in international relations – a small state?

*Vi er et lite land. Men et stort folk.* (Jens Stoltenberg)

The reason for including a discussion of small state theory is the assumption that small states are restrained by the international system to a larger degree than big powers. This results in a set of characteristics shared by many small states. When discussing Norwegian foreign policy and the NICFI as a part of the Norwegian climate policy in particular, it is of interest to assess the role of Norway as a small state. In theory there are no clear definitions of small states. Geographical size and population size, as well as degree of dependence on others and degree of international influence are often included. A country's identity, whether it views itself as a small country, or if it is perceived by other countries to be a small state, is decisive according to Keohane (1969:269. Referred to in Hey, 2003:3). Norway is clearly a small state when it comes to size, covering an area of 385 186 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 5 million. The small population spread over a relatively large area with long border lines has made Norway quite dependent on others for security. Norway is also largely dependent on imports of food and consumption goods. As a rich country Norway has played an active international role, and at least has a self-perception of a certain international influence. As the quote by Stoltenberg tells us, we see ourselves as a small state, but none the less great. I would claim that the big powers see Norway as a small state, but that the size of the Norwegian "money bag" and historically willingness to contribute may induce other actors to treat Norway differently than less privileged small states.

There are some common traits of small state foreign policy behavior. Small states tend to work through alliances or multilateral organizations to obtain their goals. Small states also are claimed to limit their foreign policy objectives. Norway has focused on development and women and children's health, and now focuses on forests within the climate policy. As small states are not a homogenous group, there are exceptions. Small states that are of importance for a great power, may exploit this situation to increase its own influence. Since Norway has the possibility and willingness to contribute with substantial sums of money to climate measures, as demonstrated through the NICFI and since putting money on the table is essential for the progress of international initiatives, Norway probably has obtained far greater influence in the field than it would have otherwise. There are other traits that are common for

small states; they tend to use diplomatic and economic measures rather than military, focus on international law and promote cooperation and multilateral agreements. Low participation in international affairs and a focus on its own region are also among the common traits (Hey, 2003), though not so much typical for Norway. Norway has since the 1950s been increasingly active, within its prioritized fields, around the world.

There is a debate on whether small state policy behavior is only constrained by international structures, or whether domestic structures also play a part. Much indicates that wealthier small states, like Norway, may have more options when it comes to foreign policy than less wealthy small states. They are less dependent on trade and less constrained by debt. This gives room for ideologically based foreign policy that may change with changing governments (Hey, 2003). The case studies in “Small states in world politics” (Hey, 2003) conclude that the system is the dominating factor influencing small state foreign policy behavior. Most small states engage in international organizations, and utilize regimes, international law and norms to enhance their interests. This is a good description of the Norwegian approach as well. To give an example, Norway is an important contributor to the UN system, and favors a strong UN (Leira, 2007). Even if international organizations mainly benefits small states, power structures play a role there as well. More powerful states are more capable of setting the agenda than small states. The case studies show that “established” democracies (states and governments that already are considered legitimate) seldom uses foreign policy to obtain legitimacy, but rather to seek popularity. The case studies also indicate that democracies do not have to pay more attention to public opinion than non-democratic states. Wealthy small states tend to have more established foreign policy bureaucracies, making them more stable and efficient. Degree of wealth to large degree determines the foreign policy objectives. While poorer states have to focus on urgent matters of economic survival, rich states, in addition to upholding their wealth, can afford to also focus on wider policy areas. The individual leaders of many small states are found to manipulate the foreign policy in favor their own role, to secure their position. This is mainly a trait of states with weak bureaucracies and institutions (Hey, 2003). Although the system does not allow individual leaders this power in more developed countries, it does not exclude the possibility that individual leaders in developed countries promote issues of special interest. Even though the government did not originally initiate what later became the NICFI, the government, and in particular Stoltenberg and Solheim has promoted the initiative as the government’s project.

“Because of their relatively weak power base within the international system, small states will act in passive and reactive modes, rather than as proactive agents of international change” (Sutton, 1987:20. Referred to in Hey, 2003:6). This may describe how Norway often acts, but through the NICFI Norway is clearly taking a more active role. Based on the phrase “money is power”, one may claim that Norway, even though being a small state, has a certain power base in its areas of interest where money is a key factor. This may partly explain how Norway has been able to work as a proactive agent in the climate work concerning forest. Also before the initiative Norway played an active part in the negotiations, and seems respected as an important voice in the debate. Much is probably due to Norway’s status as an environmental pioneer and merits like the Brundtland Commission (Interview 8).

Theory of small state foreign policy is useful for understanding Norway’s position in the international system. Norway shares the constraints that small states are perceived to have in the international system, but as a wealthy state Norway has the possibility to pursue a range of interests internationally. The NICFI is an example of how also small states can seek more active roles internationally, even though it is important to remember that the Norwegian initiative was established at a time when REDD+ already was well on its way to being integrated in international climate policy. So the Norwegian initiative is not groundbreaking in the sense of having identified a new measure, but it is the biggest commitment made to REDD+ which makes Norway a central actor. The question is why Norway seeks a more active role, and if it is related to how Norway sees itself. In the next section I will discuss the role of altruism, as Norway’s international commitments often are perceived to be based on altruistic motivations.

## **3.2 Altruism**

There is a perception of Norwegian aid and international contributions as altruistic. There seem to be certain reluctance to considering this part of Norwegian foreign policy as influenced by any form of self-interest. Norway is seen as contributing internationally for the sake of doing “good”, a wealthy state that shares its resources through humanitarian work (Leira, 2007). This makes it interesting take a quick look at how one can understand altruism, and its different shapes. Rationality is connected to the motives for action. Individual rationality is based on concerns for own wellbeing or pursuing own interests. According to

Becker (1976, 1993. Referred to in Vatn, 2005), maximizing individual utility is a universal human characteristic. Based on individual rationality, apparent unselfish acts must then have some ulterior selfish motivations. The idea of selfish altruism explains how altruistic acts may give the agent “benefits” that are comparable or bigger than the cost. This may be a good feeling or good conscience, or positive status. Another take on this is that one would always calculate individual gains and losses when making decisions. Etzioni (1988. Referred to in Vatn, 2005) claims that individual calculation always works parallel with moral reasoning. There is always tension between the individual and the social reasoning. Social rationality can be divided in two categories; reciprocal rationality and normative rationality. Reciprocity can be viewed as a form of solidarity, where good acts are rewarded and bad ones punished. Normative rationality is based on the perception of what is normatively right to do. If norms are internalized, they are normally followed independently of potential rewards or punishment. What these two have in common is that people may act unselfish (Vatn, 2005).

I would argue that the NICFI officially is presented as altruistic, based on a normative social rationality; it is the right thing to do. But when looking at the different aspects, I would claim that one can see indications of selfish altruism, based on a more reciprocal rationality. I will later discuss how these other motivational factors can be explained. There seem to be established an expectation that Norway should contribute internationally. In an opinion poll referred to by Leira (2007), 36% agreed that Norway is a nation that does not do enough for development and peace. So according to this poll, approximately one of three Norwegians think Norway should contribute more internationally. I argue that these opinions reflect an established norm of expected behavior for the country, which leads me to my next theoretical consideration of motivation - norms.

### **3.3 Norms**

Socially constructed norms define what is legitimate, appropriate and expected behavior within different contexts. All states seek legitimacy, to believe and be able to promote that their actions are according to the values and interests of the international community. Non-legitimate actions have a higher economic or social cost than legitimate actions. The higher degree of legitimacy, the higher support for the action or policy, and the more likely it is that others will cooperate. Most states, if not all, desire and depend on being viewed as legitimate.

The presentation of, and debate around, the NICFI has aspects of legitimizing; by explaining why REDD+ is perceived to be “the right” measure, and that the Norwegian objectives are to contribute to reducing global emissions, one increases the legitimacy of the policy. As mentioned earlier, Hey (2003) claims that seeking popularity may be just as likely to be a motivation for behavior for established democracies. Because of the importance of legitimacy and popularity, “naming and shaming” actors that breaks international rules and norms can be effective and influence behavior. The fear of social sanctions as mentioned above is not part of the motivation for the NICFI though, as Norway already was seen as a country that contributes internationally. The NICFI may rather contribute to increased popularity, by demonstrating that Norway does even more than expected by the norm. There seem to be a norm that Norway should, based on a moral obligation, contribute internationally. When it comes to dealing with climate change the moral obligation is even stronger, as Norway has part of the responsibility for the emissions causing climate change.

Decisions can be taken based on the logic of consequences; costs and benefits, or the logic of appropriateness; a concern with following the rules or norms. Both may be used, one does not exclude the other (Barnett, 2008). Measures to reduce deforestation are highly based on both logic of consequence and logic of appropriateness, even though costs and benefits are given most weight. To be able to reduce emissions sufficiently, measures to reduce deforestation is claimed to be the most cost efficient measure available, and a prerequisite to achieving the goals through reasonable costs. This is the measure that gives the most reduced emissions for the money. Based on perceived consequences it is the right thing to do. But REDD+ is also claimed to have multiple benefits for biodiversity and development, which strengthens the appropriateness of these measures.

Norms do not determine behavior by themselves. Scott’s three institutional pillars seek to explain behavior, and show how the three pillars -rules, norms and information work together. Rules often include sanctions if the rules are not followed, and may in itself motivate compliance. Norms make the actor feel obliged to act, because its perceived as the right thing to do. Norms may also involve negative social sanctions, in addition to the self-regulation due to moral and conscience. Information and knowledge are essential for understanding why a certain act is right, and legitimizes the rules. And not least, without information and knowledge, decision makers would not be capable of making the right decisions (Jentoft, 2003). Norms are standards of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity. Norms regulate what actors do, and are connected to their identity and an expression of how they

define themselves and their interests. “Norms not only constrain behavior because actors are worried about the cost of doing so; they also constrain behavior because they are connected to a sense of self” (Barnett, 2008: 169).

REDD+ and the NICFI have several normative aspects. The basis for international cooperation on climate issues, and that developed countries take responsibility, is the understanding that those countries mainly responsible for the climate change due to high emissions also are responsible for taking the cost. This has developed into a norm. For rich countries one has extra high expectations of them contributing. This also goes for Norway; – the Norwegian wealth is even based on the highly emitting oil production. For REDD+ and the NICFI there are additional normative aspects. There is a perception that this is “the best” measure, also because of the multiple benefits. Therefore one should contribute to this effort. As discussed in this section, norms tell us what is “right” behavior and what is expected behavior. Norms are important parts of cultural codes, and contributes to defining who we are. Who we perceive ourselves to be, and how we wish others to see us is important for understanding behavior. This brings us to the literature on identity, interests and status seeking, which I now review in turn.

### **3.4 Identity and interests in a constructivist perspective**

An actor’s identity is decisive for how the actor wishes to appear, for itself and for others. I argue, drawing upon a constructivist perspective, that this is valid for individuals, groups and states. Hence identity is a central motivational force for behavior. “The two basic tenets of constructivism are (1) that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and (2) that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature” (Wendt, 1999: 1). According to Ruggie (1998) constructivism is about human consciousness and its role in international life (Ruggie, 1998: 856. Referred to in Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2008). Meaning is socially constructed, identities and interests are created by the actor’s cultural environment. This argues against a materialist view of interests, and claim that interests are cognitions or ideas. Interests can simply be explained as based on beliefs about the world, goals or desires. Motivation for achievement can also explain interests. Achievement implies a social standard about what counts as a legitimate aspiration, and hence is cultural. Symbolic interactionists



argue that many interests or goals are made up by identities, schemas about the self. So interests are socially and culturally created, aside from those based in basic biological needs (material). But also the materially based interests are results of learning, and hence partly social. We have learned what fulfills our biological needs; what food we eat, how to keep warm, the use of energy. And we have perceptions of things value that motivates us to pursue them. These perceptions are learned, from interaction with nature, and through socialization (Howe, 1994. Referred to in Wendt, 1999). As states are not biological beings, it is easier to explain their interests through a cognitive approach than a material. All states have the material interests of security and stability, but behavior can also be explained from the states' identity and relationship to the world.

Alexander Wendt in his seminal works describes how states' identities and interests are constituted by ideas. These ideas are the result of continuous interaction among states; a process of social construction. Wendt was important in establishing constructivism as a major theory within political science and his ideas has later been picked up by many other scholars. Social processes and practices, what we do, defines who and what we are, and produces agents and their identity. The international environment has gradually changed, and is now much more capable of collective action, despite anarchy. "[...] identities and interests are a continuing outcome of interaction, always in process [...]" (Wendt, 1999:316). When interacting, states seek to get what they want, and at the same time uphold the image of themselves. To uphold a positive identity is a goal and motivational factor for behavior, it is part of shaping the interests. For Norway it is an interest to reproduce the identity and image as an altruistic aid donor and environmental pioneer. This reproduction does not take place in a vacuum, but as mentioned through interaction with other actors. Identities and interests are learned and reinforced in response to how actors are treated by significant others. This is known as "reflected appraisals" or "mirroring", as the idea is that actors grow identities based on how they perceive others to see them. The power and status of the other, and degree of dependency between the actors play affect the significance for constructing identity (Wendt, 1999). Wendt claims that interdependence, common fate, homogeneity and self-restraint are main contributors in creating collective identities and in enabling cooperation. The first three are important in forming a collective identity, while self-restraint enables the process of forming a collective identity. The more of the factors present, the more likely is a collective identity (Wendt, 1999). In the case of the international climate negotiations, interdependence and common fate clearly are present. I would argue that homogeneity, and to some degree

self-restraint, is not. When it comes to REDD, which has been more successful as to reaching an agreement, interdependence and common fate is present. One can argue that there is a greater sense of homogeneity related to the value of rainforests and the normative aspects of protecting rainforests that have enabled an agreement. Also there is a promise of self-restraint, in the sense that participating developing countries pledge to take their part of the responsibility through protective measures and control, while developed countries have agreed to take the main responsibility of reduction of emissions domestically. The NICFI is to a large degree an effort for the common good, and an example of a national contribution to the international cooperation that is based on common identity and common fate.

I will argue that the Norwegian identity has been a strong motivational factor for the NICFI, as for the other “altruistic” parts of Norwegian foreign policy. But I also argue that this does not exclude the possibility for other interests, and these other interests are not necessarily coherent with the identity. In the following paragraphs I will discuss how realism and liberalism explains interests.

### **3.5 Other perspectives on motives for foreign policy –Realism**

Within realism, there are different ‘schools’ explaining what shapes foreign policy. One of them, ‘Innenpolitik’ theories, stress the influence of domestic factors on foreign policies. Among these factors are political and economic ideology and national character. Foreign policy can be understood as a product of a country’s internal dynamics. Hence one can understand the NICFI as a product of how domestic actors have put climate and forest on the agenda. Offensive realism argues that the international system is most influential on foreign policies. Defensive realism argues that the system drives some kinds of state behavior, but not others. Both explain motivations to be based on the need for security. Neoclassical realism combines internal and external variables, arguing that the scope and ambition of a country’s foreign policy is first and foremost by its place in the international system, especially by its relative material power capabilities. Foreign policy choices are made by actual political leaders and elites, and so it is their perceptions of relative power that matter, not simply relative quantities of physical resources or forces in being. Leaders do not always have absolutely freedom, so power analysis must also look at the strength and structure relative to their societies (Rose, 2010).

In my view realism is not the most suitable theory for explaining climate policies, as this area of foreign policy contains few aspects of power and security. If climate change were to be seen as a security threat to Norwegian interests the realist approach could have more weight. The “Innenpolitik” approach of how internal domestic dynamics shape foreign policy, and the role of the national character, are interesting, and I would claim supports my view of how identity is important for foreign policy. I’ll now turn to liberalism.

### **3.6 Other perspectives on motives for foreign policy –Liberalism**

Liberalism offers a somewhat different explanation of interests. “No one denies that states act on the basis of perceived interests, and few would deny that those interests are often egoistic.” This is central for realism, but most theories agree. The difference is how one understands interests to be constituted (Wendt,1999: 113). Realists see interests as material, rather than socially based. Realists explain interests based on human nature, anarchy and material capabilities. The material basis of power and interests are widely accepted throughout IR. To counter this argument one must show how ideas, norms and institutions can explain behavior. Neoliberalism explains behavior in the frame of power and interests versus ideas, norms and institutions, but do not see power and institutions as based in ideas, norms and institutions (Wendt, 1999). In liberalism foreign policy behavior is explained on the basis of domestic factors. Utilitarian liberalism combines the liberal basis with the assumption that actors are seeking to maximize own utility as rational actors. Domestic interests shape foreign policy behavior. Actions are based on the preferences of individuals. All actors seek to maximize own utility, at the lowest possible cost. The actor will choose among the available alternatives the alternative that gives highest utility at the lowest cost. Utility can be divided into categories of policy-making power and financial means, and the assumption is that actors strive to maximize both. The basic interest is to secure survival, only when survival is secured can the utility maximizing goals be pursued. All other motives are can be linked to the goal of survival and maximizing utility (Ritterberger, 2001).

Political leaders are active on the domestic and international arena at the same time, trying to reach their goals by playing at the two arenas simultaneously. They meet different and sometimes contradictory pressures and constraints from the two arenas. Their behavior can only be understood when both factors are included. At the national level, groups seek to

influence political actors, to influence the policy making in the preferred direction (Milner, 1980).

Utilitarian liberalism states that actors in all situations seek their own interests of maximizing utility, and this is a useful approach for understanding possible motives of offsetting and economic interests connected to the NICFI. Milner (1997) describes how political leaders act as agents, and how they have to consider, and are influenced by, both international and domestic factors. This supports my description of how, in the case of the NICFI, environmental NGOs as well as oppositional political parties put pressure on the government to commit to REDD+. There are also international expectations of rich countries as Norway contributing. Norway's standing in the international system also plays a role, and I will in the last part of this chapter discuss how status may function as a motivational factor.

### **3.7 Status-seeking**

A possible motivation of state behavior that does not fit entirely into any of the 'schools of thought' approach to interests outlined above is status-seeking. It is frequently claimed that Norway holds a high status internationally for its environmental work and contributions to solve the climate crisis. By referring to and emphasizing Norway's status, politicians and media gives an impression of status as important. "Social status is one of the most important motivations for human behavior [...] it seems unlikely that adequate explanations of inter-state phenomena can be constructed on the assumption that status motives are unimportant" (Wohlforth & Kang, 2009: 1-2). As states are made up by people, and led by individuals, one should consider the role status-seeking can have in influencing behavior. "To deserve, to acquire, and to enjoy the respect and admiration of mankind, are the great objectives of ambition and emulation" (Smith, 2004 (1759). Referred to in Wolf, 2011). Status means being in a position worthy of respect and recognition, which all people seek. If individuals identify themselves with their respective state, the state's status can act as a motivational force for individuals.

Decision makers and nations demands respect from other actors on the international arena. Respect is important because it confirms an actor's rank (or status). When this recognition is given through interaction, it breeds sympathy, trust, mutual identification and open discussion; which all favors a cooperative climate. Disrespect challenges the actor's self-

esteem, and creates negative feelings. Actors have a perception of own status, and an interest in preserving this social status. Respect strengthens the perceived status, while disrespect weakens it. Respect and recognition confirms one's sense of importance (Wolf, 2011). As discussed in the small state section in this chapter, there are indications of Norway perceiving itself to be important, even though being a small state. When Norway is offered signs of recognition and respect this perception of importance and status is confirmed. "Individuals may be particularly interested in being respected as legal equals. Yet, they also want society to acknowledge their specific efforts for the common good" (Honneth, 1996. Referred to in Wolf, 2011:111). Social groups also have these struggles for recognition, seeking respect for their contributions.

When Norway is praised for the NICFI, it tells Norwegians that the substantial contribution is noticed and appreciated. Not receiving the perceived rightful attention, being overlooked or neglected may have just as much negative effect on the actor's self-esteem as criticism. Not being recognized minimizes the feeling of social value and sense of importance. We feel that others owe us respect, and we claim respect. We may also seek admiration and popularity, but don't react as strongly if not given to us. In politics, prestige is important, it means being recognized (and accredited) for achievements. Prestige means having the capability for achieving political ends. Prestigious political actors thus are considered capable, important, and valuable (Markley, 2000. Referred to in Wolf, 2011). By promoting the NICFI Prime Minister Stoltenberg and former Minister of the Environment have received much of the honor for the initiative, and obtained high status and prestige.

When Norwegian state leaders represent Norway abroad, they first and foremost are seen as Norwegians. It is the social identity based on national identity that is most prominent, not their personal identities. Social identity theory (SIT) is an important basis for the IR literature on status and is founded on the assumption that individual and social identities are two separate categories. The argument is that there is a difference between interpersonal situations and group situations. The assumption is that social behavior is based on group membership. It also assumes that people seek to obtain or maintain a positive social identity (Brown, 2000). A positive identity, and positive feedback from others- as identity is created in the relationship between how we view ourselves and the response we get from others, boosts our self-esteem.

The Self-esteem Hypothesis describes how positive intergroup differentiation result in elevated self-esteem, meaning that people feel better about themselves if emphasizing the

ingroup's advantages and good qualities through comparison with the outgroup (Brown, 2000). I find this useful for explaining Norwegian media coverage, and Norwegian politicians, that focuses heavily on Norway accomplishments, and tendency to highlight how much more we are contributing than others. SIT is essentially a theory of group differentiation: how group members can make their ingroup(s) distinctive from and, whenever possible, better than outgroups. Self-evidently, therefore, groups which discover themselves to be similar to each other should be especially motivated to show intergroup differentiation (Brown, 1984a; Turner 1978. Referred to in Brown 2000 ). This may, in the case of Norwegians emphasizing own achievements compared to other, comparable actors, have the effect of elevating own self-esteem. It may be that group members seeks to highlight similarities with other groups to feel a sense of common identity, while hanging on to their distinctive features to satisfy their identity needs. Members to low-status groups may response with "identity-protecting". One of the strategies may be to ease the effects of the lower status by claims like "even if we're poor, we're not all poor"(Doosje et al., 1995b. Referred to in Brown, 2000). In the Norwegian context one may find tendencies of sentiments of "even if we're a small country, we're not without significance". For a small country, it can be more important to have significant achievements to show to, to demonstrate own importance, both to others and for own self-esteem. "States are not gigantic calculating machines; they are hierarchically organized groups of emotional people" (Hysmans, 2010:462. Referred to in Wolf, 2011:118). Thus reactions to respect or disrespect may be just as strong on the international level, depending on the degree of identification with the nation state or leaders. Hence one may claim that positive international attention to the nation or the leaders may boost the collective self-esteem if there is a high degree of identification. And political leaders are probably just as affected by this as everyone else. One sees in the media coverage of the NICFI that Stoltenberg and Solheim are elevated in a way that gives the impression that they should, as individuals, be given credit for the initiative. By focusing on these leaders their individual status as politicians may be improved, which may have a motivational effect. Recognition given to state leaders, as representatives for the country, also has an effect on the collective self-esteem.

Being given respect for one's rights, values, achievements and social importance is also useful in material terms. Therefor it may be hard to distinguish respect (status)-seeking behavior and materially motivated behavior (Wolf, 2011). There may be various motivations working simultaneously. That there are material or moral incentives, does not exclude the possibility

for other motivational factors, as motivation connected to identity or status. Wolf's article focuses more on conflicts connected to disrespect, but I find the arguments useful also for my thesis, by explaining the importance of status and respect, and how status and respect may be a motivation for "positive" action. When seeing states as actors one in a way humanizes them. I rather argue that, as argued before, states are led and represented by individuals, these individuals play a central role in directing the state's behavior, as well as the motivation for the behavior. At the international level state leaders may seek to raise their own status as well as the collective status of their country.

Arguing that status plays a motivational role for foreign policy is based on certain assumptions of the international environment. Work on status in international politics are based on the following assumptions:

1) Informal hierarchies of status recur in world politics[...]; 2) "Status" is a recognized position in a social hierarchy, implying relations of dominance and deference. Status implicates such concepts as prestige, esteem, honor, standing, rank, and face. It is socially constructed in that it achieves meaning through collective beliefs and social processes; 3) People prefer high status[...] (also) as an end in itself[...]; 4) Leaders and elites[...] derive utility from the status of their states; 5) Status is a positional good, in that its value depends on social comparison to others[...]; 6) among the great powers in international politics, claims to status cannot be adjudicated by some higher authority [...] anarchy generates not only competition for security, but also competition over hierarchy" (Wohlforth & Kang, 2009: 3-4).

There would be no higher or lower status without a hierarchy, that is why it is important for Norway to emphasize that it is doing more compared to others. As the fourth assumption shows, one can argue that a high status of the state also is beneficial for its leaders. My findings show how the NICFI has contributed to opening doors for Norwegian leaders, and given Norway a more central role in parts of the international climate negotiations.

There are challenges connected to applying SIT in the field of IR, connected to external validity and use of, and translation between, different disciplines. Another challenge of the SIT theory is that it is based on experiments on small groups, and the results may not be directly transferred to the state-level (Hymans, 2002). Among the challenges when studying status as a driving force is that motives are mixed and interdependent. Higher status may bring wealth and/ or security, as well as influence and power. Also motives are generally

unobservable, and a given behavior may be consistent with many motives. “Status is an intersubjectively held belief, and as such is hard to measure [...]” (Wohlforth & Kang, 2009: 12). In my analysis chapter I will have to consider these challenges. Distinguishing different motives, and motives from goals is challenging. For identifying motives I will have to base my argument on findings from my media analysis, and not least, knowledge about the process and perceptions of my interview objects.

### **3.8 Concluding remarks**

Foreign policy is a field of complex motivations and goals. When seeking to understand the complexities behind the NICFI I find it useful to take a wide theoretical approach. In this chapter I have discussed how Norway as a small state has limitations in the international system, but how the Norwegian wealth creates opportunities. I have looked at how we can understand altruism, and how perceptions of altruistic motivations in foreign policy are part of the Norwegian self-image. I further argue that norms are central for understanding behavior, and I discuss how identity, interests and status also are important motivational factors for foreign policy. This is not a “theory driven” thesis, aiming at changing or contributing to the theoretical literature. It is rather a thesis focusing on the empirics, with an aim of explaining the process and motivation behind a concrete part on Norwegian foreign policy; the NICFI. The theory will be important for identifying and explaining different motives and interests. Rather than focusing solely on one theoretical approach, I will use the theoretical approach I find relevant when discussing empirical findings. I will now turn to the discussion of methodological considerations related to this thesis.



## **4.0 Methods chapter**

In this thesis, I have two interrelated research questions. Firstly, I seek to establish an overview of the process behind the NICFI. This includes describing the context, identifying important actors and arguments to understand how REDD+ and the NICFI became important aspects of Norwegian climate policy. Secondly I seek to answer the question of what motivated the government to establish the NICFI. It is possible to get a general idea of what the process was by comparing different sources. Identifying motivations is more complex. Motivations are often hidden, and motivations and spin-off effects are often difficult to tell apart. Therefore it is less likely that I will accomplish to making absolute claims of what motivated the government, but I seek to argue how different aspects may have motivational functions.

In this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the research methods I used to address my research questions, in terms of the conceptual background and justifications for methods chosen and my application of these methods in my specific study.

### **4.1 Research design: Case study**

Case studies entail detailed and intensive analysis of a single case. Case study research is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question (Stake, 1995. Referred to in Bryman, 2008: 52). The case study-design is the most appropriate design to conduct an in-depth empirical investigation. My thesis treats the development of the NICFI as a case study and aims to investigate the process behind a policy, and to identify motivations for this policy. The case study is time limited to 2005-2012 when it comes to the development of REDD+ internationally, which is the backdrop for the NICFI case study. The NICFI process itself was initiated in the fall of 2007, so my analytical timeframe is from 2007 until March 2012 when I conducted data collection.

The aim of this thesis is not to challenge existing theory or establish new ones, but rather apply theory to categorize and analyze empirical findings relating to the development of a new policy and the complexity of motivations surrounding it. This can contribute to an increased understanding of how different factors play a role in policy making. A case study

analytical approach is criticized in some methods literature for its weak ability to produce findings that can be generalized (Bryman, 2008). However, it is not the main priority of this thesis to produce generalizable findings, but rather to enhance the understanding of this concrete case. “The crucial question is not whether the findings can be generalized to a wider universe but how well the researcher generates theory out of the findings” (Mitchell 1983; Yin 2003. Referred to in Bryman, 2008: 57). Furthermore, the case selected is of enough importance to Norwegian foreign policy and interesting enough in highlighting a “small state’s” engagements in global politics that it has intrinsic value as an international relations study.

#### **4.2.0 Methods for data- gathering**

In answering my two interrelated research questions, analytical tasks included getting an overview of the process, mapping actors, pinpointing chronology and identifying key arguments for the policy. I have used two methods in carrying out these tasks; analysis of official documents and media and semi-structured interviews of relevant actors.

##### **4.2.1 Official documents**

I have gathered a great number of official documents and reports, some dealing directly with the NICFI and others more generally about climate policy or REDD+ internationally. What has been important to keep in mind are that these are not neutral sources of information, but rather biased of nature (Scott, 1990. Referred to in Bryman, 2008). As one scholar put it; “[...] such documents can be interesting precisely because of the bias they reveal” (Abraham, 1994. Referred to in Bryman, 2008: 521). However, they offer insights of the process, in the official motivation for the policy, objectives and goals, as well as the government’s perception of own actions and of the situation the policy is meant to address. Applied together with other sources, official documents can contribute to greater knowledge of the case. The reports I have used are either produced by or for the government, and for the same reason these should be considered as biased. What I concretely did was to attempt to get an overview of relevant documents by systematically searching the government’s web-page, though with a focus on the web-page of the Ministry of Environment.

### **4.2.2 Media analysis**

I found that newspaper articles-dealing with the NICFI, were more varied in their approach to the case, and include statements of government officials, reviews of the policy and the government, references to praise as well as criticism of the government and the policy. I found that the newspaper articles I analyzed gave less “factual” information about the NICFI, but on the other hand they offered valuable insight to how the NICFI was presented by the government and how it was perceived by others. When collecting data for this part of the analysis, I first decided to focus on one daily Norwegian newspaper. I chose Aftenposten mainly based on their high coverage of climate issues compared to other daily newspapers. I applied the search function on Aftenposten’s webpage. I had to try several search words to find the one that generated most relevant findings, and I ended up using “regnskog” (rainforest). This search generated 317 articles, among them 230 that were published between 2007 and March 2012. Among those of relevance to the NICFI I randomly collected 30 articles.

### **4.2.3 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews can provide insight into the knowledge and perceptions of the interviewee. The focus is on what the interviewee views as important in explaining events and answering the interviewer’s questions. By beginning with more open questions, the interviewee is allowed to freely account for her insight and understanding of the case. Following up with more direct questions ensures that the interviewees perceptions of particular issues are revealed (Bryman, 2008). I identified potential interviewees through purposive sampling: “The goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed” (Bryman, 2008: 415). As the aim of the interviews was to get further information on the process of the NICFI and opinions on motivational factors I, focused on interviewees with knowledge of the process, so this was not an attempt of representative selection but rather strategic targeting. I found representatives of NGOs to be good sources, based on their knowledge of Norwegian climate policies. I also initially wanted to interview representatives for the political parties involved in negotiating a broad political climate policy agreement (“Klimaforliket”), as they could offer insights to the political debate and process. Most of them turned out to be inaccessible after agreeing to do an interview, so I ended up with only two “political” interviews. I initially contacted the organizations and political parties without preferences as to who I would like to interview. I presented my topic, and asked who would be most suited based on knowledge to the subject. This turned out to all be men, but I

considered gender to be of little relevance in this case. I aimed at a minimum of ten interviews, but ended up with nine. Some of the interviews were conducted face to face, at the interviewee's office. A couple were conducted over the phone, and two interviews were done in writing through e-mail. This was due to the interviewees' busy schedules. The interviews that were not conducted face to face have limited value as to analyzing the manner of how the interviewee have responded. But they still offer insights to knowledge and perceptions of the interviewees. I started the interviews by presenting myself and informing the interviewee of the approach to, and objective of, my thesis. Then I asked some introductory questions about the interviewee; whether he wished to be identified and if recording the interview was all right. I do not cite the interviewees by name in the thesis, but have assigned each interview a number. An overview of the interviews, identified with name, and name of organization and political party can be found in an appendix of the thesis. I started the interviews with open questions about the process: When did Norway become interested in forest? Who were the central actors? Why did forest measures become important in Norwegian climate policy? What role did Norway have in the international development of REDD+? The interviewees talked freely, and many of them elaborated, so they ended up covering more of several of the questions in my interview guide by own initiative. I followed up with more specific questions about what motivated the government; whether Norway has any interests in supporting REDD+; what Norway's status is in the international climate negotiations; what effect the NICFI has had on Norway's international standing. The full interview guide is found in the second appendix. In addition to recording I took notes during the interviews, but kept aware that it should not disturb the flow of the interviews or my focus on listening.

### **4.3 Methods of analysis**

I loosely apply grounded theory as an approach for my analysis. This means that data collection, analysis and theory stands in close relationship to one another (Strauss and Corbin, 1998: in Bryman, 2008). "Grounded theory [...] is an approach to the generation of theory out of data. [...] in many cases, reports using a grounded theory approach generate concepts rather than theory as such" (Bryman, 2008: 541). The key analytic tool of grounded theory is coding. This is a process where data is organized in categories and given names. "Unlike quantitative research that requires data to fit into preconceived standardized codes, the researcher's interpretations of data shape his or her emergent codes in grounded theory"

(Charmaz, 2000: 515 in Bryman, 2008: 542). I first organized my material based on my two research questions, and then started categorizing my findings. It is important to emphasize that these categories are based on my interpretation of the data. It should be mentioned that I have conducted the translation of written material in Norwegian, as well as the material from the interviews. Throughout the analysis I applied theoretical approaches to discuss my findings. Much of the data contributed to expanding my knowledge and understanding of my case. Other findings were suited to be used as quotes, as they could exemplify and strengthen my arguments. In the analysis of all my data it has been important to be conscious of the position and role of the source, to put statements and attitudes into context.

#### **4.4.0 Reliability and validity in qualitative research**

Reliability and validity are important criteria for assessing the scientific value of research. However, there is a debate on whether criteria as reliability and validity are relevant for qualitative research. There has been developed parallel categories that are believed more appropriate to social science. Among these are credibility, transferability and dependability- paralleling internal validity, external validity and reliability respectively.

##### **4.4.1 Internal validity**

Internal validity deals mainly with the question of causality. It is concerned with whether conclusions that depend on causal relationships hold water. A parallel to internal validity is the criteria of credibility; how believable are the findings? The credibility of the findings depends on conducting the research according to established practices (Bryman, 2008). There are uncertainties connected to finding evidence of motivations; both because they often are hidden, and also because spin-off effects and goals may be hard to separate from motivations. These categories may also be overlapping. Therefore I refrain from making claims of such evidence, but rather seek to substantiate how the identified categories may function as motivational factors. The further internal validity, or credibility if you like, of the process and categories of motivations is strengthened by similar findings in independent sources across interviews and through triangulation between media, official documents and interviews.

##### **4.4.2 External validity**

External validity is concerned with issues of whether the findings can be generalized beyond the case in question. Representative sampling strengthens the external validity. Qualitative

studies tend to go in depth rather than taking a wide approach. The proposed parallel to external validity is transferability. To ensure transferability researchers should produce rich accounts of details. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985 in Bryman, 2008) this provides others with a database for making judgments about possible transferability. It is not the main objective of this thesis to produce findings which can be generalized beyond this case. However I have identified some characteristics of the Norwegian identity and perceived international role that may be applicable in other, but similar contexts. I also believe that the categories I have identified, including norms, identity and role of status, may be applied to other cases seeking to unpack policy motivations. If cases where fundamentally different norms and identities are present, parallel with a corresponding foreign policy, it would strengthen the argument that identity and norms play a role in policy formation.

#### **4.4.3 Reliability**

Reliability is concerned with the question of whether the results of a study are repeatable. Central to reliability is whether measures used for concepts are consistent. A parallel to reliability proposed by Lincoln and Guba is dependability. Are the findings likely to apply at other times? Through ensuring that records are kept over all phases of the study, peers can act as auditors (Bryman, 2008). The written documents I have applied are accounted for, and available for the public. Throughout my thesis I seek to demonstrate how I have interpreted the findings of this material, and in such it should be doable to trace, and repeat, the study. Based on the interview guide and an overview over which organizations and political parties the interviewees were selected from, the interviews should be repeatable as well.

## **5.0 Analysis**

REDD+ has throughout the last years become a central part of the international efforts to limit climate change. Norway is through the NICFI making a substantial contribution to this effort. So far in this thesis I have accounted for the international context around climate change and REDD+, Norway's role as a small state in the international system, and the process behind the NICFI and Norway's support to REDD+. In the analysis chapter I will discuss the questions of motivation of Norway's involvement in REDD+, and whether there may be alternative explanations to the officially stated motivations.

The question is why they are doing what they are doing, in this context; what are the motives of the Norwegian government to prioritize REDD+ as a main area of focus in their climate efforts? The natural place to start when looking into motivation is to investigate what the actors under examination present as key motivations. In this chapter I will first present the officially stated motivation, and based on the theory discuss the nature of the official arguments-primarily altruism and Norwegian foreign policy identity. Then I will turn to assessing what other motivations I based on my material can identify. I will discuss the possibility of economical motives and offsetting as motivational factors, and then discuss the role of norms and status. Motivations and spin-offs are difficult to separate, but I will argue that my findings indicate that the NICFI has positive spin-off effects that may have functioned as motivational factors.

### **5.1.0 Arguments; officially stated motivation**

Having carried out media analysis and a round of semi-structured interviews, I argue that the officially stated motivations for Norwegian contributions to REDD+ through the NICFI can be summarized under the following headings; "it's necessary", "it's an efficient choice", "it's the right thing to do" and "it suits Norwegian climate political goals".

#### **5.1.1 "It's necessary"**

First of all, taking early action is necessary to avoid more than 2° C increase in global temperatures, compared to preindustrial levels. If temperatures are kept within the 2° range, the most severe consequences can be avoided (The Ministry of Environment (a), 2008). This

is the main motive for initiating climate measures in the first place. The need for early action represents an urgency, not only to take action, but also to achieve results in the shape of reduced emissions and stabilized temperatures. Prime Minister Stoltenberg exemplified this sense of urgency and necessity: “I hope we can achieve success on more topics than forests, but since forests can give reductions equal to a third of what we need by 2020, it’s of importance that we succeed on forests” (Stoltenberg in Barstad, 2009). Likewise, then Ministry of the Environment Solheim put the urgency this way: “There is no other action in any other country that is close to having the same effect on the climate as reduced deforestation in Brazil” (Solheim in Barstad & Magnus, 2009). The focus is on reduction of global emissions, and Stoltenberg and Solheim argued for the perceived efficiency of reduced deforestation. The Ministry of Environment gains further support from international consensus, asserting that there is an international consensus over the potential for reduced emissions in reducing deforestation and forest degradation of rainforests. They cite IPCC findings, that indicate that emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries count for 17, 4% of human made emissions (The Ministry of Environment (a), 2008). The Ministry bases their argument on the Stern report when stating that “it will only be possible to achieve large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation if these emissions are included in a global post-2012 climate regime” (Ministry of Environment (a), 2008). Hence a strong argument, and a motivation for supporting REDD+, is that reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation it’s claimed to be a prerequisite for reaching the goals of limiting the rise in global temperatures. Stoltenberg states that both domestic reduction of emissions in developed countries and reduced deforestation are important in this process. He continues with claiming that without successful reduction of deforestation, we won’t succeed in the battle against climate changes. Reductions of emissions of a ton CO<sub>2</sub> through reduced deforestation would cost as little as 5% of the cost of the equivalent reductions in Norway (Hornburg, 2010).

### **5.1.2 “It’s an efficient choice”**

REDD+ is promoted as the “right” measure for several reasons. It is not only stated to be probably the most rapid and efficient when it comes to reducing emissions. It is also believed to be the cheapest way to reduce emissions efficiently. Among the most important scientific background for the Norwegian climate and forest initiative, referred to in documents is the Stern report ( The Stern review on the Economics of Climate Change, 2006) and the UN



Climate Panel's report from 2007. The report emphasizes the potential of cheap reductions of emissions linked to forests, and the importance of realizing this potential (The Ministry of Environment (c), 2007). The Stern report estimates costs of not taking action, but needing to adapt to climate change to be as high as 20% of the total BNP. If taking cost efficient actions now, the cost may be as low as 1% of the total BNP. Measures taken in developing countries are estimated to give three times the effect (relative to the cost), compared to more costly measures in developed countries. In addition one expects positive effects for the local environment as well as for development (Stern, 2006).

Cost-efficiency is a central principle in Norwegian climate policy. According to the government, it does not matter where reductions are made, the important thing is to get as much reductions as possible. Based on this, and the estimates that efforts to reduce emissions in developing countries only will cost a third compared to efforts in developed countries, one may argue that cheap reductions are a goal. I argue that the perceived cost-efficiency of REDD+ measures also is a very central motive for choosing REDD+. Several of my interviewees point to cost efficiency, quick reductions and the potential scale of REDD+ as a central motivations for contributing to REDD+ (Interview 1, 6, 7). In many of the statements to the press concerning the initiative Stoltenberg and Solheim argue in favor of reduced deforestation as one of the most important solution to the climate crisis. Their arguments are heavily based on cost-efficiency and perceived efficient reductions of emissions. They also make use of comparisons with the long planned CO<sub>2</sub> cleaning facility at Mongstad, which is well known in Norway, to demonstrate the scale of the Norwegian contributions to rainforest-protection. Stoltenberg argued in 2008 that "the money we contribute with alone, give reductions of emissions equaling 25 Mongstad facilities. This equals almost half of Norway's emissions. That says everything about the proportions. And not just that. We can do it now, at once, and get immediate reductions in the global emissions. It doesn't get any better" (Stoltenberg in Mathismoen, 2008 (a)). Stoltenberg points to cost-efficiency and quick reductions of emissions when arguing in favor of rainforest-protection. Also when discussing the agreement with Indonesia to fund reductions of deforestation, the government compares reduced emissions with Mongstad. According to the government, the deal with Indonesia equals cuts in emissions from 700 Mongstad-facilities. Mongstad has been presented as the government's "moon-landing", and has been given a heavy symbolic meaning and prestige. Comparing the deal with Indonesia with Mongstad, and claiming that the reduction of emissions will equal 700 Mongstad-cleaning facilities is a clever way of demonstrating how

much more cost-efficient it is to take action to reduce emissions abroad compared to in Norway (Anonymous, 2010 (a)).

### **5.1.3 “And it’s also the right thing to do”**

The necessity of early action, the perceived efficiency of REDD+ concerning rapid reductions of emissions together with cost-efficiency are the dominating arguments for choosing REDD+. But there are also other arguments for why REDD+ is “the right thing to do” relating to multiple benefits and Norway’s other international commitments and interests.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs summarizes these positive multiple benefits succinctly: “Reducing deforestation and forest degradation also reduces greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, it results in the conservation of biodiversity, and may also contribute to sustainable development and the fight against poverty. The Government has therefore chosen to make forests a priority in its initiatives for the maintenance of ecosystem services” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011). The expected multiple benefits of REDD+ makes REDD+ a “morally right” measure. Compared to many possible measures in developed countries, that are feared to have negative consequences on economy, and even lifestyle, REDD+, at least on paper, instead have benefits. An interviewee pointed to how the rainforests provide livelihoods for many different peoples, and that the rainforests are home to more than half of the world’s species. The forest projects, he states, can have positive effects on sustainable development and biodiversity (Interview 8). The multiple benefits of REDD+ has created an image of REDD+ as the perfect solution, where all gains. There are no drawbacks. The climate, the environment, and people locally and nationally in countries that participate in REDD+ all gain on this. A criticism about the climate and forest initiative (and relevant for REDD+ as well) is the high risk of corruption when big sums of money are to be transferred to countries with poor structures. Solheim defends the Norwegian commitment by arguing that we can’t avoid risk, and that Norway is so committed because we are willing to take this economic and political risk (in Barstad, 2011). Implicitly this means that Norwegian government are so convinced that this is the “right” measure, and so important, that it’s worth taking the risk.

### **5.1.4 “REDD+ suits Norwegian climate policy”**

The many perceived positive aspects of REDD+, including cost-efficiency, quick reductions and multiple benefits suits Norwegian climate policy. They are coherent with the Norwegian

climate political goals, as discussed in the background chapter. REDD+ also appeared as a possibility for Norway to make a substantial contribution. According to one of my interviewees, these aspects also appealed to Stoltenberg personally (Interview 1). So to recapture, according to the government, Norway contributes to REDD+ because; it's necessary to reduce emissions quickly to avoid the worst scenarios of climate crisis. REDD+ offers cheap and quick way to reduce emissions and it has multiple benefits for biodiversity and development. It's presented as a climate and development political "kinder egg", which corresponds to a range of Norwegian goals and principles within climate, environment and development policies.

### **5.1.5 Theoretical discussion of official arguments**

All the official motives and goals are material, in that they are all linked to limiting climate change. There are no acknowledged motivations connected to this policy, besides the obvious interest in limiting climate change and the argument that REDD+ is a good policy fit for addressing this problem. The only goal that stands out is the one that Norway should be a pioneer; this is non-material, and can be linked to the question of status, which is discussed in detail later in this chapter. So, how then can one by the use of theory explain the Norwegian policy based on the official statements? As IR theories like realism and liberalism mainly focus on self-interests in different shapes as motivation for foreign policy, they do not fit well with the officially stated motivations and goals reviewed above. Overall, an underlying motive seems to be altruism, and this links up to a constructivist insight- the importance of identity in shaping behavior and expectations in international relations- the motives seem to be altruistic.

When the government explains its motives for the NICFI in terms that can be characterized as altruistic, or for the common good of all people, they follow a long tradition in Norway. It is connected to a self-perception, and an expectation (or ideal) of how we should act. In Norway it is widely expected that we should do good deeds, based on the needs of others. Own interests should not be part of the motivation for doing good deeds.

Altruistic motives for foreign aid have been emphasized by various governments and the Parliament over the years. It is based on solidarity, a claim that solidarity with other people is not limited by national borders. The main objective of foreign aid has been to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of the poor. This is also relevant to climate policy, even if

the challenges are different. Norway, that is among the richest nations in the world have a moral obligation to contribute to a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth. This altruism is claimed to partly being based on the Christian philosophy of universal brotherhood, as well as socialist solidarity (Stokke, 1989). The repeatedly focus on altruistic motives, that Norway solely works for the common good in its foreign policy has built a self-perception of Norway as an altruistic state. This perception is only challenged when conflicts between own interests and the common good appears, often connected to Norwegian economic interests (Leira, 2007). There is a self-perception of Norway as unique and morally praiseworthy, and an understanding that we have an obligation to spread "our model" to the world; internationalism, solidarity, social and economic equality. An often used characteristic is "Norway as a great humanitarian power" (Leira, 2007).

The Norwegian identity, to the degree one can claim that a nation has one identity, has a central role in understanding and explaining Norwegian foreign policy. The NICFI is in many ways a continuation of an established "tradition". An essential part of the Norwegian identity, or self-perception, is that Norway is a country that contributes internationally; Norway generously shares its wealth, and does so altruistically. The Norwegian identity as an altruistic nation is not a modern phenomenon, but is based on historical events and persons that have played (and been given) central roles and importance in the Norwegian nation building. Persons like Wergeland and Nansen set the standard, and most Norwegians want Norway to live up to the image they created of Norway (Leira, 2007). I find that the theory as well as the empirics supports this view. What we do defines who and what we are (Wendt, 1999). Norway could not have established an identity as "masters" of international aid, "a driving force" within climate policy or a peace nation without actions supporting this image. Military involvement in Afghanistan and Libya has contributed to a debate about Norway's identity as a peace nation. Failure to fulfill the Kyoto Protocol with regards to domestic reductions (Ibrekk n.d.) may challenge the perception of Norway as a pioneer within climate policy. This only demonstrates that identity and image is not created once and for all, it needs to be reproduced. If too many incidents break with the self-perception, or the view others hold, the identity and image may be altered.

In Norway's case, the identity itself is an incentive to "do good deeds" internationally. Through the NICFI Norway demonstrates that it is willing to take responsibility, and even doing more than one could expect related to Norway's size. I would claim that the perception of altruism is part of the Norwegian identity. Altruism is a motive, because altruistic actions

confirms and reproduces the national identity. It is important for Norway to contribute, without regards to self-interests, because “that is who we are”. Through the NICFI we can demonstrate “how good we are”, and this commitment gives us a better reputation (Interview 5).

According to Vatn (2005,) it is quite possible that there are truly altruistic acts. Policies are made by people, and people are capable of “doing good” without regard to own interests or personal rewards. But there is an unclear distinction between true altruism and selfish altruism. The incentive behind the NICFI may very well be altruistic, to combat climate change for the common good of all people. This holds no particular benefits for Norway part from the interest all countries, including Norway, has to limit the scale and effects of climate change. But as Vatn discusses, if we partly do this because it makes us feel good, or if it benefits us in any other way, it’s turning over to be selfish altruism. The deed isn’t less good, but it’s also beneficial for us.

As mentioned before, it is difficult to make claims, or find proof, of the real motives behind a policy. The government presents “the correct” image of what the policy is based on. Any other factors that are part of the equation, but not according to the ideal, are kept from the public. Altruism is a strong ideal connected to Norwegian foreign aid, and now climate policy. This part of Norwegian foreign policy is definitively based on a social rationality. But does social and individual rationality necessarily mutually exclude one another? At least within the political left it is not accepted to include own interests into this part of the foreign policy. But as I will argue in the following sections of my analysis, the NICFI (as with foreign aid and peace initiatives) have a function parallel to its main objective, and may be beneficial for Norway in several ways. Hence, according to Vatn, we are talking about selfish altruism.

### **5.2.0 Unspoken self-interests**

The empirical basis of this thesis beyond the analysis of official documents indicate that there may be unpronounced self-interests connected to the NICFI. And as most theories explain foreign policy on the basis of some kind of self-interests, I argue that there is a strong argument for investigating this further. Even if these self-interests are not the main motives, one has to consider how they could have played a role.

### 5.2.1 Offsetting

Even though it is clearly stated from the government's side that the NICFI is additional to domestic reductions of emissions, there are indications that the possibility of future offsetting, using emission reductions paid for abroad, can reduce the necessity of domestic reductions. If offsetting becomes a reality there is an economic interest in contributing to REDD+ through the NICFI. Several of my interviewees are of the opinion that the government considers offsetting reductions of emissions in the long run. "A part of the motivation may be to, in time, buy our way out. A lot of money goes into this, eventually it may turn into a system of quotas, cheap quotas. But until 2020 there will be no such system, and no direct offsetting" (Interview 1). Another NGO representative put it this way:

There is no doubt that Stoltenberg envisions a global system of carbon quotas, and that forest conservation would be included in this system. In the long run this may replace reductions at home. [...] Norway's position is not stated in the climate negotiations, and Norway does not have a clear position on what role REDD+ should have in a future climate regime, a market for quotas [...] There is every reason to think that Norwegian reductions can be replaced by contributions to forest conservation in the long run (Interview 3).

"Norway is internationally seen as willing to go far, but Norway tries to get out of its commitments in the cheapest possible way [...] Buying quotas is the main strategy" (Interview 5) Another interviewee stated an even more direct claim, arguing that the Norwegian Labor Party (Arbeiderpartiet) saw the NICFI as a way for Norway to get exempted from its obligations (Interview 4). Also leader of Venstre, Trine Skei Grande refers to the NICFI as "buying our way out" in an *Aftenposten* article. She warns that this may lead to less commitment to the climate issue domestically, if people are led to believe that our international contribution is enough (in Gedde-Dahl, 2012).

In the political climate agreement ("Klimaforliket"), the parties state that forest-measures must be included in a future international climate agreement, so the Norwegian financial contribution to forest measures will be a part of the Norwegian commitment ("Klimaforliket", 2008). This indicates, if not directly plans of offsetting, a wish to get "our money's worth". Contributions to reduce emissions through the NICFI should be "counted for", and considered part of the Norwegian commitment. By offsetting contributions to reduce emissions abroad would compensate for domestic emissions. This is not incompatible with Norway's

international commitments, but depending on the scale of offsetting, it may be incompatible with the government's goal of making two thirds of the reductions at home. In the latest debate, it seems like the goal of making two thirds of the reductions domestically is one of the issues up to discussion. This is no longer stated as a guarantee, as many perceived it to be when it was first announced. So there is some doubt about how long this goal will stand. Offsetting is clearly a material, economic, self-interest, as the cost of the reductions one will commit to will be far lower if the measures are conducted abroad. For the time being, it does not exist a system for direct offsetting, but there the Norwegian policy may have the effect of "political offsetting"; giving the impression of doing more than they in fact are doing. The government was under pressure to do more, and the NICFI eases this pressure (Interview 1). There is no evidence for claiming that the possibility for offsetting has been a main motivation for establishing the NICFI, but it may have been an additional good argument.

### **5.2.2 Clean conscience and business as usual?**

Linked to the issue of offsetting and "buying one's way out" is the possibility this gives to keep on with business as usual with a clean conscience. Several of my sources indicate, or directly claim, that the Norwegian contribution abroad is linked to an interest of continuing emissions at home.

Several scientists, among them James Hanson in NASA, have criticized Norway for focusing too narrowly on forests, trying to avoid more costly and complicated reductions back home by promoting and financing reductions of emissions in developing countries. Stoltenberg replied to the criticism by claiming that both reductions back home, and reduced emissions from reduced deforestation is necessary. Actions to reduce deforestation are cheap and effective, and should thus be given priority. This criticism is also shared by many developing countries. It is notable that Norway, like other developed countries, is more eager to talk about the benefits of possible reductions of emissions in developing countries, rather than pushing for increased reductions in developed countries. The argument that one gets more reduction for the money in developing countries is frequently used. This is based on a cost-benefit approach to the problem, not saying anything about the normative aspect (Hornburg, 2010).

A journalist in one of Norway's major daily newspapers argued that "by financing reduced deforestation rich countries as Norway can keep on with business as usual, with a clean conscience" (Mathismoen, 2012). The argument is that by focusing on reducing emissions in

other countries, even though rich countries take the cost, they do not take the cost of changing the system that is the problem in the first place. By financing reductions of emissions abroad equaling or more than own emissions, we do not have to change our way of living and producing. Without sufficient domestic action to reduce emissions, the promised funding to save rainforests has a taste of “political indulgence” (Anonymous (b), 2010). This author views the NICFI as a way to pay to get “absolution” for our sins which allows us to go on, without feeling bad. An NGO interviewee further supported this line of thinking, arguing “One may see this as buying rainforests that shall absolve one’s climate sins. Buy ones way out of own responsibilities [...] It may function as an excuse, slowing down the further work” (Interview 4). By contributing internationally we get a “clean climate conscience”, and are released of the pressure to work hard to find solutions for reducing own emissions. As also stated by the government, it is necessary to make reductions in Norway as well. If the NICFI makes the government, and the Norwegian population for that matter, content with what we already are doing, there is less incentive to prioritize the climate issue domestically. By “showcasing” the NIFCI Norway can demonstrate “how well we are doing”, and this can also ease the international pressure on domestic reductions. A Norwegian NGO interviewee, representing an organization that encourages Norwegians to make “green” decisions in their everyday life, spoke to this point: “The commitment to forests is mainly without direct self-interests. But not completely. Can show to own efforts, and be left off the hook when it comes to dealing with more difficult matters, but this is unconsciously[...] Norway is really a ‘crappy’ oil-nation, has succeeded in clouding this. It serves our own interests by allowing us to continue as a producer of fossil fuels [...] Are hoping for new technology, to avoid making difficult reductions” (Interview 5).

This said, there are also those who claim that the NICFI and further Norwegian contributions abroad does not affect Norwegian domestic climate policy (Interview 6). It’s also claimed that Norway actually does a lot domestically, including developing new technology for oil-production. And Norway has clean electricity (Interview 2). Norway is far from the worst emitter, neither are the Norwegian emissions the biggest problem internationally. But Norway has set high goals for its climate policy, including a high degree of domestic reductions. The question is not whether Norwegian emissions make any big difference in the big picture, but whether the policy is consistent with the official goals.

It seems to be a discussion if focusing on measures abroad is consciously done to avoid focus on domestic reductions, or whether this rather is an unintentional effect of the policy. As with



offsetting, to keep on with “business as usual” with regards to production and consumption is also a material self-interest. Both of them could be explained by the utilitarian liberalism’s concept of maximizing own utility (Ritterberger, 2001). Solving the problem of high emissions in developed countries requires enormous investments in technology, and probably some changes in life-style and consumption, and not least transportation. Changes are necessary on many fields, and this is very costly both economically and politically. Hence it is not very dramatic to assume that leaders in developed countries, including Norway, see this as an incentive for alternative measures to reduce emissions. Reducing emissions through reduced deforestation probably is good for the climate, and hopefully for biodiversity and development in REDD+ countries. But it is also beneficial for the donor countries.

### **5.2.3 Improved relationships and enhanced influence**

Through the NICFI, Norway also works bilaterally, cooperating with countries as Indonesia and Brazil. It is very likely that close cooperation on one field over years, not to speak of major financial contributions, may have an effect on the relationship to the partner country. One interviewee commented on this, saying: “The Norwegian contribution may lead to better cooperation with for example Brazil, but politicians have not had any economic interest in this. Other countries, not naming any, probably would make demands to partner countries to a much larger degree than Norway” (Interview 6). Even if this is not among the incentives for pursuing this policy, it is still an effect of the policy that the decision makers most likely are aware of, and in the future may reap the benefits of. Several of my interviewees point to that Norway’s role in the international climate negotiations has changed due to the NICFI, especially as concerns forests. In issues regarding REDD+ Norway now is a country other countries look to, and Norway’s influence has increased (Interview 6,7,8). The Norwegian commitment has also been beneficial for Norwegian state officials, making Norwegian leaders more attractive. It has given Norwegian leaders the possibility to meet with more central actors, being noticed and listened to (Interview 6).

In the sections above I’ve discussed the role of altruism in Norwegian foreign policy, and I’ve highlighted some possible non-altruistic incentives for the NICFI. As discussed in the theory chapter, different IR theories have different approaches to interests, both regarding where they come from and what a state’s interests are. In realism security and power are the dominating state motives (Rynning, 2009). At first glance the realist approach doesn’t seem fit to explain

Norwegian climate policy. For the sake of discussion, if one sees climate change as a security threat, either for Norwegian interests abroad or for the Norwegian territory, the realist approach may be fruitful. Depending of the scale of climate change, it may be a threat to stability and peace caused by resource scarcity and worsening life conditions. In that sense efforts to limit climate change may be seen as preventive measures to promote security. Power may be related to economic interests or increased influence. Securing or improving economic capacity and power, increased influence in the countries and regions with which one cooperates, as well as in the international system are possible explanations. However, I do not find the realist approach adequate for explaining these matters given the complex picture of motivations and interests painted above.

What I find more useful is the utilitarian liberalism; that actors seek to maximize own utility (Ritterberger, 2001). This covers social, economic and political aspects. It's in the actor's interest to improve its standing and capacity in all manners. Taking this approach, one understands actors to be choosing actions or measures based on different forms of self-interests. In my view this approach is suitable for explaining some of the non-altruistic aspects of the NICFI. If offsetting becomes a possibility within the REDD+ framework, Norway is in an exceptionally good position to take advantage of it, with big economic benefits. Also before offsetting possibly becomes an option, there are those who claim that the NICFI creates an opportunity for the government to escape dealing with complicated and expensive reductions of emissions domestically. This is a benefit for the government, as domestic measures are more controversial, and also costly in the sense of political popularity. It is also a benefit for the Norwegian economy, especially the production and transportation sectors. As to potentially improved relationships with partner countries, even though I have no empirics to back this, it is not unreasonable to think that new or more favorable opportunities for Norwegian enterprises are among the potential effects.

What my data does say something about, is Norway's role and influence in the international climate negotiations. It is a stated objective for Norway to be a pioneer, to have a leading role within international climate policy. The NICFI has contributed to give Norway an enhanced position, and has opened doors for Norwegian political leaders internationally (Interview 6). I do not claim that these issues are among the main motives, or objectives, of the NICFI, but I do think they are aspects of the Norwegian policy that are relevant when discussing policy formation. All this can be seen as maximizing own utility. In other words, perhaps these positive image spin-offs may not have been the primary motivation for establishing the NICFI

in the first place, but could be a motivation in the continuation, and strengthening these efforts over time.

Constructivism also recognizes that states have material interests, but according to Wendt (1999) it is easier to explain state interests with a cognitive approach than with a material approach. I will be discussing non-material motives later on. As to the economic incentives discussed above, constructivism would claim that the value of money and the economic system is socially created. But money has a material function, and hence economic interests are material interests. Economic interests may be understood in relation to needs of growth and improving life conditions. Among the three theoretical, approaches I have discussed here, I find the utilitarian liberalism most useful for explaining the interests of economic gain and increased influence. However, in the next sections of the analysis, where I will focus on the role of norms and status-seeking, I will take a constructivist approach that I argue sheds further light on the reasons for Norway's high profile activity under the umbrella of REDD+.

### **5.3 Responding to normative pressure as an 'oil-nation'**

Norms are central in creating interest as they function as a guide to perceptions of right and wrong. As culture and identity, norms are not static, but produced and reproduced, and they can change over time. Norms are connected to the identity and culture, as a part of the perception of who we are. Norms regulate behavior through the threat of social and legal sanctions when norms are broken. But norms also guide behavior because they are connected to a sense of self (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2008) and hence have a regulatory function on the side of the risk of punishment. Our norms tell us what is correct and expected behavior. If breaking the norms, one may alter this self-perception. By following the norms, the norms and self-perception are reproduced. The climate debate has normative aspects that function as incentives to action. It is claimed that rich countries as Norway has a moral obligation to contribute (Interview 7). The fact that Norway is an oil-producing country makes this moral obligation even stronger. Norway's commitment is in line with these normative expectations that we find both internationally and within Norway. Many of the principles in international climate policy are normative; they say something about how states and other actors should act. The polluter pays principle is maybe the most central. A common understanding of how those responsible for polluting also should take the cost is a prerequisite for a functioning

international climate policy. Without such normative expectations there would be no pressure for action. When references are made to Norway's obligations as an oil-producing nation, it is not the identity as an "oil-nation" that drives us to act, but the norm that tells us that we are morally obliged to act. According to Scott (Jentoft, 2003) knowledge is important (together with rules and norms) in creating interests and a basis for action. In Norway the norm that we should act was already established. Scientific knowledge from the Stern report and the IPCC climate report, and knowledge and experience of environmental groups as the Rainforest Foundation, contributed to identifying for the government what would be the preferred measures. Within FrP there is a higher degree of skepticism towards the scientific evidence, and hence the norm saying that we should act to reduce emissions is weaker.

## **5.4 Status-seeking**

As pointed to previously in this thesis, seeking status, respect and recognition are essential in motivating human behavior (Wolworth & Kang, 2009). Status is how we see ourselves compared to others, and how we perceive others to see us. Status is a part of what shapes our identity. A perception of high status forms a positive identity. Everybody seeks acceptance, and to be liked. Status seeking is not only a motivation for behavior on the individual level, but there is every reason to believe that it is a motivational force for states as well. As Hey (2003) claims, established democracies rather use foreign policy to seek popularity than legitimacy. Respect and recognition is important because it confirms an actor's perception of own status (Wolf, 2011). In the discussion of Norway as a small state in the background chapter I argued that Norway may have a need to demonstrate own importance through its actions. The actions in themselves, as the NICFI, are not sufficient to enhance the self-image. International recognition of Norway's efforts through the NICFI are essential for establishing a perception of high status.

There seem to be the general understanding that Norway's status in the climate negotiations is high, especially in the field of forests. The interviews conducted all support this view. Norway participates internationally with big delegations, this demonstrates interest and commitment. Norway is seen as willing to go far, seek solutions and contribute with money. "This gives prestige" (Interview 5). But interviewees also suggested that Norwegian actors seek this status. An NGO interviewee phrased it this way: "We like to see ourselves as of great

importance [...] Everybody knows who Norway is, has gotten a role (in the international process)” (Interview 2). My media study also supports this point, with comments relating to the issue of international status coming up regularly. For example a professor at the University of Oslo argued in *Aftenposten* that “the “new aid” first and foremost is about Norway’s strong need to stand out as a pioneer- By allocating enormous amounts on climate Norway has achieved to become a giant internationally” (Toje in Gedde-Dahl, 2011).

It’s also clear from statements from the government about being pioneers, and the scope of the NICFI, that it is the intention of the government to stand out, to contribute more than the average country does. The NICFI is a demonstration of community, in the sense that Norway takes its place in a global context. Climate change is a global problem, and solving this problem requires international cooperation. The NICFI is a contribution to the international cooperation to combat climate change. At the same time it is a demonstration of doing something unique, it is the first national initiative of its kind. Norway is doing more than what could be expected, and through that stands out as different and “better”. Norwegian media coverage, as well as statements from the government, has eagerly emphasized the scale of the Norwegian contribution, and how others contribute less (Barstad, 2010).

Through the NICFI, Norway does not only seek to reproduce its identity as a driving force within climate policy. Norway wishes to be noticed and recognized as someone who contributes more. There is a perception of Norway having high status in the climate negotiations, and particularly within issues concerning REDD+. By focusing on international contributions as the NICFI, rather than middle range achievements domestically, they seek to uphold this status. Status is about standing out, and being recognized. Recognition and admiration make us feel good, and boost self-confidence and self-image. It is important that the effort is noticed, and that the Norway gets the confirmation of the status that they believe is due. Recognition is part of the motivation for doing “good”. The launch of the NICFI at Bali was initially deemed perfect for being noticed, and for Norway to stand out. Apparently the presentation was badly planned, and it did not get the expected attention. At a re-launch the year after in Poznan Norway got the attention it wanted (Interview 1).

My interview material supports the view that it is not only the actions in themselves that are important for the government, but how we are seen as well. And it is not only about the identity and image of the nation, but also of the government. “Stoltenberg wishes to be seen as one who does a lot for the climate[...] The government thinks about the image to some

degree[...] and have a wish to demonstrate how good we are” (Interview 1). The government chose REDD+ and the NICFI to profile its commitment to climate, wanting to stand out as a “climate-hero” (Interview 3). Interviewee 7 claims that standing out as a pioneer is more important than national reductions. Enhancing the importance of identity and status does not necessarily mean that the commitment to reducing emissions is not “authentic”, but it rather puts it into a context that can explain why it’s seemingly important for Norwegian decision makers to stand out and be a driving force in spite of Norway’s size.

In my analysis of Aftenposten articles it was apparent that praise and recognition from foreign actors was emphasized and enthusiastically re-communicated. This referring to domestic audiences the positive international attention indicates that Norwegian actors notice and are pleased with their increased status. It is one thing to tell oneself that one is doing something good, it is many times better to hear it from someone else. Positive attention tells us that we are noticed, that we have succeeded and strengthens a positive identity. For the government, praise for their work internationally can also function as political arguments, strengthening their position and policies. There seem to be a need for standing out and demonstrating that we matter, and can make a difference in some areas (peace, poverty, and climate). This demonstration of importance can be just as important for our own identity and self-esteem, as it is for “claiming our place” internationally. But as how “we” are seen by others matter for our identity and self-esteem, positive attention that reinforces our identity is important and relevant to highlight. If we see ourselves as important, we seek to get this confirmed from others.

The following quotes give an impression of how the media coverage of the NICFI highlights positive international attention; «Hans Verlome, the director of climate-related work in WWF International, praises Norway for the willingness to spend money on rainforests in the Amazon among other places. –The EU and Norway are leading countries in this field, he says in a briefing. To Aftenposten.no he elaborates: The announced money are a very positive initiative. It is crucial that countries as Norway are willing to act” (Ertzeid & Mathismoen, 2007). Here we get confirmation of Norway being a leading country, as well as the importance of the Norwegian contribution; “Jennifer Morgan in The Climate Action Network (CAN) praises the Norwegian rainforest-initiative [...] - By allocating such great sums to the rainforest Norway is showing the kind of leadership we need here at Bali. Norway has played a positive role historically related to the climate,[...] This is an example of a country that is willing to give something without expecting anything in return in the form of quotas or

reduced demands of emission cuts back home” (Ertzeid, 2007). Again, a confirmation of leadership, that our efforts are needed, and of the perception of Norwegian altruism. Positive attention from a representative of emerging power Brazil also garnered attention: “A humid night a couple of days ago, on an old riverboat on the Tapajo Flood in the Amazon, the Brazilian Minister of Environment Carlos Minc held a speech of appreciation. As his words were translated, what first came into mind was that the man had had a drink. He talked about brotherhood and sincerity, about a unique generosity, about fantastic Norway and a promise of money that would change the world, or at least the history of the Amazon” (Mathismoen (b), 2008). This kind of praise flatters even the relatively high self-esteem of Norwegians, and certainly confirms the perception of Norway’s central role and importance.

All references made to, and coverage of, how foreign actors praise the Norwegian initiative and Norway’s role serves at least two purposes; it strengthens the self-esteem and positive identity of those directly connected to the initiative as well as of the Norwegian people. This is the recognition, not only of who we are, but concretely of our contributions and efforts for the common good (Wolf, 2011). It serves as a confirmation of the high status Norway perceives to have. International praise also strengthens the political basis for the initiative, by confirming that we are doing something right, that is highly appreciated. It may strengthen the support to the government’s climate policy domestically as well.

Status is a motivation in itself, high status is preferred. Being significant is preferred to being average. On one side status can be linked to identity. Status means that the recognition that is expected on the basis of the identity and self-perception of own deeds is given. For Norway to see itself as a driving force and pioneer, to have a perception of high status, it is necessary to get this confirmed from the outside. But high status also has benefits beyond being liked, respected and feeling good. “The authorities, the private sector and NGOs have all had an interest in keeping the myth of Norway as an environmental pioneer alive. In many contexts this has made us a more attractive partner for dialogue and everybody knows that Norwegian representatives have money that can be allocated to support various initiatives, as well as to “grease” processes[...].” (Ibrekk, n.d.). In the international climate negotiations Norway’s high status has contributed to giving Norway a more central role, Norway is noticed, listened to and recognized. High status means increased influence. The NICFI has opened doors for Norwegian leaders, in particular Stoltenberg and Solheim that have been central in the promotion of the initiative (Interview 6). They are given status through the achievements of the government. The fact that the initiative has been presented as the governments project,

when in fact it initially rather was an initiative from the environmental movement and a demand from the political opposition has created a view of the government taking the credit for what really was not their idea. These benefits can be linked to interests of influence and power.

## **5.5 Concluding remarks**

Through analysis of official documents and Aftenposten articles covering the NICFI, and by conducting semi-structured interviews, I have identified the official motivations for Norway's contribution to REDD+. Through my analysis, I have divided the official arguments into categories; "it's necessary", "it's an efficient choice", "and it's the right thing to do". In addition I point to how these aspects of REDD+, that are stated to be motivational factors, suits Norwegian climate policy since they are in accordance with important goals and principles of Norwegian climate policy. The official arguments are without reference to any self-interest. As previously discussed, Norway has a "tradition" for altruistically based motivations and it is this altruistic foreign policy identity that allows Norwegian politicians to pursue policies in which the self-interest aspect remains unarticulated. However I argue that positive spin-off effects as the possibility for future offsetting and increased influence in the international system may function as motivational factors in addition to the initial key motivations. I also argue that the Norwegian identity, which in this context is based on Norway as an altruistic state that contributes generously to solve global problems, in itself is a motivational factor for establishing the NICFI. In the last section I discuss how status-seeking, the wish to stand out in a positive manner, to be recognized as a leading country within international climate efforts, has contributed to Norway's substantial contribution.



## **6.0 Conclusion**

REDD+ has, over the last years, developed into what is perceived as one of the most important international efforts to reduce global emissions. The Norwegian government in 2007 announced an annual contribution to REDD+ of up to 3 billion NOK through the NICFI. This contribution is recognized as of great importance for driving the international process of REDD+ forward. The main objective of this thesis was to investigate the process that led to the Norwegian commitment to REDD+ through the NICFI, and to identify the motivations for this substantial contribution.

In the background chapter of this thesis, I have accounted for the international process of REDD+ to put the NICFI into context. I have showed how principles like the precautionary principle, early action, the polluter pays principle, cost-efficiency and efficiency of methods have been central for identifying REDD+ as an important measure. REDD+ is perceived to be cheap and offer quick and large reductions. In addition, there are expectations of several co-benefits. Most developed countries have supported REDD+, while there has been some skepticism among developing countries and NGOs.

As the NICFI is perceived to have affected the development of REDD+ internationally, it is relevant to discuss how a small state as Norway could achieve this. Small states are perceived to be constrained by the structures in the international system. As the big powers set the agenda and have the capacity to enforce their policies, small states are understood to be forced into more passive roles. Small states seek cooperation through multilateral organizations and rather support initiatives than being the initiator, and tend to favor rule of international law and norms (Hey, 2003). Norway can be characterized as a small state based on population size and international power. I argue that Norway in the international system may be compared to a marginal political party. It is part of the system, but has no power base to force through own views, and hence is dependent on teaming up with or actors. It shares many of the characteristics of small state behavior in the international system. However, Norway seeks and arguably achieves international influence in its areas of interest, among them climate policy.

Norway started prioritizing forest measures when the NICFI was established in 2007. The Norwegian environmental organizations Rainforest Foundation and Friends of the Earth

Norway urged the government to allocate money to forest measures. This initiative was first supported by the opposition, who put pressure on the government in the domestic climate negotiations. It is claimed that the government was looking for a case to profile their climate commitment, and the result was a promise of up to 3 billion NOK annually to support REDD+. Through the NICFI, Norway seeks to contribute to REDD+ in four ways, through engagement in international climate negotiations, via bilateral projects demonstrating that REDD+ can be realized in practice, by advancement of an integrated architecture for multilateral REDD+ initiatives, and by financing NGOs, research institutes and civil society organizations to provide analysis and pilot projects (Ministry of Environment (d), 2011: 3). What have been Norway's motivations for pursuing a central role in the development of REDD+ internationally, and how was the process around tropical deforestation for climate mitigation's sake unfolded?

## **6.1 Findings –Process**

Based on scientific reports, including the Stern report (2006), REDD+ was deemed to be a measure that would be cost effective and offer quick reductions. It was also presented as a necessary measure for reaching international goals of limiting the increase of global temperatures to 2° C above pre industrial levels. I argue that the fact that REDD+ has been presented as an absolutely necessary measure has given REDD+ a central role in international climate policy. Most developed states support REDD+, as REDD+ is perceived to offer larger reductions of emissions at a far lower cost than measures in developed countries. Multiple benefits add to the perceived positive effects of REDD+. For leaders of developed countries it is easier to support measures abroad, than more complex, costly and unpopular domestic measures. Many developing countries and NGOs have been skeptical to REDD+. They fear that REDD+ will be a threat to national sovereignty over natural resources. There is also a concern that REDD+ will be used as a measure for offsetting. In the case of large scale offsetting, REDD+ will not contribute to global reductions of emissions, as REDD+ will only compensate for emissions elsewhere. NGOs are also skeptical due to risks connected to biodiversity and social and economic rights, in particular those of indigenous peoples and local communities. Among other things they fear that REDD+ may lead to establishment of plantations on land formerly covered by natural forests, a development that would increase the threat on biodiversity. Unclear rights to ownership of land combined with an increased

economic value of standing forests gives concern for how REDD+ may affect indigenous peoples and local communities. The increased economic value may increase the pressure on land, and lead marginalized groups to be driven off ancestral land by other actors (Peskest & Yanda, 2009).

The REDD+ agreement text have met these concerns with reassuring the sovereignty of participating states, by stating that biodiversity shall be protected and that REDD+ shall contribute to development and respect the rights of all stakeholders (UNFCCC, 2010). I argue that this aspect of the agreement text serves several purposes. First of all, it seeks to reassure the skeptics that REDD+ seeks to avoid risks and enhance positive side effects. This is necessary for the involvement of developing countries. It also places the responsibility of the implementation with the developing countries. How REDD+ will affect factors like biodiversity and development is highly dependent on the capacity of the developing countries that implement REDD+ measures. The international society cannot give any guarantees, even though the international REDD+ system will contribute to strengthen the countries' capacity. Finally emphasizing rights, multiple benefits and social safeguards also contribute to legitimizing and increasing support for REDD+ in developed countries.

Norway has as a small state made a substantial contribution internationally through the NICFI. Through the NICFI, Norway has taken a more proactive role. The NICFI is a national initiative supporting an existing international policy, so it is not revolutionary in the sense of setting the agenda. But it is claimed to be the first national initiative of its kind, and to have had effect on driving the development of REDD+ forward. Through a willingness to contribute, and the capacity to allocate large sums of money, Norway has become an important actor in the field of climate and forest. I argue that one may speculate in whether Norway as a small state is driven by the need to distinguish itself, to demonstrate and seek confirmation of own importance.

There are several factors that seem to have contributed to the establishment of the NICFI. First of all, as mentioned before, it is claimed that the government was looking for a new commitment that would profile their dedication. The government has stated that Norway should be a pioneer in the field. The fact that the government was urged by both environmental organizations and oppositional political parties indicates wide support of forest-related climate mitigation measures. Hence it was a popular and uncontroversial choice.

My examination of this process provided several clues as to why Norwegian actors have taken a leading role in REDD+ and interviews and media analysis provided further insight.

## **6.2 Findings – Motivations**

Identifying motivations for official policies is challenging as most motivations are hidden. Official sources will only reveal some motivational aspects. I found that my interviewees' and the media coverage's perceptions of motivations for the NICFI in many cases differed from what I could read out of official documents. Based on my empirical material I identified a range of possible motivational factors that I categorized as altruistic identity, economic benefits, norms, and status.

I argue that the officially stated motivations for the NICFI can be summarized under the following headings; “it is necessary”, “it is an efficient choice” and “it is the right thing to do”. REDD+ and the NICFI are seen as necessary measures because, as stated in the Stern report, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is seen as a prerequisite for reaching the international climate goals. It is an efficient choice because REDD+ is believed to offer quick, large and cost-efficient reductions of emissions. It is the right thing to do because it is perceived to contribute to reduced global emissions, but also because REDD+ is intended to have a positive effect on biodiversity and development. All these factors suit Norwegian climate policy well, and are coherent with the principles and goals of Norwegian climate policy. It is claimed that Norway contributes to REDD+ to save rainforests and contribute to the international effort of limiting climate change. Interestingly, I find that there are no clear statements of self-interest in the official motivations. According to Stokke (1989) and Leira (2007) it is typical for Norway to present Norwegian foreign aid as altruistic acts, based on international solidarity.

However, I argue that the NICFI has several positive spin-offs that serves Norwegian interests. My findings indicate that it is likely that REDD+ in the future will create a possibility for offsetting, and that Norway also may take advantage of this. By offsetting Norwegian emissions through financing REDD+ measures, Norway would meet its international obligations at a far lower cost than if measures were to be implemented in Norway. In this way, the NICFI is may create a possibility to go on with business as usual in Norway. Because of the positive focus on the initiative and the overall satisfaction at home

and abroad, the pressure on taking action domestically eases somewhat. This allows the government to avoid or postpone costly societal changes. It also allows Norway to continue producing fossil fuels, with a clean conscience. One other claimed spin-off effect of the NICFI is that it has given Norway increased influence in the international climate negotiations, and that it has functioned as a door opener for Norwegian leaders. Some also claim that the NICFI through generating trust, and in particular in partner countries, contributes to improving relations with developing countries, including major regional players like Indonesia and Brazil. One may speculate if this may have a positive effect on Norwegian economic interests. As seen by utilitarian liberalists all actors seek to maximize own utility. It is in the actor's interest to improve its standing and capacity in all manners; socially, economically and politically.

Norms also may motivate behavior and shape interest because they in a given cultural context say something about what is correct and expected behavior. There are a number of normative aspects that may be driving Norwegian climate policy. First of all, taking the stand that Norway should take action, that Norway should contribute internationally is influenced both by a sense that this is the correct thing to do. But also that this is what Norwegians and others expect from Norway. When it comes to the NICFI in particular, REDD+ has been recommended as an appropriate measure in all manners, and even described as a prerequisite for successfully limiting climate change. In this one can read an implicit normative message, that states should support this measure.

Normative pressure also relates to the question of a state's identity, and the identity of the state's representatives. The Norwegian identity, to the degree one can claim that a country has one identity, is based on a self-perception of Norway as altruistically sharing its wealth internationally. Norway contributes internationally based on solidarity. The identity also reflects a perception of our role in the international society. My interview material confirms that it is important for the Norwegian government how Norway, and the government itself, are perceived internationally. It is stated by the government that Norway should be a pioneer, and the government wishes to be seen as someone who does a lot for the climate. When Norwegian media emphasizes international positive feedback, it confirms our self-perception, and reproduces the identity. This identity needs to be reproduced through actions, and hence identity itself becomes a motivation for contributing internationally.

Seeking status, respect and recognition are essential in motivating human behavior (Wolworth & Kang, 2009). Status is how we see ourselves compared to others, and how we perceive others to see us. There is reason to believe that status is a motivational force at the state level as well. Leaders seek recognition and status on behalf of themselves and the state. There seem to be a general understanding of Norway having high status in the international climate negotiations, and particularly when it comes to REDD+. The Norwegian contribution is claimed to give prestige. When the government states that Norway should be a pioneer it gives the impression of seeking to do more, and better, than others. The scope of the NICFI also reflects this. As Norway allocates more than could be expected, it stands out. My findings also indicate that the Norwegian government seeks status, and that “we like to see ourselves as of great importance” (Interview 2). Perceptions of status also need to be confirmed through affirmative feedback from others. When Norway did not get the anticipated attention when the NICFI first was launched, they decided to do a re-launch to be properly recognized (Interview 1). Actors seek status because high status is preferred, but it also has co-benefits like increased influence. For the government international recognition also may strengthen their positions domestically.

### **6.3 Further observations**

In addition to these findings relating to Norway’s motivations with the NICFI, my study has resulted in several further observations.

-Role of NGOs: The process leading up to the announcement of the NICFI gives an example of how NGOs can play a role in policy making. This suggests that decision makers are influenced by domestic factors. The support to the initiative by oppositional parties demonstrates wide political support. However, the different political parties may have different motivations for supporting climate measures abroad.

-Wealth and the ‘small state’: I have identified wealth and willingness to contribute internationally as key for the Norwegian more proactive role. This can indicate that it is degree of wealth rather than size is decisive for foreign policy behavior in some areas of the international system. One can claim that it is problematic that wealth should be decisive for degree of influence in a process like the international climate negotiations. A fair share of the

world's states do not have the capacity to contribute financially, these countries are also those who will be most affected by climate change.

-Acknowledging all these motivations in official, public accounts of the NICFI would result in incompatible combinations: Norwegian foreign policy, not even aid and contributions to international climate efforts are totally altruistic. To uphold image and reproduce identity is important. How others see Norway is important for Norwegian leaders, status is important. Increased status has improved the Norwegian role in international climate negotiations. To recognize any form of self-interests would have a negative effect on the Norwegian identity.

## **6.4 Final comments**

In sum, these findings enhance our understanding of the complex motivations of climate policy, and also suggests that positive spin-off effects may also function as motivational factors for the continuation of particular policies. It suggests that identity and desire to achieve high status play a role in promoting a certain type of foreign policy behavior. It also indicates reluctance to admitting self-interests connected to what is perceived as altruistic policies.

I argue that combined with a genuine desire to contribute internationally, the NICFI contributes to strengthen the Norwegian identity as a generous, altruistic country. As it is likely that there is an interest in reproducing this positive identity, my study suggests that this is a motivational factor for initiatives such as the NICFI. There are also indications of Norway seeking a status position related to climate issues, and that the NICFI has given Norway prestige, recognition and increased influence.

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## **Appendix I – overview of interviews**

This is a list of my interviewees and the organizations/ parties they were selected from. Their views do not necessarily represent their respective organization/ party.

Interview 1: Bård Lahn: Naturvernforbundet (Friends of the Earth Norway)

Interview 2: Mads Lie: WWF Norway

Interview 3: Nils Harman Ranum: Regnskogfondet (Rainforest Foundation) (phone interview)

Interview 4: Snorre Sletvold: Miljøvernforbundet (e-mail interview)

Interview 5: Arild Hermstad: Framtiden i våre hender

Interview 6: Audun Rosland: Former Norwegian negotiation leader in the international climate negotiations

Interview 7: Lars Andreas Lunde: Høyre

Interview 8: Bendiks Arnesen: Det Norske Arbeiderparti

Interview 9: Anonymous :Bellona



## Appendix II- interview guide

1. Hvilke aktører var involvert i utviklingen av REDD+? (nasjonalt, men ført og fremst internasjonalt) / What actors were involved in the development of REDD+? (in Norway, but primarily internationally)
2. Når ble Norge interessert i REDD+ skog-klima? / When did Norway become interested in REDD+?
3. Hvordan og hvorfor valgte Norge REDD+/ skog-klima som satsningsområde?/ How and why did Norway choose REDD+ as an area of commitment?
4. Hvilken rolle har Norge spilt internasjonalt i utviklingen av REDD+, og hvilken rolle spilte annonseringen av det norske Klima- og Skogprosjektet?/ What role has Norway played in the international development of REDD+, and what role did the announcement of the NICFI play?
5. Hvorfor ønsker Norge en lederrolle vs. det å bare bidra på linje med mange andre land?/ Why does Norway seek a leading role vs. Contributing at the same level as many other countries?
6. Har det norske Klima- og skogprosjektet påvirket Norges rolle og status i de internasjonale klimaforhandlingene?/ Has the NICFI affected Norway's status in the climate negotiations?
7. Påvirker Klima- og skogprosjektet Norsk klimapolitikk på andre områder, for eksempel satsning på nasjonale kutt? / Does the NICFI affect other areas of Norwegian climate policy, e.g. the commitment to domestic reductions?
8. Hvorfor har utslippskutt knyttet til tropisk skog blitt så viktig (internasjonalt og for Norge) i motsetning til for eksempel utslipp fra fossil brensel? / Why have reductions related to tropical forests become so important (internationally and in Norway), opposed to for example emissions from fossil fuels?
9. I hvor stor grad har Norges engasjement bidratt internasjonalt? (Betydning for resultater?)/ To what degree has Norway contributed internationally? (What has this contribution meant for the international results?)
10. Hvordan ses Norges engasjement i utlandet? Hva har engasjementet i REDD+ å si for hvordan det internasjonale samfunnet ser på Norge? / How is the Norwegian commitment perceived internationally? Does the Norwegian commitment to REDD+ affect how Norway is seen internationally?
11. Tror du det er viktig for norske politiske ledere at Norge fremstår som en forkjemper innen klimaarbeid? Hvorfor?/ Do you think it is important for Norwegian political leaders that Norway appears as a driving force within international climate policy? Why?

12. Er det norske bidraget til REDD+ (Klima- og skogprosjektet) «altruistisk», eller har Norge noen egeninteresser knyttet til dette?/ Is the Norwegian contribution to REDD+ (the NICFI)«altruistic», or does it have any aspects of self-interests?