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Leading by Example – or Green- lighting Greenwashing? A Comparative Study of Norway's “Climate Image” in Brazil and in Indonesia.

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Abstract

Norway has long been able to portray itself as a “climate frontrunner”, perhaps most notably through its efforts to reduce deforestation rates globally. Yet, the international context is changing, and there are indications that Norway’s carefully crafted reputation or climate image has begun to crack. This thesis explores Norway’s climate image, how it is affected by the relationship between Norway’s green ambitions and its fossil fuel dependency, and in turn, what this dual effect could mean for Norway in the context of a green transition.

The thesis compares Norway’s self-image to its image in two key forest partner countries: Brazil and Indonesia. Through a combination of content analysis and semi-structured interviews with informants mainly from Norway, Brazil and Indonesia, it finds that Norway’s climate image is mixed in all three countries. Findings indicate that there is not much difference in perceptions of Norway’s climate image in Norway, Brazil and Indonesia; rather, the difference is between the official self-image in Norway and that of well-informed professionals. Despite recognition of Norway’s positive contributions to climate issues at the international level, a recurrent theme across all interviews was the perceived double standard and hypocrisy in how Norway pushes for more climate action abroad, yet undermines such efforts domestically by continuing to produce and export fossil fuels. The content analysis suggests a slightly more positive, but still mixed perspective. Furthermore, informants emphasized a broad range of potential implications for Norway by a continued “climate paradox”, including political and economic costs, risk of social instability and polarization, and not least climate risks. Such risks are expected to grow in strength over time, as hopes of reaching stated climate objectives such as the 1.5 °C target in the Paris Agreement decrease. Overall, results show that the image is changing, and that Norway should consider the changing international context going forward.

Preface

This thesis was written as part of the International Environmental Studies Master Programme at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) in Ås, Norway. The topic of this thesis was chosen in part based on my own scientific curiosity and perspectives derived from courses taken at NMBU, and in part based on my professional work experience, including having previously worked for Norway's Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI).

I would like to thank the 24 informants who so generously shared with me their time and expertise in this context. This thesis would not have been possible without your valuable insights and kind support. I am also very grateful for all the constructive and helpful feedback given to me by Arild Angelsen and Leah Plotz – thank you both for taking the time to help me significantly improve the quality of this thesis.

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List of abbreviations

- BOGA – Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance
- CCS – Carbon Capture and Storage
- COP – Conference of the Parties (to the UNFCCC)
- EFTA – European Free Trade Association
- IPCC – The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
- NICFI – Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative
- ODA – Official Development Assistance
- REDD – Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
- UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1 – Introduction

1.1. Theme and background

“Image” in the context of international relations can be understood as “national reputation” or a set of beliefs and perceptions of a given state among other states (Wang, 2006, p. 91). A country’s image is important because it impacts the way other countries perceive and interact with it, and in turn, this can influence that country’s ability to reach its foreign policy goals (Jervis, 1970, p. 5). For this reason, most countries can be expected to strive to create a positive image of themselves (Nye, 2008).

Norway has over the past few decades sought to position itself as a “green nation” or “climate frontrunner”, building an image of a country at the forefront of global efforts to fight climate change (Lahn & Rowe, 2015). This plays well into its long-honed image as a peaceful partner and reliable contributor to global public goods (Leira, 2007). Norway in particular has played a leading role in efforts to reduce tropical deforestation and in developing Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology (Moe et al., 2022; Rosvold, 2022). It has pledged NOK 3 billion annually since 2008 to protect rainforests through Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI, 2022b), and it is by far the largest financial contributor to the UN-REDD Programme (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation), the flagship UN partnership on forests and climate (MTPF, 2023).¹ David Victor, a convening lead author of the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has noted “There is no “small” country that has done more to advance cooperation on climate change than Norway.” (Victor, 2016, p. 136).

Yet Norway’s “climate image” is increasingly under pressure. Not only because these results are sometimes threatened, as was the case in Brazil when deforestation rates in the Amazon increased following Jair Bolsonaro’s election in 2018 (Pessoa & Patel, 2022); or when Indonesia in September 2021 decided to end its decade-long forest partnership with Norway citing lack of payments for documented results (Reuters, 2021). Norway has also faced

¹ “UN-REDD” and “REDD+” are sometimes mixed up. REDD+ is a climate change mitigation solution used by several initiatives, including the UN-REDD Programme. For more on the difference between the two, see: https://www.un-redd.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/UN-REDD_FAQs_and_Answers-June_2010%5B1%5D.pdf

growing criticism for its own loss of forest cover (Magassy, 2021), for its continued production and export of oil and gas (Bremmer, 2021) and for its alleged greenwashing and hypocrisy when encouraging other countries to cut emissions while growing richer itself through the sale of fossil fuels (Boyd, 2019; Milanovic, 2021). During the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2022, commonly referred to as COP27 in Egypt, Norway faced similar criticism as it supported official language stating the need to “phase down oil and gas”, all the while continuing to increase its own oil production (Amundsen et al., 2022). In January 2023, the Norwegian government announced 47 new production licenses for petroleum, emphasizing how exploration and new discoveries are “important to maintain the production of oil and gas over time, both for Norway and Europe” (Regjeringen, 2023a).

This thesis will explore the relationship between Norway’s green ambitions and its fossil fuel dependency, how this affects its image, and what this dual effect could mean for Norway going forward. While Norway was arguably able to portray itself in a positive light in the past (Lahn & Rowe, 2015), the international context is changing, and there are indications that the country’s carefully crafted climate image has begun to crack and that it has to change its policies in order to avoid potentially harmful consequences.

1.2. Research questions

This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of Norway’s climate image internationally, and to examine how this image is influenced by the country’s fossil fuel dependency.

More concretely, this study will explore the following research questions:

1. What is Norway’s international climate image, given its continued fossil fuel dependency combined with its efforts to reduce global deforestation? To what extent is this (self-)image similar to important bilateral partners such as Brazil and Indonesia?

2. What might be the practical implications of balancing green ambitions with continued fossil fuel revenues?

To analyze these issues, I will contrast Norway's image among relevant stakeholders mainly from Norway, Brazil, and Indonesia. Brazil and Indonesia are interesting cases in this context because they are important bilateral partners to Norway, particularly in efforts to reduce tropical deforestation.

Norway and Brazil have a long history of trade and collaboration in fields like resource management and maritime issues (Regjeringen, 2011). Brazil is today Norway's most important trade partner in Latin-America, and the country's importance to Norwegian businesses is increasing (Innovation Norway, 2023). In 2008 it became the first country Norway collaborated with through NICFI, and by 2018 Brazil had received more than NOK 8 billion (equivalent to approximately USD 900 million) from Norway for reduced emissions from deforestation (NICFI, 2023).

By contrast, bilateral relations between Norway and Indonesia are comparatively more recent. These relations have also intensified, particularly over the past decade, with the signing of a free trade agreement in 2018 between Indonesia and the EFTA (European Free Trade Association), of which Norway is a member country (Regjeringen, 2020) and through a bilateral agreement on Ocean for Development signed in 2022 (Kemlu, 2022). In terms of deforestation, Indonesia also became an early NICFI partner after the two countries agreed to a forest partnership in 2010, and in 2022 Indonesia received its first results-based support of USD 56 million from Norway (NICFI, 2022a).

Both Brazil and Indonesia are classified as developing countries, and they are both among Norway's top recipients of development assistance (Norad, 2023b). One could thus expect this to impact Norway's image positively in both countries. However, both Brazil and Indonesia are large economies with a combined population of around 477 million – greater than that of the European Union (EC, 2020), while Norway, by comparison, is a small country of only around 5.5 million people. Thus, while Norway is a donor country and Brazil and Indonesia are recipient countries in this context, there is a certain duality in terms of power relations between Norway and these two countries. Moreover, both Brazil and Indonesia depend on fossil fuels, but oil and gas account for only around 10 % (ITA, 2023) and 2,5 %

(IEA, 2023) of GDP in the two countries respectively; by contrast, the oil and gas industries account for around 28 % of Norway's GDP (NPD, 2023). This could also expectedly impact Norway's image in both countries.

Data will be gathered through a combination of content analysis and semi-structured interviews. The content analysis will be based on media coverage and Twitter posts from Brazil and Indonesia during a pre-defined time period. It complements insights from interviews with expert informants, working on forest-climate issues mainly in Norway, Brazil, and Indonesia, as well as in a few European countries. Together, these two analyses can provide a more nuanced picture of Norway's climate image as well as highlight some possible implications of its green ambitions combined with continued fossil fuel production.

1.3. Key terms

At the outset, a few distinctions should be made regarding some key terms used in this study. In the context of international relations, as mentioned above, a country's "image" often relates to perceptions of national reputation, and it often builds on perceptions of a given country's "culture, policy and conduct" (Wang, 2006). Such an image is subjective and commonly linked to credibility, often shaped by representations in media or various forms of direct or indirect communication (Nye, 2008). Accordingly, for the purposes of this thesis, I will consider a country's "climate image" as its national reputation or the set of perceptions and beliefs linked to this country and its role in climate and environmental issues.

"Greenwashing" can be understood as "falsely promoting an organization's environmental efforts" (Becker-Olsen & Potucek, 2013, p. 1318). While different definitions and uses of the term exist, it is often used in the context of businesses and their efforts to promote their own brands. I will discuss the term further in the theory chapter.

Finally, while also used differently depending on context, "green transition" can perhaps most simply be defined, following the view of the European Union, as the process of getting to "climate neutrality", a goal the Union aims to reach by 2050 through "green technology, creating sustainable industry and transport, and cutting pollution" (EC, 2023b). "Climate neutrality", may be understood as a way to achieve "net zero greenhouse gas emissions", in

the sense of balancing these emissions so that they “are equal to or less than the emissions that get removed through the planet’s natural absorption” (UNFCCC, 2021).

1.4. Organization of thesis

Following the introduction, chapter two of this thesis outlines the main theory and literature used to approach the research questions and to better understand the data gathered. Chapter three will provide an overview of the methodological approach used to find answers to the research questions presented in the introduction. Combining a content analysis with semi-structured interviews, this approach allows for a deeper dive into the attitudes and perspectives of key stakeholders, primarily from Norway, Brazil, and Indonesia, as well as from Europe.

Chapter four presents the empirical data gathered from the content analysis and interviews described in chapter three. First, the chapter gives a comparative overview over key take-aways from the content analysis covering news articles and tweets from Brazil and Indonesia, respectively. Second, it identifies and describes the main findings from the semi-structured interviews carried out as part of this thesis. Chapter five attempts to take a step back and consider what these findings suggest in a broader context, guided by literature presented in chapter two. Finally, chapter six provides a brief reflection on the main findings from this thesis, and recommendations for further research will be presented. Translations from Norwegian to English, regarding quotes or perspectives from Norwegian literature and sources, are my own throughout the thesis.

2 – Theory

2.1. Image, power, and discourse

A country's image or reputation can be viewed as a source of power and influence. This idea is not new; for instance, Hans J. Morgenthau, one of the so-called “fathers of classical realism” in International Relations theory, said in the 1960s that “Reputation, the reflection of the reality of power in the mind of foreign observers, can be as important as the reality of power itself. What others think about us is as important as what we actually are” (Morgenthau, 1965, p. 3). In the 1970s, Robert Jervis emphasized the link between images and state behavior, highlighting how misperceptions and inaccurate images among political actors often lead to bad decision-making (Jervis, 1976, p. 3).

Since it was coined nearly two decades ago, “soft power” has often been linked with the idea of image among scholars and policymakers. “Soft power”, as opposed to “hard power” in the form of military or economic strength, can be defined as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments” (Nye, 2004, p. 11). This ability to “shape the preferences of others” is based on resources that produce attraction, such as a country's culture, values, or policies – if these policies are seen as legitimate. A positive image can thus increase a country's soft power and enhance its influence and credibility, making it easier to have one's voice heard, gain support for initiatives, form partnerships, and reach its foreign policy objectives (Nye, 2008, p. 100).

The notion of “discourse” becomes relevant in this context. “Discourse” can perhaps most fundamentally be viewed as a representation of reality or as a “socially shared perspective on a topic” (Adger et al., 2001, p. 683). Like image, “discourse” relates to power, in the sense that actors – such as governments, but also NGOs, companies, and others – can use “discursive power” to establish discourses on specific issues in ways that are suitable to themselves. For instance, proponents of China's Belt and Road Initiative, the country's enormous infrastructure program spanning over 130 countries, could promote a view of the project as “green development” with investments in low-carbon infrastructure and development. Critics, however, could dismiss efforts to present the project in an environmentally-friendly light as “greenwashing” (Harlan, 2021). And while competing

discourses often coexist, a discourse becomes hegemonic if it defeats all alternative perspectives and comes to dominate thinking on a given issue (Adger et al., 2001).

“Greenwashing” was defined in the introduction as “falsely promoting an organization’s environmental efforts”, and a similar definition views it as “deceptive information regarding an organization’s environmental strategies, goals, motivations, and actions” (Becker-Olsen & Potucek, 2013, p. 1318). It was originally coined by activist Jay Westerveld in 1986 as a criticism of the hotel industry for falsely promoting the reuse of towels for environmental reasons, when in fact it was designed to reduce costs. Another perhaps simpler definition refers to greenwashing as “poor environmental performance and positive communication about environmental performance” (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). While the term can be used in different contexts and with different thresholds, such definitions are often used in the context of businesses and their efforts to promote their own brands. This thesis will explore accusations of greenwashing in a country context.

In sum, a positive and credible country image can be seen as beneficial and a source of influence or soft power through actions and policies that are seen as legitimate, but also through conscious efforts and selected discourses (Nye, 2008). Conversely, a negative or “undesirable image” and lack of credibility can make it more difficult for countries to reach their objectives (Jervis, 1970, p. 6).

A distinction should be made, however, between “image” and “self-image”; while the former refers to the reputation of a country in the eyes of others as described above, the latter refers to perceptions of oneself, an important yet often overlooked dimension (Kaplowitz, 1990). It is important to note here that the image one may try to create, as well as the soft power that comes with it, is neither static nor the same everywhere: it depends on perspective, and it can change over time (Stuenkel, 2016). For instance, despite its size, financial muscles, policies, and conscious messaging efforts, the European Union’s self-image within global energy governance has not always been mirrored in partner countries like the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) (Chaban et al., 2017).

2.2. Norway's "climate paradox"

Norway's self-image is ostensibly positive when it comes to climate and environmental issues (Lahn & Rowe, 2015). In the current Government's political platform, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre and his cabinet highlighted the climate crisis as "the greatest challenge of our time", adding that "climate and environmental considerations will be at the core of all government policy" (Hurdalsplattformen, 2021). This explicit commitment to climate issues was also emphasized by the previous cabinet, describing Norway as an international "climate diplomat" who takes on a leading role in almost all climate issues (Søreide & Rotevatn, 2020). Such descriptions fit well with long-held public views within Norway of the country as a peace nation, a generous international aid donor, and a contributor to global public goods and multilateral institutions (Leira, 2007, p. 9)

Indeed, Norway can point to several policies underlining these views of Norway as a frontrunner in climate and environmental issues. In addition to taking on a leading role in global efforts to fight tropical deforestation through NICFI (NICFI, 2022b), in 2016, Norway became the world's first country to ban deforestation in the sense of demanding deforestation-free supply chains in all public procurements (Nace, 2016). And for years, Norway has been recognized for its ambitious plans on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) (Black, 2012). Norway has also been praised for leading the transition to electric vehicles (Palmer, 2021) and for its high production rates of renewable energy, mainly from hydropower (Campbell, 2021). More recently, at the UN climate negotiations COP26 in Glasgow, Norway announced it would double its overall climate finance from NOK 7 to 14 billion (approximately USD 1,7 billion) (Regjeringen, 2021), and at COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, Norway said it would enhance its national climate target and reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels (Regjeringen, 2022). Finally, during Norway's recent membership period with the UN Security Council, "climate, peace, and security" was one of the country's four priority areas (NUPI, 2023).

Furthermore, in its latest Environmental Performance Review, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) describes Norway as a frontrunner in the field and as making progress in many environmental areas, with its targets on climate mitigation being among the most ambitious worldwide (OECD, 2022).

However, this situation might be about to change. It is no secret that fossil fuels are essential to the Norwegian economy; in 2022, the oil and gas industries accounted for around 28% of Norway's GDP and 58 % of its total exports (NPD, 2023). Links between these industries and the high level of welfare enjoyed by Norwegian citizens are often highlighted, not least by the industries themselves (Bang & Lahn, 2020). Norway is one of the world's largest oil producers² and natural gas producers,³ and after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Norway has become Europe's largest natural gas supplier (Glover, 2022).

A growing body of research has pointed to how Norway's balancing act between its identity as a climate frontrunner and as a major oil producer will become increasingly difficult to maintain in the future (Bang & Lahn, 2020; Lahn, 2019; Rosvold, 2022). Conditions in the global climate regime to date have generally been favorable to Norway, for instance given the fact that under the Kyoto Protocol, trade in carbon credits allowed countries to finance emissions reductions in other countries rather than cut their own emissions (Dokk Smith et al., 2022). Moreover, countries were only responsible for emissions related to their own consumption of energy, but not for emissions of the energy they exported (Lahn, 2019). To a country like Norway, this has obviously been an advantage, as 98% of its own electricity production comes from renewable energy, in particular from hydropower (Regjeringen, 2016). In short, this meant that it was possible for Norway to separate its climate policies from its oil policies, in essence allowing it to combine green ambitions with continued oil production (Bang & Lahn, 2020). NICFI was arguably important in this context, partly based on the idea of international cost-effectiveness and on making emissions reductions where they are cheapest – often not in Norway (Lahn & Rowe, 2015). But this “decoupling” of oil and climate policy has become increasingly difficult to maintain in a changing international context.

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on “global carbon budgets”, meaning limits for cumulative emissions globally – in particular since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015 and its objective to limit global warming to 1.5 °C (Lahn, 2019). At the same time, while “climate” has traditionally been regarded as a separate policy domain, it is increasingly

² Currently, by some estimates, Norway is the world's 13th largest oil producer:
<https://www.worldometers.info/oil/oil-production-by-country/>

³ Currently, by some estimates, Norway is the world's 7th largest natural gas producer:
<https://www.worldometers.info/gas/gas-production-by-country/>

considered to be an integral part of other policy areas, including trade, energy, and foreign policy (Rosvold, 2022). More attention has been given to the supply side of energy, to global carbon limits, and to the cross-sectoral nature of climate, and these developments have led to stronger calls for the phasing out of fossil fuel use and for the need to keep more resources in the ground (IEA, 2021; Vaughan, 2021).

The Paris Agreement has also increased the “fragmentation” of the international climate regime, here understood as “growing diversity and challenges to coordination” among the actors and rules involved (Zelli & van Asselt, 2013, p. 3). This fragmentation has led to new forms of multilateral initiatives and collaborations between states, with potential consequences for which countries Norway seeks to partner up with (Dokk Smith et al., 2022). Norway has not joined the “Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance” (BOGA, 2023) led by Costa Rica and Denmark, which seeks to phase out all oil production. Instead, it has closed ranks with countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the US-led “Net Zero Producers Forum” (DOE, 2021), an initiative whose members aim to act responsibly by reaching global net-zero emissions, but without committing to a complete phasing out of oil and gas. “Net zero” in this context can be understood as “a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removal out of the atmosphere” and is often used in connection with technologies such as CCS (Oxford, 2023).

Moreover, in the context of a green transition, studies have indicated how a slow transition would entail considerable reputational and economic risks for Norway; particularly given an expected decline in global oil demand as a result of existing climate policies and technological advances in renewable energy (Funnemark & Beaumont, 2022; Hornburg & Sending, 2019). A green transition most likely means closer integration and mutual interdependence between Norway and the EU, obliging Norway to comply with the EU’s climate policy regulations in more areas, and this close connection between the two parties has already increased pressure on Norway to cut emissions domestically (Gulbrandsen & Hermansen, 2022).

With the threat of an energy crisis in Europe in the aftermath of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Norway was arguably given some breathing room from pressure to phase down fossil fuels; in fact, it could even increase production and at the same time appear as “Europe’s savior” (Reed, 2023). However, accusations of being a “war profiteer” soon

emerged (Economist, 2022), as well as demands – notably by countries like Poland – to share profits with Ukraine (Duxbury, 2022; Martewicz, 2022). And with the “Green New Deal” seeking to make Europe “the first climate-neutral continent” by 2050 (EC, 2023a), and the “RepowerEU” plan to make Europe independent from Russian fossil fuels as soon as possible and well before 2030 (EC, 2023c), the EU has accelerated its turn towards renewable energies. Despite the fact that Norway and the EU announced earlier this year a deepened cooperation on climate through a new Green Alliance (Regjeringen, 2023b), there is no guarantee that Norway and its role in Europe’s energy future will continue to be viewed in a positive light if it continues large-scale oil and gas production.

Indeed, as demonstrated in the introduction, Norway has already faced growing criticism in recent years for its continued oil and gas production and thus for what some critics label hypocrisy or even greenwashing (Amundsen et al., 2022; Boyd, 2019; Bremmer, 2021; Milanovic, 2021; Nesheim, 2020). While oil and gas accounted for 28% of Norway’s GDP in 2022, as mentioned above, Norway’s official development aid (ODA) in that same year amounted to less than 1% of GDP – of which around 17,9 % was climate-related (Norad, 2023a). And while the OECD described Norway as a frontrunner as shown above, in the same report, it highlights how Norway still faces multiple challenges and recommends that the country “should develop a plan to phase out support to fossil fuel and other environmentally harmful forms of support” (OECD, 2022).

2.3. Expectations

Based on the above, a few expectations can be formulated as a way to operationalize the research questions presented in the introduction.

The first is regarding Norway’s climate image. While Norway has made conscious efforts over time to construct a positive climate image, this might not be shared by everyone. Thus, Norwegian citizens and foreign observers can be expected to have different opinions on Norway’s climate image, with Norway having a positive self- image and its image being more negative in countries like Brazil and Indonesia.

Second, Brazil and Indonesia are both important to Norway and they have received significant support in particular in their efforts to reduce deforestation. However, given the larger

investments in Brazil, as well as the longer period of diplomatic collaboration between the two as compared to between Norway and Indonesia, one could expect the image in Brazil to be more positive than in Indonesia. Norwegian companies have also invested a lot in the Brazilian economy over the past 10-15 years, particularly in the oil and gas sectors (Innovation Norway, 2019, p. 8). Similarly, in light of these historically closer ties with Brazil, accusations of greenwashing given Norway's green ambitions combined with its fossil fuel dependency could expectedly be less dominant in Brazil than in Indonesia.

Additionally, given the fact that informants interviewed for this thesis have detailed knowledge about climate policies and Norway's efforts in this area, one could expect their views to be more positive than those in the general public found in the content analysis – based on news articles and tweets.

Finally, if key cooperation partners like Brazil and Indonesia perceive Norway to have a “climate paradox”, one could expect that this will have some practical implications for Norway in terms of its ability to lead by example or make its voice heard internationally.

3 – Methodology

3.1. Research design

A research method can be defined as a way to approach a particular research question. Selecting a method thus includes making choices about types of sources and which data to be gathered, and in turn, about what kind of knowledge is possible to produce (Ryen, 2002, p. 29).

This thesis makes use of an explorative research design based on qualitative research methods in the form of case studies. A country's image is not very tangible and it can be difficult to measure, but case studies can be useful in this context because they help identify and measure relevant indicators to enable high levels of "conceptual validity" – in other words they help make sure one measures what is in fact intended to be measured through "a detailed consideration of contextual factors" (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 19). In this context, the interest was in perceptions of Norway's image, and such perceptions can be expressed for instance in public documents, media or by individuals. For this reason, the thesis builds on data gathered through semi-structured interviews combined with content analysis of news articles and social media posts.

3.2. Procedure

The data collection for this thesis had two main components: First, a content analysis based on media coverage and social media content in Brazil and in Indonesia during September 2021 and September 2022. These time periods allowed for an investigation of sentiments expressed when climate and environmental issues would expectedly be high on the international public agenda for several reasons; as a run-up to the climate negotiations at the COPs that are held in November/December each year; the UN General Assembly is being held in September each year; and this coincides with the fire season in both tropical forest regions.

Second, data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with 24 informants. This group of informants consisted of a combination of scientists, policymakers, practitioners, and journalists. The process of carrying out and analyzing the interviews is described in more detail below.

3.2.1. Content analysis

The content analysis consisted of two parts; one the one hand, news coverage from Brazil and Indonesia respectively, in the form of online newspaper articles featuring Norway and issues related to climate and/or the environment; on the other hand, social media posts in the form of Twitter posts or “tweets”.

News coverage

The role of media in shaping public opinion has been widely demonstrated and analyzed in academic literature (Cohen, 1963; Lippmann, 1922). In the context of foreign policy and international affairs, Robert Entman has shown how ideas and beliefs in society can spread through contests over public framing and the interactions between elites, the media and publics (Entman, 2003, p. 417). According to his Cascading Activation Model, the flow of ideas is strongest at the top, coming from the elites, and flow downwards via media to the publics. Following this view, some media sources are more capable than others in establishing such frames, notably national, prestigious newspapers which are often considered to be “main opinion formers” (Chaban et al., 2017, p. 10).

In analyzing news coverage, both in Brazil and Indonesia, the main focus has been on such opinion formers in the form of internationally oriented, daily newspapers. In the case of Brazil, all news articles were in Portuguese. For Indonesian news coverage, English-language articles have been prioritized. This was partly due to language barriers, and partly because these types of news outlets – with a strong international profile and English-language content accessible to wider audiences – expectedly were more likely to include coverage of Norway. Given the fact that Norway is a small country compared to Brazil and Indonesia and geographically far away from both, widespread coverage was not expected. The articles were found primarily using the Google News search engine, though in some cases also through searches on the website of particular news outlets.⁴

In the context of Brazil, the majority of articles analyzed were retrieved from Brazilian daily newspapers *Folha de S. Paulo*, and *O Globo*. In addition, some articles were found in regional and local newspapers, as well as niche news websites. In total, twelve articles from September

⁴ See appendix 5 for the list of news articles analyzed, as well as keywords used in searches.

2021 and ten articles from September 2022 were analyzed. In the case of Indonesia, most of the news articles studied were found in the Indonesian daily newspaper *The Jakarta Post* and in the regional news network *Asia News Network*. As in Brazil, some articles were also found in local, regional and niche online publications. For Indonesian news coverage, seven articles from September 2021 and eleven from September 2022 were analyzed – all English-language articles.

Tweets

Twitter is often used in academic research, not only due to the availability of data compared to other platforms, but also because searching and collecting data of related events or topics may be easier to find due to a “strong hashtag culture” and because Twitter is particularly popular among journalists, policymakers and news-oriented people (Ahmed et al., 2017, p. 5). In addition, Twitter users are typically young, highly educated, and more news-oriented than the general public (Hirose, 2022). Finally, while exact figures may vary, recent statistics show that both Brazil and Indonesia are among the top 5 countries globally in terms of absolute numbers of active Twitter users.⁵ Combined, these characteristics indicate that a typical Twitter user would be likely to be interested in current affairs and follow international news – including on countries like Norway.

Thus, while there are important methodological and ethical challenges related to this type of analysis – see in particular sections 3.3.1 and 3.4 of this thesis – Twitter can be a useful platform to search for opinions and perspectives related to Norway and its climate image among users in Brazil and in Indonesia. In total, 38 tweets from Brazil or related to Norway-Brazil relations – mainly in Portuguese – from September 2021 and September 2022 were analyzed. That same number, in the case of Indonesia or Norway-Indonesia relations, was 62 tweets – mainly in English. All tweets were found using Twitter’s “advanced search” function.⁶

3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

⁵ Brazil has around 19 million Twitter users, and Indonesia around 18.5 million users. For more details, see <https://www.statista.com/statistics/242606/number-of-active-twitter-users-in-selected-countries/>

⁶ See appendix 6 for a full list of tweets analyzed and keywords used in the searches.

As described in the introduction of this chapter, the main data analyzed in this thesis was gathered through a series of interviews with relevant informants. This type of semi-structured interviewing is useful to explore social processes, constructs and concepts, and to attempt seeing reality through the eyes of the informants (Kvale et al., 2009, p. 45). This method can be beneficial in order to gain a better understanding of different perceptions of Norway's climate image.

Through my own professional network, as well as those of my supervisors, I was able to quickly identify a few relevant informants. Then, after following up on recommendations from previous informants, I was able to conduct further interviews with more informants through the process known as "snowball-sampling" (Small, 2009, p. 14). While this type of sampling risks a certain bias because several informants were likely to know each other – something which was in fact often the case – the objective of this particular sampling was again not to be representative of a given population, but rather to serve as a strategic selection of key persons capable of providing useful insights into the subject at hand (Dalen, 2011, p. 47).

In total, I carried out of 24 interviews. The informants came mainly from Norway (7), Brazil (5) or Indonesia (5). Moreover, to include a broader international perspective on the issues covered, I interviewed an additional set (7) of informants from multiple countries, mainly in Europe.⁷ The majority of interviews were around 45 minutes, with the shortest being close to 30 minutes and the longest 1,5 hours. All interviews were semi-structured, based on the same set of questions but with some space to adapt and for instance follow up specific answers or focus more on some issues than others.⁸ This approach facilitated the comparison of data collected by various informants with different backgrounds, while at the same time enabling an adaptive process and the chance to tailor questions and focus the conversation according to each context (ibid: p. 26). Ahead of each interview, I asked the informant of their consent to record the interview for transcribing purposes. Due to privacy reasons, as well as to allow for open, free conversations, all interviews have been anonymized.⁹ After each interview had been carried out and transcribed, a process of "inductive coding" followed, in which I identified a number of recurrent and overlapping themes, key words, and categories brought

⁷ See appendix 1 for the list of informants.

⁸ See appendix 3 for the interview guide.

⁹ See appendix 4 for the information letter given to each informant ahead of the interviews.

up in the interviews (Sheppard, 2020, p. 259). After careful reading, analyzing and clustering the data, I ended up with a list of 17 codes, which encapsulate the main sentiments and findings from the interviews.¹⁰

Due to time and financial constraints, all interviews were carried out through online video conference tools. On the one hand, this was not an ideal approach, because generally in-person interviews are considered to be more comfortable both for the interviewer and the interviewee, allowing for better rapport and increasing the chances of a more open, honest dialogue (ibid: p.285-286). On the other hand, in the aftermath of the post-Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns, many people have become accustomed to this form of communication. Moreover, as this type of interview often requires less facilitation in terms of logistics and overall time spent, in some cases it could lead to increased rather than reduced access to potential informants. Lastly, this form of interview obviously entails a much smaller carbon footprint than physical interviews, in particular given the fact that informants in this context were based in different continents.

3.3. Methodological considerations

Semi-structured interviews combined with a content analysis can be a useful approach to provide a more nuanced picture of complex topics such as a country's image, using complementary data from various sources. At the same time, there are important limitations to this method. "Reliability" in quantitative research often concerns replicability, in the sense that each step of the research process – including gathering and analysis of data – should be possible to be accurately redone by other scientists and lead to the same results. Since this is often hard to accomplish in qualitative research, some scholars in this tradition thus prefer to use the terms "credibility" rather than "reliability" (Lincoln et al., 1985, p. 189). For instance, one could ask if the data sources used are in fact credible, or if there could be a bias either in the selection criteria of respondents or in the data sources themselves. "Validity" in this context can be understood as the degree to which the chosen method actually explores what is set out to explore (Kvale et al., 2009, p. 246). While there are important challenges related to reliability and validity in the context of this thesis, there are ways to improve both, and in the following I will lay out some of these challenges as well as strategies to overcome them.

¹⁰ See appendix 2 for the list of codes.

3.3.1. Limitations of content analysis

Reliability in the context of a content analysis can be considered less of a challenge than validity. By using the same search methods and key words when identifying relevant news articles and social media content, other scientists could be expected to get similar results. To enhance reliability in this context, I have included the list of articles and tweets analyzed as well as the selected search words in appendixes for this thesis.¹¹ Credibility in the news coverage was improved by focusing mainly on articles from large and reputable news outlets.

Validity, in the sense of examining what is meant to be examined, was in comparison more difficult to ensure. A country's image is inherently difficult to measure as it relates to power relations, norms, recognition, influence and interactions between states and other actors, and perceptions may to varying degrees reflect reality as it is (Chaban et al., 2017, p. 6). And in this context, the news stories analyzed were selected from a limited time period, comprised mostly Portuguese and English language articles, and included only certain types of media – i.e. online newspapers – while excluding others, such as TV, radio or podcast segments.

Similarly, this analysis mainly looks into Portuguese and English language tweets, potentially leaving out numerous tweets from users tweeting in other languages, particularly in Indonesia. Moreover, the number of tweets analyzed was limited, and they were also selected from a limited time period. And despite the possibility to search for tweets in a given geographic area, it can be hard to determine with certainty where a given Twitter user is from as many users tweet without revealing their location.¹² For these reasons, the sample of tweets may not measure exactly what was intended, but it is arguably still a measure of how Norway's climate image tends to be among twitter users related to Brazil and Indonesia. Based on this, in what follows, I will refer to these as Brazil-related and Indonesia-related tweets.

Admittedly, these are all important limitations. A large Twitter analysis to amend all these shortcomings was outside the scope of this thesis. Yet combined with the news coverage, the tweets provide additional insights. Validity was strengthened as the opinions and sentiments

¹¹ See appendixes 4 and 5.

¹² Tweet location is by default turned off, and each user will need to opt in to use it. For more details, see <https://help.twitter.com/en/safety-and-security/tweet-location-settings>

expressed in many tweets were not “taken out of thin air”, but rather were often directly linked to events and news articles from this period. Finally, to further improve validity, I triangulated these findings with data gathered from the qualitative interviews.

3.3.2. Limitations of semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews can be both time-consuming and labor-intensive, and the quality and richness of data collected through interviews depend on the capacity or will of each informant to accurately and honestly share their thoughts and perspectives on the subject issue (Sheppard, 2020, p. 268). Moreover, in the context of qualitative interviews, “reliability” in the sense of accurate replicability or consistency over time is obviously difficult to accomplish given that each conversation is unique (Dalen, 2011, p. 93).

Nonetheless, reliability in qualitative research can be strengthened by being transparent about the research approach, and in the context of semi-structured interviews, by recording and transcribing the interviews (Ryen, 2002, p. 180). Thus, in order to enhance the reliability of this thesis, I decided to record and transcribe all interviews. In terms of validity, and in particular as it relates to generalizability, an obvious limitation was the scope of the thesis, as there was a limited amount of interviews that could realistically be carried out. However, generalizations on the basis of case studies are different from those of statistical studies (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 110) and in this context validity has been strengthened by contrasting two cases. While the aim was to gain a better understanding of the views of key informants, important voices and perspectives have necessarily been excluded, including, for instance, those of indigenous peoples, students, activists and others.

Rather than generalizability, I would argue that this study aims at ensuring a certain level of transferability of its findings; in other words that it seeks to make the insights and knowledge produced in this context transferable to other domains (Lincoln et al., 1985, p. 189). For instance, while the focus here has been on Norway’s image and the paradox of its international climate efforts combined with its oil and gas export, the findings of this thesis could potentially contribute to an understanding of the dilemmas facing several countries attempting to balance green ambitions with fossil fuel revenues.

3.4. Ethical considerations

A central principle in modern research ethics is the respect for free and informed consent (Sheppard, 2020, p. 45). This means the researcher should not only ensure that the research participant is in fact taking part in the study voluntarily, but also that the participant has adequate information about the project and its purpose, and in this way is able to give an informed consent. In this thesis I conducted all interviews on the basis of prior, written consent. In advance of each interview, I gave the informant an information letter with details about the project, its purpose, and privacy.¹³ To further strengthen the respect for free and informed consent, I repeated explicitly at the start of each interview the background and purpose of the project, and asked for their consent to record and analyze the data provided in the interview. Moreover, before the start of the first interview, I obtained an ethics permission from SIKT – The Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research – confirming personal data gathered for this thesis will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation.¹⁴

And while a research interview is always characterized by a certain power asymmetry between the researcher and the informant (Kvale et al., 2009, p. 52), in this context, however, one could argue that the power asymmetry to a certain extent was balanced out since the informants were often scientists or practitioners with expert knowledge about the subject matter. Yet, a common concern in this type of interviewing regards the role of the interviewer or potential biases, often referred to as the “interviewer effect” (Sheppard, 2020, p. 280). In this case, being Norwegian and having worked for NICFI may imply some personal biases that I have done my best to control for, but there is no guarantee that this has not influenced the answers given to me by the informants.

In the case of the content analysis, and in particular the analysis of Twitter posts, the issue of free and informed consent was more complex. For instance, there is sometimes disagreement about whether or not social media constitute public or private spaces (Ahmed et al., 2017, pp. 6-7). And while Twitter users might consent for their information to be collected and used by

¹³ See appendix 4.

¹⁴ SIKT was established in 2022 as a merger between three entities: NSD (Norwegian Centre for Research Data), Uninett, and Unit – the Directorate for ICT and Joint Services in Higher Education & Research. For more details, see <https://sikt.no/en/about-sikt>

third parties when they sign up and agree to Twitter's terms of service and privacy policy, it might not always be the case that these terms and conditions are fully understood or even read by users. In its current privacy policy, the company explicitly states that Twitter is a public platform, yet acknowledges that "Affiliate services may have their own policies" (Twitter, 2023). Thus, while the use of tweets for academic purposes might comply with legal regulations and policies, respect for privacy and confidentiality calls for a cautious approach in this context. For this reason, I decided not to include any tweets that could be seen as violating the respect for privacy and human dignity, including the sharing of personal information or harmful or discriminatory content.

4 – Findings

4.1. Content Analysis

4.1.1. Brazilian news coverage

September 2021

In general, there was arguably a limited amount of news coverage of Norway in Brazilian news media in September 2021. In six of the twelve articles analyzed, Norway was included in the context of being the main funder of the Amazon Fund. For instance, one article focused on how one Brazilian state, Para, had developed a new fund to continue working against deforestation in the absence of funds locked in the Norwegian-supported Amazon Fund.¹⁵ Norway had transferred approximately USD 452 million to the Amazon Fund and Germany USD 35 million, to pay Brazil for reduced deforestation, but the money was frozen after the Bolsonaro government came to power in 2019 and made changes in the board of the Amazon Fund.

Five of the articles highlighted the Norwegian parliamentary elections held that month.¹⁶ Four articles centered around the story of Indigenous activists seeking asylum on behalf of a Jatobá tree outside the Norwegian embassy in Brazilia.¹⁷ The initiative, aimed at drawing attention to the destruction of Brazilian biomes, took place the same day then-president Jair Bolsonaro held his opening speech at start of the General Assembly in New York. The initiative was covered by national and international media and according to some reports was backed by 40 international organizations. One of the indigenous leaders behind the initiative, Sônia Guajajara, said the reason for choosing Norway was its efforts to fight deforestation, and role as main funder of the Amazon Fund.¹⁸

¹⁵ <https://epocanegocios.globo.com/Um-So-Planeta/noticia/2021/09/sem-fundo-amazonia-para-cria-iniciativa-estadual-para-tentar-captar-verbos.html>

¹⁶ See for instance <https://g1.globo.com/mundo/noticia/2021/09/23/o-que-significa-volta-historica-da-esquerda-ao-poder-nos-paises-nordicos.ghtml>

¹⁷ See for instance <https://epocanegocios.globo.com/Um-So-Planeta/noticia/2021/09/epoca-negocios-indigenas-pedem-asilo-noruegues-para-arvore-brasileira.html>

¹⁸ <https://g1.globo.com/df/distrito-federal/noticia/2021/09/21/ambientalistas-pedem-refugio-na-embaixada-da-noruega-em-brasilia-para-arvore-ameacada-de-extincao.ghtml>

One article painted a less favorable picture of Norway, describing the role of foreign mining companies – such as Norwegian alumina company Hydro Alunorte – in damaging the environment and local communities in their pursuit of profits. The main shareholder of Hydro Alunorte is the Norwegian government, and according to a recent study, following the article, the company was one of the mining companies in Brazil most at conflict with indigenous peoples, allegedly operating under much less strict environmental and labor protection rules in a developing country such as Brazil than it would have done in Norway.¹⁹

September 2022

Similar to 2021, there was a limited amount of news coverage of Norway among Brazilian newspapers in the month of September 2022. Mostly, when there was talk about Norway and in particular Norway in connection with climate/ environment/ deforestation issues, again, it was mentioned in connection with the Amazon Fund.²⁰

In four of the ten articles analyzed in this period, the news stories appeared in connection with the run up to the Brazilian presidential election that fall. The focus was often on the likely environmental consequences - in particular for the Amazon rainforest - of the election of Lula vs. Bolsonaro. Norway and the Amazon Fund in this context represented international support for a potential pro-environment (Lula) government.²¹ Two articles focused on Norway's Sovereign Wealth Fund and the pressure it exerts on Brazilian companies to reach net zero greenhouse gas emission by 2050.²² One article described how Norway presents itself as the future « graveyard » of European CO₂, through its focus on carbon capture and storage (CCS).²³ Recognizing the challenge of scaling up such technologies in order to have meaningful impacts, as well as concerns among environmental activists that CSS could absorb money better spent elsewhere – such as on renewables – the article mentions how both

¹⁹ <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/bbc/2021/09/03/mineradoras-estrangeiras-sao-campeas-de-denuncias-e-conflitos-no-brasil.htm>

²⁰ See for instance <https://www.acritica.com/amazonia/fundo-amazonia-volta-a-pauta-politica-a-duas-semanas-das-eleicoes-1.281301>

²¹ See for instance <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ambiente/2022/09/campanha-de-lula-quer-destravar-fundo-amazonia-e-impulsionar-agenda-do-meio-ambiente.shtml>

²² See for instance <https://valor.globo.com/financas/noticia/2022/09/20/plano-climatico-de-fundo-noruegues-eleva-pressao-sobre-empresas-brasileiras.ghtml>

²³ https://www.em.com.br/app/noticia/internacional/2022/09/04/interna_internacional,1391176/noruega-se-apresenta-como-futuro-cemiterio-de-co2-europeu.shtml

the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA) consider CSS to be a necessary tool to curb global warming.

4.1.2. Indonesian news coverage

September 2021

As was the case in Brazil, there was a limited coverage of Norway in Indonesian news media in September 2021 – particularly in English. Unlike the case of Brazil, however, I decided to stick with English-language articles because of language barriers and since there was a sufficient number of relevant articles identified, comparable to the number of Brazilian articles. The majority – five of seven – of these articles were related to the Letter of Intent signed by Indonesia and Norway, which was abruptly and unilaterally terminated by Indonesia in September 2021.²⁴

Dating back to 2010, the decade-long forest partnership between the two countries had been celebrated for its positive results in reducing emissions from deforestation. In the aftermath of the termination of the deal, one article referred to a “blame game” in which the two governments of Indonesia and Norway allegedly were at odds as to who were in fact responsible for the event.²⁵

Another article described how the end of the deal revealed distrust among the partners and vulnerability in securing needed climate funding.²⁶ In an editorial a few days later, the Jakarta Post lamented what it considered to be a rash decision by the Indonesian government and described the need for Indonesia to collaborate with Norway, “a long-time trading partner and strong ally in climate efforts”.²⁷

September 2022

²⁴ See for instance <https://www.thejakartapost.com/paper/2021/09/12/ri-norway-clash-over-1-billion-redd-deal.html>

²⁵ <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2021/09/12/indonesia-norway-in-blame-game-over-collapsed-deforestation-pact.html>

²⁶ <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2021/09/13/end-of-indonesia-norway-deal-reveals-distrust-vulnerability-in-climate-funding.html>

²⁷ <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2021/09/13/broken-promises.html>

Similarly, nine of the eleven articles analyzed from September 2022 were related to the Norway-Indonesia forest partnership, which was renewed that month.

Four of the articles reviewed examined the possibilities of the renewed deal with Norway to open doors to even more funding,²⁸ and whether or not it represented a real breakthrough in Indonesia's efforts to cut carbon emissions from deforestation.²⁹ One article focused on the Norwegian support to Indonesia's climate actions more broadly, referencing praise from Norway's government for "Indonesia's role in addressing global climate change issues".³⁰

There were two critical articles too, however, notably citing environmental activists who criticized the new deal for its lack of transparency of the terms of the deal, or for not being sufficiently ambitious.³¹ One article focused on the way Norway, through this deal, "buys carbon credits from Indonesia's rainforests", and while being among the world's largest oil exporters, plans to become carbon neutral by 2050 mostly through offsetting its own emissions. The article quoted Greenpeace in saying "Norway shines in borrowed feathers, and (...) it should take responsibility for carbon emissions in Norway rather than buy its way out of emissions it causes by exporting oil and gas."³²

4.1.3. Brazil-related tweets

September 2021

In the case of Brazil-related tweets in September 2021, I found only six English-language tweets concerning Norway and climate/environmental issues. For this reason, I decided to include Portuguese-language tweets.

The 18 tweets analyzed were often closely linked to major events in the news coverage from this period. In particular, two news stories drew a lot of attention and received many

²⁸ See for instance <https://www.thejakartapost.com/indonesia/2022/09/23/will-indonesias-new-forest-pact-with-norway-open-door-to-more-funding.html>

²⁹ <https://asianews.network/indonesias-billion-dollar-deforestation-question/>

³⁰ <https://en.antaraneews.com/news/250157/norway-supports-indonesias-role-in-climate-action-official>

³¹ See for instance <https://asianews.network/activists-say-new-indonesia-norway-deforestation-deal-falls-short/>

³² <https://scandasia.com/norway-buys-carbon-credits-from-indonesias-rainforest/>

comments and re-tweets; on the one hand, the national elections in Norway,³³ and on the other hand, as reflected in the news coverage from this period mentioned above, the story of the Jatoba-tree seeking asylum at the Norwegian embassy in Brasilia was widely shared and commented on.³⁴ One tweet pointed to green projects and initiatives in Norway such as plans to construct the world's first energy positive hotel.³⁵

Two tweets were openly critical towards Norway and like-minded countries, stating that these countries wanted to “dominate” the Amazon rainforest³⁶ and use Brazil as “their little farm”.³⁷

September 2022

Similarly, in the case of Brazil-related tweets in September 2022, I found only four English-language tweets concerning Norway and climate/environmental issues, and thus included Portuguese-language tweets. Most of the 20 tweets analyzed from this period related to one major event which also dominated the news coverage in this period; namely the presidential election in Brazil.

Tweets in this context were often colored by strong and sometimes emotional views. They expressed either strong support for or criticisms against the political candidates in question – Lula or Bolsonaro. And by extension, in some cases, strong sentiments for or against countries which had openly supported one side, including Norway. For instance, among Lula-supporters, one user commented on how Brazil previously – with support from Norway and Germany – had significantly reduced deforestation rates and had enjoyed international admiration for its environmental policies.³⁸

At the same time, three tweets were openly critical towards both Lula and Norway, with two referring to Norway and other European countries as “hypocrites”, pushing countries like Brazil to protect the environment while they themselves continue to make profits out of it and

³³ See for instance <https://twitter.com/TimesNewsPortug/status/1437812134180704257?s=20>

³⁴ See for instance https://twitter.com/cti_indigenismo/status/1441117833459486728?s=20

³⁵ <https://twitter.com/greenpressbr/status/1433893203200069638?s=20>

³⁶ <https://twitter.com/Conservadora191/status/1434229430940020740?s=20>

³⁷ <https://twitter.com/TRMatheus/status/1434233652225921024?s=20>

³⁸ see for instance

<https://twitter.com/AMarinaSumiu/status/1569796146037489670?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig> or
<https://twitter.com/ReginaldoLopes/status/1566897395769679874?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>

even kill biodiversity.³⁹ In their view, countries like Norway have no right to tell Brazil what to do.⁴⁰

4.1.4. Indonesia-related tweets

September 2021

In the case of Indonesia-related tweets in September 2021, most of the attention of users tweeting in English and interested in Norway and climate/environmental issues seemed to echo the main news stories from this time period. The vast majority of the 29 tweets concerning Norway and Indonesia in this period focused on the termination of the Letter of Intent between the two countries.⁴¹ Two tweets expressed concern about the future, fearing that it could result in loosened control and ultimately to increased deforestation.⁴² As was the case in some of the news articles in this period, two tweets focused on questions relating to the possible causes behind the termination of the agreement.⁴³

Most of the tweets in this context expressed regret about the terminated deal and/or concerns about possible consequences, but only a few singled out either country as the main responsible. Three tweets were critical towards the Indonesian government for “abruptly” ending a decade-long partnership, asking what was going on Indonesia or what this would mean for the country’s commitment to reaching the goals of the Paris Agreement.⁴⁴

September 2022

Most Indonesia-related tweets from September 2022 evolved around the renewed forest partnership between Norway and Indonesia. The majority of the 33 tweets analyzed shared or commented on news articles focused on the basic facts of this new deal, and these were often the ones with the highest reach – meaning the largest numbers of retweets or comments.⁴⁵ While most of these tweets welcomed the new deal or at least contributed to its spread

³⁹ See for instance

<https://twitter.com/CLAUDIOJARDIMD1/status/1566888419443228675?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>

⁴⁰ <https://twitter.com/KatiuciaOficial/status/1572883262288318466?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>

⁴¹ see for instance <https://twitter.com/Reuters/status/1436606705392103425?s=20>

⁴² See for instance <https://twitter.com/k1k1taufik/status/1440415312566841349?s=20>

⁴³ See for instance <https://twitter.com/palmoilmonitor/status/1438532717654781957?s=20>

⁴⁴ See for instance <https://twitter.com/GrantRosoman/status/1436439163180486656?s=20>

⁴⁵ See for instance

<https://twitter.com/ClimateNewsIDN/status/1571816406986854400?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>

through neutral language, three were openly critical towards the deal and focused on its limitations as highlighted by activist groups.⁴⁶

4.1.5. Summary

Overall, the news articles from Brazil and Indonesia tended to project Norway in a positive light, as a supporter of green policies. In Brazil, Norway was seen as a representative of the broader international community in favor of policies towards mitigating CO₂ emissions from deforestation. Norway and its use of the country's diplomatic and economic muscles to push for a green transition and the development of green technologies was generally portrayed as an example for others to follow. Yet, a few critical articles questioned the focus on CCS and the environmental damages caused by Norwegian-owned companies in the Amazon. Similarly, in the Indonesian news reports from this time period, Norway was often described as an important ally with important common interests with Indonesia, and the need for collaboration between the two was emphasized. Most of the media attention with regards to Norway focused on the forest partnership between Norway and Indonesia. At the same time, some criticisms made their way to the media spotlight, mainly guided towards the effectiveness and transparency of the new bilateral partnership, but a few also questioning Norway's legitimacy through its policies on carbon offsetting.

In the case of tweets analyzed, while the majority of Brazil-related tweets were positive, there were to a certain extent heated discussions on Twitter in particular ahead of the presidential election in the fall of 2022, and this included environmental issues and the role of outside actors and countries like Norway. Similarly, despite some critical tweets, Norway's image as indicated by Indonesia-related tweets was mostly positive or at least positive-neutral in this period, most likely due to the apparent success with the forest partnership signed between the two countries.

⁴⁶ See for instance <https://twitter.com/AidaGreenbury/status/1572707650101338112?s=20&t=S5r8Du-DX03bGZwnRyAMNQ>

4.2. Analysis – interviews

There were a number of recurrent themes and issues raised in the course of the 24 semi-structured interviews carried out as part of this thesis. The data has been organized in four main sections; firstly, with a focus on Norway's self-image as it relates to climate. Secondly, how Norway's climate image is perceived abroad, in particular in Brazil and in Indonesia, in addition to a mostly European perspective. Thirdly, regarding implications of Norway's "climate paradox", the informants' perceptions have been divided in four main categories: Economic, political, social and climate risks. Finally, a few perspectives from the informants on greenwashing in this context have been included.

4.2.1. Norway's self-image

A common theme in the interviews with the seven informants from Norway (informants number 1, 5, 11, 15, 16, 20 and 24)⁴⁷ was the complexity and somewhat paradoxical self-image of Norway as it relates to climate and environmental issues. While acknowledging the general positive image Norway enjoys abroad, all seven informants were often quick to point out the two-sided nature of this image.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 1** : « Norway's climate image is complicated. In many ways, it's a good image. Norway is seen as an active and constructive country, in particular in international climate negotiations such as those under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or through Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). However, Norway's role as fossil fuel producer puts it in a different « club ».

These sentiments were echoed by another informant:

- **Informant 11**: "Norway's climate image is mainly positive. It is a big aid donor, and Norway is a frontrunner in some areas related to the green transition, such as electric

⁴⁷ See appendix 1 for list of informants.

vehicles. It takes climate issues seriously domestically. But, it's a paradox that it is oil revenues which have made the green transition possible".

Similarly, one informant described the contrast between commitments abroad and domestic actions, noting the need to do more at home:

- **Informant 15:** "Norway has a schizophrenic climate image. And of course, it depends on who you ask. On the one hand, there is the petroleum industry. On the other hand, there's NICFI. And the fact is that Norway hasn't been particularly good at cutting its own greenhouse gas emissions; only about 3% since 1990".

One informant emphasized what he sees as Norway's overall positive image internationally due to its funding to multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, or to its long-term commitment to foreign aid and development. Even if this might be more in relative terms, rather than in absolute terms.

- **Informant 11:** "Norway is considered to be a "doer", a country which does a lot in terms of altruism. At the same time, the standard is low when it comes to foreign policy and climate policies; the average share of GDP given to ODA [Official Development Assistance] is low; Norway ranks near the top with 1% of its GDP given to ODA".

Three informants (5, 15, 20) were more concerned with how this positive image related to specific Norwegian policy priorities, in particular efforts to protect tropical rainforests:

- **Informant 20:** «Norway doesn't have a singular climate image in the world – it depends on who you ask. Even if most countries are aware of Norway being an oil producer, in my opinion they regard Norway as a central and important actor with a high standing related to rainforest conservation, which contributes to mitigate massive greenhouse gas emissions through reduced deforestation and forest degradation".
- **Informant 5:** "Norway's climate image internationally is generally positive. Most people outside of Norway will say it has a positive image. Because climate and forests

are something we want to prioritize. A lot of resources have been set aside for this, in particular through NICFI”.

And while all informants discussed the possibility for Norway to lead by example, three of them (15,20,24), given the current status quo, dismissed this idea.

- **Informant 20:** “There is no doubt; Norway cannot claim to be an example to the world in terms of transition to a low-emission society, given that we continue to invest so much in new oil and gas fields. “

One informant went even further and made use of powerful metaphors to describe what he considered to be mainly negative sides of Norway’s climate image.

- **Informant 24:** “I think Norway’s climate image is one of indulgence; that Norway as a country essentially buys itself free from commitments to climate targets through carbon trade and offsets, or that it buys itself a better image through climate aid and support to the Rainforest Foundation, to the UN and others. And this is perhaps the nice way to look at it. A perhaps more vulgar parallel would be to look at Norway as a filthy rich billionaire, driving around in a fossil-driven Bentley. He drives as fast as he wants and parks wherever he wants, not caring about the speeding or parking tickets because he doesn’t even notice their costs. This comparison might be a bit cheeky, but also somewhat serious. Norway in this sense also can act as a climate bully, through our emissions and through our main source of income.”

4.2.2. Norway’s climate image in Brazil

The five informants from Brazil (6, 8, 10, 18, 19) mostly echoed sentiments from their Norwegian counterparts regarding Norway’s climate image. While acknowledging several key areas where Norway has contributed positively, in particular to forest protection in the Amazon through Norway’s role in the Amazon Fund, these informants were also critical of Norway’s oil revenues.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 6:** “Norway is seen as a forest champion. Looking out for other nations, and making bold contributions, commitments to forest nations. No developed country has made these high amounts of contributions to forest countries. It started with the Amazon Fund, and then Indonesia. This brings Norway’s image to the highest standards. Yet, Norway’s main economic resources are oil and gas.”

While a critical view of this duality was generally shared among the informants, all five informants also stressed the need for swift change:

- **Informant 10:** “Norway is very important to climate. It’s on the front line of the most innovative things we need. On finance, or on helping others. But it also lives with the contradiction of being an oil country. The transition can’t happen overnight, but they will have to stop with fossil fuels this decade”.

Four of the informants (6,8,18,19) emphasized how this image varies according to knowledge of Norway and its policies. Three of them (8, 18, 19) made a point of how Norway can be seen as a hypocrite in Brazil, and that this view is particularly salient in certain segments in the population. As one informant said:

- **Informant 8:** “Norway’s climate image is positive, because your general image is good. Educated professionals in Brazil won’t know much about Norway, but think of Norway as a case of social equality. Those familiar with the country recognize Norway as a leader in climate negotiations, with its history for instance with the Brundtland commission. Then, there is the other side of the image: NGOs and Greens would say you are hypocrites. One could ask; Is Norway trying to pay its way out of the hard choices it has to make domestically?”

Similarly, another informant stated:

- **Informant 19:** “I know about Norway through the Amazon Fund. And it’s not only me; many people do, in part because of Bolsonaro. For him it was hypocritical for countries like Norway to ask Brazil not to extract from the forest, while they themselves continued extracting oil and other resources from their own territories”.

And while most attention is given to Norway's oil and gas industries in this context, one informant emphasized how such critical views are also taking into account other sectors.

- **Informant 18:** "Norway's climate image? That's a tricky question. Norway already has a place as an example country, an image of a capitalistic country working for social policies. But I would say its image is one of hypocrisy. Not just regarding fossil fuels, but also state-owned companies like Hydro. Norway doesn't do anything to prevent these companies from doing harm to people or the environment. But it's not just Norway, all Nordic countries are doing this."

4.2.3. Norway's climate image in Indonesia

Similar to the case with Brazil, all five informants (2, 13, 14, 21, 22) from Indonesia to a large extent shared key views with the Norwegian informants regarding Norway's climate image. While acknowledging Norway's contributions in some areas, in particular its commitment to collaborate with Indonesia to reduce deforestation, all informants were quick to point out the dilemmas facing a country which combines ambitious climate action with continued fossil fuel extraction.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 2:** "Norway is one of the most committed countries in the world, serious about tackling climate change. Norway takes the risk, investing in different activities. Some are successful, some are not, but they keep their commitment in the climate sector. But of course, with the Oil Fund in Norway, it's a dilemma".

This view was largely echoed by another informant:

- **Informant 21:** "Yes, there are some contradictions. Norway depends on oil. The impression is that Norway produces a lot of oil, emitting a lot of CO₂. At the same time, Norway is trying to be seen as a leader in climate change mitigation, by aiding countries that are big emitters, specifically, with regard to forest and land use activity."

Two informants (13, 22) emphasized how the country's image generally is good, but that it quickly changes with increased knowledge about Norway's fossil fuel dependency.

- **Informant 13:** "Norway's climate image is positive, but not as positive as my first impression. Norway is double-faced: On the one hand, they are trying to portray this positive climate image, but at the same time, domestically, some of their policies are contributing negatively to the climate".

One of them pointed out how lack of knowledge can even be an advantage sometimes:

- **Informant 22:** "In terms of commitment to deforestation, Norway is generous. It gives lots of money. But not many people in Indonesia are aware of the fact that Norway depends on fossil fuels. So there is a disconnect between Norway's image in deforestation and its fossil fuel dependency. Even a scholar like myself does not have a clear view of the percentage of fossil fuel revenues used for nature protection in this context."

A more critical view, following one informant, resonated with perspectives presented above describing positive climate actions in one area as a form of indulgence or compensation for negative actions in another. Yet, he points out how this doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing.

- **Informant 14:** "When Norway still produces oil and gas, and asks other countries to do more for climate, it makes some people confused. Sometimes countries do good things in one setting, and bad things in another setting. Western countries often pay compensation for pollution to countries like ours, in a way to clean their sins. And maybe it's a good thing. At least it's better than being a pollutant and not doing anything."

4.2.4. Norway's climate image internationally

The final set of informants – six from Europe (3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 17) as well as one from the US (23) – generally reflected the above-presented perspectives. They all reaffirmed the

previously presented views that Norway's climate image is indeed strongly influenced by its double role in fossil fuel production and climate mitigation efforts.

As stated by one informant:

- **Informant 23:** "I have a mixed impression of Norway's climate image. For an oil and gas producer, a lot of attention goes to Carbon Capture and Storage, and to the footprint of this production. It's savvy but committed. Perhaps not completely balanced in what they consider other countries should do. The impression is of a country eager to burnish its credentials in the climate space."

Again, echoing views expressed by informants from both Brazil and Indonesia, four informants (3,4,7,9) described how the country's image depended on the level of familiarity with Norway.

- **Informant 4:** "Norway's climate image is positive overall. But most people on the outside don't know too much about Norway. The most enlightened abroad would point to a double standard. How much they do for other countries vs. what they do within the country."

Similarly, one informant stated:

- **Informant 12:** "My first impression of Norway was that of a green country, with extensive hydro power, and lots of green spaces. Then, I realized the strength of industrial industries in Norway, and in particular the role of oil and gas, as well as fish and forestry. Norway's double role is clear, being a main producer of oil and gas on the one hand, and on the other hand being on the forefront against deforestation in countries like Brazil, DR Congo, and in Indonesia."

This view was echoed by another informant, who went even further in highlighting what she considered to be an important disconnect between image and actions.

- **Informant 3:** "Norway tries to portray itself as savior, and protector towards countries like Brazil. It has a deep engagement in international fora. But when you dig into the economy, which is based predominantly on oil and offshore structures, you see the disconnection between the image of the country and actions taken on the ground."

From an external viewpoint, one can see that here is good will. But is it all just to build a beneficial climate image?"

Echoing views by the other informant groups, five informants (3, 4, 7, 9, 17) emphasized the perceived hypocrisy of Norway's actions at home and abroad:

- **Informant 17:** "Norway's climate image is one of hypocrisy. They talk loudly about the climate crisis at COP, but keep awarding massive licenses for oil and gas production. These are emissions which are causing the climate crisis."

One informant described how the positive image was misplaced, even within the country itself:

- **Informant 7:** "Norway is the greenest country in the world regarding electric cars, but still depending on oil and gas. It has a lot of carrots, but not so many sticks. In climate meetings abroad, Norway rarely gets criticized because it has a big checkbook. I would say the oil industry is a big black spot on the Norwegian climate record. Norway's image abroad is better than it should be when you evaluate it against its performance. Norwegians too have an idea its better than it really is."

One informant stressed this hypocrisy as part of a broader discourse in which perspectives from the Global North and the Global South are at odds:

- **Informant 9:** "Norway's climate image depends on who you ask. In Brazil, Norway can be seen as a hypocrite. Some people, particularly in the South, have a critical view of countries in the Global North. They see European discourse as an attempt to take away their territorial integrity, to take away the Amazon from Brazilians."

4.2.5. Implications of Norway's "climate paradox"

All 24 informants agreed that Norway, given its oil and gas production and simultaneous green ambitions, has a somewhat paradoxical image when it comes to climate and environmental issues.

However, if there were broadly speaking agreement among the informants regarding Norway's climate image, there were more diverging views concerning challenges and

possible ways forward. In what follows, I will present some of the key views of these informants on potential implications of a continued status quo – that is, a prolongation of Norway’s so-called “climate paradox”. In broad terms, these implications related to (i) political, (ii) economic, (iii) social and (iv) climate risks. Overall, all of these four broad categories were mentioned by respondents from all country groups (Norway, Brazil, Indonesia and Europe). For this reason, I did not disentangle their comments by country.

i. Political risks

Nine informants (1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17) were quick to emphasize potential political risks facing Norway if it continues maintaining its double role or “climate paradox” as described above. These risks included loss of credibility, a worsening image and ultimately reduced influence.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 9:** “The main risk facing Norway would be credibility. Related to negotiations in COP. This could impact the narratives of other countries about who the bad guys are”.

This view was echoed by another informant:

- **Informant 7:** “It’s about international credibility. If you say you’re going to cut 30% of emission by 2030, but you’re only 5% on the way, and keep awarding new oil licenses.. Next time you’re going to make a promise - who will listen? People aren’t going to believe you or listen to you”.

Similarly, one informant from Norway emphasized how it would be more difficult to be taken seriously in political discussions with other countries.

- **Informant 5:** “A continued status quo will have clear political costs for Norway as a climate country. We lose credibility, and our arguments won’t be taken as seriously. In political talks, more time will have to be spent on explaining or excusing what’s going

on. We won't be taken as seriously as we would have been otherwise, as long as we have this two-faced profile.”

Another informant stressed how this credibility is even more important for small countries like Norway:

- **Informant 1:** “Norway’s climate image has an instrumental value, giving it credibility and showing that we are taking climate change seriously. It gives us the opportunity to influence others, and enhance our position in climate negotiations. This is more important for Norway than for some other countries, because we’re small, and we need to make our mark if we are to be listened to. We depend on our credibility if we want to be listened to by larger countries such as Brazil or Indonesia.”

Eight informants (2, 4, 7, 13, 17, 18, 19, 23) highlighted how many countries – in particular developing countries – look to Norway and countries like Norway for inspiration:

- **Informant 4:** “Norway is an interesting lab for the rest of the world. Many people are following what is happening here, if it can work here it can work anywhere”.

While stressing how Norway was not there yet, ten informants (2, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22) described how Norway in their minds is positioned to lead by example and pave the way for other countries, showing how a successful green transition can look like.

- **Informant 13:** “If Norway succeeds with the green transition, this would give leverage to Norway. As a country that not just talks the talk, but walks the walk. If Norway has a policy which is strong for its own country, that brings it from fossil fuels to renewable energy, it’s going to encourage countries like Indonesia to listen more to Norway.”

Similarly, one informant pointed out that some countries already look to Norway in relation to social policies, and that a green transition would enhance this power of example.

- **Informant 18:** “Norway already has a place as an example country, a capitalism that works. And I don’t think Norway is a small country, because it represents other Nordic countries. If Norway stops with fossil fuels, that would be huge. It would put massive pressure on countries and companies, that climate activists would take

advantage of. It would show what is possible, that the energy transition is not a big issue, but good for the economy.”

Indeed, two informants (7, 17) asked if other countries – in particular developing countries - would at all be able to transition, if a wealthy country like Norway was not.

- **Informant 7:** Norway has the opportunity to lead. A rich country like Norway has every possibility to do the right thing. Why should Nigeria, Paraguay or even China go down this path of economic transmission, if Norway won't do it?

ii. Economic risks

Another strand of consequences of a continued “climate paradox” highlighted by half of the informants (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24) related to potential negative effects for the economy, for workers and for the business sector. While these informants expressed views that a green transition would inevitably happen at some point, they particularly stressed the economic risks of a delayed or slow transition.

As one informant said:

- **Informant 8:** “We know oil will end in the normal areas by 2050 or 2060. So unless you go to the Arctic, this will not be economically viable. There will be a time when it will be tricky to know the limits. If I were Norwegian, I would ask the government: - What will we do after oil? What will be the generation of wealth for Norway in 2050?”

Similarly, another informant discussed the financial risks of continued oil production, and stressed the urgency of phasing it down.

- **Informant 10:** “There are many risks, but a major risk is stranded assets. If we are to reach the 1,5 degrees target, the International Energy Agency (IEA) is very clear: We cannot open new oil fields now. And it's the IEA that says this, not Greenpeace. What are we waiting for?”

One informant pointed out how it is difficult to accomplish systems changes in a crisis situation, but nonetheless stressed how recent crises should not be used to postpone a green transition:

- **Informant 12:** “The war in Ukraine is leading to a path dependency for oil and gas production. There is a high energy need, and this is used as an excuse not to turn away sooner from oil and gas. Additionally, there is increased pressure on states in the post-Covid19-world. But sooner or later, Norway will have to transition. Pressure is mounting, both internally in Norway and in international media.

Four informants (6, 16, 20, 24) focused more on the positive impacts of a green transition, especially if carried out swiftly:

- **Informant 24:** “If Norway were to stop fossil fuels production soon, it would provide a massive amount of competent workers for the green transition we all want. Competence, technology and finances which could be poured into renewable energy. It would be an immediate advantage.”

Resonating with this view, another informant also emphasized concerns by the businesses sector, in particular insurance companies.

- **Informant 6:** “A quick green transition would be good for the people of Norway, better for employment, and it would reduce impacts of climate change. But it has to be done in a way that is not creating other issues. Insurance companies are more and more concerned with climate risk. If nothing is done, there is a risk of collapse of the economy or of nature.”

One informant stressed how Norway’s potential to lead in this context would not only benefit the economy:

- **Informant 20:** “Everyone knows fossil fuels will eventually be phased out. Given our high-tech competencies, Norway could take on a leading role in the technological transition. We could invest heavily, not just in offshore wind, but in industries that are future-oriented and audacious, and this would serve Norway both economically,

socially and environmentally. We could to a much larger extent lead the way, rather than just subsidize electric vehicles. But it is already getting late...”

Another informant recognized Norway’s potential to lead, but underlined how he thought it would be more difficult to do so going forward, compared to how it was like in the past:

- **Informant 4:** “Up until now, Norway has picked the low-hanging fruits with its electric vehicles and ferries. What is left is much more difficult; planes, heavy transportation, agriculture. How do you make these less polluting, or more energy-efficient? I believe it will be harder for Norway to find a way to be as useful as with electric cars. Everybody uses cars, but the for the rest it’s more abstract. But, if you show people you can save money and the planet, you have a good case.”

One informant focused on the key role of the business sector in the green transition, and highlighted how Norway should prioritize what he called “business-diplomacy”.

- **Informant 16:** “Norway could take on a leading role in the green transition. But it is interesting, because one of our challenges will be that we are too old-fashioned. We need to be better at “business-diplomacy”, how to collaborate better between the public and private sector. Denmark is better at this. Because if Norway wants to be credible leader in the green transition, I think this is missing.”

iii. Social risks

In addition to political and economic risks, almost half of the informants (2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 22) emphasized social risks, in the form of increased tensions in society, rising instability or dwindling trust, and they stressed the need for policies that are considered just and legitimate in the eyes of citizens.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 3:** “Often when we talk about climate policy, we talk to the already converted ones. The risk is if the government is not including every aspect of society,

including workers' rights, you will end up in a situation which is polarized and get climate policies which are maybe supported by the 1 %. Other classes of the society are still supporting the fossil fuel industry because they give them jobs. "Just transition" is key here."

Along the same lines, another informant pointed out how equality and climate policies are often intimately linked, and how there are already examples of what can happen if such policies are not viewed as legitimate.

- **Informant 15:** "The challenge is to ensure continuous and long-term support for increasingly stricter climate policies. It can be tempting to introduce powerful measures in the short term, without taking into consideration that this has to work long term. The green transition has to ensure that inequalities in society won't be deepened, which they often are, through green taxes or fees which disproportionately impact the poor – for instance as seen with the "Yellow vests"-movement in France. If you go too hard, too fast, you can lose a lot, and the policies can become unpopular".

One informant pointed out how some societies are already rather polarized, and that climate policies could reinforce this divide.

- **Informant 10:** "Polarization is an important challenge in countries like Brazil and in the US. This is about democracy, and social politics. We are going to have to change the way people understand the problem of climate change, and change how half of the population is completely against many issues."

Another informant went even further in describing the risk of social instability unless stronger action is taken.

- **Informant 18:** "We often speak about climate anxiety these days, also in the countries in the North. Young people realize that they are let down, that their governments are failing them. That they are part of something which is damaging the entire world. At a certain point, there will be social instability. "

And while legitimacy within a country is considered essential to avoid polarization and social unrest, one informant stressed the importance of legitimacy also across country borders:

- **Informant 22:** “There is an aspect of neocolonial climate development here. The Global South is seen as the place where reduction has to happen because it’s cheaper, it’s positioned as the zone of sacrifice. In the North, the sacrifice of stopping production of fossil fuels is not stopping. That’s what’s happening.”

Three informants (3,4,5) emphasized the moral dimensions in this context:

- **Informant 4:** “It’s really a moral conflict; How to serve the earth and your country at the same time? But governments have to be re-elected every 4 years. If you shut down the entire oil industry overnight, it would be suicidal. It’s how you phase out which is important, and what you replace it with. And I don’t think they have the answer yet».

Similarly, one informant highlighted the Norway’s responsibility not just towards its current citizens, but also to those in the future:

- **Informant 3:** “This is ultimately a moral imperative, a question regarding the type of world we want to give future generations. Should Norway be a country that cares about future generations?”

iv. Climate risks

Six informants (4, 6, 8, 13, 18, 24) highlighted the risks posed by worsening climate change itself, and its direct and indirect effects on society.

As one informant put it:

- **Informant 13:** “The risk is not meeting the goals the countries have set themselves. For instance, Indonesia has set a goal to reach net zero by 2050. Even meeting such goals might not be adequate to limit 1.5 degrees. Just in the past 10 years, we have seen how climate change has affected our climate and ecosystems. Disasters are

already more extreme, and more frequent. So, it is very risky business to allow for new fossil fuels and new infrastructure.”

This view was echoed by another informant:

- **Informant 6:** “One of the major risks is climate change. We cannot go beyond the 1,5 limit, and we all know fossil fuels contribute the most.”

One informant pointed to the likelihood of worsening effects of climate change, and stressed the particular responsibility of wealthy countries:

- **Informant 18:** “Rich countries with high living standards would be the first to be blamed as bad guys. Regarding climate change, and effects like extreme rain or heat waves that kill people, these countries are creating an environment which is destabilizing countries in terms of social cohesion.”

Finally, one informant painted a bleak picture of the future he expects with the current status quo:

- **Informant 24:** ““Code red” becomes “blood red”. It would just be a reinforcement of doomsday prophecies. We know that we are headed straight off the cliff, yet we continue marching steadfastly on towards the edge of this cliff.”

4.2.6. Insights about greenwashing

In the interviews, each informant was asked whether they considered the totality of what Norway is doing – including policies impacting positively or negatively towards climate change – as a case of greenwashing. Of the 24 informants interviewed, 8 agreed that Norway indeed was mostly guilty of greenwashing, 8 chose not to take a stand, and 8 disagreed, arguing that while there were certainly reasons for criticism, they would still not consider what Norway was doing as greenwashing. In terms of countries of origin among the informants, there were no obvious patterns, and there were informants agreeing, disagreeing, or not wanting to pick side from each country group of informants.

The 8 informants (3, 5, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, 21) agreeing to call Norway's actions a case of greenwashing were particularly questioning the intentions behind its policies.

As put by one informant:

- **Informant 3:** "If Norway is doing greenwashing? Yes, it could be defined as that. I wonder what the perception is among Norwegians. From an external viewpoint, on the one hand, we could say that there is good will. On the other hand, we could ask; Is it just to build a beneficial climate image?"

Another informant made a comparison between countries and companies in the context of greenwashing:

- **Informant 18:** "Countries are different than companies, as they have to bring together interests from many sectors. I think we see a lot of good things coming from Norway, like efforts to reduce CO2 emissions globally, or new rules for assets administered by public funds. But at the same time, Norway is acting like most companies; Giving lots of money and funds, but not cutting its own emissions. In this sense, yeah, it's greenwashing".

For 8 informants (1, 2, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 24), Norway's "climate paradox" was indeed perceived as problematic, but they were undecided as to whether or not they would call it greenwashing.

As stated by one informant:

- **Informant 2:** "With the oil fund in Norway, it's a dilemma. It is using climate initiatives like REDD+ to cover bad policies with good ones. I'm not sure if it's greenwashing, as this could be too negative. But you could argue they are covering their sins."

Lastly, 8 informants (4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 15, 22, 23) emphasized the contradictions in Norway's policies, but did not consider this to be a case of greenwashing, pointing to actual commitments and contributions.

As put by one of them:

- **Informant 4:** “No, I wouldn't use that word. Greenwashing is not what Norway is doing. It is trying to serve its own interests, and at the same time trying to save the planet. At times the two are contradictory. It's a difficult equation to solve, but I don't think it's done just for the sake of reputation. These are sincere efforts to help other countries.”

5 – Discussion

This thesis set out to explore Norway's international image in relation to climate and environmental issues. As indicated in the previous chapter, this image is a mixed one, confirmed both by the content analysis and by the semi-structured interviews. A striking finding, therefore, is the agreement among informants across all country groups, as well as sentiments found in news articles and social media posts, about the country's "climate paradox" and thus the mixed climate image Norway has today.

A country's image is arguably important, as demonstrated previously, to better reach set foreign policy goals (Jervis, 1970) and to increase one's soft power (Nye, 2004). It is conceivable that most countries will therefore see it in their interests to construct a positive image. This certainly seems to be the case for Norway, as the government has made conscious efforts over the years to position the country as an international "frontrunner" in climate policies – more or less successfully (Lahn & Rowe, 2015).

Yet, as pointed out in the theory chapter, the formal image or one's proclaimed self-image and the image as it is perceived by others do not always correspond well (Stuenkel, 2016). Even within a country, contradictory views or discourses might co-exist (Kaplowitz, 1990). Indeed, findings in this thesis suggest that there are significant discrepancies between Norway's official self-image and the image among the Norwegian experts working with climate issues or with more in-depth knowledge of the topic. These experts did not fully accept propagated views of Norway as a "climate frontrunner" or "climate diplomat", despite admitting positive aspects, such as Norway's leading role in forest protection through NICFI. Instead, they stressed Norway's double role and an image shaped above all by its "climate paradox". Thus, despite the fact that oil and climate have been kept as separate policy areas in Norway (Lahn, 2019), these findings indicate that even people working in the field or familiar with Norway's role in forest conservation consider this work as part of a larger whole.

Furthermore, Norway's formal self-image does not necessarily coincide with how its image is perceived abroad. As shown, Norway's image in Brazil and in Indonesia is also shaped by its "climate paradox". Contrary to what was expected, findings in this thesis indicate that there is not much difference in perceptions of Norway's climate image in Norway, Brazil and Indonesia; rather, the difference is between the official self-image in Norway and that of well-

informed professionals. In all three countries, informants recognized Norway's climate contributions as important, with a particular emphasis on Norway's deforestation efforts, but they also stressed the perceived double standard and hypocrisy when Norway pushes for more climate action abroad yet undermines such efforts domestically by continuing to produce and export fossil fuels. Consequently, even in countries where Norway has invested a lot and the Norwegian government can point to important accomplishments in terms of forest protection, its actual image is not as good as its formal self-image.

Another expectation was that Norway's image in Brazil would be more positive than in Indonesia, given Norway's deeper history of economic and diplomatic ties with Brazil. However, the findings presented in the previous chapter suggest that Norway's climate image is similar in both countries. In Brazil, informants commended Norway's positive actions, noting its role in the Amazon Fund and efforts to combat deforestation, and in Indonesia, informants highlighted the important forest partnership between the two countries. Yet informants in both cases emphasized skepticism towards the above-mentioned dual role, even if the Brazilian informants to a larger extent tended to link this to a perceived hypocrisy, while their Indonesian counterparts rather pointed to a perceived indulgence or a way for Norway to "clean its sins".

Contrary to expectations, the content analysis found a predominantly positive view of Norway both in Brazilian and Indonesian media and social media posts. There were a few exceptions, notably one Indonesian news article citing an activist as saying "Norway shines in borrowed feathers" by paying for emissions reductions elsewhere rather than cutting them at home. Or, for instance, a Brazilian newspaper article describing how foreign companies operating in Brazil, such as Norwegian-owned Hydro Alunorte, were often involved in damaging the environment and local communities in their pursuit of profits. Yet, the general image both in the articles and tweets analyzed was positive, portraying Norway as an important and constructive ally in the fight against deforestation and efforts to tackle climate change – in other words, much closer to Norway's formal self-image than the one found among the informants interviewed for this thesis.

Similarly, in contrast to what was expected, these findings indicate no significant difference between stakeholders in Brazil and Indonesia in terms of accusations of greenwashing. One informant from each country agreed to describe what Norway is doing as a case of

greenwashing, but the majority of informants from both countries would either not conclude or rejected using the label in this context. Nonetheless, my findings suggest that the more knowledge one has about Norway and its policies both domestically and abroad, the more negative ones' perceptions of Norway seem to appear.

As summed up by one informant:

- **Informant 5:** “The most informed people are aware that Norway is one of the world’s largest oil exporters, and that our emissions per capita are soaring. This is even many times worse if you count emissions from everything we export. So the most informed are aware of this. For instance, the most critical farmers, climate activists and representatives from the land use sector in Brazil confront us with this, and that has costs to our credibility and poses challenges.”

Finally, the data gathered in this thesis suggest that when key partners like Brazil and Indonesia consider Norway to have a double role or a “climate paradox”, there are – as expected – some practical consequences for Norway. Informants across all country groups agreed that a business-as-usual approach – in the sense of continued fossil fuel production – would imply a combination of political, economic, social, and climate risks for Norway. While different informants placed varying emphasis on these risks, informants from all four groups – Norwegian, Brazilian, Indonesian, and European – identified challenges relating to all of these categories of risks.

Such risks might very well become more imminent in a changing international context. A fragmentation of the international climate regime and stronger linkages between climate and other policy areas are already challenging states (Funnemark & Beaumont, 2022; Rosvold, 2022). By continuing to rely on fossil fuels, one could argue that Norway is effectively choosing a slow green transition, since a transition is likely inevitable (Hornburg & Sending, 2019). Informants stressed how Norway in this case risks not only a weakened image, credibility, and influence. They also stressed how this could put the country at an economic disadvantage through stranded assets, loss of jobs, and lack of access to emerging markets or future technologies – all views that resonate well with recent research (Funnemark & Beaumont, 2022).

Moreover, informants stressed the risks of social instability, growing inequality and expanding polarization, and the need for policies considered to be legitimate to allow for a “just transition”. These issues are closely related to climate risks, as a worsening climate change would exacerbate problems linked to extreme weather and thus threaten to destabilize more areas and countries. In this context too, the findings align with existing studies arguing how climate change constitutes one of the most serious threats to Norway’s security and to international stability, including through intensifying conflicts and through massive numbers of climate refugees likely to be forced on the move by quickly deteriorating living conditions (Hornburg & Sending, 2019).

Notwithstanding the perceived double role and the numerous challenges facing Norway in this changing context, there is arguably still potential for Norway to step up and lead by example. Indeed, informants from all country groups highlighted the potential for Norway to become a true “climate leader”, in other words to set an example for other countries and to lead the way towards a beneficial and just green transition. This was already the case in some areas, in their eyes, through Norway’s expeditious adoption of electric vehicles, the development of green technologies such as CSS, and perhaps most of all in reducing deforestation globally through NICFI.

Unfortunately, “leading by example” will not necessarily be easy. As long as other countries had limited ambitions, it was relatively painless for Norway to be seen as a “forest champion” through its large ODA budget and particularly by its achievements through NICFI. However, as the findings of this thesis suggest, the situation is changing, and as more and more countries are stepping up their climate efforts – be it EU countries through the Union’s accelerated shift towards renewables (EC, 2023a), initiatives like the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance demanding the phasing out of oil and gas (BOGA, 2023), or even the United States through its new climate legislation laid out in the Inflation Reduction Act (EPA, 2023) – it will likely be more difficult for Norway to defend its double role and not least to be perceived as a “climate frontrunner”.

By all indications, time seems to be an essential factor. The longer Norway maintains its “climate paradox” by continued fossil fuel reliance, the smaller the window of opportunity becomes to meet set climate objectives. Consequently, Norway risks its potential for climate leadership becoming a “missed opportunity” as highlighted by informants in the previous

chapter. Furthermore, while public accusations of greenwashing have thus far been relatively limited, as shown, a third of informants interviewed for this thesis largely agreed that Norway – given its continued business as usual-approach to fossil fuels and green policies – could be seen as a case of greenwashing. These types of criticisms can expectedly increase in strength as deadlines for current climate objectives are fast approaching, in Norway’s case, cutting emissions by 55% by 2030, or reaching net zero by 2050.

As summed up by one informant:

- **Informant 6:** “I think it’s not greenwashing because of Norway’s bold contributions. If it was little, and there was no commitment to the plans for the transition – that would be different. But this could be seen as greenwashing if it does not change soon.”

In coming years, policymakers, diplomats, and other stakeholders both in Norway and other donor countries could do wise by reflecting more on what their country’s image is – both its self-image, as well as its image abroad. “Image” is not static, and just as the international environment changes constantly, so do the images of the countries interacting in it (Jervis, 1970, pp. 4-5). What might have worked well in the past will not necessarily work as well in the present, and perhaps even less so in the future. Going forward, Norway might find it necessary to consider other solutions besides financial support and development assistance in the Global South to earn a positive image and be considered a real “climate champion” both at home and abroad.

6 – Conclusion

A positive country image can be a source of power and influence, making it easier for countries to reach their goals (Nye, 2008). Yet a country's self-image is not always reflected in that of its peers – not even among those who are close, and where conscious efforts have been made to accomplish this. Capturing the essence of a country's image in an accurate way is not an easy undertaking.

This thesis aimed to shed light on Norway's international image as it relates to climate and environmental issues – in short, its climate image. For years, Norway has more or less successfully been able to create a positive image and present itself as a front-runner in international climate politics (Lahn & Rowe, 2015, p. 140), despite its role as a major oil and gas producer. A cornerstone of this positive image has been Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), providing Norway with a leading role in the fight against deforestation globally through careful coalition making and strategic use of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

However, findings in this thesis suggest that this positive image might have started to crack. Norway has already faced growing criticism over the past few years for its perceived double role in promoting green policies abroad while continuing fossil fuels production at home (Amundsen et al., 2022; Boyd, 2019; Milanovic, 2021). In a rapidly changing political environment and a fragmentation of the international climate regime (Dokk Smith et al., 2022), Norway's climate image could soon become much harder to defend (Rosvold, 2022).

By contrasting Norway's self-image with that among two key partner countries in the fight against deforestation, Brazil and Indonesia, this thesis found that Norway's image is mixed – a finding confirmed both by the content analysis and by the semi-structured interviews. While the image was more positive in news articles and tweets from Brazil and Indonesia than among the informants from these two countries, even here there were critical views of Norway's perceived hypocrisy. All expert informants emphasized this perceived double role and Norway's "climate paradox", with some even referring to it as indulgence, or a way for Norway to clean its sins. Thus, despite significant financial support from Norway and close partnerships with both Brazil and Indonesia, even here Norway's positive image seems to be cracking. The consequences are potentially numerous, as informants across all country groups

pointed to a combination of political, economic, social and climate risks facing Norway if it continues with business-as-usual in terms of its fossil fuel production.

Given the above perspectives, and the complex nature of the issues discussed – including country image, green transition, and climate change – it would seem fair to suggest that synthesizing these views into cohesive, comparable trains of thought is a complex challenge. Yet one such approach could be found in the question of greenwashing. In the theory chapter, “greenwashing” was defined as “poor environmental performance and positive communication about environmental performance”, a way to promote one’s brand with deceptive information (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). In terms of accusations of “greenwashing” in this context, one could argue that if Norway is indeed doing greenwashing, in the cases of Brazil and Indonesia, it does not seem to be working well as all informants pointed out Norway’s double role. Yet in the media and social media analyzed, the discourse of Norway as a climate frontrunner had broader support in both countries. Admittedly, it is not without difficulties, asking informants to go along with a simplified judgement or to take a position on whether or not what Norway is doing should be considered greenwashing. Not only because definitions of “greenwashing” vary, but also because the use of the label itself is not always welcome. Furthermore, given the limited number of informants interviewed, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions on this particular subject. By combining a content analysis and semi-structured interviews, one can deepen the understanding of context, but more research into underlying assumptions and attitudes towards greenwashing at the country level would be needed to complement these findings.

This thesis has sought to contribute to a limited, but growing literature on Norway’s climate image internationally. By comparing Norway’s self-image with that among two of its partner countries, as well as combining a content analysis with semi-structured interviews, it has made use of an original approach to provide a more nuanced understanding of this image. While several issues are specific to Norway and its particular history and policies as an oil country with green ambitions, one could imagine that some of the challenges it faces are relevant in a larger context and might apply to other countries as well, in particular developed countries with significant fossil fuel industries. Moreover, given the importance of development assistance in this context, as exemplified by NICFI, this thesis could also be viewed as a contribution to the larger literature on donor-recipient relations.

Notwithstanding the potential for broader applications, the thesis only provides a snap shot of Norway's image at this particular time among certain informed stakeholders mainly from Norway, Brazil and Indonesia. It does not provide a comprehensive view of this image among the general public in either country, nor does it attempt to represent a broader, global perspective on these issues. More research is needed to gain a better understanding of Norway's climate image, both in specific countries and among various stakeholders within these countries.

More research is also recommended to better understand the potential and perhaps likely impacts of a continued production and export of fossil fuels in a rapidly changing environment. For instance, the threat of legal challenges could intensify as effects of climate change become more severe, and calls grow stronger both domestically and abroad to hold governments and companies to account. Norway, as a major fossil fuel country, would expectedly be particularly vulnerable in this context. Finally, more scholarly attention should be given to the role of the private sector in reaching climate objectives, as well as to the possibilities and risks related to new and innovative collaborations between countries, including the emergence of new coalitions such as the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance.

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Appendix 1 – List of informants

All interviews were conducted online. Names and workplaces of all informants have been anonymized for privacy purposes.

#	Country/ region	Profession	About	Date of interview
1	Norway	scientist	Expert on Norwegian climate policies	26.1
2	Indonesia	scientist	Expert on REDD+	30.1
3	Europe	practitioner/NGO	Campaigner on forest and climate	1.2
4	Europe	journalist	News correspondent, covering climate and more	8.2
5	Norway	policymaker	Expert on Norwegian and Brazilian climate policies	9.2
6	Brazil	policymaker	Expert on forests and climate finance	13.2
7	Europe	journalist	News correspondent, covering climate and more	14.2
8	Brazil	policymaker	Expert on Brazilian and Norwegian climate policies	15.2
9	Europe	practitioner/NGO	Expert on land and natural resource governance	17.2
10	Brazil	journalist	Climate and environment correspondent	17.2
11	Norway	scientist	Expert on REDD+	20.2
12	Europe	scientist	Expert on REDD+	20.2
13	Indonesia	journalist	Environmental journalist	21.2
14	Indonesia	journalist	News correspondent, covering climate and more	21.2
15	Norway	scientist	Expert on climate and energy policies	22.2
16	Norway	practitioner/NGO	Expert on green finance and sustainability	22.2
17	Europe	journalist	News correspondent, covering climate and more	24.2
18	Brazil	journalist	Environmental and climate journalist	24.2
19	Brazil	scientist	Expert on global governance and climate change regime	24.2
20	Norway	practitioner/NGO	Expert on REDD+	28.2
21	Indonesia	scientist	Expert on environmental policy and REDD+	1.3
22	Indonesia	scientist	Expert resource management and forest governance	1.3
23	US	scientist	Expert on energy and climate change policy	1.3
24	Norway	journalist	Investigative reporter, covering climate and more	2.3

Informants by country/region:

Norway: 1, 5, 11, 15, 16, 20, 24.

Brazil: 6, 8, 10, 18, 19.

Indonesia: 2, 13, 14, 21, 22.

Europe (+ the US): 3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 23.

Appendix 2 – Codes

“Image” codes: relating to Norway’s “climate image”

Code	Associated/similar terms	Meaning	Mentioned by
Positive			
Climate champion	Forest champion, climate leader, savior, protector, leader in climate negotiations, NICFI, green country, green economy.	What Norway already does in climate/environment issues today which is “good”	6, 8, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23
Altruistic	Influence, honest broker, reliable ally in the West. Big checkbook, generous, high ODA percentage, bridge builder, Norway as doer, generous.	General image abroad as mostly positive, seen as constructive team player. Contributes to global public goods, peace building, ODA	4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 22,
Leading by example	Set example, be an example country, a case of social equality, a capitalism that works, potential “first mover”, could be green transition leader, could have leading role in tech.dev.	Potential for leading by example. An example in some areas already (social policies, deforestation), but potential for leading in climate more broadly	2, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22
Negative			
Oil exporter	“Big black spot on Norway’s climate record”, NICFI as greenwashing to continue oil production, Norway not a leader for green transition, climate bully.	Role which represents Norway’s “bad” in the climate domain, a role that runs contrary to “climate champion” discourse.	5, 7, 11, 20, 24

Hypocrite	Double standard, double role, climate paradox, disconnect, two-faced, climate split, contradictory policies, schizophrenic image, in denial, self-complacency	Ways of describing the duality/paradox of green ambitions and oil/gas revenues. Green transition made possible by oil revenues.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,6, 7, 8,9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18,19, 20,21,22, 23, 24
Indulgence	Buying itself a good image, clean consciousness, and buying itself free from commitments, cleans its sins, dirty money, war profiteer.	Questioning intentions. “Dirty money for good cause”. Critique particularly coming from climate activists.	4, 5, 14, 17, 20, 24
Historical responsibility	Shifting/differentiated responsibility, neocolonial climate development.	Norway with responsibility as a rich, developed country, but also as leading fossil fuel producer.	1, 4, 7, 11, 21, 22
Missed opportunity	Lost opportunity, missed chance to lead, not there yet.	Great potential but so far missed opportunity to lead.	2,3, 4,5, 7, 14, 17,24

“Implication” codes: Relating to implications of continued “climate paradox”

Code	Associated/similar terms	Meaning	Mentioned by
Political risks	Loss of credibility/trust, reliability, transparency, legitimacy. Reputational costs. Qs of “Norway’s fair share”. Political offsets. Greenwashing accusations increase. Threat of legal battles. Peer pressure increases.	Will be more difficult to make its voice heard/ promote Norwegian interests abroad. Reduced influence.	1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17
Lab for the world	Many look to Norway. Norway having the best starting point for a green transition. If not Norway, then who?	Chance to inspire, accelerate transition. Or reduce motivation by failing to act.	2, 4, 7, 13, 17, 18, 19, 23
Opportunity to lead	Do the right thing, clean up its act, lead by example. Not just talk the talk, but walk the walk. Be “first mover”. Soft power boost. Norway on “pedestal”. Inspire others.	Global problem, but someone has to lead. Show what is possible. Norway a small country, but can inspire others. Show green transition is possible, good for economy.	2, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22,
Economic risks	Stranded assets, loss of jobs, weakened economy. Loss of market shares in renewables. Lack of tech. Path dependency.	Bad positioned for future economy. Difficult to separate climate, energy, and trade policy.	2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24
Solutions	Technology, innovation, education, collaboration. Business diplomacy. Green business opportunities. Role of financial sector. Public-private partnerships.	Need for multiple solutions. From big tech to local perspectives. Open-minded. Need to catalyze more funds to reach climate goals (SDGs).	4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20
Social risks	Social instability, polarization, lack of trust in government. Climate anxiety. Rise of	Increased pressure inside states (costs of welfare, shifting demographics) and pressure on	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 17, 18, 22

	extreme wings, nationalism.	multilateralism/cohesion in org.s like the EU.	
Moral imperative	Moral conflict. Importance of “doing the right thing”. Phase out fossil fuels.	Moral issues for current and future generations.	2, 3,4,5 7,11
Just transition	Not too fast, not too slow. Social inequality, climate justice, human rights. Workers rights. Vested interests.	Need for legitimate climate policies.	3, 6, 12, 15,21,22 23,
Climate risks	“Code red” becomes “code blood red”. Worsening effects of climate change.	Direct consequences (More extreme weather, risk of flooding etc) and indirect consequences (increased hunger/resource fight, instability, migration)	4, 6,8, 13, 18, 24

Appendix 3 – Interview guide

Introduction

- 1) Can you briefly describe your professional and academic background?
- 2) What is your current title / role in the organization?
- 3) How did you first become interested in climate / environmental issues?

Key terms/definitions

- 4) How would you, in your own words, define
 - a) Green transition?
 - b) Greenwashing?
- 5) In the context of international collaboration; What comes to mind with the words "climate image"?
- 6) What are some key factors influencing a country's climate image, and how is this different from a country's general image?

Norway and climate image

- 7) How did you first become familiar with Norway and its role in global climate governance?
- 8) How did you first become familiar with Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), and what's your involvement with NICFI?
- 9) In your opinion, what is Norway's current climate image like?
- 10) To what extent do you think it's self-image reflects that of other countries?
- 11) In your opinion – is what Norway is doing a case of greenwashing?
- 12) If Norway stops with fossil fuel production – what are key upsides of this for Norway?
- 13) What would a Norwegian success in green transition mean for other countries?
- 14) What are some potential risks for a country attempting to balance fossil fuel revenues with green ambitions?

Final thoughts

- 15) Any other final thoughts?

Appendix 4 – Information letter to informants

Participation in research project (MA thesis) on “Norway’s international climate image”

This is an inquiry about your participation in a research project/MA thesis with the working title: “Leading by example – or green-lighting greenwashing? A comparative study of Norway’s climate image in Brazil and in Indonesia”. In this letter I will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This work will be carried out as part of my MA thesis in International Environmental Studies at The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU). The main purpose is to contribute to a better understanding of Norway’s current climate image internationally. More concretely, I will explore Norway’s self-image and compare it with the climate image among important bilateral partners such as Brazil and Indonesia. Additionally, the study will examine how this image might be influenced by the country’s fossil fuel dependency, and potential consequences of a weakened image for Norway.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU) is the institution responsible for the project. For the work with the thesis, I benefit from the guidance of the following two supervisors:

- 1) Aida Cuni Sanchez, NMBU (main supervisor)
- 2) Solveig Aamodt, CICERO (The CICERO Center for International Climate Research) (co-supervisor)

Why are you being asked to participate?

The informants for this study consist mainly of scientists, practitioners, journalists and policymakers. Given your position and your duties/responsibilities at your institution, I would like to interview you about the issues described above from your point of view.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to participate in the project, I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with you. This means that I have an interview guide with a number of topics that I would like to get your views on. The interview will probably last around 30 minutes. You are free to speak as you wish or refrain from answering questions. Before the interview, I will ask for your consent to take notes and make an audio recording of the conversation.

The interview guide typically contains topics such as:

- Your professional background, duties/responsibilities
- Background, status and reflections of the topic I am investigating - seen from your point of view
- Thoughts on future developments and potential challenges in this context

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is completely voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy –your personal data will be stored and used

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with privacy regulations. Only me and my supervisors will have access to the information. All data will be treated confidentially. Audio recordings and notes are stored separately, and also separately from name list and connection key if this is used. The data is stored on a laptop and in the cloud solution NMBU OneDrive, where computer and network access is protected with username and password. If it becomes relevant to use an external data processor for transcription of the audio recordings, a separate data processor agreement will be entered into with the company in question. In any publications from the project, as a general rule, information you have provided and which can help to identify you, will be anonymised, unless otherwise agreed in more detail.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end before June 2023. After the project ends, the information will be deleted. Only me and my supervisors will have access to the data in the project period.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent. Based on an agreement with The Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), the Norwegian Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

How can you find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), via Daniel Schmidt (jacob.daniel.schmidt@nmbu.no) or Aida Cuni Sanchez (aida.cuni-sanchez@nmbu.no)
- NMBU's Data Protection Officer: Jan Olav Aarflot (jan.olav.aarflot@nmbu.no)
- The Norwegian Data Protection Services, by email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Schmidt

Project Leader

, MA student at NMBU

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *“Leading by example – or green-lighting greenwashing? A comparative study of Norway’s climate image in Brazil and in Indonesia”* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in a semi-structured interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. June 2023.

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 5 – News articles

Brazil – September 2021⁴⁸

Newspaper	Topic(s)	#
Agencia EPBR	Deforestation / LEAF	1
Epoca Negocios	Amazon Fund	2
G1/Globo	Jatoba tree seeking refuge at Norway’s embassy in Brazilia	3
Oeco	Jatoba tree seeking refuge at Norway’s embassy in Brazilia	4
Epoca Negocios	Jatoba tree seeking refuge at Norway’s embassy in Brazilia	5
Metropoles	Jatoba tree seeking refuge at Norway’s embassy in Brazilia	6
UOL Economia	Mining/Environment	7
G1/Globo	Norway elections / predictions	8
DW Brazil	Norway elections	9
Correio Braziliense	Norway elections	10
Epoca Negocios	Norway elections	11
G1/Globo	Norway elections/ results	12

⁴⁸ Articles found using Google News. Search for keywords: “Noruega” combined with “Brasil”, “desmatamento”, “meio ambiente” and/or “clima” in period Sept. 1-30, 2021. In addition, in some of the largest newspapers, searches for “Noruega”, including in Globo, Folha, and Valor.

Brazil – September 2022⁴⁹

Newspaper	Topic(s)	#
Folha de S. Paulo	Brazilian presidential election / Amazon Fund	1
Yahoo Financas	Deforestation	2
Acritica	Brazilian presidential election / Amazon Fund	3
BrasilDeFato	Deforestation / Amazon Fund	4
Estado de Minas	Norway/CCS / Green transition	5
Click Petroleo e Gas	Renewable energy/ wind/ Norway	6
Folha de S. Paulo	Norway/Climate crisis	7
Folha de S. Paulo	Norway/Environment/Climate/Oil-fund	8
O Globo	Brazilian presidential election / Amazon Fund	9
Valor Economico	Norway/Environment/Climate/Oil-fund	10

⁴⁹ Articles found using Google News. Search for keywords: “Noruega” combined with “Brasil”, “desmatamento”, “meio ambiente” and/or “clima” in period Sept. 1-30, 2022. In addition, in some of the largest newspapers, searches for “Noruega”, including in Globo, Folha, and Valor.

Indonesia – September 2021⁵⁰

Newspaper	Topic(s)	#
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway end of deforestation deal / lessons	1
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway end of deforestation deal/ climate funding	2
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway end of deforestation deal / clash	3
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway end of deforestation deal / blame game	4
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway end of deforestation deal / editorial	5
The Jakarta Post	Norway elections	6
Indonesia Expat	Sustainability marketing / Norway	7

⁵⁰ Articles found using Google News. Search for keywords: “Norway”, combined with “Indonesia”, “deforestation”, “environment”, and/or “climate” in period Sept. 1-30, 2021. In addition, in some of the largest English-language news sites searches for “Norway”, including in The Jakarta Post, Antara News and Asia News.

Indonesia – September 2022⁵¹

Newspaper	Topic(s)	#
Asia News Network	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal	1
Asia News Network	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal / future	2
Antara News	Indonesia-Norway cooperation	3
Scandasia	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal	4
Borneo Bulletin	Norway/Oil-fund/Carbon-neutrality	5
Borneo Bulletin	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal	6
Borneo Bulletin	Norway/CCS	7
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal	8
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal / activist criticism	9
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal / editorial	10
The Jakarta Post	Indonesia-Norway deforestation deal / future	11

⁵¹ Articles found using Google News. Search for keywords: “Norway”, combined with “Indonesia”, “deforestation”, “environment”, and/or “climate” in period Sept. 1-30, 2022. In addition, in some of the largest English-language news sites searches for “Norway”, including in The Jakarta Post, Antara News and Asia News.

Appendix 6 – Tweets

Brazil – September 2021:⁵²

1. <https://twitter.com/agimediata/status/1441421071501176832?s=20>
2. <https://twitter.com/TRMatheus/status/1434233652225921024?s=20>
3. https://twitter.com/cti_indigenismo/status/1441117833459486728?s=20
4. <https://twitter.com/MarcioAstrini/status/1437747142181986304?s=20>
5. <https://twitter.com/InformaPortal/status/1437870951220269056?s=20>
6. <https://twitter.com/TimesNewsPortug/status/1437812134180704257?s=20>
7. <https://twitter.com/jnascim/status/1437811305931583490?s=20>
8. <https://twitter.com/Conservadora191/status/1434229430940020740?s=20>
9. <https://twitter.com/eduexmaldito/status/1442898634345906177?s=20>
10. <https://twitter.com/greenpressbr/status/1433893203200069638?s=20>
11. https://twitter.com/jader_barbalho/status/1436658878511468547?s=20
12. <https://twitter.com/paulocallis/status/1442000839715950597?s=20>
13. <https://twitter.com/eddieblakett/status/1441394239489945600?s=20>
14. <https://twitter.com/amazonwatch/status/1441156692108976138?s=20>
15. <https://twitter.com/ajplus/status/1440772724134055945?s=20>
16. <https://twitter.com/VerdeCoin/status/1440493774245797888?s=20>
17. https://twitter.com/Junior_Jr_/status/1440731263862669327?s=20
18. <https://twitter.com/anews/status/1440677263545192448?s=20>

⁵² Search filters: “Noruega” combined with “Brasil”, “desmatamento”, “meio ambiente” and/or “clima”. Applied for period Sept. 1-30, 2021.

Brazil – September 2022:⁵³

1. <https://twitter.com/MarinaSilva/status/1569781531240980487?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
2. https://twitter.com/aagencia_info/status/1572224855944335369?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig
3. <https://twitter.com/ReginaldoLopes/status/1566897395769679874?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
4. <https://twitter.com/AMarinaSumiu/status/1569796146037489670?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
5. <https://twitter.com/aldorebelo/status/1571940218629939201?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
6. https://twitter.com/carlos_galhego/status/1572956886345064450?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig
7. <https://twitter.com/ParlamentoAgro/status/1575070501273481218?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
8. <https://twitter.com/EINuevoSiglo/status/1569443777428819972?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
9. <https://twitter.com/CLAUDIOJARDIMD1/status/1566888419443228675?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
10. <https://twitter.com/KatiuciaOficial/status/1572883262288318466?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
11. <https://twitter.com/msantoro1978/status/1570174785958850560?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
12. https://twitter.com/Scheila_SS/status/1565919863578791936?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig
13. <https://twitter.com/bifedeuranio/status/1567192850621767680?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>
14. <https://twitter.com/FernandoHortaOf/status/1571104008286408712?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig>

⁵³ Search filters: “Noruega” combined with “Brasil”, “desmatamento”, “meio ambiente” and/or “clima”. Applied for period Sept. 1-30, 2022.

15. [https://twitter.com/Bethscarlett29/status/1574999970003841024?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/Bethscarlett29/status/1574999970003841024?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdh<u>uw</u>hhBPTPVqig)
16. [https://twitter.com/mongabay/status/1570481145162379265?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/mongabay/status/1570481145162379265?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwh<u>h</u>BPTPVqig)
17. [https://twitter.com/michaeltanchum/status/1568693392346910720?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/michaeltanchum/status/1568693392346910720?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGd<u>hu</u>whhBPTPVqig)
18. [https://twitter.com/GRAINSOILSEEDS/status/1568340877872975872?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/GRAINSOILSEEDS/status/1568340877872975872?s=20&t=kV7LRB<u>B</u>GdhuwhhBPTPVqig)
19. [https://twitter.com/moscarielloe/status/1569827349088051200?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/moscarielloe/status/1569827349088051200?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhu<u>w</u>hhBPTPVqig)
20. [https://twitter.com/geetreddy/status/1574346155441397760?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhhBPPTPVqig](https://twitter.com/geetreddy/status/1574346155441397760?s=20&t=kV7LRBBGdhuwhh<u>B</u>PPTPVqig)

Indonesia – September 2021:⁵⁴

1. <https://twitter.com/PalmSawit/status/1437288450953138182?s=20>
2. <https://twitter.com/AidaGreenbury/status/1437678476513853450?s=20>
3. <https://twitter.com/AidaGreenbury/status/1436599777437708295?s=20>
4. <https://twitter.com/k1k1taufik/status/1440415312566841349?s=20>
5. <https://twitter.com/Reuters/status/1436606705392103425?s=20>
6. <https://twitter.com/SniffOutStocks/status/1436542149760143366?s=20>
7. <https://twitter.com/ETFsStockPicker/status/1436542149953085441?s=20>
8. <https://twitter.com/JDGreenIndo/status/1440926270087442434?s=20>
9. <https://twitter.com/JDGreenIndo/status/1440035592067162117?s=20>
10. <https://twitter.com/nicolasnicola22/status/1436433210552958978?s=20>
11. https://twitter.com/EIA_News/status/1436970349413994496?s=20
12. <https://twitter.com/Orgetorix/status/1437506366197977089?s=20>
13. <https://twitter.com/palmoilmonitor/status/1438532717654781957?s=20>
14. <https://twitter.com/AsianHeraldNews/status/1436581147841081345?s=20>
15. <https://twitter.com/GrantRosoman/status/1436439163180486656?s=20>
16. <https://twitter.com/PeterNBell/status/1436607698766753792?s=20>
17. https://twitter.com/_KateLamb/status/1437231720873410561?s=20
18. https://twitter.com/ISAbella_P_PARF/status/1440706737569341454?s=20
19. <https://twitter.com/ChannelNewsAsia/status/1436596652236701698?s=20>
20. <https://twitter.com/benjaminbland/status/1437216482845335553?s=20>
21. https://twitter.com/fwn_science/status/1440239437741318155?s=20
22. <https://twitter.com/palmoilmonitor/status/1438532716190912520?s=20>

⁵⁴ Search filters: “Norway”, “Indonesia”, “deforestation”, “environment” and/or “climate”. Applied for period Sept. 1-30, 2021.

23. <https://twitter.com/ReutersScience/status/1436543820511039489?s=20>
24. <https://twitter.com/ClimateHome/status/1439938097328934916?s=20>
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Indonesia – September 2022:⁵⁵

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