

Narratives and Hegemony in the Finnish *Eduskunta* - A Narrative Policy
Framework Analysis of Finnish Energy Policy Narratives

Michael Brown

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Craig Thomas

Scott Montgomery

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Michael Brown

University of Washington

Abstract

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Michael Brown

Chair of Supervisory Committee:

Craig Thomas

Evans School of Public Policy

Finland is a critical case in climate policy because of the prestigious position it occupies on the world stage as a bastion of good governance, yet its climate policies have serious flaws, the same ones that hinder movement on climate issues worldwide. This study uses the Narrative Policy Framework to analyze policy narratives over the Finnish energy bill: HE 175/2017. Informed by the theories of hegemony and discourse, the study identifies that the revealed content and strategy in the policy narratives serves as evidence for a hegemonic set of market-friendly narratives that are consistent both in that specific policy arena and also in the wider discourse on climate change. Within the specific policy arena, a coherent energy elite were the sole participants and their narratives reflected their interests exclusively, resulting in a homogenous set of strategies around victimization and general acceptance of the theory of markets as solution to the climate crisis.

Introduction:

The science behind climate change has never been presented with greater fidelity, and scientists' warnings and calls for policies to address the issue have become increasingly strenuous. The IPCC's report on 1.5C mitigation scenarios lists more scenarios where the 1.5C line is crossed than ones where it is held, and the scenarios where it *is* held imply the need for a radical reorganization of the economy or a massive increase in Carbon Capture and Sequestration technologies.¹ In the face of this though, governments and industry continually propose the same kinds of market-based solutions that they have for years which have often been rejected by scientists as inadequate² and that have also made no appreciable dent in the problem. Indeed, 2018 saw a record year for carbon emissions, alongside present-day climate related disasters,³ implying that existing policies, more numerous now than ever,⁴ have done little if anything to stem the tide.

What factors explain this gap between the empirical reality of atmospheric science and policy implementation? Many have been suggested: a lack of education of the electorate,⁵ paralysis inducing climate communication strategies,⁶ bad actors like the American Republican Party and fossil fuel companies,⁷ human nature,⁸ capitalism more broadly,⁹ etc. These all offer partial explanations, the Republican party and fossil fuel companies have openly and continuously fought against climate issues for years, and there is evidence that most people just don't know enough about the issue to mobilize for it, but what they don't explain is the relatively narrow political horizons of proposed solutions in both the mainstream debate and also in policy arenas.¹⁰ It seems that for the most part civilization is banking on some technological breakthrough, the innovation of which is fostered by market forces perhaps helped along by state investment or carbon taxes, that makes renewable energy cheap enough to get adopted en masse and put those coal power plants out of business. This is considered realistic, all the while the energy industry openly forecasts BOTH continued growth in fossil fuels through 2040 AND increasingly cheap renewables,¹¹ technology to fight climate change struggles to get venture capital

¹ Rogelj, J., D. Shindell, K. Jiang, S. Ffifita, P. Forster, V. Ginzburg, C. Handa, H. Khesghi, S. Kobayashi, E. Kriegler, L. Mundaca, R. Séférián, and M.V. Vilariño, (2018). Mitigation Pathways Compatible with 1.5°C in the Context of Sustainable Development. In *Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press.

² Kaufman, A. (2018). "Sobering" New UN Report Challenges Republican Climate Hawks' Free-Market Dogma. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/carbon-tax-intergovernmental-panel-on-climate-change_n_5bbbaf55e4b028e1fe404102

³ *Global Carbon Budget: Summary Highlights 2018*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.globalcarbonproject.org/carbonbudget/18/highlights.htm>

⁴ Nachmany, M., & Setzer, J. (2018). *Global Trends in Climate Change Legislation and Litigation: 2018 Snapshot*. Retrieved from <http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Global-trends-in-climate-change-legislation-and-litigation-2018-snapshot-3.pdf>

⁵ Plutzer, E., McCaffrey, M., Hannah, A., Rosenau, J., Berbeco, M., & Reid, A. (2016). Climate Confusion Among U.S. Teachers. *Science*, 351(6274), 664–665.

⁶ Reser, J., & Bradley, G. (2017). Fear Appeals in Climate Change Communication. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.386>

⁷ Meyer, R. (2018). The Problem with the New York Times' Big Story on Climate Change. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/08/nyt-mag-nathaniel-rich-climate-change/566525/>

⁸ Rich, N. (2018). Losing Earth: The Decade We Almost Stopped Climate Change. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/01/magazine/climate-change-losing-earth.html>

⁹ Klein, N. (2014). *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

¹⁰ Azar, C. (2010). Chapter 18: Cost-Efficiency and Political Feasibility. In S. Schneider, A. Rosencranz, M. Mastrandrea, & K. Kuntz-Duriseti (Eds.), *Climate Change Science and Policy*. Washington DC: Island Press.

¹¹ *World Energy Outlook 2018*. (2018). International Energy Agency.

funding,¹² and even Sweden's high carbon tax of \$130 per ton of CO₂ had to be paired with direct regulation to switch from fossil fuels to biomass in district heating.¹³

Something like the Green New Deal, which is perhaps a more extreme and urgent version of the same argument that also includes massive social programs to make a green economy possible, while popular in general,¹⁴ has also been routinely dismissed as unrealistic or utopian by the bills' authors' ostensible allies.¹⁵ Even more dismissed and marginal are arguments that undercut the premise of both the Green New Deal and other market-based approaches that center on degrowth of the economy.¹⁶ This is not to get into what is actually realistic, feasible, or desirable, merely to point out that market-based arguments, which have done little to address the problem, dominate others and have become common sense. It seems fair to point out that concrete and physical barriers to change aside, there are imaginative hurdles that must be overcome to even imagine a world that can fundamentally address the problem of climate change.

How is this hierarchy of ideas established and how is it reinforced, and how might a study of this process inform efforts to promote new climate policies?

This paper makes the claim that ideological hegemony, represented by the policy narratives deployed in the drafting process of a Finnish energy policy bill, is a key factor in understanding the reasons why responses to climate change have both been narrowly bounded and how these narrow bounds are rhetorically maintained. The theories of ideology and hegemony are useful here because they have generally been employed in explaining how it is that situations that benefit small groups of people (at least in the short term, re climate) at the expense of most others persist. Ideology and hegemony are abstract concepts, so this paper will use empirically analyzed policy narratives as evidence of their contours in a concrete setting. This paper does not claim that ideology and hegemony as evidenced by narratives are solely responsible for the difficulty of implementing effective climate policies, there are numerous material and institutional barriers to that challenge, but a hegemony of ideas means that alternatives are virtually proscribed at the gate.

This fact is evidenced quite nicely by the Finnish case that serves as this paper's object of study. Finland and the other Nordics seem to be bulwarks of sensible policy and good governance, indeed, in this era of the "end of the end of history,"¹⁷ they seem like ideal end states. They are economically productive with mixed market economies and generous welfare states, public transit, baby boxes gifted by the state to encourage good parenting, etc. They even invest in perhaps the world's most aggressive emissions cuts and are on the vanguard of confronting climate change. Sweden has the world's highest carbon tax,¹⁸ Finland has committed to carbon neutrality by 2050,¹⁹ and Denmark is a world leader in wind technology. Finland has even planned to ban coal use by 2029.²⁰

¹² Popper, N. (2019). Start-Ups Hoping to Fight Climate Change Struggle as Other Tech Firms Cash in. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/07/business/carbon-removal-technology-start-ups.html>

¹³ Ericsson, K., & Werner, S. (2016). The Introduction and Expansion of Biomass Use in Swedish District Heating Systems. *Biomass and Bioenergy*, 94, 57–65.

¹⁴ McElwee, S. (2019). People Actually Like the Green New Deal. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/27/opinion/sunday/green-new-deal-mcconnell.html>

¹⁵ Nilsen, E. (2019). Nancy Pelosi Embraces the "Enthusiasm" Behind the Green New Deal. *Vox*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2019/2/7/18215571/nancy-pelosi-green-new-deal-alexandria-ocasio-cortez>

¹⁶ Bernes, J. (2019). Between the Devil and the Green New Deal. *Commune*. Retrieved from <https://communemag.com/between-the-devil-and-the-green-new-deal/>; Berg, A., & Hukkinen, J. (2011). The Paradox of Growth Critique: Narrative Analysis of the Finnish Sustainable Consumption and Production Debate. *Ecological Economics*, 72, 151–160.

¹⁷ Hochuli, A., Hoare, G., & Cunliffe, P. (2019). *Aufhebung Bunga*. Retrieved from <https://aufhebungbunga.podbean.com/>

¹⁸ *Where Carbon is Taxed*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.carbontax.org/where-carbon-is-taxed/>

Finland's energy mix and policies do seem impressive on paper, and their target of carbon neutrality by 2050 is aggressive. Of capitalist liberal democracies, it is certainly high on the list for their efforts to address climate and carbon emissions. However, of their renewable sources, the vast majority comes from forest biomass, an energy source that has dubious climate benefits especially as it expands as an industry, and their latest bill, the object of this paper's study, HE 175/2017, to support renewable energy production, while laudably designed to promote wind power most of all, will only support the generation of 1.4 TWh annually for Finland's total annual energy consumption of over 67 TWh,²¹ a trifling amount. The state otherwise intends to rely on biomass which is a mature, market-driven technology involved in a thriving cross-border trade.

Finland and the Nordics represent perhaps the best case scenario for capitalist liberal democratic governance but this paper argues that it shows more the limits to an ideology than its promise as evidenced by a hegemonic set of policy narratives that proliferate in a closed and exclusionary policy process that has resulted in questionable climate benefits over the long term due to that constrained set of ideas.

To show the importance of ideology and hegemony on climate policy (in)action, this paper will assess the power of ideology to shape policy in four ways:

1. A review of the literature on policy narratives, including discussions of their implications for demonstrating power and ideological transmission and reproduction through the lens of hegemony.
2. Literature review on the Finnish energy/environmental policy process to give context to the material, institutional realities that narratives and ideology act upon and to demonstrate Finland as a critical case for studying the climate policy process through narrative analysis.
3. A description of a potential dominant macro-level climate narrative conceptualized through the lens of Mann and Wainwright's *Climate Leviathan* and articulation of hypotheses to test its appearance in meso-level policy narratives.
4. An analysis and description of the meso-level narratives deployed in the policy process for the Finnish energy legislation HE 175/2017.
 - a. The Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) will be used to catalogue the different narrative content and strategies used by experts brought in to assess the bill as it went through various Finnish legislative committees.
 - b. A comparison will be made between the macro and the meso-level narratives, including a discussion of implications for climate politics in general.

Literature Review:

This paper intends to use meso-level policy narratives, identified and catalogued using the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF), over a single legislative bill as data points to point towards connections

¹⁹ Huttunen, R. (2017). *Government Report on the National Energy and Climate Strategy for 2030 (Unofficial Translation)*. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

²⁰ Morgan, S. (2018). Finland Confirms Coal Exit Ahead of Schedule in 2029. *Euractiv*. Retrieved from <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/finland-confirms-coal-exit-ahead-of-schedule-in-2029/>

²¹ *Use of Renewable Energy Sources Grew in Electricity and Heat Production in 2017*. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.stat.fi/til/salatuo/2017/salatuo_2017_2018-11-01_tie_001_en.html

between the meso-level policy arena and macro-level narratives on climate, and how the selective download of macro-level narratives to the meso-level demonstrates power in a policy system.

Policy Narratives, Transmission, and Power:

Table 1. Policy Narratives

	Definition	Cape Cod Example
Narrative Elements		
Statement of a Problem	A policy narrative is always built around some stated problem.	The people of Massachusetts deserve a clean, affordable, and renewable energy source. (Pro-Wind)
Characters	The participants in a policy narrative.	
Victim	The entity hurt by a specified condition.	Native American Tribes whose sacred lands would be desecrated. (Anti-Wind)
Villain	The entity responsible for the damage done to the victim.	The Koch Brothers, who only care about their view and not clean energy for the rest of us. (Pro-Wind)
Hero	The entity designated as fixing or being able to fix the specified problem.	Cape Wind and Associates, who wish to site the wind farm in Cape Cod. (Pro-Wind)
Evidence (setting)	Support offered with the intention of demonstrating a problem, usually pertaining to real world fixtures in the problem environment.	"The wind turbines could provide up to 468 megawatts of power." (Williams & Whitcomb, 2007, p. xiii) (Pro-Wind)
Causal mechanism	A theoretical relationship denoting a cause and effect relationship between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable. Common causal relationships include intentional, mechanical, inadvertent, and accidental (Stone, 2012).	"The placement of the wind farm will result in the wholesale destruction of the American landscape." (Senator Alexander, Inadvertent CM) (Williams & Whitcomb, 2007, p. 247)
Moral of the story	A policy solution offered that is intended to solve the specified problem.	The construction and placement of Cape Wind. (Pro-Wind)
Plot	A story device linking the characters, evidence (setting), causal mechanism, and moral of the story (policy solution). Common plots include decline and control (Stone, 2012).	By helping us get off fossil fuels, Cape Wind will allow Americans to control their energy future. (Pro-Wind)
Narrative Strategies		
Expansion	A policy story depicting concentrated benefits and diffuse costs that is intended to draw in more participants and expand the scope of conflict.	By siting Cape Wind, one multinational corporation stands to make a lot of money while Massachusetts ratepayers, ocean life, and tourists pay the costs. (Anti-Wind)
Containment	A policy story depicting diffused benefits and concentrated costs that is intended to dissuade new participants and maintain the status quo.	By siting Cape Wind, a few people will lose their views of the ocean, but the rest of society will benefit from lower energy prices. (Pro-Wind)
Devil shift	A policy story exaggerating the power of an opponent while understating the power of the narrating group or coalition.	Cape Wind is using backroom deals to ram through a "transparent" regulatory process as well as pushing misinformation about our rate costs to lull us into thinking everything is going to be OK. (Anti-Wind)
Angel shift	A policy story that emphasizes a group or coalition's ability and/or commitment to solving a problem, while de-emphasizing the villain.	Cape Wind can lead us to a cleaner world and free us from our addiction to foreign oil. (Pro-Wind)
Policy Beliefs	A set of values and beliefs that orient a group and/or coalition.	Ideology, environmentalism, etc.

Figure 1: Source - Shanahan, E., Jones, M., & McBeth, M. (2018). How to Conduct a Narrative Policy Framework Study. *The Social Science Journal*, 55,

The NPF provides an empirical, replicable method for studying subjective meaning creation in the policy arena. It has been produced as a complementary framework to the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) which considers institutional power, resources, individual beliefs, stakeholder coalitions, etc. as variables in analyzing policy outcomes in different settings.²² It groups stakeholders into advocacy coalitions and analyzes their institutional advantages against each other. The NPF instead analyzes policy narratives as a variable to add to that milieu, which are basically strategic stories deployed by advocacy coalitions on either side of an issue.²³ This is an important variable to consider, especially now and especially with issues related to climate, given the contested nature of the facts at hand. In this case the NPF will help to explain why a policy outcome that, when analyzed at a technical level potentially goes against stated goals of the government that approved it, came to be.

This expansion on the ACF does not deny its importance. Its assumptions that policymaking occurs among specialized experts whose behavior is affected on the micro level by broader political and socioeconomic systems makes sense.²⁴

Another assumption of the framework is that participants hold strong, immutable beliefs, called deep core beliefs, as internal constants that those external systems act upon.²⁵ The ACF has typically been applied as a way to figure out why policy institutions struggle with intractable problems, and notes that because of their specialized, cloistered nature, policy subsystems are "mature," meaning resistant to change in ideas because the cohort of policymakers with consistent deep core beliefs remains relatively constant.²⁶ Fischer points out that policymakers or members of advocacy coalitions use plots and other

²² Sabatier, P., & Weible, C. (2007). The Advocacy Coalition Framework: Innovations and Clarifications. In *Theories of the Policy Process* (2nd ed., pp. 189–220). Boulder, CO.

²³ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., & McBeth, M. (2018). How to Conduct a Narrative Policy Framework Study. *The Social Science Journal*, 55, 332–345.

²⁴ Fischer, F. (2003). *Reframing Public Policy: Discursive Politics and Deliberative Practices*. University Press Scholarship Online.

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

story telling elements to argue that policies in their self-interest are indeed part of the greater good, and this is effective because it's something that people instinctually do.²⁷ Thus, policy narratives are articulations of deep core beliefs manifest in specific policy circumstances.

The NPF analyzes narratives at three levels: individual (micro), group (meso), and cultural/institutional (macro). Micro-level narratives are the stories that individuals absorb or create themselves when deciding on an issue, meso level narratives are the kinds of narratives that define coalitions in a given policy arena, and macro-level narratives are those at the highest level that tend to define things like culture. These narratives are constructed by individuals and organizations advocating for a policy goal derived from some defined problem. They must contain either a policy stance or a judgment on policy-related behavior, a character/set of characters who is/are cast as a hero/villain/or victim. They may also contain plots, causal elements, narrative strategies, and policy beliefs. So, there's a minimum condition of what a narrative is and then elements that make them more narrative-like or quasi-literary. Plot elements include negative stories of decline and positive stories of control. Causal mechanisms are the source of the problem according to the narrative (intentional, mechanical, inadvertent, accidental).²⁸ These elements are what differentiates the NPF's study of narratives from other categories of discourse analysis like frame analysis or content analysis: it deals with the pointed stories constructed around very specific policy outcomes. Typical examples include narratives on wind farm siting off of Cape Cod²⁹ but also broader issues like political narratives on the Arab Spring.³⁰

Consistency Between the Narrative Levels:

This study is interested in the consistency between macro-level narratives and meso-level narratives to determine some degree of alignment. The reason for this interest is that such consistency would show the contours of society wide ideologies into smaller settings that could filter down to policymakers. The NPF theorizes that meso level narratives, constructed by a constellation of individuals, media, and coalitions, influence individual policy preferences (ex. Legislators) at the micro level, contributing to a particular output.³¹ So if there's a transmission between the meso and the micro, ie, stakeholders draw from the basket of media and institutional takes on a given policy, it stands to reason that there's consistency between macro-level narratives and the meso-level ones. Stephen Ney argues that the macro level of the NPF is constituted by cultural frames and can be studied using cultural theory and that they influence the meso level of policy narratives thusly: "...cultural frames provide cognitive and normative resources to make sense of wicked issues."³²

This consistency between the macro and the meso levels can be expanded on by the concept of ideology. In a critical review of the concepts of ideology, hegemony, and discourse, Mark Stoddard teases out the development of a group of theories about why masses of people accept materially

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R. (2013). An Angel on the Wind: How Heroic Policy Narratives Shape Policy Realities. *Policy Studies Journal*, 41(3), 453–483.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ O'Bryan, T., Dunlop, C., & Radaelli, C. (2014). Narrating the "Arab Spring": Where Expertise Meets Heuristics in Legislative Hearings. In *The Science of Stories: Applications of the Narrative Policy Framework in Public Policy Analysis* (pp. 107–130). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

³¹ O'Bryan, T., Dunlop, C., & Radaelli, C. (2014). Narrating the "Arab Spring": Where Expertise Meets Heuristics in Legislative Hearings. In *The Science of Stories: Applications of the Narrative Policy Framework in Public Policy Analysis* (pp. 107–130). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 15-16

³² Ney, S. (2014). The Governance of Social Innovation: Connecting Meso and Macro Levels of Analysis. In *The Science of Stories: Applications of the Narrative Policy Frameworks in Public Policy Analysis* (pp. 207–234). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

deleterious situations.³³ The concept of ideology is Karl Marx's theoretical attempt to explain this phenomenon, which he defines as a **set of dominant ideas that reflect the interests of a ruling class**. He uses the case of transmutation of labor into wages, which obfuscates the role of labor in the production of any good, to make what he calls subordinate classes take the arrangement for granted. In Marx's construction of ideology then, it's a totalizing concept of a fully coherent body of elites putting together a coherent set of ideas that make the working classes accept exploitative arrangements.³⁴ This relationship of a larger set of culturally embedded ideas that favor a particular class bears some resemblance to the idea of a macro level of cultural narratives influencing meso-level policy narratives, though seen through a lens of power. So rather than a neutral analysis of just levels of analysis, the transmission between the levels can be seen to serve some interests more than others.

An example of this type of ideological analysis is Mark Fisher's 2009 book *Capitalist Realism*. In it, the author engages in cultural critique and identifies how the idea of TINA (there is no alternative) to neoliberal capitalism has seeped into almost all aspects of life from the administration of universities to individual manifestations of endemic depression and anxiety. Though Fisher does not engage in a specifically formulated narrative analysis, his examination of cultural products like movies and music to identify how the dominant metanarrative of capitalist ideology has made for a situation in which (borrowing language from Fredric Jameson and Slavoj Žižek) "It has become easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism."³⁵ Fisher never identifies a transmission or causal link, but by showing the consistency of values from a cultural level to concrete cultural products, the dominance of TINA ideology can be determined and its general influence measured.

Perhaps a similar consistency between the dominant metanarrative operating at what the NPF would classify as the macro level could influence the meso-level narratives of a given policy process.

Narratives and Power:

The NPF sees this communication of narratives as essential to advancing the interests of coalitions even with all of the other variables in play (institutions, resources, etc).³⁶ The meso level functions on the "strategic construction of coalitional policy narratives, particularly as to how it relates to winning and losing in the policy arena."³⁷ In other words, no matter a given coalition's resources, narratives are always deployed as a persuasive tool for individual powerful stakeholders and the public and/or as cover to rationalize a given action. Even the most vicious actors come up with narratives to make what they're doing seem necessary and/or good. One study on narratives about the Arab Spring analyzed the ways that experts were used by political committees in the UK and the US. It stressed the importance of meso-level narratives by examining committees that don't have formal power but nonetheless help shape the thinking of actual legislators.³⁸ Conventional wisdom would hold that as experts are called in to answer questions they would correct the inaccurate heuristics of politicians but in fact this study found more evidence for expert opinion being manipulated to support a further politicization of

³³ Stoddart, M. (2007). Ideology, Hegemony, Discourse: A Critical Review of Theories of Knowledge and Power. *Social Thought and Research*, 28, 191–225.

³⁴ Ibid, 195-197

³⁵ Fisher, M. (2009). *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* Zero Books.

³⁶ Jones, M., Shanahan, E., & McBeth, M. (Eds.). (2014). *The Science of Stories: Applications of the Narrative Policy Frameworks in Public Policy Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

³⁷ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R. (2013). An Angel on the Wind: How Heroic Policy Narratives Shape Policy Realities. *Policy Studies Journal*, 41(3), 453–483.

³⁸ O'Bryan, T., Dunlop, C., & Radaelli, C. (2014). Narrating the "Arab Spring": Where Expertise Meets Heuristics in Legislative Hearings. In *The Science of Stories: Applications of the Narrative Policy Framework in Public Policy Analysis* (pp. 107–130). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 108-109

narratives.³⁹ This crucial insight though, about the way observers who try to advocate a more empirical view of the world have their information appropriated for political purposes, could be further explained by using Gramsci's concept of hegemony to demonstrate what interests this politicization benefits.

Antonio Gramsci imagined ideology as collectively maintained and willingly accepted by the breadth of society. The dominant classes obtain the subaltern classes' consent of the situation and their participation in perpetuating it. This is done by having ideology be "inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed,"⁴⁰ resulting in a passive acceptance of what's considered common sense. Hegemonic power is transmitted through civil society, which Gramsci identified as schools, churches, etc, but could include just about any institution that acts outside of the state in the realm of politics.⁴¹ It's an ongoing process, with counter hegemony struggling against hegemony at all times to varying degrees of success. In any case, the theory rests on the idea that social change can be contested and enacted at the level of culture and of ideas that would push on material realities. It's more of an outgrowth of individual and group experience and relationship with the world than a coherent body of thought.⁴² Fisher's idea of TINA is an example of hegemony at the macro level, where many citizens saw neoliberal capitalism as the "end of history" that couldn't and/or shouldn't be argued with, and lacked the vocabulary needed to do so even if they wanted to.

At the meso level, the concept of hegemony is a useful lens through which to look at the results of an NPF analysis. The NPF has generally been used to analyze what strategies winning and losing coalitions tend to use, ie, how they deploy characters, causal mechanisms, evidence, morals of the story, etc, so the concept of hegemony lets a practitioner further characterize the field of contention by inferring a bit more about what the NPF has revealed. The NPF can and has been used to quantitatively measure "deep core beliefs," a concept taken from the body of literature surrounding the ACF, through narrative elements like characters and narrative strategies like morals of the story.⁴³ If an NPF analysis reveals a predominance of a certain set of core beliefs or narrative strategies, it would give some insight into how hegemony works in a given policy arena by showing how a coalition aligns itself and also by showing how they use narrative strategies to manage contention. In a study of the fight over wind farms to be sited on Cape Cod, the authors found that the pro and anti-coalitions used different, though internally consistent narrative strategies and characters. The winning, pro wind farm side made liberal use of hero characters and their morals of the story included their own victory; they provided a solution to a problem. The losing, anti-side deployed villain characters exclusively and had a negative moral of the story.⁴⁴ While the high level of contention over this issue shows a vigorous debate over ideas and thus not much hegemony on this issue, the cohesion of the coalitions internally and their consistent uses of morals of the story and characters could demonstrate the hegemony of certain ideas about their own position.

What this study adds to the policy literature is that by considering concepts like narratives, deep core beliefs, and transmission of policy narratives via specialized institutional channels through the lens of

³⁹ Ibid. pp. 126-127

⁴⁰ Gramsci, A. (1992). *Prison Notebooks: Volume I* (J. Buttigieg, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

⁴¹ Stoddart, M. (2007). Ideology, Hegemony, Discourse: A Critical Review of Theories of Knowledge and Power. *Social Thought and Research*, 28, 191-225.

⁴² Ibid, pg. 202

⁴³ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., & McBeth, M. (2011). Policy Narratives and Policy Processes. *Policy Studies Journal*, 39(3), 535-561. ; Shanahan, E., McBeth, M., & Hathaway, P. (2011). Narrative Policy Framework: The Influence of Media Policy Narratives on Public Opinion. *Politics & Policy*, 39(3).

⁴⁴ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R. (2013). An Angel on the Wind: How Heroic Policy Narratives Shape Policy Realities. *Policy Studies Journal*, 41(3), 453-483.

ideology and hegemony, we can see how maturity of policy subsystems or consistent deep core beliefs of policymakers is not immutable but is reproduced and reinforced as a function of power. Meso-level policy narratives then, can be seen as discrete articulations of ideology, represented by deep core beliefs, drawn from macro-level narratives, potentially resulting in a hegemonic ideological hierarchy of some configuration or other.

The Finnish Case:

Finland is a useful case study for narrative analysis for two reasons. The first is its high ranking on all manner of international metrics for things like quality of life of its citizens,⁴⁵ social justice,⁴⁶ gender equality,⁴⁷ transparency,⁴⁸ and environmental performance and innovation.⁴⁹ Finland even ranks first on the "Good Country" index, which attempts to quantify to what amount a particular country contributes to humanity.⁵⁰ Veracity aside, these metrics are a signal of Finland's virtue, which has led to a perception amongst the general population that Finnish governance and policies are worth emulating. The second reason Finland is a useful case study is that, because of these rankings and their dissemination through news media, Finland has been convincingly presented as a model to follow. The so-called Nordic Model is the one to follow.

This study, then, considers Finland a *critical case*, or, a case in which if something is valid for it, it is likely valid elsewhere, perhaps systemically. I chose Finland because of its perceived standing as a model of governance, especially on climate policy. If there are serious flaws in climate planning in a country like Finland that has given it much more attention and resources relative to most others, and is considered a leader, there will be serious flaws elsewhere. Bent Flyvbjerg applied this same logic in Denmark where he considered that rational urban planning in Aalborg, where it enjoyed high status and support, would be able to stand up to industry's power to sway decisions, though he found that this was routinely not the case and industry got its way on most things.⁵¹ Put another way, if the ideal expressions of the current political economic order has trouble addressing a serious problem like climate change, what does that say about the political economic order?

The following section will briefly review the Finnish state's goals and methods for achieving its climate targets, a historical overview of Finland's energy mix and policy process, a short explanation of the bill examined in the narrative analysis, and a small review of the literature on the Finnish energy policy process. This vital context will give the narrative analysis of HE 175/2017 some depth and provide the stakes for the narratives, as well as providing some clues as to how meso-level narratives work together with concrete, institutional factors to perpetuate a particular form of hegemony.

Government Targets, Objectives, and Plans:

The *National Energy and Climate Strategy for 2030* lays out Finland's climate targets and the government's general plans to get there. At the high level, the goal is for Finland to achieve an 80-95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the 1990 level by 2050. The plan looks at energy production

⁴⁵ *Living and Working in Finland*. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/country/finland#survey-results>

⁴⁶ *Social Inclusion Monitor Europe*. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.social-inclusion-monitor.eu/#/>

⁴⁷ Luxton, E. (2016). *Which is the Best Country to be a Working Woman?* Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/02/where-is-the-best-country-to-be-a-working-woman/>

⁴⁸ *Finland*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://rsf.org/en/finland>

⁴⁹ *2018 EPI Report*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/2018/report/category/hlt>

⁵⁰ *The Good Country Index*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.goodcountry.org/index/results>

⁵¹ Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245.

and consumption, including in transport, and also at agricultural and land use issues in considering policies to be deployed. Importantly, the plan notes that three basic goals must be met in the transition: cost effective solutions that enable economic growth and global competition, sustainability in greenhouse gas emissions, energy supply security.⁵² Forest biomass energy that is “profitable and emission-free” and biofuels for transportation are singled out as particularly important for making this transition happen, given Finland’s geographic and resource characteristics.⁵³ In envisioning a 100% renewable energy grid, the plan recognizes the importance of nuclear to provide base load, with bioenergy filling most of the need for district heating, and also much of the transportation sector including aviation and shipping. To realize this, biofuels will likely have to be imported. For industrial use, the government assumes that renewables won’t be able to provide the energy needed, and makes reference to the likely need for carbon capture & sequestration in industrial processes.⁵⁴ The plan thus relies inherently on investing in technologies and industries that are already well developed and will be commercially profitable over time but also recognizes that certain practices like importation of biomass and carbon capture & sequestration will be necessary to realize the kind of carbon-neutral energy portfolio they envision.

In terms of reaching these high targets in a concrete way, the Sipilä government planned to lean heavily on bioenergy (biofuels and biomass electricity) to increase the share of renewables by lowering its cost through “technology neutral” government aid.⁵⁵ The replacements for coal for energy production and petroleum for transport are thus mainly envisioned to be biomass-derived alternatives, though there is one bullet of the plan that suggests “pilot projects” for new technologies, likely wind and solar.

Policies proposed in the plan to increase renewable energy share generally follow a plan of investment support for commercializing new technologies that will be phased out over time as the technology reaches market maturity. These are coupled with potential taxes on fossil fuels like coal and moratoriums on building new coal plants to reduce, but not entirely eliminate, the use of fossil fuels that biomass and/or other technologies will replace. In short, the government’s plan is to steer (a term used often throughout the document) the development of an energy mix that favors renewables through price signals, either through heavily subsidizing new technologies, promoting existing ones like biomass, and/or putting a price on less beneficial ones like coal. The plan seems to envision the need for this kind of support as limited in scope and duration, as this passage about the promotion of wind energy lays out:

“The feed-in tariff system of wind power in its current form will be phased out as agreed. Instead, the aim will be at implementing future projects on commercial terms. To provide a transition period solution and to maintain Finnish project expertise, technology-neutral competitive tendering processes will be necessary which means that aid for producing electricity will only be paid to the most cost-effective and competitive investments in renewable electricity production.”⁵⁶

The government's plan then, envisions the transition to a carbon-neutral future as one that the market can achieve with slight mediations and interventions from policy-makers, with the larger public’s role

⁵² Huttunen, R. (2017). *Government Report on the National Energy and Climate Strategy for 2030 (Unofficial Translation)*. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

⁵³ *ibid* Pg. 13

⁵⁴ *ibid* Pgs. 101-103

⁵⁵ *ibid* Pg.25

⁵⁶ *ibid* Pgs. 40-41

left unmentioned. This is an approach that is historically consistent with the development of Finland's energy policy over time.

Policy Process Trajectory:

A large part of what makes Finland an interesting case is that it has a historically strong record on environmental and renewable energy policy, a process that has been ongoing since the 1970s. The political milieu of the 1970s saw Finland establish its strong welfare state and an environmental movement that carried through to the 90s, when Finland underwent "wholesale regulatory reform" and instituted the world's first carbon tax and other taxes on motor vehicles and fertilizer, etc that added up to 3.4% of GDP.⁵⁷ At the same time however, Finland's environmental policy process went from being characterized by an environmental coalition founded on the level of civil society and towards one embedded in the state's institutions, which coincided with a move from an adversarial set of politics to a more "consensual" one between the state and industry.⁵⁸ Planning from a strong state was replaced with decentralized, market mediated technological innovation to solve environmental problems, though this was mitigated somewhat by the external influence of the EU as Finland started to follow the lead of that organization in crafting its policies at the national level.⁵⁹

A consequence of moving from adversarial to consensual environmental politics meant that carbon taxes were eventually removed in place of policies like voluntary agreements and eco-labelling to address environmental issues.⁶⁰ Also, the earliest stirrings of environmental awareness in Finland were characterized by private landowners concerned with clear air and water, as Mickwitz et al point out.⁶¹ This approach has been successful at addressing things like point pollution but more diffuse, abstract issues like pollution (read: carbon) from land-use or traffic, things that require more fundamental change to address has had a more difficult time because, as Sairinen points out, the very success of the pollution policies gave the Finnish state some cover so it could say it was taking proactive action of some kind and also because the legalistic culture of the administrative bodies, without the push of an adversarial policy-making, no longer had much incentive to produce new or sweeping instruments.⁶²

In more recent times as climate change has become politically untenable to ignore, Finland has ramped up the same model that emerged in the late 90s and early 2000s, pursuing what Aslani et al call "strategic diffusion," or using a variegated set of schemes on the demand and supply side to push the market to accept renewable energy technologies. This includes a similar set of policies across the Nordics including subsidies and incentives towards consumers to be more energy efficient, subsidies and co-financing for renewable energy production projects, grants for research and development, and consolidated and connected open energy markets across national borders to gain economic efficiencies for renewables.⁶³

⁵⁷ Sairinen, R. (2003). The Politics of Regulatory Reform: "New" Environmental Policy Instruments in Finland. *Environmental Politics*. Pg. 73

⁵⁸ Ibid, Pg. 76

⁵⁹ Mickwitz, P., Hilden, M., Seppala, J., & Melanen, M. (2011). Sustainability Through System Transformation: Lessons from Finnish Efforts. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 19, 1779–1787.

⁶⁰ Sairinen, R. (2003). The Politics of Regulatory Reform: "New" Environmental Policy Instruments in Finland. *Environmental Politics*. Pg. 77

⁶¹ Mickwitz, P., Hilden, M., Seppala, J., & Melanen, M. (2011). Sustainability Through System Transformation: Lessons from Finnish Efforts. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 19, 1779–1787.

⁶² Sairinen, R. (2003). The Politics of Regulatory Reform: "New" Environmental Policy Instruments in Finland. *Environmental Politics*. Pg. 77

⁶³ Aslani, A., Naaranjoa, M., & Wong, K.-F. (2013). Strategic Analysis of Diffusion of Renewable Energy in the Nordic Countries. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 22, 497–505.

On the energy side of things, Finland has had considerable success in decreasing the use of fossil fuels in power production, but hasn't yet had much success in reducing fossil fuel use in the transportation sector. Finland has the most diverse supply of energy out of the Nordics, as oil use of 64% in 1973 was reduced to 28.7% in 2009 and replaced with biomass energy derived from forestry waste products, hydro, and nuclear power.⁶⁴ While Finland has renewables as a percentage of its primary energy supply double that of OECD Europe and three times the OECD average, about 80% of this renewable energy production comes from biomass⁶⁵ while wind and solar have lagged.⁶⁶ Wind power is only now, with the introduction of HE 175/2017 set to benefit from government policy.

Bioenergy has always been a significant part of Finland's energy mix, but has been actively promoted in national energy programs as an energy security measure since the 1970s. Finland has no notable reserves of fossil fuels but an abundance of hydropower and biomass reserves. This fact combined with experiences in WW2 and the first oil crisis where imported sources of fossil fuels were in some doubt combined to push Finland towards a reliance on biomass as a primary power and heating source. Broadly, national energy strategy has revolved around funneling public R&D money into energy efficiency, bioenergy, and nuclear power plants. This has been considered uncontroversial by the public who favor bioenergy's perceived security and safety, though some critiques have been levelled at details of bioenergy processes from the perspective of optimizing emissions output. In the 1980s and 90s Finland promoted bioenergy further through investment subsidies, the world's first carbon tax on fossil fuels (later repealed), and credits for research and development. At the time, these incentives were specifically aimed at making bioenergy competitive when it wasn't and to help develop technologies for specific Finnish circumstances not already available.⁶⁷

This emphasis on bioenergy incentives meant that solar and wind energy know-how ended up being imported or outsourced to other countries with higher R&D budgets. Climate change became a motivating factor in Finnish energy policy in the early 90s. The early CO2 tax turned into incentives for renewable energy production by 1997. Finland's climate strategy of 1999 included renewable energy targets of 27% of primary energy consumption and 31.5% of electricity demand by 2010.⁶⁸ It can be seen then that Finland has employed this market-centric approach for some time, applying the levers of public investment to promote particular industries until they are mature and then letting them compete on the market. As will be outlined later, the introduction of HE 175/2017 and technology neutral auctions in place of the feed-in tariff that had up until 2017 supported biomass projects indicates that biomass has reached the point of being competitive on the market in Finland without as much intervention from the state. More recently, the Finnish government has shifted its efforts away from power generation, which it considers on track to decarbonization, to the transportation sector which it plans to improve through electrification and drop-in biogas and biofuels and has funneled funding into various RD&D measures to promote biofuel and energy efficiency research.⁶⁹

While in some ways this trajectory is a success, it also reveals some of the limitations to Finland's market-centric and business friendly inclination. The Finnish state's close energy policy relationship with

⁶⁴ Aslani, A., Naaranoja, M., Helo, P., Antila, E., & Hiltunen, E. (2013). Energy Diversification in Finland: Achievements and Potential of Renewable Energy Development. *International Journal of Sustainable Energy*, 32(5), 504–514.

⁶⁵ *Energy Balances of OECD Countries*. (2015). International Energy Agency.

⁶⁶ Aslani, A., Naaranoja, M., Helo, P., Antila, E., & Hiltunen, E. (2013). Energy Diversification in Finland: Achievements and Potential of Renewable Energy Development. *International Journal of Sustainable Energy*, 32(5), 504–514.

⁶⁷ Helynen, S. (2004). Bioenergy Policy in Finland. *Energy for Sustainable Development*, 8(1), 36–46.

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ *Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Finland*. (2018). International Energy Agency.

industries (more detail next section) and the EU have resulted in relatively aggressive targets but also some key blind-spots, the most salient of which is that biomass, while certainly renewable, is not necessarily the most carbon friendly option, especially at scale. Forest biomass, especially, while technically carbon neutral, can take a long time to become an effective carbon sink again, resulting in a net addition of carbon to the atmosphere in the short term.⁷⁰ This issue becomes even more fraught as biomass is used at larger and larger scales, where more climate-friendly, waste-based feedstocks become scarce and have to be supplemented by less beneficial processed wood pellets or energy crops.⁷¹ Without wading into that argument or the details, it's reasonable to point out that there's a way to do biomass right and a way to do it wrong and doing it at scale increases the risk of negating its climate benefits. Unfortunately, currently the EU, in which biomass accounted for 67% of total renewable consumption in 2010,⁷² allows member states to count any energy derived from biomass as carbon neutral.⁷³ Meanwhile, global demand for Finland's forest-based bioenergy products is increasing.

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Characterizing the Finnish Energy Policy Process:

It is worthwhile here to understand the literature and extant studies on the Finnish energy policy process to determine what actors have dominated, how the process is typically conducted, and what types of views tend to dominate. Studies indicate that Finland's energy policy process can be characterized as non-inclusive to most participants, which sits in a context of a generally weak civil society and a strong energy elite, resulting in the hegemony of that energy elite and their views.

Non-inclusive policy process and outcomes

A recurring theme in the literature is the un-inclusive nature of Finland's energy policy process, with few points for new actors to enter the process and similarly few economic resources to support new entrants to the market.

A comparative study of democratic inclusion in the Finnish, Danish, German, and Spanish energy policy processes indicates that diffusion of solar and wind in the other three countries has been quicker in those three countries than in Finland because of their relatively more participative processes. The authors considered this issue through the framework of "niche development" and analyzed to what extent non-governmental groups existed that would push for these power sources, how inclusive the policy process was, and how inclusive the policy outcomes were. They typified the ways in which the respective governments conducted the process, either through negotiations, debates, or elections.

⁷⁰ Brack, D. (2017). The Impacts of the Demand for Woody Biomass for Power and Heat on Climate and Forests. Chatham House. ; Holtsmark, B. (2015). A Comparison of the Global Warming Effects of Wood Fuels and Fossil Fuels Taking Albedo into Account. *Global Change Biology: Bioenergy*, 7, 984–997. ; Holtsmark, B. (2015). Quantifying the Global Warming Potential of CO2 Emissions from Wood Fuels. *Global Change Biology: Bioenergy*, 7, 195–206.

⁷¹ The Promise of Biomass: Clean Power and Fuel - If Handled Right. (2012). Union of Concerned Scientists. ; Schlesinger, W. (2018, March 23). Are Wood Pellets a Green Fuel? *Science*. Retrieved from <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/359/6382/1328> ; Smith, K. A., Mosier, A. R., Crutzen, P. J., & Winiwarter, W. (2012). The Role of N2O Derived from Crop-Based Biofuels, and from Agriculture in General in Earth's Climate. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, 367, 1169–1174. ; U.S. Department of Energy. (2016). 2016 Billion-Ton Report: Advancing Domestic Resources for a Thriving Bioeconomy, Volume 1: Economic Availability of Feedstocks. M. H. Langholtz, B. J. Stokes, and L. M. Eaton (Leads), ORNL/TM-2016/160. Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, TN. 448p. doi:10.2172/1271651. <http://energy.gov/eere/bioenergy/2016-billion-ton-report>.

⁷² International Renewable Energy Agency, & European Commission. (2018). *Renewable Energy Prospects for the European Union*. Retrieved from http://www.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2018/Feb/IRENA_REmap_EU_2018.pdf

⁷³ Schlesinger, W. (2018, March 23). Are Wood Pellets a Green Fuel? *Science*. Retrieved from <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/359/6382/1328>

⁷⁴ *Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Finland*. (2018). International Energy Agency.

Denmark had quicker wind diffusion because it had an existing solar industry, similar to how Finland has had a longstanding biomass industry, that could push upwards on policymakers through what the authors call debates. Germany had both a chemical industry that stood to gain from the mass-adoption of solar energy and a coherent and strong Green Party whose policies could be affected by elections. Key to Denmark and Germany too had been a liberalized and decentralized energy grid in which larger groups could sell energy, either solar or wind. In Finland's case, there are very few coalesced interests either from business or citizenry around non-forest based industries that could push for those things and in any case the process is structured around negotiations, that, while conducted in Parliament since 1989, tend to include only experts and the old guard of the energy industries. The energy economy has not been liberalized as much at the same time, so production is dominated by larger, centralized groups.⁷⁵

There are some other, more micro examples of inclusion of at least environmentally focused goals in high level goal setting in the Finnish government. There had been for some time since the 90s attempts to try and integrate environmental goals into technology policy, including RD&D funding, with the hope that doing so would incentivize RD&D funds to go to more environmentally minded projects, according to Kivimaa & Mickwitz.⁷⁶ However, while there was some success at getting these goals written out in strategy documents, those goals were typically not borne out in the projects funded. Unfortunately, the issues with that approach as transformative is that environmental goals and economic ones are often at odds with each other, and when environmental goals are one priority among many, without much pressure to make it a prime one, there's a good chance it will get dropped, and this seems to have happened in execution as the groups that, in this study, input the environmental goals into strategy were Ministry of the Environment officials without much public backing or participation.⁷⁷

This top-led approach is, as mentioned in the historical sections above, common in Finnish policy processes, and has been outlined as a prime challenge in the energy transition in the Nordics, including Finland.⁷⁸ The reality is that in Finland there isn't much of a push from any direction for the public to be involved in the policy process, so it remains the purview of a dedicated energy elite with a weak civil society not offering much in the way of resistance.

Weak civil society

Perhaps surprising for a country with a reputation of strong social democracy and a history of a large and active socialist element, Finland has had a weak civil society for decades.⁷⁹

Finland has recently been described as a “stealth democracy,” in which the voter turnout is in the lowest third in Western democracies and political activism has retracted along with trust in the political system as an arena for positive change to occur. Citizens would prefer that experts, whom they generally trust, make the difficult decisions and are not interested in participating in those decisions. These experts and this approach are trusted because citizens see it as somehow apolitical and tidy, that smart experts can

⁷⁵ Ratinen, M., & Lund, P. (2015). Policy Inclusiveness and Niche Development: Examples from Wind Energy and Photovoltaics in Denmark, Germany, Finland, and Spain. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 6, 136–145.

⁷⁶ Kivimaa, P., & Mickwitz, P. (2006). The Challenge of Greening Technologies - Environmental Integration in Finnish Technology Policies. *Research Policy*, 35, 729–744.

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Sovacool, B. (2017). Contestation, Contingency, and Justice in the Nordic Low-Carbon Energy Transition. *Energy Policy*, 102, 569–582.

⁷⁹ Jokinen, P., & Koskinen, K. (1998). Unity in Environmental Discourse? The Role of Decision Makers, Experts and Citizens in Developing Finnish Environmental Policy. *Policy and Politics*, 26(1), 55–70.

work behind the scenes to ensure a smooth society for them. In short, citizens in Finland are satisfied with this arrangement.⁸⁰

Another aspect of this dynamic is the prominence of political consumerism in Finland. Stolle and Micheletti describe “political consumerism” as a new model of political participation that has emerged as traditional modes of civil society have hollowed out and states and democratic institutions have lost their legitimacy and some of their power to multinational corporations and other institutions of capital. As corporations have become targets upon which to apply pressure in solving grievances, and citizens have had more and more aspects of life come under a mechanism of “choice” mediated by the market, expressive consumerism as protest, ie product boycotts, has emerged and is especially prevalent in northwestern Europe and the US, mostly promoted by marketing campaigns by NGOs.⁸¹ Policy-making in energy in Finland is dominated by experts that have a small political footprint. Citizens see the technological policies in energy as firmly non-ideological and divorced from politics, so there is a perception that participation in politics would not have much of an effect on energy policy.⁸² Realistically too, the Finnish state in its current configuration has limited ability and will to influence energy policy because of the overarching imperative to be globally competitive in the energy market. In this context, even were a civil society to push for some different set of values than market competitiveness, it would likely not happen through electoral participation alone. Finnish citizens thus tend to see their own consumer choices, including in energy, as more influential than political activism of any kind.⁸³ This is of course likely an indirect method of influencing politics and capacity for consumers to really do that as individuals or even as a group is dubious, but in the political context that Finns see of a dominant global market and also an EU whose regulatory directives the state emulates, it makes some logical sense to move the market to move the state and influence energy choices.

Strong Vested interests - Elites and Path Dependency

Arrayed against, and possibly responsible for the non-inclusive policy process and a weak civil society in Finland is a strong coalition of energy elites that have a coherent set of goals and interests that would require united and sustained opposition to counteract.

On the Finnish Forestry Act, one study applied the ACF and identified three advocacy coalitions based on their core policy beliefs: a forestry coalition, an administrative one, and an environmental coalition. The forestry coalition and environmental coalition had predictable viewpoints, with the forestry coalition comprised of landowners and business representatives holding beliefs that held the economic exploitation of forest resources for domestic and international markets as the first priority, and the environmental coalition opposed to that on the basis of nature preservation for leisure, recreation, intrinsic value, etc. The administrative coalition though, held core policy beliefs as well, and tried to thread the needle between the two groups' opposing viewpoints by calling for "sustainable" usage of the forest resources with some concessions to leisure activities, but were otherwise aligned with the forestry coalition.⁸⁴ The authors referred to Finland's governance setting as "corporatist" and this cooperation typical of such a setting, which is backed up by what has been reported on other studies of the Finnish policy process. But also, the presence of a hard core of united interests on behalf of

⁸⁰ Ruostetsaari, I. (2017). Stealth Democracy, Elitism, and Citizenship in Finnish Energy Policy. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 34, 93–103.

⁸¹ Stolle, D., & Micheletti, M. (2013). *Political Consumerism: Global Responsibility in Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁸² Ruostetsaari, I. (2010). Citizens, Politicians and Experts in Energy Policy-Making: The Case of Finland. *Energy & Environment*, 21(3), 203–222.

⁸³ Ruostetsaari, I. (2008). Governance and Political Consumerism in Finnish Energy Policy-Making. *Energy Policy*, 37, 102–110.

⁸⁴ Harrinkari, T., Katila, P., & Karppinen, H. (2016). Stakeholder Coalitions in Forest Politics: Revision of Finnish Forest Act. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 67, 30–37.

economic exploitation has a higher priority for government officials than a relatively hazy group of environmentally conscious citizens.⁸⁵

Asking a similar question as the authors writing about inclusion in policy processes and outcomes about why solar hasn't made it very far in Finland, Haukkala instead places the blame at the feet of strong vested interests that are fine with the way things are.⁸⁶ He argues that Finland is about as irradiated as Germany, but when interviewed, politicians and energy experts were equal parts skeptical that solar would work in practice and outright hostile to the potential competition that a government-supported solar industry would bring. The more reflective of these experts seemed to think that hostility to competition aside, those elites that effectively set energy policy were uninterested in getting new ventures going or trying new things in general because following what has clearly worked in the past either in Finland or through the confidence of an EU mandate hedges risk. In other words, the incumbent group benefits from the status quo and sees no need to change and there's no real countervailing force to pressure that viewpoint.⁸⁷

In another study, Ruostetsaari shows that there's been a stable energy elite in the period 1987-2009 while the energy policy process has changed from public to private to what he calls re-deregulation. But what he shows is that the same elites in the process, big energy companies and state agencies, have steered the process and are considerably interdependent. In this study, in which he asked these elites who *they* thought were significant influencers, civil society ranked near the bottom, and environmental associations were barely considered. Common themes in the narratives used by these actors extol a kind of technical, valueless, rational, neutral, etc viewpoint. All in all, it's a closed process with lots of informal channels amongst these elites that is exclusionary, with little inroads for competition or competing narratives.⁸⁸

Finnish energy policy makers and experts, for their part, see deep path dependencies in the energy system. Their views tend towards competition and 'smart solutions' leading the way on changing the energy system, and like things to be technology neutral. Others wanted more heavy-handed state intervention but in the goal of maximizing the use of local resources, i.e., protectionism. These views were diffused through the elite camps.⁸⁹

Hegemony:

A non-inclusive policy process, weak non-business civil society and political participation, coherent elites with vested interests, all strong evidence that the policy process is dominated by a particular group. But could it be characterized by hegemony of ideas and how does that work in practice? It's not as if there are no critiques to these things as a pretty wide body of literature exists that's been saying about the same thing for decades. It seems safe to say that the ideas of market mediated climate transition overseen by a technocratic few enjoys considerable hegemony, but there are signs of contention in this dominance of ideas and it reveals another aspect of this very dominance. Criticism isn't necessarily enough to counteract it and can instead strengthen it.

⁸⁵ Ibid

⁸⁶ Haukkala, T. (2015). Does the Sun Shine in the High North? Vested Interests as a Barrier to Solar Energy Deployment in Finland. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 6, 50–58.

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Ruostetsaari, I. (2010). Changing Regulation and Governance of Finnish Energy Policy Making: New Rules but Old Elites? *Review of Policy Research*, 27(3).

⁸⁹ Toivanen, P., Lehtonen, P., Aalto, P., Bjorkqvist, T., Jarventausta, P., Kilpelainen, S., ... Myllari, F. (2017). Finland's Energy System for 2030 as Envisaged by Expert Stakeholders. *Energy Strategy Reviews*, 18, 150–156.

First, the dominance of broadly economic ideology over the environment has been recounted many times in the Finnish energy policy process.⁹⁰ A similar study to this paper that examined expert/stakeholder statements over a forestry act from 2010 that involved support for wood energy revealed the tension between economic and environmental concerns. Four general narratives were found: forest industry friendly, one that focused on profitable wood energy, one that focused on renewable energy targets, and a separate environmental one. These narratives tracked with interests, the forestry stakeholders argued that support for more wood energy would make their industry non-competitive, the profitable wood energy group argued that to meet emissions targets, the wood supply needed to be decoupled from forestry production, ie, dedicated energy forestry. The more technology neutral energy group argued for support for the most economically efficient renewable energy which might not necessarily mean bioenergy, but leaned towards bioenergy out of historical loyalty between the supposedly neutral government ministries and biomass industries in general. Finally, the environmental group wanted to foreground biodiversity and sustainable practices on at least equal footing with economic concerns. The findings of the study indicated that while there was a shift in the hegemonic position of pure forestry towards more consideration for dedicated bioenergy, the environmental narrative had almost no purchase.⁹¹

Second, this dominance of narratives means that envisioning effective counter-narratives is very difficult. “There is no alternative” has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. This was empirically documented in a narrative analysis of interviews with members of the Finnish Sustainable Consumption and Production Committee. The authors found that in this body of experts drawn from environmental groups, business, and the government, the growth focused economy was almost universally criticized and even held as the key driver of the climate and ecological catastrophe. But deep criticism like this, though rhetorically well argued, did not provide a fully-fledged counter narrative to growth, and even those that held in their belief system a preference for a “degrowth” economy, the hazy contours of that vision and how to implement it more or less resulted in paralysis and perpetuation of growth-oriented policy proposals. The authors conclude then that without developed political institutions that can make counter-narratives into concrete projects, then the hegemony of growth narratives can’t really be challenged.⁹²

What comes through from the examined studies is that Finland has a long-standing dynamic of an energy elite that, while not monolithic, is broadly coherent in its views and that citizenry are just not that involved both for institutional and ideological reasons. In this current configuration the interests of economic efficiency in a capitalist economic system, in practice, seems to universally trump environmental considerations and values. There just isn’t much of an exogenous push on the aligned interests of the state and business to change this dominance either. The fact that the Finnish state has only changed its policies in more recent years to focus on climate at all because of the role of the EU as a policy driver, seems to indicate that what is needed to foreground environmental issues over economic ones is an independent, citizen-led civil society that can make counter-narratives a concrete reality and/or push the state to help realize those ends. This dynamic provides a context in which hegemonic narratives perpetuate and remain unchallenged.

⁹⁰ Jokinen, P., & Koskinen, K. (1998). Unity in Environmental Discourse? The Role of Decision Makers, Experts and Citizens in Developing Finnish Environmental Policy. *Policy and Politics*, 26(1), 55–70. ; Rantala, T., & Primmer, E. (2003). Value Positions Based on Forest Policy Stakeholders’ Rhetoric in Finland. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 6, 205–216.

⁹¹ Huttunen, S. (2014). Stakeholder Frames in the making of Forest Bioenergy Legislation in Finland. *Geoforum*, 53, 63–73.

⁹² Berg, A., & Hukkinen, J. (2011). The Paradox of Growth Critique: Narrative Analysis of the Finnish Sustainable Consumption and Production Debate. *Ecological Economics*, 72, 151–160.

If we look at the results of an energy elite dominated process without much public pressure for major changes, Finland's energy policy has developed along purely technocratic lines, that is, in ways that are comfortable to vested interests. Biomass has been the prime actor and will continue to be. Wind is starting to make headway in some ways as the debate around HE 175/2017 seems to show. However, there are bigger challenges that this arrangement will likely be unable to address, that is, without a coherent political movement to push for changes that could address future challenges outlined by Sovacool such as job losses associated with a truly green economy and the tendency of economies to just offshore their emissions somewhere else.⁹³

HE 175/2017 - A "Technology-Neutral" Auction:

Approved and launched in November 2018, HE 175/2017 is Finland's latest renewable energy legislative support and a "technology-neutral" renewable energy auction that replaces Finland's feed-in tariffs. New construction wind, solar, biogas, biomass, and wave power projects can bid for portions of the total 1.4 TWh annually covered by the support scheme. The bidder proposes a MWh price in competition with other projects and the lowest prices are selected first. If, after the project is completed, it maintains a price equal to or under the EU average, it receives a feed-in premium, which the project can continue to receive for up to 12 years.⁹⁴ As of March 2019, the first auction has completed and has been dominated by wind power firms.⁹⁵ The likely intent of the bill is to contribute to Finland's emission reductions and to gather some energy production price data on new renewable projects.

Renewable energy auctions have become common in Europe as the European Commission has demanded competitive bidding to support renewable energy projects. The general intent behind these schemes is to control costs on renewable energy projects, which can expand under feed-in tariffs.⁹⁶ However, it has been noted that this goal of lowering prices can crowd out other ones, and has resulted in constraining supply as new technologies don't get supported under this scheme.⁹⁷ Indeed, it favors already established technology and can, as in the case of South Africa, make it more difficult to expand renewable energy systems beyond a certain threshold and what price reductions were realized seemed more to do with development of technology outside of the auctions.⁹⁸ There are some means of mitigating this by easing permitting and ensuring less regulatory wrangles for new players, but in the end there's a risk that these auctions concentrate the state's support and lock it in place for a small group of energy firms. In other words, having cost containment as the highest priority seems to counteract spurring innovation, at least in some cases.

Climate Leviathan - A Macro-Level Narrative:

⁹³ Sovacool, B. (2017). Contestation, Contingency, and Justice in the Nordic Low-Carbon Energy Transition. *Energy Policy*, 102, 569–582.

⁹⁴ *Hallituksen esitys eduskunnalle laeiksi uusiutuvilla energialähteillä tuotetun sähkön tuotantotuesta annetun lain ja tuulivoiman kompensaatioalueista annetun lain 6 §:n muuttamisesta*. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/vaski/KasittelytiedotValtiopaivaasia/Sivut/HE_175+2017.aspx

⁹⁵ Petrova, V. (2019). Winds Beats All in Finland's 1st Renewables Auction. *Renewables Now*. Retrieved from <https://renewablesnow.com/news/wind-beats-all-in-finlands-1st-renewables-auction-648220/>

⁹⁶ *Auctions for Renewable Energy Support - Taming the Beast of Competitive Bidding*. (2017). Auctions for Renewable Energy Support.

⁹⁷ Ibid

⁹⁸ Toke, D. (2015). Renewable Energy Auctions and Tenders: How Good Are They? *International Journal of Sustainable Energy Planning and Management*, 8, 43–56.

This section will describe the content and context of a hegemonic political configuration, code it as a narrative via the NPF, and propose hypotheses to test its appearance at the meso level in Finland. The point of this exercise is to determine how hegemony transmits from abstract, cultural level notions into concrete policy processes. Since narratives show deep core beliefs deployed in specific circumstances, they are a good tool for this.

I have borrowed from Mann and Wainwright's *Climate Leviathan* because they analyze many of the ongoing responses to climate change and determine that they are mostly ideologically coherent. From this framing, I have identified a macro-level narrative with distinctive strategies that I can test for at the meso level. The authors analyze a broad swathe of climate documents from the IPCC and political bodies involved in the COP process that have proposed solutions to the crisis, as well as the intellectual history that informs these responses.⁹⁹

The book posits four potential political pathways that could emerge in response to climate change setting in and intensifying: Climate Leviathan (which they deem most established already and thus most likely to proceed), Climate Behemoth (a reactionary form of security-state based conservatism), Climate Mao (a political configuration similar to Maoist era China with an extremely powerful state that subsumes capital), and Climate X (a loosely linked set of responses that are neither sovereign nor capitalist in nature which exist now only in small corners or in utopian semi-narratives). This analysis will focus on Climate Leviathan because it is the political configuration that is the least speculative.

The authors identify Climate Leviathan as the most likely political pathway given the world's balance of power, institutional makeup, and intellectual hegemony. Leviathan in Mann and Wainwright's sense draws upon Hobbes's use of the metaphor of the beast to refer to an escape from nature through the state and upon Walter Benjamin's "state of exception" in which the liberal state, which has to use the cover of exceptional circumstances to harshly regulate what it conceptualizes as an emergency. Their essential thesis for Leviathan's emergence is that as climate change results in more and more emergencies, including military, humanitarian, and economic ones, states and capital holders will respond by doubling down on the actions that brought the world to this state in the first place. They stop short of characterizing this as a process of indifference or ignorance, indeed one of their key assumptions is that the infrastructure of elites that govern the international capitalist order will desire to moderate climate and adapt to climate, but it is because of the internal contradictions of the economic system that they benefit from that will prevent a truly proactive approach, even as political leaders try harder to do so.

The whole purpose of their speculative exercise is that they assert that climate change poses problems for which the current political order has no answer, having mostly abandoned mitigation for all practical purposes and focusing instead on adaptation. According to them, global inequalities caused by capital make it virtually impossible that this configuration of competing streams of capital accumulation mediated by international diplomacy will actually reverse emissions, yet the world continues to turn to the COP process for lack of alternatives. "Its ineffectiveness - is not a result of the whole thing being staged to fool the world, however duplicitous this or that party to the agreement. Rather it is the result of the fundamentally contradictory character of political-economic responses to climate change in liberal, capitalist societies, which produces an inadequacy the agreement (amazingly) acknowledges... The Paris Agreement admits its own failures."

⁹⁹ Mann, G., & Wainwright, J. (2018). *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*. Brooklyn: Verso Books.

This set of contradictions, of a crisis that demands a critical response that the political order cannot provide, leaves a few difficult pathways open to global elites who are characterized as classical liberals that value individual freedoms, “free markets,” formal political equality over addressing economic equality, etc.¹⁰⁰ The preferred mechanism for responding to climate change is exactly the kind of thing that the Paris Agreement and the EU have embodied: a Green capitalism/Keynesianism that would see the state step in and use taxes, subsidies, public investments, carbon trading schemes, etc to maximize efficiency in regulating the market failure that has led to the collective action problem of climate change. The authors see the hegemony of this idea, that every “serious” response to climate change is considered through the abstraction of markets, as strong because it posits that the global world order can institute a few clever, technocratic schemes without a revolutionary political order.¹⁰¹ The authors point out that this approach has failed for a number of reasons, including the primacy of sovereign states that haven’t and likely won’t move to the kind of cosmopolitan global village necessary to implement a coordinated global Green Keynesianism, the financialization of the global economy that makes investment less related to employment/domestic industry, and also the unlikelihood of a global economy that is predicated on growth solving the problem, no matter how green it is.¹⁰² Nevertheless, the authors point out that these are the extant political horizons for the foreseeable future, and even the Green New Deal recently proposed in the US, with some major differences that makes it seem quite radical in comparison, is advanced on fundamentally the same lines.

This set of political imaginaries lends itself to narrative form quite readily. Using the elements of the NPF shown in the previous section on narratives. I have framed Climate Leviathan as a narrative in the following way:

1. Problem Statement:
 - a. Climate change is a “collective action problem” characterized by “market failure”¹⁰³
2. Characters:
 - a. Villains – not much finger pointing at a specific group, the whole premise of green growth solutions is to promise a miracle without a revolution.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps finger pointing at an abstract “human nature.”¹⁰⁵
 - b. Heroes – smart, dedicated technocrats involved in top down policy making via the state and concerned private industry.¹⁰⁶
 - c. Victims – perhaps the poor, but euphemistically put, more often the victimization is again not put at target groups,¹⁰⁷ which would imply some systemic bias, but rather abstracted through aggregation, so the victims are seen through the potential loss in GDP and/or economic indicators.
3. Moral of the Story:
 - a. Market failures must be corrected through an activist state stepping in and providing incentive alignments to promote, say, renewable energy or public transit, in either case, using the state to direct the power of markets to solving the climate crisis.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*, 81

¹⁰¹ *ibid*, 103-121

¹⁰² *ibid*, 119-121 ; Hicckel, J., & Kallis, G. (2019). Is Green Growth Possible? *New Political Economy*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2019.1598964>

¹⁰³ Mann, G., & Wainwright, J. (2018). *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*. Brooklyn: Verso Books. Pgs. 103-108

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*. Pg. 121

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*. Pgs. 103-104

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*. Pg. 109

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*. Pgs. 53-78

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, Pgs. 99-121

4. Policy Solutions:

- a. Taxes/Subsidies on carbon/pollution, carbon markets/cap and trade, R&D investment into green tech, green bonds, regulated market competitions, etc.¹⁰⁹

Hypotheses:

To demonstrate consistency between the macro and meso narrative levels, I will test the aforementioned macro-level narrative elements for consistency at the meso level.

I hypothesize that the narrative elements of *Climate Leviathan*, the problematizing of climate change as a collective action problem, with few systemic villains, heroes at the top level, victimization of abstract economic actors, and properly incentivized capitalism as vehicle for policy solutions that encourage its better impulses will be consistent with the meso-level policy narratives in Finland.

Meso-Level Narrative Analysis:

The empirical portion of this paper is a meso-level narrative analysis of the expert statements submitted during the legislative process for Finnish bill HE 175/2017. The expert statements will be analyzed via the NPF in the same way that I did with *Climate Leviathan* to both identify the kinds of narratives and narrative strategies that are used in this policy process and to see if those findings are consistent with the macro-level narrative.

HE 175/2017 is the Finnish government's recent and major policy tool to replace feed-in tariffs and takes the form of a "technology neutral" auction that offers subsidized energy rates to new energy projects that operate at the lowest cost. It will provide this subsidy for up to 1.4 TW/h annually.

Finnish legislation is crafted through committees made up of members of government, political parties, and interest groups. Comments on each draft are invited by those working in the committee before the committee working on said legislation submits it to vote in the *eduskunta* (Parliament). These statements (*asiantuntijalausunnot*) are consultative in nature and limited to interest groups invited to work on the bill.

Data and Methods:

The data analyzed comes from the Expert Committee (*valiokunta*) in the form of written statements (*asiantuntijalausunnot*) pertaining to the parliament's (*eduskunta*) proposal HE 175/2017 on a new renewable energy production support scheme. Overall, 70 statements were submitted to the parliament by the Expert Committee, but only 23 were worth analyzing since many were either duplicate statements (repeated statements on different days of the legislative process) or duplicate information intended for oral presentation. Each analyzed statement is from a different organization and expert.

Once translated and coded according to the NPF (see: Appendix 1 for coding schema), I organized the data to highlight common themes present throughout these statements. I sought to determine what types of characters (villain, hero, victim) were present in these statements and what types of "moral of the story" narratives were deployed. I chose these aspects to focus on primarily because these aspects

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, Pg. 110

highlight the nature of the policy discourse in this specific, national policy arena. The analysis uses the standard NPF coding shown in the table in the literature review section, but to help conceptualize wider themes, this study has grouped similar morals of the story into four themes: “minor tweaks,” “include us,” “market distortion,” and “sound policy,” which will be explained in the presentation section. Just as important as these highlighted aspects of the NPF is the demographic makeup of the experts that submit testimony. These three facets, demographics, character choice, and morals, all help illuminate the dominant interests represented in this policy process.

Data Presentation:

The experts that submitted statements represented four different organizational types: private firms, trade associations, NGOs, and government agencies. Private firms might include specific energy producers or small entrepreneurs, trade associations are entities that represent industry sectors and/or geographically related groups of small producers as a collective interest, government agencies are direct organs of the state, ie, the ministry of finance, and NGOs are civic groups like civil associations, non-profits, and/or academic think tanks. These groupings provide ready categories for the kinds of interests represented in this policy process. Private firms are interested in an outcome that benefits their specific firm, trade associations want their industry sector to benefit, NGOs want their specific issue area (be it environmental protection or emissions reductions) to benefit.

The following tables provide counts on the types of characters used in the narratives embedded in the expert statements as well as the broad strokes of the "moral of the story" identified. Both are sorted by the organizational type represented by each expert. I coded each statement per the codebook in Appendix 1 and added the statement giver to the respective box on the following table if one of the characters or morals appeared in a document.

Table 1 - Character and Moral Prevalence by Organizational Type - Counts represent whether or not the respective character/moral appeared in a document or not

	Private Firm (<i>n</i> =4)	Trade Association (<i>n</i> =11)	NGO (<i>n</i> =3)	Government Agency (<i>n</i> =5)
Victim – A policy character negatively affected by the proposal.	4 (100%)	10 (91%)	3 (100%)	2 (40%)
Villain – A policy character responsible for the negative outcome.	0	0	0	0
Hero – A policy character responsible for the positive outcome.	0	2 (18%)	0	0
“Minor Tweaks” – The policy premise is good, but we would prefer a	0	1 (9%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (20%)

longer/shorter round of bidding, or a slightly more equitable allocation of TWh.				
“Include us!” – We should be allowed to participate in the bidding rounds but are unfairly excluded.	4 (100%)	6 (55%)	0	0
“Market Distortion” – This policy results in a market distortion for our interest, it should be overhauled or abandoned.	0	3 (27%)	2 (66.6%)	0
“Sound Policy” – This policy should be enacted because it results in low cost renewable energy.	0	1 (9%)	0	4 (80%)

A Note on Groupings of Morals of the Story

I coded each statement’s moral of the story concerning HE 175/2017, but since these morals tended to vary on specific technical details, I came up with further categorizations to make them easier to parse. Technical details (for instance, slight variations on suggested timing changes to the bill’s funding structure) aside, there were four broad responses to the bill in terms of morals, detailed below.

“Minor Tweaks”

The "minor tweaks" conclusion essentially means that the respondent felt the policy was reasonable and helpful, either to their industry, their firm, or society as a whole. However, to optimize the positive outcomes, the respondent proposed a few minor fixes such as increasing or decreasing the duration of the tender period, allocating more fine-grained brackets of funding, or the like.

An example, from Anni Mikkonen of the *Suomen tuulivoimayhdistys ry* (Finnish Wind Power Association): *“Työllisyystilanteen vuoksi on tärkeää, että hankkeiden rakentaminen käynnistyy mahdollisimman nopeasti kilpailutuksen tulosten ratkettua. Hallituksen esitystä tulee muuttaa siten, että ensimmäinen tukijakso tulee määrittää viimeistään vuosi ennen kuin tuottaja haluaa tuen alkavan, kunhan ensimmäinen tukijakso on viimeistään kolmen vuoden kuluessa hyväksymispäätöksen saamisesta.”*

Translation “It is important to the employment situation that project construction proceeds as quickly as possible following the outcome of the competition. The government’s proposal should be changed such that the first aid period is determined at least one year before the producer wishes to begin the subsidy, provided that the first aid period is no later than three years after the approval decision has been received.”

“Include Us!”

The "include us!" conclusion felt that the policy was helpful but highlighted that their industry or company was unfairly precluded from reasonable competition in the tender either because of harsh stipulations or outright exclusion. They recommended a change to the law to allow them to compete on better terms.

An example, from Peter Reiter of the *Pienvesivoimayhdistys ry* (Small Hydropower Producers Association): *“Kuten lausunnossamme 15.11.2017 olemme tuoneet esille pidämme hyvin tärkeänä, että teollisen mittakaavan pienvesivoimalat, eli sellaiset jotka toimittavat pääosan tuottamastansa energiasta verkkoon, hyväksytään tuotantotuen piiriin.”*

Translation: “As outlined in our statement of 15 November 2017, we consider it very important that industrial scale small hydroelectric power plants, that is, those that supply the bulk of the generated energy to the grid, are eligible for the production aid.”

“Market Distortion”

The "market distortion" conclusion judged the policy to be more disruptive than helpful, resulting in a great deal of uncertainty in their market or business. Reasons included: overly harsh eligibility stipulations, uncertainty of the award of money, and an already mature market for renewable energy. A common line of argument was that potential new businesses would have to bend their business model to meet the eligibility requirements that was helpful as long as it lasted but then once it ended would make competing on the open market more difficult. This argument also sometimes held that the award was unnecessary because their market was already mature and this proposal would create barriers to new investment. Recommendations ranged from extensive changes to the law to support a more diverse array of technologies to outright ditching the plan to allow the market to do its work.

An example from Ahti Fagerblom from *Metsäteollisuus* (Forest Industry Association): *“Metsäteollisuuden mielestä bioenergian edistämiseksi ei pidä ottaa käyttöön uusia tuotantotukia. Esitetyssä tarjouskilpailussa voisi puuenergian osalta valikoitua vain yksi tai muutama toimija, jotka saisivat etulyöntiaseman muihin puuta käyttäviin toimijoihin verrattuna. Lisäksi tukitaso on ennalta arvaamaton.”*

Translation: “The forest industry believes that no new production aid should be introduced to promote bioenergy. In the case of wood energy, only one or a few operators could be selected in the bidding procedure, which would have an advantage over other operators using wood. In addition, the support level is unpredictable.”

“Sound Policy”

Finally, "sound policy" arguments figure that the proposal is doing exactly what it should, and that outcome is beneficial to society. These arguments generally invoked the benefit to the economy of the country and the cost-effective way this policy would increase the total amount of renewable energy available while downplaying or ignoring the fine grain, regional, or sector specific effects this policy might have.

An example from Pekka Ripatti of the Energy Agency: *“Niin ikään uusiutuvan energia-alan osaaminen ja markkinat ovat kehittyneet siten, että edellytykset teknologianeutraaleille tukien tarjouskilpailuille ovat hyvät. Kehittyneet markkinat ovat puolestaan edellytyksenä kustannustehokkaille kilpailulle tukijärjestelmälle, mitä voidaan pitää yhteiskunnan kokonaisedun mukaisena tapana tukea uusiutuvan energian sähkön tuotantoa.”*

Translation: “Furthermore, the know-how and the market in the renewable energy sector have developed so that the conditions for a technology neutral call for tenders are good. An advanced market is, in turn, a prerequisite for a cost-effective, competitive support system, which can be considered as the common good of society for supporting renewable energy generation”

Table 2 - Trade Associations' Character and Moral Usage sorted by Interest Area

	Wind (n=1)	Biomass (n=5)	Hydro (n=2)	Various Energy (n=3)
Victim	1 (100%)	5 (100%)	2 (100%)	2 (66.6%)
Villain	0	0	0	0
Hero	1 (100%)	0	0	1 (33.3%)
“Minor Tweaks”	1 (100%)	0	0	1 (33.3%)
“Include Us!”	0	0	2 (100%)	0
“Market Distortion”	0	5 (100%)	0	2 (66.6%)
“Sound Policy”	0	0	0	0

Results:

Overall there are three findings of note: 1) the dominance of one organizational type among the respondents (refer to table 2), 2) a strong majority of victim roles and the complete lack of villains as characters (refer to table 2), and 3) the wide agreement on the principle mechanism of the policy with perhaps some reservations on minor points (refer to table 2).

Skewed Representation:

The respondents in this expert committee heavily favor industry representation and government, with few exceptions.

Trade associations and private firms accounted for 15 out of the 23 distinct respondents with government making up a further 5. This is important to bring up because it colors the structure and preponderance of narrative types in a general sense and perhaps offers a preliminary explanation for the second and third major finding.

In total 3 entities representing non-industry and government gave statements, which have been broadly labeled as NGOs. This includes a conservation focused NGO (*Suomen luonnonsuojeluliitto* - Finnish Environmental Protection League), a think tank (*Luonnonvarakesku* - Environmental Risk Center), and a non-profit civil association (*Tuulivoima-kansalaisyhdistys ry* - Wind Power Civil Association). This indicates a level of token resistance from the one organizational type likely to pose non-business or environmental resistance to this policy, yet, ironically, the only one with strong opposition to the bill was the Wind Power Civil Association that evinces a parochial, NIMBY opposition to wind.

A Preponderance of Victims:

Most of the respondents chose a strategy of identifying victims under the proposed policy. Because the bill has stipulations that dictate what projects are eligible for competition, some companies could meet them easier than others. For example, the bill requires that ~85% of the fuels used in biomass projects be biomass derived, which limits the use of fossil fuels as base load, it also requires that projects be new construction. Both of these requirements advantage wind over biomass because they are cheaper to build new, and don't have to contend with a complicated fuel supply chain. Participants that pled the victim mostly complained about being priced or explicitly excluded out of the competition.

For private firms, as shown in table 1, they all pled the victim and also asked for changes that would include their businesses in the support scheme in some way. In this process, those were either hydro firms outright excluded from funding or biogas producers that felt the stipulations priced them out of the support. The distinction between biogas and biomass electricity producers is important because biogas tend to be smaller operations that would want the funding as opposed to larger scale producers who rely on a mature international market for its feedstocks.

Trade associations had more complicated narratives than private firms, as shown in table 2. Broken down into their represented industry, the narratives crystallize.

The one wind trade association voiced satisfaction with the bill but wanted minor changes (refer to the example in the “minor tweaks” section). I coded them as using the victim as well as the hero because the narrative included some consequences if the proposed changes weren't enacted while also saying that the bill would bring prosperity to the industry.

Biomass trade associations uniformly pled the victim and complained about the market distortion effects of the bill. I interpreted this stance as not necessarily opposed to the premise of the technology neutral competition chiefly because of the lines of argument. As evidence for their stance of the market distortion effects, biomass operators blamed either the feedstock requirements, the requirements that awardees be entirely new construction, and also the potential effects on international feedstock markets because of these stipulations. Because of that, it seems that opposition to the tender is more about these specific rules rather than about some distaste with getting government support.

Hydro representatives predictably did not like the bill because of their explicit exclusion and advocated for their own inclusion.

Lastly, the “various energy” category is for regional associations that represent multiple small producers of different types. One of them praised the bill effusively while the other two complained, perhaps because of their regional reliance on hydro and biomass heat.

Another theme that appeared frequently was that the policy unduly favors wind energy operators/investors. The argument typically followed that wind benefits most from this policy as it has the lowest operating costs and also because most of its expansion would be to brand new sites, so the “technology neutral” tender would seem to favor those operators above others.

These complaints culminated in a common refrain from victim identifiers: this policy is not technology neutral.

Government agencies typically implied themselves the hero, which makes sense since this policy is their proposal. Generally speaking, they emphasized the benefits of the bill to wider Finnish society, such as providing large amounts of new renewable energy available in a cost-effective way (society wide benefits from climate) and boosting investment in new projects which will strengthen the national economy. Not surprisingly, wind producers and their associations typically backed the bill and in doing so also cast themselves the hero role for the whole country, because of the benefits their expansion would bring.

There is a curious lack of villains here. It is unclear why specifically this is, but the literature on the Finnish policy process and political culture tends to point towards more sober analysis of a given issue, not because Finns are somehow nicer in general, but in this case because of the historically closed nature of the energy policy process. These respondents could likely be called elites by political theorists. It could be argued that those statement writers that pled the victim are de facto blaming the government, but this rarely came up explicitly. Usually the rhetoric avoided specific blame and instead provided an accounting of the effects of the bill.

Let the Market Work (For Us):

Despite the majority complaint of victimhood, few organizations criticized the general mechanism of the policy, that is of a competitive, market-based support subsidy, and those that did raised concerns of market distortions. Indeed, the common complaint that this policy is not technology neutral is not a complaint of that general premise, as it implies the existence of an ideal technology neutral scheme. Rather, the stipulations on the funding allotments don't live up to this premise and lead to a market distortion. Since much of the logic of the narrative arises from criticizing these stipulations, it can be imagined that if the policy gave biomass operators a much freer hand to tailor processes to the market and also awarded sums to them, opposition to the bill would wither.

Any respondent that fit into the categories of "minor tweaks," "include us," and "market distortion" accepts the general premise but argues for changes (minor tweaks being the lighter end and market distortion the more extreme) to make the policy closer to the theoretical principles of a technology neutral competitive tender. Those in the “minor tweaks” category were more excited about the proposal and so only suggested minor scheduling or funding allocation changes so that the competition worked slightly more in their favor. A typical structure for this kind of narrative involved praise of the proposal's premise (a technology neutral competitive tender is the best thing for Finland's climate strategy goals as well as the wider national economy, etc) and then at the end the minor tweaks. The “include us” respondents had a similar narrative structure but simply wanted inclusion in the scheme and argued that the idea of a technology neutral scheme makes sense, but that the harsh stipulations mean that premise isn't delivered on. The “market distortion” respondents took a slightly different tack and were, in general, the harshest critics of the proposal. Most of the respondents that took this tack

seemed to be larger biomass associations or companies. The lines of argument usually involved critiques of the eligibility requirements and the extent to which this creates risk/uncertainty for power producers in a mature biomass market. Essentially, the producers would have to choose to stake their success on continued support from the tender or be more at the risk of a market that doesn't have such rigid requirements on what mix of biomass or fossil fuels would be used at the given plant. Some of these respondents argued against uptake of the bill entirely, but because of their lines of argument about why it doesn't work, it's implied they would take part in the scheme without the restrictions on their operations. While similar to the "include us" respondents, the important difference here is on what terms they argued. Both sets of respondents adhered to the logic of market competition but under different auspices and it seems important to point out that domestic hydro producers and smaller biogas/biomass producers simply wanted inclusion, while larger, more established biomass producers with access to/reliance on outside markets perhaps wanted inclusion but also a more frictionless set of requirements on their operations.

Climate Leviathan:

To what extent does this empirical analysis lend credence to the idea of Climate Leviathan as a dominant macro-level narrative?

There is certainly not evidence that the invited actors are in unanimous agreement, indeed the statements, when analyzed using the NPF, reveal competing coalitions even amongst this relatively homogenous group of actors. That in itself is to be expected; the government has held out a pot of money and invited businesses to compete for it, it's no surprise they would compete to alter the legislation to their benefit.

However, overall the narratives employed seem to confirm the dominance of the Climate Leviathan narrative through their similarity in the use of characters and morals of the story. In the Climate Leviathan narrative, heroes are those that can craft savvy top-down policy that corrects market failures and allows for a sort of green growth, victims are abstracted through economic losses or euphemized to "target populations," and villains are rarely mentioned in a comprehensive way, save for a few bad apples, a problem which can be corrected away by fixing a few loopholes. The moral of the story to this cast of characters and the problem of market failure is that capitalism need not be discarded, in fact it is the solution and can be made to function in a way that is beneficial to all. Policy solutions reflect this moral of the story, use the market to deploy "green" fixes to the problem.

In the meso-level narratives analyzed above, evidence of this macro-narrative's elements appeared frequently. Government agencies frequently cast themselves as the heroes for crafting a policy that boosts renewable energy at the lowest cost. In the statements provided by many of the business representatives, most of the victim elements deployed were simply those businesses/industries that would not benefit from the arrangement as it stood, and they wanted in. A few mentioned the Finnish people in terms of perhaps losing jobs because of it, but in both cases, these seem like meso-level proxies for economic losses in the abstract. The villain character was never deployed explicitly. It's possible that the businesses that lost out on this policy were implying that the government was a villain for leaving out their important industries, but this wasn't explicitly stated. However, there wasn't a systemic identification of a consistent group of villains at all, which tracks with Climate Leviathan's win-win attitude. As for morals of the story, whether or not the respondent was for or against this bill, the vast majority believed that markets were the key to addressing the climate, and they either agreed with this bill's specific provisions to that effect or not.

Discussion and Significance:

This study has shown evidence through an analysis of policy narratives that there is broad consistency in the ideological underpinnings and narrative strategies between a macro-level climate policy narrative seen throughout organizations like the IPCC, EU, UN, governmental agencies, and most institutional groups responding to the climate crisis and specific meso-level policy narratives in Finnish climate legislation. Other studies using the NPF show that more contentious processes have a more diverse array of strategies. In this case, the narrative strategies between the macro and meso levels are so consistent that it indicates a process that is mostly settled. The narrative analysis of HE 175/2017's drafting process and Finland's policy process in general reveals a hegemonic dominance of market-based solutions that will produce renewable energy in the most cost-efficient manner. It, as the Climate Leviathan narrative implies, is a way to solve climate challenges in a way that means society doesn't have to change in any fundamental way.

This demonstrates a fundamental consensus in policy institutions at many levels that doesn't have many challengers in any position to change it, leaving few paths those institutions will elect to take. There are consequences to proceeding in this manner. Most of Finland's renewables stem from biomass energy that has dubious climate benefits and has been promoted in the economy in much the same way that the current auction has been promoted, and emulates external, mostly EU, examples rather than innovates. The new competitive auction will be mostly promoting wind power, but at only 1.4 TWh annually, that's still a small percentage of overall power generation, and it's set to continue for twelve years.

Hegemony comes not simply from the consistent nature of the narratives at both levels, but also in the institutional set-up in Finland, which provides a context in which these narratives go unchallenged. From the literature review on Finnish energy policy, it seems clear that Finland's energy policy-makers are a coherent and consistent set of elites and have been for decades. It also seems clear that Finnish citizens at large are not interested in contesting that space, and don't see much hope or appeal in turning to politics to change things. In an electorate defined by political consumerism, it makes sense that most would defer to policymakers to define the problem and simply pick from solutions made available. Thus, there are few bodies that can or will promote new narratives in an effective way to support new policies. It's clear that new narratives in institutional bodies are necessary, as demonstrated by the fact that many participants on committees place the blame for climate change on a growth economy, but can't turn that feeling into political action on their own. Business actors have one imperative, and government, as seen in the trajectory of Finland's forest policies, in attempting to split the difference between economic and environmental goals, tends to foreground economic goals in most cases. This is not to say that Finland has done nothing of value in terms of lowering emissions, but it does call into question the ability of liberal capitalist governance in general to accomplish CO2 mitigations at the necessary scale.

It does seem that new narratives will be instrumental in laying the ground for institutional change. As shown by the Green New Deal, new entrants into the policy narrative space can shift the boundaries of the possible in the imagination. Whether or not that results in concrete policy is never a given, but change needs to be imagined before it can be implemented.

Appendix I – Narrative Codebook

Data Source: Expert Statements (*asiantuntijalausunnot*) for legislation HE 175/2017. Coding derived from the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF).¹¹⁰

1. Problem Statement
 - a. Describe – How is climate change described as a problem?
2. Victim
 - a. Yes or No?
 - b. Describe – Entity hurt by a specified condition
3. Villain
 - a. Yes or No?

¹¹⁰ Shanahan, E., Jones, M., McBeth, M., & Lane, R. (2013). An Angel on the Wind: How Heroic Policy Narratives Shape Policy Realities. *Policy Studies Journal*, 41(3), 453–483.

- b. Describe – Entity responsible for the damage done to the victim
- 4. Hero
 - a. Yes or No?
 - b. Describe – Entity designated as fixing or being able to fix the specified problem
- 5. Moral of the Story
 - a. Yes or No?
 - b. Describe – Policy solution offered that is intended to solve the specified problem