



**THE MICRO-DYNAMICS OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY DIFFUSION:  
CONDITIONS, MOTIVATIONS,  
AND MECHANISMS**

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## Abstract

This thesis contributes to the scholarship on policy diffusion in general, and on environmental policy diffusion in particular, by unpicking the drivers of different diffusion mechanisms. Its overarching aim is to investigate the motivational dynamics influencing environmental policymaking at the fuzzy, understudied, pre-legislative stage. The thesis comprises four standalone papers: The first paper (Chapter 2) examines policymakers' motivations to engage with the climate change mitigation agenda based on a case study of Israeli climate change mitigation policy. It suggests that Israel's engagement with the climate change mitigation agenda, displaying an evident pattern of diffusion by emulating developed countries, is significantly motivated by considerations of internal, rather than external, legitimacy, contrary to expectations. The second paper (Chapter 3) makes theoretical advancements in recognising issue attributes as explanatory factors for the different mechanisms of policy diffusion, addressing an acknowledged gap in the literature. The third paper (Chapter 4) is an empirical application of the issue attributes model introduced in Chapter 3; the concept is applied to three diffusion processes of environmental issues in Israel: climate change, air pollution, and waste, analysing the differences in the attributes of these three issues, and subsequently, the differences in diffusion mechanisms in practice. The fourth paper (Chapter 5) investigates GLOBE International, a previously unstudied network of legislators committed to advancing climate change legislation. Its main findings show that GLOBE facilitates a mechanism of policy and political learning, but perhaps more interestingly, generates network-enabled emotional energy and *esprit de corps* among its members, which has helped to motivate and sustain climate action by legislators. The thesis takes a qualitative, micro-level approach, utilising data from 64 interviews with policy actors from 21 countries, as well supporting textual sources, thus contributing to the qualitative knowledge base needed to support analytical aggregations on policy diffusion processes.

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# **Chapter 1: Introduction**

## **1.1 Questions and journeys – a personal story of research motivations**

This thesis was born in the same way that knowledge has always advanced throughout history: from curiosity in the face of an unsolved puzzle, with a pinch of luck and coincidence. Between 2009 and 2011 I worked for an Israeli environmental think-tank. My team was involved with the formulation of Israel's Packaging Waste Law and advised the government on the formulation of a national greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation plan. In both of these processes, there was a demand from policymakers to situate the policymaking process in relation to what other countries were already doing: gathering information, benchmarking, and plainly copying. Witnessing this up-close was intriguing. Israel boasts the title of 'start-up nation' as it has the highest number of start-ups per capita; entrepreneurship is a defining cultural feature. In many other domains, especially with regard to the Palestinian issue, Israel isn't concerned with international public opinion. Why then, were policymakers so eager to look up to other countries when formulating environmental policies?

One of things that piqued my curiosity, in particular, was why Israel would dedicate resources to formulating a national climate change plan in spite of having negligible GHG emissions and no commitment to reduce them according to the Kyoto Protocol. At the same time, it was not investing any resources in climate adaptation despite the fact that it is a coastal, arid, desert-bordering country which, at the time, relied heavily on imported fossil fuels. In the face of soaring energy demands, a national energy efficiency plan lay untouched in the drawers of the Ministry of National Infrastructure. It was only under the auspices of the national GHG mitigation plan that it was acknowledged and budgeted for.

Another interesting puzzle was how the same policy officials in the same small Ministry of Environmental Protection appeared to be acting differently with

regard to various policy issues. In some instances they seemed to be systematically gathering information and evaluating alternatives based on professional and intrinsic considerations; in other situations, it appeared that decision-making was driven by other considerations. Was it a question of accumulated expertise, of political agendas, or did the issues themselves possess any traits which could explain this variance? In the cases observed, there seemed to be a policy diffusion process, yet the international policy diffusion literature accounted only very sparsely for differences between different policy issues, as explanatory factor for diffusion processes.

In London I joined a research team working on the Global Climate Legislation Study, a review of international climate legislation, produced at the Grantham Research Institute in collaboration with GLOBE International, an inter-parliamentary institute (IPI) for legislators, concerned primarily with climate change. Witnessing the encounters among legislators in international conferences, it was clear that a fascinating dynamic was at work. Delegates were conversing with each other frankly and eagerly, even when it was uncomfortable. During one of the sessions in a large international summit, a senior legislator from an oil-rich country spoke at the plenary, stating that GLOBE was the only forum in which he could speak from heart, where he felt his country wasn't seen as an evil-doer. This, and other moments that I witnessed over several years, prompted me to investigate the network – as a researcher rather than an observer. The global environmental governance literature recorded transnational networks and institutions as platform for learning and for resource acquisition. Yet it did not capture the buzz that seemed to be happening at those events.

Initially, I assumed that my research would focus on different policy diffusion mechanisms: the Israeli climate policy plan appeared to be an obvious quest for legitimacy in the eyes of other valued countries; GLOBE seemed like a platform which could entertain various diffusion mechanisms – learning, competition, and emulation. However, as the research project unfolded, more complex and interesting narratives emerged in both cases. Interestingly, both of these revealed that alongside the (expected) diffusion processes, emotional factors

were coming into play. In the Israeli case, data revealed that questions of identity-forming in relation to other countries was a key motivation to engage with climate action. In the case of GLOBE, evidence suggested that the network served not only as a platform for exchange of knowledge and resources, but also stimulated feelings and aspirations which facilitated subsequent climate action.

As new themes emerged, the core question remained: what motivational dynamics operate on policymakers when they interact with their counterparts' previous policy experiences.

## 1.2 Mapping the gaps in existing scholarship

This thesis is mainly rooted in political science, but also draws from scholarly work in international relations, geography and sociology. It is grounded in a large body of work on policy diffusion, while drawing from other literatures.

Turning to a broader notion, the scholarly discourse on policymakers' motivations is largely absent in other ways, especially with regard to climate change action. Scholarly attention is often focused on reasons to engage in climate action, ranging from scientific evidence and normative prescriptions to economic incentives (e.g. Stern, 2006; Anenberg et al., 2012; GCEC, 2014; Stern, 2015). Equally, a wide discourse analyses the barriers which prevent or slow down climate action (e.g. Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole, & Whitmarsh, 2007; Semenza et al., 2008; Gifford, 2011). However, there is little evidence on why countries actually *do* engage in climate action. A number of potential explanations are available: established global environmental norms (e.g. Falkner, 2012; Bernstein, 2013), domestic interests framed as co-benefits to climate mitigation, the green growth narrative (e.g. Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011; M. Jacobs, 2013), or a quest for political capital (such as legitimacy) from other valued actors in the international arena (e.g. Radaelli, 2000; Elkins & Simmons, 2005; Braun & Gilardi, 2006). However, these are not addressed systematically within a single framework. **Chapter 2** maps these motivational themes and applied them to Israel's climate change mitigation policies.

Some of these key motivations are informed by- and respond to interdependencies among states, leading to processes of policy diffusion. The scholarship on policy diffusion has reached a broad consensus on its definition – as a process in which policies in one policy unit are influenced by policies in other policy units (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin, Simmons, & Garrett, 2007; Shipan & Volden, 2012; Graham, Shipan, & Volden, 2013) as well as on its main mechanisms: learning, emulation, competition, and coercion (Meseguer, 2005; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007; Shipan & Volden, 2008). Significant advances have also been made regarding the conditionality of these mechanisms on various factors (Taylor, Lewis, Jacobsmeier, & DiSarro, Clark, 1985; Mooney & Lee, 1995; Strang & Soule, 1998; Shipan & Volden, 2008; Boushey, 2010; 2010; Taylor, Lewis, Jacobsmeier, & DiSarro, 2012).

Attention has also been drawn to the conditionality of policy diffusion on the attributes of the policy innovation itself. This has been flagged by scholars as holding potentially substantive explanatory power (Karch, 2007b; Fulwider, 2011; Jordan & Huitema, 2014, p. 724). Building on the model of diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 1995), various attributes have been suggested to influence policy diffusion processes. Table 1 below summarises the literature on issue attributes and policy attributes within the diffusion literature.

**Table 1: Summary of existing scholarship on attributes within the policy diffusion literature**

Paper	Geography	Method	Policy issues covered	Attributes	Issue / policy	Explained variable
Walker (1969)	USA	Quantitative	Fair employment practices; civil rights; labour legislation	(Addressing the general concept)	Issue	Rate of policy diffusion
Gray (1973)	USA	Quantitative	Education; welfare; civil rights	(Addressing the general concept)	Issue	Rate of diffusion
Brief, Delbecq, Filley, and Huber (1976)	USA	Quantitative	Citizen participation programmes	<u>Policy attributes:</u> fragility, complexity, relative advantage, legitimacy, redistribution, communicability, compatibility, legitimacy. <u>Issue (problem) attributes:</u> perceived severity	Issue and policy	Probability of adoption
Eyestone (1977)	USA	Quantitative	Fair employment practices	(Addressing the general concept)	Policy	Patterns of diffusion
Clark (1985)	USA	Quantitative	Educational accountability; lobby regulation; redistributive state revenue-sharing	Symbolic, administrative complexity, redistributive (suggesting it is conflictual)	Policy	Programme scope
Savage (1985)	USA	Quantitative	Car safety policies; education reform	Fragility	Policy	Rate of diffusion
Bennett (1991a)	UK & Canada	Qualitative	Freedom of information	(Addressing the general concept)	Policy	Different motivations, leading to diffusion mechanisms

<b>Paper</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Policy issues covered</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Issue / policy</b>	<b>Explained variable</b>
Rogers (1995, 2003)	Global	Quantitative	Various policies	Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, observability	Policy	Rate of diffusion
Mooney and Lee (1995, 1999)	USA	Quantitative	Abortion policies; death penalty	Complexity, salience, conflictual nature	Issue	Rate/pattern of diffusion
Hays (1996)	USA	Quantitative	Child abuse reporting; crime victim compensation law; public campaign funding laws	Fragility (controversy); necessity for anticipated remedy	Policy	Patterns of diffusion/reinvention
Bennett (1997)	OECD countries	Qualitative	Bureaucratic accountability policies	(Addressing the general concept)	Policy	Mechanisms of policy transfer (lesson drawing; legitimacy; harmonisation)
Tews, Busch, and Jörgens (2001)	OECD + Central and Eastern Europe	Quantitative	Environmental policies	Potential of conflict, international organisations, technical complexity	Policy	Probability and rate of diffusion  Motivations addressed: policymakers will mimic what others are doing because of uncertainty and legitimacy (not linked to attributes)
Kern, Jörgens, and Jänicke (2001)	OECD	Qualitative	Environmental policies	Visibility, technological availability of solutions, redistributive (suggesting it is conflictual)	Issue	Likelihood of policy transfer

<b>Paper</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Policy issues covered</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Issue / policy</b>	<b>Explained variable</b>
Daley and Garand (2005)	USA	Quantitative	Waste policies	Severity	Issue	Adoption and comprehensiveness of law
Tews (2005)	OECD + Central and Eastern Europe	Qualitative	Environmental policies	Problem structure, compatibility	Issue and Policy	Probability and rate of diffusion
Karch (2007b)	USA	Mixed	Various	Uncertainty, level of conflict	Policy	Mechanisms of diffusion  (Note: emulation defined differently in this paper)
Nicholson-Crotty (2009)	USA	Mixed	Various	Salience, complexity	Policy	Rate of diffusion
Boushey (2010)	USA	Quantitative	Various	Salience, complexity, fragility, target of policy	Policy	Rate of diffusion
Makse and Volden (2011)	USA	Quantitative	Criminal justice policies	Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, observability	Policy	Rate of diffusion
Fulwider (2011)	USA	Mixed	Infertility insurance mandates	Policy type (morality vs. regulatory policies)	Policy	Patterns of diffusion
van der Heiden and Strebel (2012)	Switzerland	Qualitative	Energy policy, locational policy	Observability, competitiveness (degree to which policy decisions influence the economic well-being of the entity)	Issue	Non-diffusion

<b>Paper</b>	<b>Geography</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Policy issues covered</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Issue / policy</b>	<b>Explained variable</b>
Taylor et al. (2012)	USA	Qualitative	LGBTQ policies	Complexity	Issue	Scope of adoption (what and who are protected)
Boushey (2012)	USA	Quantitative	Various	Saliency, complexity	Issue	Rate of diffusion
D. M. Glick and Friedland (2014)	USA	Quantitative	Various	Saliency, complexity, geographical focus (state/local or state/federal)	Issue	Propensity to learn (policy researchers' reporting)
D. M. Glick (2014)	USA	Mixed	General model	Complexity, ambiguity	Issue	Mechanism of learning
Winburn, Winburn, and Niemeyer (2014)	USA	Quantitative	School bullying	Saliency, complexity	Issue	Probability of adoption
Butz, Fix, and Mitchell (2015)	USA	Quantitative	Shooting in self-defence ('Stand Your Ground' laws)	Fragility	Policy	Probability of adoption
Mallinson (2015)	USA	Quantitative	Various	Saliency, complexity	Policy	Rate of diffusion



This literature compilation points to several gaps regarding concepts, scope, methods, and geographical reach. First, most studies take a comparative approach across states and across time, yet few engage in explicitly comparing different policy issues (or problems). Even fewer acknowledge the differences between policy issues as relevant to the question of why and how policies diffuse; rather, they focus on the attributes of the policies (solutions) themselves, thus overlooking a critical conceptual distinction between problems and solutions – or in John Kingdon’s (1984) words – between the problem stream and the policy stream, which are independent of each other. Second, existing literature is focused mainly on the likelihood and rate of diffusion, and less on the different mechanisms at work, bypassing the causal factors at the root of these differences. Third, Most of these studies are quantitative studies (note several exceptions above), which means that by design, they measure only what is measurable. There is a limited ability to capture policy diffusion processes where significant learning took place but which nevertheless did not mature into legislation, which underwent significant transfiguration during the process, or from which negative lessons have been drawn. Additionally, these accounts often fall short of offering deep insights into causal pathways that qualitative studies may be able to offer. Fourth, the literature is almost exclusively set in federal settings, predominantly in the United States, ignoring forces and potential political dynamics that apply to other political structures.

One of the key elements that appear to play a role with regard to policy diffusion processes is what motivates policymakers to act. Scholarship addresses this question on different diffusion mechanisms, providing the following useful typology (Gilardi, 2003): *Problem-dependent* mechanisms – learning and competition – will be driven by a motivation to solve a given problem. *Problem-independent* mechanisms – emulation and coercion – are driven by motivations which are external to the specific policy issue, for example a quest for legitimacy or peer approval. While there is an established link between motivations and diffusion mechanisms, and in addition, a link between attributes and motivations (Perry & Kraemer, 1978; Dutton & Jackson, 1987), the chain leading

from attributes to motivations through to diffusion mechanisms has not been formalised. This gap is addressed in **Chapter 3** which models this relationship. **Chapter 4** provides an empirical application of the model with regard to three environmental case studies.

Environmental policy diffusion processes have been facilitated by a plethora of transnational networks and institutions in the public and private sectors, which operate in the context of global environmental governance. These often serve as a platform for purposeful exchanges of knowledge on policies, politics, norms, and practices among actors. The role of these networks has typically been regarded as providing opportunities for learning platforms (Hoffmann, 2011; Legrand, 2012; Stone, 2013; H. Busch, 2015) or for resource-acquisition (Raustiala, 2002; Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). There are some notable gaps in this literature, mainly with regard to the ways that these networks achieve their governance purposes. Specifically, inter-parliamentary institutions (IPIs), the role they might play, and the ways in which operationalise their governance, are largely overlooked in the scholarship (albeit recognised briefly by Slaughter, 2004). **Chapter 5** addresses these gaps through an investigation of GLOBE International, a transnational legislator network.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The overarching question of this doctoral thesis is concerned with the motivational forces at the root of policy diffusion processes. Specifically, it is concerned with the following questions:

1. What are the different motivations which drive the spread of climate change policies and, specifically, how might these play out in low-emitting countries?
2. Do different policy issue attributes affect these motivational forces?
3. Do different motivations affect the tendency for different diffusion mechanisms to occur?

## 1.4 Approach/methods

### 1.4.1 Research design

As this thesis is primarily concerned with motivations, a largely unexplored theme within the policy diffusion literature, it required a flexible, qualitative research design, seeking to develop and expand themes rather than to quantify a known phenomenon. This addresses a gap in policy diffusion literature and responds to requests from scholars that:

*We should engage in more qualitative analysis of the type of communication and influence between policymakers of different countries which might explain why the pattern of adoption...is different*

*(Bennett, 1997, p. 225)*

Taking an in-depth, qualitative approach offers an important addition to predominantly quantitative work on conditionality of policy diffusion in general. It is especially relevant in regards to the understudied pre-legislative stage of policymaking:

*Without clear and well-founded facts on the ground, often best provided by qualitative research, quantitative scholars have an insufficient understanding of the relevant politics to produce ultimately fruitful analyses...we are now at a point where **qualitative research could nicely complement Quantitative analyses**, such as with fuller assessments of what exactly policy makers seek to learn from others or how socialization comes about.*

*(Graham et al., 2013, p. 695, emphasis by the author)*

In order to address individual motivations, it is necessary to have unmediated access to the individuals driven by these motivations. The chosen unit of analysis was therefore individual policymakers, whose motivations stand at the heart of the research questions. This level of analysis has received comparatively limited attention in the policy diffusion literature (notable exceptions include Weyland, 2006a; Sugiyama, 2008a; Taylor & Tadlock, 2010).

### 1.4.2 Data

As the thesis is concerned with policymakers' perceptions and motivations, the main data collection method was interviews, as they 'yield rich insights into people's biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings' (May, 2001, p. 120).

In total, interviews were conducted with 61 key policy actors, as detailed in Table 4 and

Table 3 below. For the Israeli case study (Chapters 2 and 4), the author conducted thirty-four interviews with Israeli-based policy officials (n=21) and other actors (n=13), identified based on their direct involvement in the formulation of one or more of the policies in question. Interviewees were approached primarily through the author's network, as well as by cold-calling. For the GLOBE case study (Paper 5), 26 semi-structured interviews were undertaken in 2015 with 26 legislators, policy officials, and GLOBE secretariat. Seven additional interviews were conducted with members of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU), in to gain comparative insights on the dynamics of the networks.

The Israeli interviews were all conducted in person, save one which was conducted via Skype. The GLOBE Interviews were conducted either in person or remotely via telephone or Skype, although two of the respondents sent in their answers to interview questions in writing. Interviews were transcribed in full, and in the Israeli case, translated from Hebrew according to need.

**Table 2 – Interviewees – Israeli case studies**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Interviewees</b>
Elected officials <sup>1</sup>	1
Policy officials (non-elected)	17
Other actors	11
Total	<b>29</b>

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<sup>1</sup> In order to protect the elected official's anonymity, his/her quotes are cited as 'PO', as with policy officials, so as not to single her/him out.

**Table 3 – Interviewees – GLOBE case study**

<b>Interviewees</b>	<b>Number of interviews (countries represented)</b>
GLOBE staff	4 (n/a)
Legislators from GLOBE network	20 (16)
Policy officials from GLOBE network (e.g. legal counsels)	2 (2)
Legislators from other inter-parliamentary networks who are not members of GLOBE	6 (6)
Policy officials from other inter-parliamentary networks who are not members of GLOBE	1 (1)
Total	33 interviews (22 countries)

### **1.4.3 Analysis**

Data was coded by the author using thematic analysis, a narrative analysis approach in which a narrative typology is organised by themes based on occurrences in the data text. Illustrations are provided by case studies or vignettes, which is a useful approach in the case of comparative analysis of issues with common thematic elements (Riessman, 1993). An inductive-deductive approach (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008) was applied, which allowed developing new themes while corresponding to a pre-conceived coding frame based on a literature review. The thematic coding process was done in an iterative process, which included several steps: (1) identifying relevant quotes in the text; (2) coding the relevant segments ('instances') and (3) creating a coding framework.

### **1.4.4 Inter-coder reliability**

In order to ensure the replicability of the coding frame, data was re-coded by another independent researcher (Krippendorff, 2004). In chapter 2, the coding process was repeated in full by a second independent researcher, who did not have access to the first coding framework. The coding framework was then

refined and consolidated. Finally, a third researcher coded the material again, based on the finalised coding framework. Inter-coder reliability stood at 80 percent between coders 1 and 2, and at approximately 70 per cent between the consolidated coding (1 and 2) and coder 3. In Chapter 4, two methods were applied: first, the author coded a sample of the interviews twice, two years apart. The compatibility of the coding was 96%. Second, a sample of the data was re-coded by a colleague who was not exposed to the first coding, generating inter-coder reliability of approximately 80 per cent.

#### **1.4.5 Positionality and bias**

*“Recognition of one’s own biases and the ability to discount for them is of course important for social scientists... The interviewer ought necessarily to be quicker in recognizing and allowing for his biases whereas in some other situations more time is allowable for discounting them*

*(Dexter, 1970, p. 80)*

As described in detail, the author had a personal knowledge and involvement both in the Israeli case studies, having been involved in the packaging waste law formulation and in the national GHG mitigation plan, and in the GLOBE case study, having attended GLOBE events in person, and being employed by the network secretariat for a few months. The clear distinction between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, often coupled with assumptions that only ‘outsiders’ can generate ‘objective’ observations, has long faded in social research (Mosley, 2013). Nevertheless, the challenges, as well as the opportunities that an ‘insider’ status has, need be acknowledged. The obvious up-side is access to data. Indeed, as described above, the author’s personal network allowed her to conduct 61 interviews, including 26 interviews with legislators from over 20 different countries. Incidentally, she was able to gain access to parliamentarians from countries that do not have formal diplomatic relations with her nation state. Additionally, having close knowledge of the subject matter, she was able to both ask interviewees about events that they had not brought up themselves, as well as being able to make informed assessments if their account was factually consistent.

The challenges include a risk of confirmation bias, which is the partial seeking or the interpretation of evidence, in order to support the researcher's preconceived hypotheses, or beliefs (Nickerson, 1998). Various measures were taken by the author to mitigate this risk. The first was acknowledging it exists, and suggesting alternative interpretations to the data wherever possible. The second is phrasing the questions in an open ended rather than in a leading way. The third was employing other coders (see above). Working with a critical co-author on the GLOBE case study was also a means of mitigating confirmation bias.

Another potential risk was respondent bias – where interviewees might seek to please the researcher by providing over-positive accounts and not addressing sensitive or negative issues. However, the open and candid accounts provided by many interviewees, which also included negative experiences, suggest that the existing working relationships generated, if anything, a sense of trust and willingness and not otherwise.

## **1.5 Thesis structure**

This thesis provides a set of publishable-quality papers on a set of related topics, framed by an original introduction and conclusion. It comprises of four papers (Chapters 2 through 5). Following the requirements set forth by the Department of Geography and Environment at the London School of Economics and Political Science, these include three single-authored papers (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) and one paper co-authored with Dr Richard Perkins (Chapter 5), who contributed 50 per cent of the work. References and annexes are presented at the end of each chapter. The following provides a brief abstract of each of the four papers.

### **Chapter 2 abstract: Why bother? Motivations for engaging with climate change mitigation policies in low emitting countries**

A large body of literature is concerned with reasons why addressing climate change is not only necessary but also beneficial, and analyses the barriers that

prevent sufficient action. However, policymakers' *motivations* to engage in climate change mitigation are often overlooked. Several motivational themes may explain why policymakers do act on climate change: established norms of environmental responsibility, considerations of domestic self-interest, and a quest for legitimacy, achieved by emulation-based policy diffusion. While the literature addresses each of those separately, and offers insights on interactions between domestic and international forces, it often does not systematically analyse policymakers' motivations, but rather makes broad assumptions about them. This paper contributes to filling this gap by examining the interplay between different motivations in the context of Israel's climate change policy. Given its miniscule greenhouse emissions, lack of international climate commitments, and often-contested international political status, it might be expected that considerations of external legitimacy would explain its engagement with the climate agenda. Using data from 34 interviews conducted with policy actors, supported by textual analysis of parliamentary committee protocols and media articles, this paper examines this proposition further. It reveals that a combination of motivational factors play a role in the formulation of climate policy, of which a quest for external legitimacy is not dominant; rather, considerations of internal legitimacy and identity-building seem to have played a role, in addition to motivations of promoting domestic co-benefits.

### **Chapter 3 abstract: Can issue attributes explain different mechanisms of policy diffusion? An exploratory framework**

Policy diffusion scholarship has made significant advances on what determines policy diffusion. Drawing on a literature concerned with the diffusion of innovations, scholars have offered valuable insights on how attributes of different policies affect the likelihood and rate of policy diffusion. This paper advances the literature on attributes and policy diffusion by offering several important contributions. It proposes a conceptual model, suggesting that different attributes of the policy issues have an influence on policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms



to arise. The conceptual model is then applied to examine five issue attributes (salience, complexity, fragility, perception as opportunity or threat, and geographical scope), and their effect on two diffusion mechanisms – learning and emulation – forming specific hypotheses regarding the relative likelihood of the process being dominated by the different mechanisms. Four perceived attributes are hypothesised to increase the propensity for learning-based diffusion: high salience, high complexity, high fragility, and the perception of an issue as an opportunity. The propensity for emulation is hypothesised to be increased if the issue is perceived as a threat or has an international (rather than domestic) orientation. The paper offers a theoretical contribution by acknowledging issue attributes as explanatory factors for *different mechanisms* of policy diffusion, addressing an acknowledged gap in the literature. The conceptual model allows for future exploration of different attributes and diffusion mechanisms. Additionally, it refines the muddled conceptual line between attributes of issues (problems) and of policies (solutions). Finally, it offers potential theoretical and policy implications for this model.

#### **Chapter 4 abstract: Can issue attributes explain different mechanisms of policy diffusion? Evidence from three environmental issues**

Recent developments in the policy diffusion literature explore how different factors may condition the patterns and nature of policy diffusion. While attributes of the policies (solutions) have been suggested to affect the dynamics of diffusion, and especially the variance in rate of diffusion, the explanatory nature of the issues (problems, e.g. education or air pollution) remains largely unpacked. Recently, Nachmany (2016c)<sup>2</sup> developed a conceptual model suggesting that various attributes of policy issues influence policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the likelihood of certain diffusion mechanisms. This paper offers a first empirical application of this model. Based on 34 interviews with policy officials and other policy actors in Israel, the model is

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 3 in this thesis

applied to the processes of diffusion in three environmental policy issues: climate change, air pollution, and waste. Through the analysis of the differences in the attributes of these three issues, and variance in diffusion mechanisms in practice, the paper lends support to Nachmany's conceptual model, as well as to some of her specific hypotheses. Its micro-level approach provides empirical evidence not only on correlational, but also on the causal, pathways tying issue attributes to specific diffusion mechanisms. Particularly, there is evidence that salience and complexity, and to a lesser degree, fragility, influence the propensity for learning-based diffusion to occur, and that international orientation increases the propensity for emulation-based diffusion to occur. There is insufficient evidence regarding the hypotheses on perceived threat and opportunity. Other contributions offered by the paper include advancing the understanding of policy diffusion processes in the pre-legislative stage, which is hard to capture in most quantitative studies, as well as advancing the literature on policy diffusion in non-federal settings.

### **Chapter 5 abstract: 'A very human business' – trans-governmental networking initiatives and domestic climate action**

The past two decades have witnessed a proliferation of networking initiatives, in both the private and public spheres, aimed at addressing climate change. Previous work has suggested that these initiatives largely achieve their governance functions through learning and the provision of resources. Our particular contribution in the present paper is to advance the current understanding of networking initiatives by suggesting that they may also perform emotional roles which are important in motivating domestic action on climate change. In order to illustrate our argument, we examine GLOBE International, an inter-parliamentary institution focused on supporting the development of domestic legislation in the area of sustainable development. Based on interviews with 26 legislators, we provide evidence that GLOBE

functions as a network for learning – particularly political learning. Yet of equal, if not greater, significance is that involvement in the networking initiative has fostered a sense of common purpose, feelings of unity, inspiration, and an ‘esprit de corps’ amongst participants. In doing so, it has given rise to emotional energy, which has helped to motivate and sustain climate action by legislators.

## **1.6 Concluding remarks**

This thesis makes several conceptual, empirical and methodological contributions that respond to the gaps in the literature. These contributions, which briefly follow, as well as limitations and suggestion for future research, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Notably, those include unpacking of the link between issues and mechanisms, and linking literatures on learning and resource acquisition in scholarship through network dynamics to literature on solidarity, emotional energy and inspiration. Empirically, it advances the understanding on why policy diffusion takes place and what are they key motivational themes behind it. This is investigated particularly with regard to Israel, which remains little studied in the literature in general, and from an environmental perspective in particular. The thesis offers a contribution with regard to conditions in which learning- and emulation-based diffusion is more likely to occur. This is investigated with regard to five attributes of the policy issues – namely salience, complexity, fragility, perception as opportunity/threat, and international-orientation. Lastly, the thesis advances understanding on networking initiatives and the role of emotions in particular, providing unique insight on a previously unstudied IPI.

Methodologically, the thesis employs a qualitative research design, which has the potential to offer deeper insights into causal pathways leading to policy diffusion processes. It takes a micro-level approach, contributing to the surprisingly limited research which has involved actors directly involved in the

process. The thesis utilizes unique data sets, including over 60 elite interviews, owing to the author's personal network. Finally, it advances policy diffusion research in understudied non-federal and non-US/European settings.

Research Chapters 2 through 5 follow.

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# Chapter 2: Why bother? Motivations for engaging with climate change mitigation policies in low emitting countries<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

*A large body of literature is concerned with reasons why addressing climate change is not only necessary but also beneficial, and analyses the barriers that prevent sufficient action. However, policymakers' motivations to engage in climate change mitigation are often overlooked. Several motivational themes may explain why policymakers do act on climate change: established norms of environmental responsibility, considerations of domestic self-interest, and a quest for legitimacy, achieved by emulation-based policy diffusion. While the literature addresses each of those separately, and offers insights on interactions between domestic and international forces, it often does not systematically analyse policymakers' motivations, but rather makes broad assumptions about them. This paper contributes to filling this gap by examining the interplay between different motivations in the context of Israel's climate change policy. Given its miniscule greenhouse emissions, lack of international climate commitments, and often-contested international political status, it might be expected that considerations of external legitimacy would explain its engagement with the climate agenda. Using data from 34 interviews conducted with policy actors, supported by textual analysis of parliamentary committee protocols and media articles, this paper examines this proposition further. It reveals that a combination of motivational factors play a role in the formulation of climate policy, of which a quest for external legitimacy is not dominant; rather, considerations of internal legitimacy and identity-building seem to have played a role, in addition to motivations of promoting domestic co-benefits.*

## 2.1 Introduction

Why do policymakers act on climate change mitigation? Scholarship leaves this question largely unanswered, replaced by a discourse constructed around why they should, or why they do not. A large body of literature points to the reasons why addressing climate change would be beneficial (e.g. Stern, 2006; Anenberg et al., 2012; GCEC, 2014; Stern, 2015) and analyses the barriers which hold

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<sup>3</sup> The author is grateful for remarks received from the participants of the PERG workshop at the University of Exeter, April 2013, and the participants of the 9th Annual Graduate Conference in Political Science and International Relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, December 2013.

countries back from acting (Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole, & Whitmarsh, 2007; Semenza et al., 2008; Gifford, 2011). Unfortunately, mere necessity does not always lead to policy action, and barriers and motivations are not mirror images of each other: the absence of barriers does not imply a motivation to act.

Nevertheless, sufficient examples of climate legislation worldwide (Nachmany et al., 2015) shows that countries do act on climate change. One potential explanation for this is that global environmentalism has successfully established norms of environmental responsibility (Falkner, 2012); recognising their responsibility even beyond national borders, and facilitated by a genuine understanding of the climate-related risks that lie ahead, policymakers truly want to mitigate climate change. This reasoning is largely hindered by two significant characteristics of climate change: One is that climate change is a 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin, 1968), reducing the motivation to act locally to contribute to its solution. The other is that it is a 'tragedy of the horizon' (Carney, 2015), as its implications go beyond the political cycle, business cycle, and the mandated terms of technocratic authorities, thus reducing motivations to act in the short term.

A second plausible explanation is that interdependencies among countries shape policymaking via processes of policy diffusion. By emulating 'appropriate' policy agendas or instruments, and adhering to internationally-accepted norms, countries gain political capital which impacts their position on other matters, from economic relationships to the legitimacy of their governance in general (Radaelli, 2000; Elkins & Simmons, 2005; Braun & Gilardi, 2006). At times, this might result in 'label diffusion' – the adoption of a policy framework without a real application of its content (Mossberger, 2000; Radaelli, 2005; Goldfinch, 2006). The international nature of global climate politics lends support to this notion. Legitimacy may also be geared internally, contributing to identity-building by taking on practices of esteemed counterparts, albeit without expecting payoffs from those counterparts (Craik, 2005; Preuss, Haunschild, & Matten, 2009).

A third possible explanation is that actions are motivated by co-benefits of addressing climate change, such as reducing air pollution or traffic congestion. A growing body of evidence on co-benefits suggests that tackling climate change is actually profitable, even without taking climate considerations into account (e.g. GCEC, 2014; Green, 2015). Specifically, inclusion of air quality co-benefits in the design and evaluation of climate policies has been suggested to enhance climate policy evaluations (Nemet, Holloway, & Meier, 2010). Porter's hypothesis (notably, Porter & Van der Linde, 1995b) that environmental regulation stimulates innovation and efficiency paved the way to the 'green growth' narrative (Ekins, 2000; Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011; Jacobs, 2013) which has been paramount in this regard. Facilitated by evidence on enhanced innovation and competitiveness (Jänicke, 2012; Fankhauser et al., 2013), as well as positive impact on labour markets (Bowen, 2012), this narrative can be attractive to policymakers. As convincing as this narrative may be, there is a shortage of empirical evidence on its actual effect; recently, Bain et al. (2015) showed that co-benefits are a strong motivation for the public to support climate action, but there is still little evidence to show whether these considerations affect policymakers' motivations.

Literature widely acknowledges the co-existence and interaction between international diffusion forces and domestic policy choices. At times, these forces work together. For example, national democratisation processes, combined with high salience of environmental issues, have been shown to create conditions allowing international factors to promote the formation of national environmental ministries (Aklin & Urpelainen, 2014). The spread in uptake of voluntary corporate responsibility standards is associated with both domestic and international factors (Perkins & Neumayer, 2010). Fankhauser, Gennaioli, and Collins (2015a, 2015b), point to both domestic and international drivers influencing the passage of climate legislation worldwide. However, there are times when domestic and international forces pull in different directions. For example, in the case of corruption regulation, domestic policy entrepreneurs invoke global norms and values to overcome the resistance of local elites in

advancing their preferred policy options (Schnell, 2015). Busch, Gupta, and Falkner (2012) demonstrate how international policy convergence pressures are countered by strong domestic forces in the cases of policies on genetically modified organisms and renewable electricity.

In addition to not addressing motivations explicitly, there are several other gaps in existing literature: first, it focuses primarily on the national level, and less on decision-making by individual policymakers. Since ‘actors will typically be individuals when we are dealing with motivations and incentives’ (Grandori, 2000, p. 20), this leads to a conceptual gap, as well as a methodological one. In addition, most existing scholarship targets – to borrow a term from Eckersley (2012, p. 26) – ‘the most responsible, the most capable, and the most vulnerable’ countries. There is a large group of not-so-polluting, not-so-vulnerable countries whose actions remain largely un-documented.

This paper offers a contribution towards filling some of these gaps: it examines the motivations of individual policymakers to engage with the climate change mitigation agenda. It does so by telling the story of climate change mitigation policy in Israel between 2008 and 2013, a period which experienced a global surge in climate policymaking in the run-up to- and following the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties (COP 15). In 2010 Israel, a country which emits only a miniscule fraction of global greenhouse gases (GHG), formulated a national GHG mitigation plan according to the recommendations of a dedicated inter-ministerial committee. Through this case study, it aims to map and identify the principal motivations of policymakers to engage in climate change mitigation, and to advance the understanding of how different motivations might interact.

Israel is an illustrative case for a number of reasons: First, it is a very low-emitting country in absolute terms,<sup>4</sup> which significantly reduces the need to address its role in the global effort to mitigate emissions. While not bound to EU frameworks, eliminating the need to deal with top-down policy imperatives, its

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<sup>4</sup> Approximately 0.2 per cent of global emissions in 2015 (Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2015). Its per capita emissions, however, exceed the EU average.

OECD accession process exposed it to external pressures. Finally, although it is an arid, low-lying coastal country, the balance between mitigation and adaptation in its policymaking resembles a developed– more than a developing country. Thus, some of the findings may apply to other developed non-EU countries, such as Chile or New Zealand. Yanai, Koch, and Dayan (2010) identify Israel within a group of recently developed countries, such as Greece and Spain. Findings may also be relevant to other ‘advanced developing countries’ which had no commitments under the Kyoto protocol, such as South Africa, Mexico, or Argentina (Castro, 2010).

At the same time, Israel is unique in its geo-political setting and international positioning, mainly with regard to the Palestinian issue, as well as in its clear agenda focus on security issues. This may lead to the intuitive conclusion that engaging with climate change is done for the primary purpose of seeking external legitimacy by aligning with external values and normative practices, demonstrating that it is, after all, one of the ‘good guys’. While there is evidence for this dynamic, other forces seem to be at play as the picture unfolds. There is evidence that domestic forces harness the theme of climate change in order to pursue other environmental issues which generate co-benefits. Additionally, evidence suggests that the process was considerably motivated by a quest for internal legitimacy and identity-building. There is very little evidence to suggest that climate policies in Israel were driven by global environmental norms.

The case study contributes to increased understanding of the interplay between domestic and international forces, and may contribute to a deeper understanding of the passage of climate legislation. It uses a micro-level approach which aims to unpick motivations of individual policymakers. By shining a light on policymakers’ motivations, the paper makes a contribution towards a better understanding of the policymaking process and allows the examination of processes – even those with no measurable outcome in the form of a law or policy. The data utilised in this research includes 29 interviews conducted between 2012 and 2013 with Israeli policy officials and other actors closely

involved in climate policymaking, as well as analysis of parliamentary protocols and media publications. The different sources allow for observations, of differences between explicit motivations and underlying motivations. This gap is particularly complex to pin down, both conceptually and methodologically, especially with regards to elected officials; however, limited conclusions can be drawn. Finally, this paper also contributes to the limited body of scholarship on Israeli climate policy, which is often framed within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Sowers, Vengosh, & Weinthal, 2011; Feitelson, Tamimi, & Rosenthal, 2012; Messerschmid, 2012; Mason, 2013; Nachmany, 2016).

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2.2 briefly reviews theories of international policy diffusion, internal legitimacy-seeking and domestic policy-shaping forces. Section 2.3 presents an overview of Israel's climate policymaking. Section 2.4 describes the methodology of the study. Section 2.5 presents empirical evidence from the interviews and document analysis. The paper concludes with implications for scholarly and policy research.

## **2.2 Literature**

Motivations are defined as the reasons for certain behaviours in certain situations (Middleton & Spanias, 1999, p. 66). They are a part of an individual's goal structures and beliefs about what is important (Ames, 1992), and are triggers for action on unmet needs (Slater, 2007, p. 151).<sup>5</sup> Scholarship on policymakers' motivations emphasises credit-claiming from constituents and clientele groups for actions taken (Fiorina, 1977), or blame-avoidance for unpopular actions (Weaver, 1986). In examining policymakers' motivations to engage with social policy reform, Sugiyama (2008) suggests that electoral

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<sup>5</sup> As pointed out by Okereke (2007), there is often a confusion between motivations and drivers – the former generating movement, and the latter shaping the direction and force of that movement. In the context of climate policy, motivations could be achieving green growth, while drivers could be energy prices, institutional powers, or certain focusing events (for example, hosting a COP was found to drive increased legislation. See Fankhauser et al., 2015a).

concerns are one of three motivational groups, the other two being ideology and socialisation into communities which define social norms. All of these constitute a typology which broadly corresponds to the different motivational groups that we explore below for adopting climate change mitigation policies: a quest for external or internal legitimacy, domestic co-benefits, or normative motivations. To illustrate the difference between these motivational groups, one could borrow imagery from the world of fashion: you can wear a shirt that you saw esteemed colleagues wear because you are concerned with what they might think of you, or hope they will invite you to join them for a drink (external legitimacy). You can wear a shirt you saw on a top-model because wearing it will make you feel good about yourself, although you do not expect feedback, unfortunately, from the top-model (internal legitimacy). You can wear a shirt because it will keep you warm (self-interest, co-benefits), and finally, you can wear a certain shirt because you think it is produced in a way which is aligned with your values (normative motivations). The next sections examine those in detail.

### **2.2.1 Seeking legitimacy via a process of policy diffusion**

Policy diffusion is the process by which policy choices in one unit are influenced by policy choices in other units (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2006; Füglistler, 2012; Gilardi, 2012). It has been instrumental in explaining the dissemination of environmental policies, and specifically climate policies (Hoberg, 1990; Busch & Jörgens, 2005; Busch, Jörgens, & Tews, 2005; Tews, 2005; Edge & McKeen-Edwards, 2008; Holzinger, Knill, & Somerer, 2008; Matisoff, 2008; Hall, 2011; Nakamura, Elder, & Mori, 2011; Saikawa, 2011). Global policy responses to mitigate climate change and adapt to its consequences have grown tenfold in the last 20 years (Nachmany et al., 2015), spreading among all economies. Four main mechanisms of policy diffusion are recognised in the literature: learning, competition, emulation, and coercion (Füglistler, 2012; Gilardi, 2012; Falkner, 2015). Learning is the process by which policymakers gather information about practice in other policy units, and use that information to inform their own policymaking (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996, 2000; Dobbin, Simmons, & Garrett, 2007; Gilardi, 2010). Competition occurs when actions

taken by one policy unit alter the payoffs for another; for example, countries will adopt regulatory schemes which will be more appealing to investors than their neighbours' schemes (Simmons & Elkins, 2004; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007). Emulation occurs when policymakers adopt a certain policy solution because they believe it will provide political capital in the form of legitimacy or peer approval (Argyris & Schön, 1978; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Rose, 1991; Mizruchi & Fein, 1999; Radaelli, 2000). In this sense, the policymaking process is independent of the policy problem, and policies 'spread irrespectively from their problem-solving capacity' (Gilardi, 2003, p. 5). Emulation could result in symbolic imitation of practices (Evans & Davies, 1999; Gilardi, 2005), or even in 'policy label diffusion' – where only the label or rhetoric of policy is copied, without its essential content (Mossberger, 2000). In these cases, adoptions are motivated by and serve purposes different to those stated (Goldfinch, 2006). Coercion happens when powerful actors impose their preferred policy choices on other actors (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007; Füglistner, 2012).<sup>6</sup>

It has been suggested that European institutions promote isomorphic policy solutions to deal with their limited legitimacy (Radaelli, 2000). Meyer and Rowan assert that isomorphism between similar institutions leads organisations to 'incorporate elements which are legitimated externally, rather than in terms of efficiency' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 348).

Legitimacy, which is often the goal sought in emulation-based diffusion, is 'a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions' (Suchman, 1995, p. 574). Legitimacy may provide additional external resources (Baum & Oliver, 1991; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002; Bitektine, 2011), or serve as a tool for consolidating organisational reputation (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Legitimacy has been widely documented as a

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<sup>6</sup> Coercion is excluded from some widely accepted typologies of policy diffusion as it is more focused on vertical than horizontal dynamics (Braun & Gilardi, 2006). Nevertheless, as the definition of vertical power is a fuzzy one, similar observations can be made about other mechanisms.



motivation for engaging with global environmental governance (Bernstein, 2004; Luft Mobus, 2005; Smith & Fischlein, 2010) and climate policy (Busch et al., 2005; Paterson, 2010) specifically.

When the motivation is engaging with the international community, by means of adapting to its norms, one would expect that policy actions would be strategically used as a stepping stone. In this case, we might expect to find discussions on how to communicate policy efforts externally in international forums beyond required. An example of this can be seen in Ethiopia's ambitious emissions reduction commitments, which stand in contrast to its low emissions. We might also expect to see stakeholders from other areas of the executive branch, who will seek to be involved in this strategic action – for example, from the ministry of foreign affairs.

Additionally, bringing attention to one topic (climate change) can potentially shift attention from other, more contested, topics. For example, the legitimacy of Israel's actions is frequently questioned (albeit a softer challenge than questioning the legitimacy of its existence),<sup>7</sup> mainly with regard to the occupation of, and conflict with, Palestine. To this end, one might expect external legitimacy to be a prime motivation for Israeli policymakers to engage with climate change policy. Similarities can be drawn with Taiwan, which faces broader questions of legitimacy; research suggests that Taiwanese climate policies reflect a tactical adaptation to the international concern with climate change, and are utilised for purposes of enhancing legitimacy and socialisation within the global community (Hsu, 2009).

However, there is another type of legitimacy which is aimed at internal rather than external audiences: 'Internal legitimacy refers to acceptance of norms by

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<sup>7</sup> There are claims, albeit sparse, against Israel's legitimacy as an entity, and only 160 of 192 countries of the United Nations formally recognise it as a state. Claims against the legitimacy of a regime could have grave consequences:

*'In our global era, states that rely only on coercion or individual payoffs are unstable. From apartheid South Africa to crony-ridden Indonesia, illegitimate regimes have been quickly replaced by unaccepting societies. Nothing will turn heads more than a cry of 'legitimacy crisis'.*

*(Gilley, 2006, p. 499)*

participants in an institution, for instance the members of an organization or supporters of a rule-making mechanism. External legitimacy refers to the acceptance of a rule by non-members or nonparticipants' (Biermann & Gupta, 2011, p. 1858). Internal legitimacy seeks to provide members of the organisation (or country) with a perception of being 'more worthy...more meaningful, more predictable, more trustworthy' (Suchman, 1995, p. 574; Bitektine, 2011). In order to achieve legitimacy with their constituents, organisations are prone to construct stories about their actions that correspond to expectations and socially assigned dictates. The stories do not have to actually be carried out through organisational actions, but are rather used as 'symbolic reassurance' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Drori and Honig (2013) suggest that internal legitimacy 'acts as a tool that reinforces organizational practices and mobilizes organizational members around a common ethical, strategic or ideological vision' (p. 346).

This internal drive, leading to socialisation, could stem from the internal motivation of feeling part of a greater good, as part of a collective identity (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992). Collective identities fulfil a fundamental 'need to belong' which is ingrained in human nature (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Keck and Sikkink (1998) note states' desire to belong to a normative community. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) assert that 'states comply with norms [...] for reasons that relate to their identities as members of an international society' (p. 902), and that state identity shapes its behaviour, which in turn is shaped by the cultural-institutional context within which states act.

The fragmented identities within the relatively young and ever-changing Israeli society, including the strong influence of the Palestinian issue on national identity (Cohen, 1995; Kelman, 1999; Bar-On, 2008), suggest that questions of identity and internal legitimacy may play a role in policymaking processes. Israeli identity is focused on separating itself from its neighbours and positioning itself as a western democracy in the Middle East (Smootha, 1998).

### **2.2.2 Domestic Interests and climate change co-benefits**

A growing body of evidence suggests that climate policies which facilitate a transition to low carbon economies are in line with countries' self-interest. Specifically, climate policies can contribute to cutting air pollution and improving health (Bussolo & O'Connor, 2001; Campbell-Lendrum, Pruss-Ustun, & Corvalan, 2003; Younger, Morrow-Almeida, Vindigni, & Dannenberg, 2008; Nemet et al., 2010; Harlan & Ruddell, 2011; Anenberg et al., 2012; Seinfeld & Pandis, 2012), aid transportation-related problems including congestion (Kousky & Schneider, 2003; Creutzig & He, 2009), and increase energy independence and energy security (Kruyt, van Vuuren, De Vries, & Groenenberg, 2009; McCollum, Krey, & Riahi, 2011). They can also contribute to better city planning, increased land use productivity, and resource efficiency (GCEC, 2014; Clarke et al., 2014; Dechezleprêtre, Martin, & Mohnen, 2014; 2014; Somanathan et al., 2014).

In 1995, Michael Porter hypothesised that environmental regulation stimulates and encourages innovation, which enhances competitiveness and leads to greater resource efficiency (Porter & Van der Linde, 1995b, 1995a). In Porter's words, his hypothesis served to 'end the stalemate' between social welfare and the net benefits of private firms. Subsequent work paved the way to the narrative of 'green growth' – economic growth (defined in terms of GDP) which also achieves significant environmental protection (Ekins, 2000; Bowen & Fankhauser, 2011; Jacobs, 2012, 2013). Facilitated by evidence on enhanced innovation and competitiveness (Jänicke, 2012; Fankhauser et al., 2013) and positive impact on labour markets (Bowen, 2012), it is becoming clearer that climate mitigation policies are largely economically net-beneficial (GCEC, 2014; Somanathan et al., 2014; Stern, 2015).

Green (2015) argues that this body of evidence should shift the discourse on barriers to climate policy from the internationally-oriented 'tragedy of the commons' and 'prisoner's dilemma' explanations to a different set of domestic-based barriers, such as the inert nature of high-carbon systems ('carbon lock-in'), pressure from interest groups including partisan pressures, distributive

challenges, and normative and ideational disputes (see pp. 27-30). Moving from barriers to motivations, there is evidence that environmental policies are used as electoral incentives, corresponding to requests from constituencies. Costa (2014) finds that environmental policies are used as a 'pork barrel' signalling tool in the US (and see List & Sturm, 2004). Additionally, Fredriksson, Wang, and Mamun (2011) show that in the area of environmental policy, elected politicians are motivated by electoral considerations rather than by their own personal preferences.

In Israel, there is evidence that renewable energies may increase energy security (Mor, Seroussi, & Ainspan, 2009) and generate net-economic benefits, including reduced energy bills and green jobs (Mor & Seroussi, 2008). A marginal GHG abatement curve produced ahead of COP 15 suggests that over 50 per cent of GHG abatement potential is net-beneficial to the economy (McKinsey and Company, 2009). Israel's branding as a 'start-up nation' (Senor & Singer, 2009; Engel & del-Palacio, 2011) suggests that these will serve as additional motivations to act on climate change.

### **2.2.3 Environmental norms**

According to scholars, environmental responsibility has emerged as an important 'global norm' over recent decades, similar to other norms such as the protection of human rights (Lafferty, 1996; Meyer, Frank, Hironaka, Schofer, & Tuma, 1997; Haas, 1999; Falkner, 2012; Bernstein, 2013). Norms define and regulate appropriate standards of behaviour for actors with a given identity, but can also be prescriptive or evaluative – defining what is 'appropriate' or 'proper' (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 891). Environmental norms correspond to the latter category, as they lie on the foundations of the concept of sustainable development (formalised by Brundtland et al., 1987) – which indeed seeks to prescribe and evaluate behaviour for states and individuals alike (Lafferty, 1996; Jörgens, 2004). The diffusion of global norms can be attributed to processes of norm internalisation, whereby decision-makers modify their beliefs according to norms existing in the international system (Haas, 2002). The internalisation of

norms is a redefinition or change of *perceptions* and *beliefs* and through socialisation, is often said to arise from processes of participation in international fora, argumentation and persuasion, including by so-called norm entrepreneurs.

Nevertheless, the degree of internalisation of environmental norms varies among different states and other actors. One can expect, that higher levels of participation in global governance mechanisms, will contribute to the broader and deeper internalisation of norms. In that sense, Israel, whose international status within various international forums is often clouded by a broader political context (for example, it is excluded from UN regional working groups), may not be at the best position to harbour these norms in full.

To conclude this section, it would be unreasonable to assume that a single motivation could be specified in explaining policymakers' engagement with an issue. More often, motivations will resemble a combination of logic of appropriateness and consideration of consequences (Checkel, 2001; March & Olsen, 2004; Harrison & McIntosh Sundstrom, 2010, p. 270). Moreover, explicit and implicit motivations tend to mix, as policymakers frame their motivations purposefully for their voters. However, there may be more and less dominant motivations driving policymaking processes forward – for example, one might assume that external legitimacy might be a key motivation. The next sections investigate what these might be in the context of climate change mitigation policymaking in Israel.

## **2.3 Climate change policymaking in Israel – background**

Israel's political setting, growing population, and surging energy demand make considerations of environment core to its existence. Being a coastal, arid country exposes it to climate change risks, and its numerous innovative start-ups have been looking for a technical experimentation field, many of them in the area of

renewable energies and energy conservation. Nevertheless, Israel has a fairly short history of environmental policymaking, and environmental concerns do not rank highly on its agenda. There is no green party in the Knesset, and the Ministry of Environment (MEP) was only founded in 1988, with 18 ministers filling the position since then, sometimes for only a few months. Until 2009, Israeli engagement with climate change mitigation amounted to a few reports commissioned by MEP and an inter-ministerial committee dealing with GHG emissions reduction. The committee operated between 2001 and 2004 following a government resolution, and ceased operating without reporting any results. As a non-Annex I party to the Kyoto protocol with negligible overall emissions, climate change was simply not on Israel's policy agenda. In 2009, a GHG emissions reduction bill drafted by ATD was tabled in the Knesset,<sup>8</sup> but despite being endorsed by over 70 members of parliament, it never progressed beyond an initial reading. The Ombudsman released a severe report criticising the lack of action on climate action in Israel. The summarising notes read 'a country that will not prepare to reduce its (GHG) emissions may jeopardise its international status, and possibly be subject to restrictions and sanctions' (Lindenstrauss, 2009).<sup>9</sup>

Policy efforts were ramped up during the period discussed in this paper (2008-2013), in alignment with global developments – mainly the Bali and Copenhagen Summits (COP 13 and COP 15 respectively), and coinciding with the appointment of a new and energetic Minister for Environmental Protection (who maintained his position for four years). At COP 15 in 2009, Israeli president Shimon Peres declared that Israel, a non-Annex I signatory of the Kyoto Protocol, will reduce 20 per cent of its GHG emissions by 2020 compared to a business-as-usual scenario. Following this declaration ('the Peres Commitment') the government passed a resolution in March 2010 to formulate a national GHG

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<sup>8</sup> Draft bill for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Bill, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> The report was not initiated by Israel but was rather part of a series of similar reports coordinated by The European Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (EUROSAI), in which Israel was participating for the first time.

mitigation plan consistent with Peres's declared target.<sup>10</sup> The director general of the Ministry of Finance was appointed head of an inter-ministerial committee ('The Shani Committee'), which set out to formulate a national GHG mitigation plan. The committee, employing over 40 senior professionals representing various government agencies and key stakeholders, operated three sub-committees: for energy efficiency, transportation, and green building. A fourth sub-committee for energy production never assembled, for political reasons. Several of the adopted policies were inspired by policies adopted in the EU and the US. Examples of these include: regulation for minimum efficiency for appliances, schemes to replace inefficient refrigerators for low-income families, and various measures to increase fuel efficiency. In late 2010, the government approved the National GHG Mitigation Plan ('the mitigation plan'), with a budget of 2.2 billion NIS covering 2011 to 2020.<sup>11</sup> A significant portion of the mitigation plan consisted of an adapted national energy efficiency plan, developed independently by the Ministry of National Infrastructures (MNI) but implemented as part of the Shani Committee. The budget for the plan was frozen in a round of budget cuts in 2012.<sup>12</sup> In 2013 there was another failed attempt to pass an emissions reduction bill.

Several relevant processes and events should be pointed out. First, the formulation of the mitigation plan coincided with Israel's accession process to the OECD, which was completed in 2010. The accession process triggered rapid environmental action, as approximately a third of the commitments required by the OECD were environment-related. An environmental report submitted to the OECD included no reference to climate change mitigation, apart from participation in several projects under the Clean Development Mechanism (Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2008). Subsequently, as part of the

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<sup>10</sup> Government resolution 1504, 14 March 2010

<http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2010/Pages/des1504.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> Approximately 600 million USD or 450 million Euros (rates as of 28 November 2010).

Government resolution 2508, 28 November 2010

<http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2010/Pages/des2508.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> Funding was not restored until late 2015, when the mitigation plan was replaced by a new plan for energy efficiency and emissions reduction.

OECD accession requirements, Israel committed to declaring its commitment to reducing GHG emissions. Second, the discovery of large reserves of natural gas from early 2009 onwards reduced Israel's dependency on imports; however, the gas market has been mired in a regulatory deadlock, and great uncertainties remain regarding domestic use of those reserves. Finally, the increased tension with Palestine, the Hamas government in Gaza and *Operation Cast Lead* in late 2008 and early 2009, as well as the ongoing occupation of the West Bank, resulted in harsh international criticism of Israel's actions. These may suggest that considerations of external legitimacy may have been highly relevant for Israel.

## **2.4 Methodology**

During 2012-2013, the author conducted 29 interviews (see Table 4) with Israeli-based policy officials identified as Policy Officials (POs, n=18) and other actors identified as Other Actors (OAs, n=11) who were directly involved in the formulation of one or more of the policies in question. Policy officials were career civil servants from several ministries and government agencies, and included one elected official. Other actors included representatives of NGOs, think tanks, and academia. The interviewees represent a large purposive sample of people who were involved in the policy process and, given the small size of the environmental policymaking scene in Israel, are beyond a symbolic sample, avoiding systematic errors of non-response (Goldstein, 2002, p. 670). Interviews were conducted in person (save for one Skype interview) and lasted 53 minutes on average. Interviews were conducted in Hebrew and translated by the author where required.

Interviewees were mainly approached by using the author's contact network, developed through her work for an environmental think tank which has been involved in the formulation of the mitigation plan. The author, who ceased working for the think tank prior to taking up the research, reiterated during the interviews that these were conducted as part of academic research.



**Table 4 – Interviewees**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Interviewees</b>
Elected officials <sup>13</sup>	1
Policy officials (non-elected)	17
Other actors	11
Total	<b>29</b>

Interview questions addressed the general attitude towards climate change policy and policymaking processes, and specifically the motivations to act on climate change. Policy officials were asked directly about their experiences and motivations; interviewees belonging to the ‘other actors’ group were also asked to provide their comments regarding policymakers’ motivations. The interviewees were prompted to construct ‘their story’ based on their recollections of the policy formulation process and encouraged to discuss specific events and ideas, while the interviewer attempting to advance themes and insights raised by the interviewees. Thus, interviewees were offered an opportunity to reflect on ideas previously unconsidered. This was noted appreciatively by some of them, commenting that upon reflection they may alter their choices in the future (see Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

Research interviews are an artificial situation (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000), posing a risk of artificial answers, or answers interviewees think the researcher wants to hear (Schwarz, 1999). This is especially true when a researcher attempts to explore motivations or uncomfortable truths. Interviewees may also offer exaggerated or false accounts of events or feelings (Lilleker, 2003). A narrative-based interview, in which interviewees are presented with the opportunity to ‘tell their story’, may mitigate some of these risks. Through a process termed reflexive progression – a discursive activity in which previously unasked questions are posed – interviewees are encouraged to gain (and offer) new insights on their own experience (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

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<sup>13</sup> In order to protect the elected official’s anonymity, his/her quotes are cited as ‘PO’, as with policy officials, so as not to single him/her out.

In this research, interviewees were generally open and willing to discuss complex, sensitive topics, and to offer critical hindsight on themselves, their colleagues, and the policymaking process. Personal rapport between the author and many interviewees, as well as cultural elements of directness (Katriel, 1986; Almog, 2000), leads to the belief that the accounts offered were largely candid. However, the author's involvement in the processes poses a risk of confirmation bias – the interpretation or tailored seeking of evidence to support preconceived beliefs or hypotheses (Nickerson, 1998). This risk was mitigated by a variety of measures, from open-ended phrasing of questions, through suggesting alternative explanations to the data where possible, and finally, an acknowledgment of this risk.

To complement the interviews, parliamentary committee protocol transcriptions (identified as CP, n=7) and media articles (identified as MA, n=96) were also examined (See Table 5). Protocols are from parliamentary committee meetings held by the Joint Parliamentary Committee for Environment and Health, which dealt with climate change mitigation and was held between 2008 and 2013.<sup>14</sup> While the interviews are a reflection on motivations and processes, committee protocols provide a more public expression of motivations, purposefully framed for a public debate. Media articles that appeared in five daily Israeli newspapers between 2008 and 2013 were compiled and scanned for *direct quotes* by politicians, policy officials, and other stakeholders, referring to climate change policies. Note, there is partial overlap between individuals who were interviewed, quoted in protocols and those in the media, however, to protect interviewees' anonymity, this will not be indicated in the paper. Overall, 130 individuals are represented in at least one of the sources (interviews, protocols, media) – 17 elected officials, 55 non-elected policy officials, and 58 'other actors'. Note, the original data is in Hebrew, and was translated as needed.

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<sup>14</sup> The author has personally participated in one of those meetings. Prior to 2009, there were no parliamentary debates dealing with climate change.

**Table 5 – Textual data sources**

	Individuals quoted in parliamentary protocols	Individuals quoted in media articles
Elected officials	10	11
Policy officials (non-elected)	28	14
Other actors	36	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>57</b>

The interview transcriptions, protocols, and articles were coded thematically, in an iterative process which aimed to identify motivations to act on climate change. This was done in several steps: (1) identifying relevant quotes in the text; (2) recording all instances of a quote mentioning a reason or justification for the climate agenda; (3) creating a coding framework of expressed motivations. Steps 2-3 were repeated in full by an independent second researcher who did not have access to the first coding framework. The coding framework was then refined and consolidated. Finally, a third researcher coded the material again, based on the finalised coding framework. Overall, over 500 instances were recorded and analysed from the textual sources (342 in parliamentary protocols, 166 from media articles). Inter-coder reliability stood at 80 percent between coders 1 and 2, and at approximately 70 per cent between the consolidated coding (1 and 2) and coder 3.

**Table 6 – Coding framework with examples**

Themes coded	Examples
<b>Domestic interests</b>	
Economic considerations (including innovation and exports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are some policies, that if we don't adopt, it's like there's money on the trees and we're not picking it...for every Shekel we'll invest, we will see 15 Shekels back (OA4).</li> <li>• Maybe the Israeli mind will create new industries that the world is looking for so much, and will invest trillions of dollars in (PO in CP4).</li> <li>• Israeli technology is very important in this regard, and we already see that Israelis and Israeli start-ups are changing the photovoltaic world (OA in CP3).</li> </ul>
Pollution and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alongside global warming there is the direct impact of emissions on us, first and foremost air pollution (PO in CP2).</li> <li>• [Reducing emissions] is great even outside of the international context, as we're a fraction of global GHG emissions, but it's good for reducing local air pollution (OA in CP1).</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transportation not only reduces emissions because so and so people switch from cars to buses, but also reduces traffic congestion, road infrastructure, and other things that were not considered here (OA in CP2).</li> </ul>
Energy independence and/or security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The meaning of this is health costs, for example, pollution, and increasing our dependence on foreign energy sources (PO in CP2).</li> </ul>
Contribution to adaptation, biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the warming and the extreme weather changes continue, the damage to Israel will be great. We feel it already in the reduced rainfall and in the decay of the biological diversity (PO in CP2).</li> </ul>
General concept of co-benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a missed opportunity here to make a cultural change not just for the reduction of emissions, but for something that will promote a much better quality of life (OA in CP5).</li> </ul>
<b>Emulation and external legitimacy</b>	
International commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The state of Israel has an international commitment. The international commitment is important, it is meaningful. We are talking about the credibility of the State of Israel; about a commitment that the President of Israel himself gave in a well-respected international summit, and we need to do everything to stand by that (PO in CP7).</li> </ul>

Themes coded	Examples
Anticipation of global pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If Israel won't be a part of the world that is fighting this fight, even though it is relatively small and so is its impact, it will pay a high price internationally (PO in CP1).</li> </ul>
Participation in international institutions (e.g. OECD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We can't get away with this much longer...Israel is a leading candidate for the OECD. We can't tell them we're a third world country when it comes to environmental policy (PO in CP2).</li> </ul>
<b>Internal legitimacy, identity</b>	
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On one hand Israel protects its interests zealously, and on the other, it has a deep longing, almost childish aspiration to be one of the best...to be Scandinavian (OA10).</li> </ul>
<b>Normative considerations</b>	
Global norms, collective responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After all, we inhabit this planet. We are part of the human race, and must take part in its struggle (PO in CP4).</li> </ul>

A quote could include more than one instance. Consider, for example, the following:

*The benefits of adopting a green growth strategy for Israel will increase its energy independence, allow for economic development, strengthen Israel's international status, especially in the OECD, and will improve the environment and living conditions of citizens.*

(M44)

This sentence includes four recorded instances – (1) energy independence and/or security, (2) economic considerations, (3) quality of life and general well-being, and (4) Israel's status as a developed country. Note, if a direct quote in the media appeared in more than one article (typically, following a press release), it was only counted once.

## 2.5 Motivations for climate change mitigation policies – empirical evidence

The analysis of interviews and documents reveal evidence for all four motivational groups – external legitimacy, internal legitimacy, domestic co-

benefits and, to some (small) extent, normative considerations. Parliamentary protocols transcripts and media articles provide evidence supporting the main findings of the interviews.

### **2.5.1 Emulation and external legitimacy**

Numerous references in the data were made to developed countries and the global negotiations which were at a stalemate at the time the interviews were carried out. Some of these had to do with policymakers' concern over Israel's international status. Several policymakers stated that the climate agenda was a way for them to create and demonstrate normalisation, to bring Israel to the table as a member of the family of nations, engaging with 'normal' agendas, as a 'normal' member (PO14, PO18). In contrast with other issues, in which Israel repeatedly reaffirms its sovereignty and independence, Israel can use climate policy to be, for once, as one senior policymaker put it, 'the good boy at least in something' (PO13), or, as another said: 'Israel will have to consider if it wants to position itself as the naughty kid in class, or at least in the developed-countries class' (PO18).

This approach was also manifested at the president's address in Copenhagen in 2009: while the Palestinian delegation framed their climate challenge as an explicit security threat, referring to its people's vulnerability to climate risks under occupation and emphasising adaptation over mitigation, the Israeli president took a different view, sustained by the separation principle, which disconnects Israeli environmental policy from its occupation of the Palestinian Territories (Mason, 2013): 'We have to separate environment from politics...climate calls for actions regardless of borders...political disagreement should not hinder environmental cooperation...' (President Peres' declaration in COP 15). The Minister of Environmental Protection, a right-wing member of Benjamin Netanyahu's government, said in this regard:

*Differing from my position in regards to state affairs, according to which the states of the world cannot dictate to Israel the right solution for it when dealing with terror, on [GHG mitigation], wisdom is unfortunately*

*not in the hands of Israel, and I do believe...that Israel is better off if it is part of the countries that have an obligation to mitigate their emissions.*  
(Gilad Erdan, November 2009)

The language of this last sentence implies that Israel is not better off if it reduces its emissions, but rather that Israel is better off if it belongs to the group of countries who do.

Some interviewees said there was concern that Israel would be forced to take measures to reduce its emissions. One interviewee commented: ‘MEP managed to scare the government by saying “we’re joining the OECD, and we’ll be forced to reduce our emissions, so we should pre-empt this and come up with a plan of our own”’ (OA1). Other interviewees echoed the concern that, after COP 15, Israel would be forced to ‘graduate from kindergarten and go to first grade’ in terms of emissions reduction (OA7). In that respect, it is worth noting that the OECD (which Israel joined in mid-2010) does not deploy explicit political conditionality, and all member states voted unanimously to invite Israel to join. The only climate commitment Israel had to fulfil in the accession process was a declaration that it intended to reduce its emissions, which had been fulfilled by the president’s commitment and the subsequent government resolution. Furthermore, after COP 15, it was clear that Israel did not face further international commitments under the UNFCCC.

### **2.5.2 Internal legitimacy**

In the 1970s, Henry Kissinger said that ‘Israel has no foreign policy, only domestic policy’. This well-known saying may suggest that external legitimacy does not tell the full story of policymakers’ motivations. Evidence shows that internal legitimacy and the desire to *feel* part of the developed world, serve as an equally robust motivation. Interviews provide ample support for this claim. Following other countries’ lead has been a repeated theme in all interviews. Interviewees said that engaging with climate change was ‘fashionable’ (OA1), ‘sexy’ (PO3), that Israel should be ‘a part of the world, not some third world country’ (OA2), and ‘act like one of the industrialised countries’ (PO1).

Acknowledging that you were doing something that other countries cared about was like a 'Kosher stamp' (OA4). Another interviewee mentioned that Israel has an 'almost childish aspiration to be one of the best. To be Scandinavian' (OA10). PO18 elaborated on this point:

*Every sentence we say is 'according to the highest European standards'. A factory sends you a response 'we acted according to highest global standards'/the ministry says 'it was approved according to highest global standards'. There is no such thing. It is so important to everyone to show that they are like everyone. There's an aspiration to be like others.*

Many interviewees noted that at times, the fact that something was done elsewhere seemed like the only reason to do it in Israel, and the question of 'what's right' was secondary to the question what others were doing: 'everybody is looking for a textbook solution, a book where it tells them what to do...not to invent the wheel.' (OA2). One interviewee bluntly said: 'Sometimes we just copy-pasted' (OA6). However, this could be interpreted as a (bounded) learning process, in which cues are taken from trusted counterparts on the right thing to do, given that resources are limited and that knowledge is expensive. In a comparative analysis of environmental issues in Israel, Nachmany (2016) demonstrates that, regarding climate change, this was probably not the case. On a broader note, an interviewee who was closely involved with Israel's accession process to the OECD commented on internal legitimacy:

*There's a sentimental factor [in the accession to the OECD]. It's about acceptance; about being accepted by someone. It's like living in a bad neighbourhood and saying 'Oh but I don't belong here'. That's us, we always want to show that we are not like our neighbours; we belong in the better neighbourhood.*

(OA3)

Some interviewees commented that their perception was that other policymakers were motivated by international issues, and believed that framing issues as international made them more attractive. Almost every interviewee believed that framing actions as being aligned with the international community in general, and with regards to climate change specifically, creates greater leverage



to operate. NGOs and think tanks have made this assertion with regard to bureaucrats, bureaucrats have made it with regard to those senior to them, and senior bureaucrats have made it with regard to the political level. The climate agenda was explicitly referred to as ‘fashionable’ and ‘sexy’, and people involved in the policy processes noted that using international experience, or demonstrating that the formulated policy had an international ‘look and feel’, were preferable to local initiatives or innovations. Interviewees used terminology such as ‘marketing’ and ‘selling’, as though the policy had to be ‘sold’ to senior policymakers in the ministries (PO10, OA2). One interviewee noted, ‘to find out how things were already done in the world was sometimes a greater question in meetings I’ve been to, than the question of what the right thing to do was’ (OA2).

Interestingly, Israel’s engagement with climate change *adaptation* came down to the establishment the Israeli Climate Change Information Center (ICCIC), a research centre concerned with climate adaptation. Given that Israel is an arid, coastal, desert-bordering country, it could be expected that more resources would be directed in that direction. This could be consistent with the perception of adaptation efforts as something belonging to those ‘third world countries’ that policymakers were disassociating from, although this hypothesis is not explicitly supported by the data.

Approximately a quarter of instances from parliamentary protocols and media mentions responded to this motivational theme. This may suggest that considerations of identity and legitimacy were not discussed only in private, in anonymous interviews, but were also conveyed to broader audiences.

### **2.5.3 Domestic motivations**

Interviews tell a slightly different story – most interviewees stated that they thought that mitigation of GHG *per se* was irrelevant to Israel as a small, low-emitting country, but that a positive externality could be created by addressing climate change: ‘Let’s take issues we want to promote, harness them to the same cart, and get to the place we want to get to’ (PO18). Many interviewees said they

thought domestic considerations were more important, and that personally, their motivations were about promoting domestic interests. The Ministry of Finance led this approach, explicitly preferring domestic over global agendas: 'It was the Ministry of Environment's role to deal with the global agenda' (PO7).

Those domestic interests which can be regarded as co-benefits of climate mitigation also feature prominently. Most of the interviewees said they saw climate change as an opportunity to promote local causes, or sub-issues, which were perceived as very salient. They mentioned 'riding the wave' of climate change (PO16), with regard to energy efficiency (PO1, PO6, PO17, OA1, OA4, OA6, OA7, OA8), air pollution (PO1, PO5, PO6, PO17, OA6, OA8), energy independence (PO1, PO6), green industry innovation (PO6, OA2, OA4), and generally, as a net-profitable avenue (PO5, PO6, PO11, PO17, OA1, OA4, OA6, OA9, OA12). OA9 added that this was a strategic approach, and that 'the minister understood more than all his predecessors...that climate change was a way to leverage other environmental issues'.

In parliamentary protocols which, although public, are more of an internal dialogue amongst policymakers, this theme represented just over a third of expressed motivations, mainly referring to economic benefits and to health and pollution co-benefits. In media quotes, which appeal directly to the domestic audience, this represented the most dominant motivational theme, representing more than 45 per cent of instances.

However, given the low priority that climate change *per se* has on the agenda, one would expect the discussion to be framed in the opposite way: climate change mitigation being the co-benefit of increasing energy efficiency or reducing air pollution. However, the fact that this did not occur lends support to the legitimacy (internal or external) motivational argument; it seemed that energy efficiency measures weren't attractive enough in themselves, and a more prestigious framing was required. Addressing issues in the energy sector – the most prominent co-benefit of reducing emissions, including resource efficiency,

reduction of pollution, and enhanced energy security – was not part of climate policy efforts. This also suggests that the adoption of climate policies may have been a case of ‘label diffusion’ (Mossberger, 2000; Radaelli, 2005), where the main benefit is reaped by letting various audiences believe that the issue is being dealt with, without attaching significance to its actual content. The prevalence of domestic considerations in local media suggests that a quest for internal legitimacy is the main motivation.

#### **2.5.4 Normative motivations**

One of the clearer findings of this research was that climate change mitigation *per se* was not perceived as important by Israeli policymakers. Most of the interviewees, including prominent policy officials who are environmental champions in other fields, said explicitly, that they had other priorities, that Israeli GHG emissions were minute, and that climate change was not something Israel should be concerning itself with (PO11, PO13, PO14, PO16, PO18, OA1, OA6). Not a single interviewee stated normative considerations, climate justice, or global responsibility as a motivation for engaging with the agenda. Nevertheless, one policy official (without claiming that climate change was a top priority) wondered: ‘when you’re abroad and you see that the whole world is part of the [climate] discourse, you ask yourself, “Am I the last Idiot?!”’ (PO5). Documental data also reveals little evidence for the role of normative or ideological motivations in policymakers’ decision-making. Less than 18 per cent of parliamentary protocol instances referred to these considerations, with a similar figure for quotes in that media.

These findings are consistent with Israel’s position as an environmental laggard in general (Vogel, 1998). The late formation and resource-poverty of its Ministry of Environmental Protection and the frequent reshuffle of ministers are both indications and drivers of this. It could be argued that this is consistent with the general logic of Maslow’s famous pyramid of needs (1943): the perception of existential threat and security considerations, coupled with high poverty rates

and widening inequalities (discouraging data on Israel's performance on the latter two can be found on OECD, 2015), leave little room for the more 'privileged' of environmental norms.

## **2.6 Concluding remarks**

Upon setting out to uncover the motivational forces propelling policy action, it is not unlikely to find more than one. This paper attempts to map and detangle the main motivational forces driving climate change mitigation policy in a developed yet low-emitting country, challenging simplistic narratives around perceived international pulls.

The analysis of Israel's climate mitigation policymaking process points to a number of motivational themes. Evidence strongly features an international narrative, revealing a motivation to adopt climate policies because they have been adopted in other countries. One might expect that this would result from strategic considerations of Israel's international status and quest for legitimacy. However, there is evidence that policymakers are no less strongly driven by considerations of internal legitimacy and identity-building – feelings of belonging to a group of advanced economies rather than being 'some third world country'. In addition, those domestic considerations which can be regarded as co-benefits of climate mitigation also feature prominently in expressed motivations. But even those failed to generate real action, and the (small) budget for many of those net-profitable activities was frozen. This suggests that climate policymaking was a matter of 'label emulation', supporting either internal or external legitimacy motivations. Finally, there is little evidence for the role of normative, ideological, and moralistic motivations in policymakers' decision-making.

Motivations may be independent of each other, and can also co-exist (Checkel, 2001). For example, being a solar-technology leader could contribute both to domestic-self-interest motivations of increased revenues from innovation, export,

and job creation; they can also play a role in preserving a valued self-identity of being innovative, pioneering entrepreneurs capable of ‘making the desert bloom’, to quote David Ben Gurion. It would be difficult to disentangle these, and existing findings do not allow drawing robust conclusions without further research.

Israel is situated in an uncommon, albeit not unique, position in terms of its international standing, heightening potential considerations of legitimacy. Other countries struggle with unpopular political actions, and may turn to climate actions as compensation or distraction and some of the findings from this paper may also be generalised to less politically-charged environments; there are countries which do not share the normative ethos on climate change, and climate change does not rank highly on their agendas.

There is wide recognition that ambitious action is still needed to combat rising GHG emissions (Boyd, Stern, & Ward, 2015; Stern, 2015). Scholars and policy researchers have long been trying to understand what is required to break the gridlock preventing countries from acting more assertively on climate change mitigation. Although an international agreement was reached at the COP 21 in Paris in 2015, with participants declaring their national ambitions, it is still unclear how credible these commitments are (Averchenkova & Bassi, 2016). The Paris agreement not only requires countries to put policies in place, but also demands they upgrade and strengthen those every few years. This will require sustained momentum – sustained motivation to act. While narratives are constructed and taken apart by scholars and policy experts in order to encourage countries to ramp up their climate ambition and action, there is still a lack of clarity on whether these narratives actually have any impact on policymakers. Advancing the understanding of policymakers’ motivations may serve a valuable role in unlocking further climate action.

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## Annex – summary of document analysis

Theme	Instances in parliamentary protocols	per cent	Instances in media articles	per cent	Combined: Media & protocols	per cent
<b>External legitimacy</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20%</b>
International commitments	60		16		76	
Anticipation of global pressure	16		8		24	
<b>Internal legitimacy</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>22%</b>
Status of a developed country	78		32		110	
<b>Domestic interests</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>46%</b>
Economic considerations, innovation and exports	56		46		102	
Pollution and Health	31		24		55	
Transportation benefits	18		1		19	
Energy independence and security	10		9		19	
Adaptation, biodiversity	16		5		21	
Quality of life, well-being	15		3		18	
<b>Normative considerations</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>13%</b>
Global responsibility & environmental justice	42		22		64	
<b>Total</b>	<b>342</b>		<b>166</b>		<b>508</b>	

# Chapter 3: Can issue attributes explain different mechanisms of policy diffusion? An exploratory framework

## Abstract

*Policy diffusion scholarship has made significant advances on what determines policy diffusion. Drawing on a literature concerned with the diffusion of innovations, scholars have offered valuable insights on how attributes of different policies affect the likelihood and rate of policy diffusion. This paper advances the literature on attributes and policy diffusion by offering several important contributions. It proposes a conceptual model, suggesting that different attributes of the policy issues have an influence on policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms to arise. The conceptual model is then applied to examine five issue attributes (salience, complexity, fragility, perception as opportunity or threat, and geographical scope), and their effect on two diffusion mechanisms – learning and emulation – forming specific hypotheses regarding the relative likelihood of the process being dominated by the different mechanisms. Four perceived attributes are hypothesised to increase the propensity for learning-based diffusion: high salience, high complexity, high fragility, and the perception of an issue as an opportunity. The propensity for emulation is hypothesised to be increased if the issue is perceived as a threat or has an international (rather than domestic) orientation. The paper offers a theoretical contribution by acknowledging issue attributes as explanatory factors for different mechanisms of policy diffusion, addressing an acknowledged gap in the literature. The conceptual model allows for future exploration of different attributes and diffusion mechanisms. Additionally, it refines the muddled conceptual line between attributes of issues (problems) and of policies (solutions). Finally, it offers potential theoretical and policy implications for this model.*

## 3.1 Introduction

Nearly half a century of policy diffusion research has led to a broad consensus on its definition – as a process in which policies in one policy unit are influenced by policies in other policy units (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin, Simmons, &

Garrett, 2007; Shipan & Volden, 2012; Graham, Shipan, & Volden, 2013) – and on its main mechanisms: learning, emulation, competition, and coercion (Meseguer, 2005; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007; Shipan & Volden, 2008). This paper is concerned with understanding the variance in occurrence of these mechanisms: for example, under what circumstances are learning or emulation more likely to take place, and why?

A useful typology (Gilardi, 2003) arranges the different diffusion mechanisms into two groups according to the motivations to engage in outward-looking activity. *Problem-dependent* mechanisms of learning and competition arise when actors embark on policymaking processes because there is a policy issue that is inadequately addressed. Learning takes place when policymakers gather information about practice in other policy units (city, federal state, country) and use that information to inform their own policy-making. Alternatively, they respond competitively to choices made by another policy unit that alter their own payoffs, generating a dynamic of ‘race to the bottom’ or ‘race to the top’. For example, they may adopt a taxation scheme which is more attractive to investors than a neighbouring country’s scheme. On the other hand, motivations driving *problem-independent* diffusion mechanisms, emulation and coercion, are external to the specific policy issue. Emulation occurs when policymakers adopt a policy solution because they believe it either provides political capital in the form of legitimacy or peer approval, or they perceive it to adhere to a general logic of appropriateness (see work by March & Olsen, 2004); Meseguer (2005) states that ‘the drive behind emulation is not so much problem solving, as the search for credibility, status, or simple conformity with international trends’ (p. 73). This means that ‘the normative and socially constructed characteristics of policies matter more than their objective consequences’ (Gilardi, 2012: 13). Thus, learning could be seen as a quest for ‘successful’ policies, emulation may be seen as a quest for ‘appropriate’ policies, and competition as a reaction to competitors’ policies (Maggetti & Gilardi, 2015). Finally, coercion, excluded from several



diffusion typologies, is the dynamic in which more powerful actors impose their preferred policies on others.

Significant advances have been made towards understanding the policy diffusion patterns' conditionality on various factors, among others: political orientation (Gilardi, 2010), policy type (Mooney & Lee, 1995; Boushey, 2010), the role of intergovernmental institutions (Cao, 2009; Strebel, 2011), size of the government (Shipan & Volden, 2008), programme scope (Clark, 1985; Taylor, Lewis, Jacobsmeier, & DiSarro, 2012), variations in interest-group organisation, strategic framing and venue (Boushey, 2010), strong versus weak tie arguments, spatial proximity, and cultural proximity (Strang & Soule, 1998). Recently, scholars have urged their peers to develop and test interesting hypotheses and discern more systematic patterns related to the conditional nature of policy diffusion, as 'not all policies spread in the same manner, and we know that not all mechanisms are at work in the spread of all policies' (Graham et al., 2013, pp. 699-697; Gilardi, 2015).

One area with a 'great potential to break new ground' (Jordan & Huitema, 2014, p. 724) is the study of the nature of the 'diffused matter' itself. Recognising an empirical and theoretical gap, scholars have attempted to understand the explanatory power of the attributes of the diffusing innovations (Karch, 2007b; Fulwider, 2011). Drawing on Rogers' model of diffusion of innovations (2003), the following attributes have been modelled as factors affecting diffusion processes: salience and complexity (Mooney & Lee, 1995, 1999; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010, 2012; Winburn, Winburn, & Niemeyer, 2014; Mallinson, 2015), fragility (Clark, 1985; Savage, 1985; Mooney & Lee, 1995; Hays, 1996; Mooney & Lee, 1999; Tews, Busch, & Jörgens, 2001; Karch, 2007b), symbolic nature (Clark, 1985), and observability (van der Heiden & Strebel, 2012). Combinations of innovation attributes have also been explored, notably high salience paired with low complexity (Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010, 2012; Winburn et al., 2014; Mallinson, 2015).

This body of work has several limitations: First, it is focused mainly on the likelihood and rate of diffusion, and less on the different mechanisms at work, bypassing the causal factors at the root of these differences. An attempt to model the effect of innovation attributes on certain diffusion mechanisms was performed by Makse and Volden (2011), who applied the question to various criminal justice policies. However, their findings are limited to learning, without considering alternative diffusion mechanisms. Second, by focusing on the innovations, or the policies, a critical step is overlooked – it is that figurative (and largely over-simplified) moment, when policymakers raise their heads from their desks and decide to look outwards. Since the different mechanisms are informed by different motivations, researching a policy solution at the point where it has already been considered leaves a crucial gap in understanding the underlying process.

One way to address this is by taking a step back from the policy innovations – or solutions – and looking at the policy problems – or issues of concern. These are conceptually distinct (Kingdon, 1984), and deserve discrete scholarly attention. Redirecting scholarly attention towards policy issues (air pollution, for example) away from policy solutions (such as imposing industry emissions standards) ‘assumes actors asking “what should we do about x” in contrast to the conventional approach, which usually assumes that actors ask “should we do y”’. (D. M. Glick, 2014, p. 343). Existing scholarship on issue areas (Gray, 1973; Mooney & Lee, 1995, 1999; van der Heiden & Strebels, 2012; Winburn et al., 2014) has made contributions on the probability or rate of adoption, generally focusing on one issue rather than taking a comparative approach (save Gray’s work, which noted the differences between issues but attributed them to variance in federal funding). More recently, Glick’s (2014) work on learning has paved the way to increasing interest in the different diffusion mechanisms at the issue level.

This paper addresses a significant gap in the literature by developing an exploratory conceptual model that ties the ‘what’ to the ‘why’, and suggesting

that issue attributes have an influence on the policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms to arise. By analysing the motivational vectors influenced by several issue attributes, specific hypotheses are formed regarding the relative likelihood of the process being dominated by learning and emulation mechanisms. The first three attributes – salience, complexity, and fragility – have already garnered some scholarly attention; this analysis adds perception of the issue as a threat or opportunity and the geographical reach of the issue – namely whether it is locally or internationally oriented. The attributes are analysed individually, but what may be interesting is the assemblages in which they work, and how different combinations might play out in different issues. The conceptual model may be developed in the future to incorporate other attributes and mechanisms.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 3.2 provides an overview of the existing literature and its limitations. Section 3.3 presents the conceptual model, followed by its application to a set of attributes and diffusion mechanisms. Section 3.4 offers a discussion on future directions for future research, as well as potential academic and policy implications.

## **3.2 Overview of the literature**

### **3.2.1 Policy diffusion mechanisms**

Policy diffusion is the study of the process through which policy choices in one unit influence policy choices in other units (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Simmons et al., 2006; Gilardi, 2012; Graham et al., 2013). It is the process of influence and decision-making, rather than a given outcome (Elkins & Simmons, 2005). Recent reviews of policy diffusion literature (Gilardi, 2012; Graham et al., 2013; Gilardi, 2015) note that there is broad consensus that diffusion can take on one of four main forms or mechanisms: learning, emulation, competition, and coercion, briefly described as follows:

*Coercion is the imposition of a policy by powerful international organizations or countries; competition means that countries influence*

*one another because they try to attract economic resources; learning means that the experience of other countries can supply useful information on the likely consequences of a policy; and emulation means that the normative and socially constructed characteristics of policies matter more than their objective consequences.*

*(Gilardi, 2012, p. 13).*

Learning is defined as a change in beliefs and ideas brought about by new information. It is rooted in the rational-institutionalist notion that governments (or other policy units) scan their environments for new information on policies and their success, and update their beliefs in light of new evidence obtained. The learning literature incorporates concepts from scholarship on lesson-drawing (Rose, 1991, 1993), policy transfer (D.P. Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996; Evans & Davies, 1999; David P. Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000), and policy convergence (Bennett, 1991; Holzinger, Knill, & Somerer, 2008). It asserts that policy units, especially in federal structures, serve as ‘policy laboratories’ (Walker, 1969; Karch, 2007a) and that, as a result, policy innovations sometimes undergo a process of reinvention –purposeful changes made during the diffusion and implementation phases (H. R. Glick & Hays, 1991; Hays, 1996; Rogers, 2003). While Tyran and Sausgruber (2005) emphasise the importance of information in increasing the likelihood of adoption, learning is not always a fully rational process and can take a bounded form, where the policymaking process is affected by limited resources and cognitive biases, resulting in cognitive shortcuts and heuristics (Meseguer, 2005; Weyland, 2006).

Competition occurs when one government's choices alters the payoffs for another, changing incentives to act (Simmons & Elkins, 2004; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007). The literature observes patterns of competitive interdependence in several policy areas: economic policies (for a short review see Dobbin et al., 2007), including, for example: tax policies aimed at drawing investors from other jurisdictions (e.g., Cao, 2010); welfare, where states offer policies deterring welfare migration, creating a ‘race to the bottom’ (Peterson &

Rom, 1990; Brueckner, 2000; critical notes by Volden, 2002); state lotteries and Indian gaming (Baybeck, Berry, & Siegel, 2011) and others.

Emulation, on the other hand, suggests that policies spread because they are socially valued independently of the functions they perform (Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2008). Stemming from organisational literature on normative and mimetic isomorphism (Haveman, 1993), emulation is 'driven by motivations other than problem solving and does not entail reflection on causal paths leading from policies to outcomes' (Meseguer, 2005, p. 73). Rather, two main motivations are suggested to drive these processes: a logic of appropriateness and conformity with international norms, and a quest for legitimacy. In the case of 'symbolic imitation' (Weyland, 2005), measures are adopted not to solve problems, but as 'ceremonies' (Edelman, 1985) or 'rituals' (Argyris & Schön, 1978, pp. 318-319) to exhibit the use of an appropriate or expected response to a situation. This can stem from 'follow the leader' patterns, led by the desire to conform to the policies of other valued countries (Braun & Gilardi, 2006, pp. 311-312; Meseguer & Gilardi, 2009) and 'it often is rhetorical power of a new policy approach, rather than hard evidence...that matters' (Simmons et al., 2008). For example, diffusion of central bank independence had 'larger symbolic meanings...not only for the expressed functions that (it) was initially developed for' (Castro & McNamara, 2003, p. 3). Adoptions by way of emulation are motivated by and serve different purposes from those stated (Goldfinch, 2006). This may take the form of 'label diffusion' (Mossberger, 2000) in which the name or general notion is adopted, but the content is different or missing altogether, since the main motivation is being perceived as taking certain measures: 'everyone wants to have a bottle of this wine at home' (Radaelli, 2005, p. 930). Emulation by means of imitating structures or policies can also be a way of securing legitimacy, because 'organizations compete not just for resources and customers, but for political power and institutional legitimacy' (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 150). In an analysis of EU countries' single currency policy, tax policy, and media ownership policy, it is claimed that European institutions promote isomorphic policy solutions to deal with their limited legitimacy (Radaelli, 2000). Emulation could

eventually take an institutional form of ‘taken for granted-ness’, where the fact that many countries have adopted a certain policy makes it the obvious choice for others (also see Hannan & Carroll, 1992; Green, 2004).

Finally, although an outlier in certain diffusion typologies, coercion is a mechanism by which powerful actors try to impose their preferred policy solutions on a particular government by altering the payoffs of action or inaction (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007; Graham et al., 2013). This mechanism has been identified, for example, in the diffusion of democracy (Gleditsch & Ward, 2006) and pension privatisation (Brooks, 2002), as well as for the spread of environmental management standards (Delmas, 2002). Coercion is excluded from some diffusion typologies because “it emphasizes top-down pressures rather than the horizontal interdependencies that are at the core of our definition of diffusion’ (Braun and Gilardi, 2006, n.4; see also Busch & Jörgens, 2005; Elkins & Simmons, 2005). Nevertheless, the fuzzy distinction between vertical and horizontal power dynamics can lead to similar observations about other mechanisms.

These mechanisms can be assembled into two main groups based on the key motivations that drive them. The first group, which include learning and competition, is driven by the search for a solution for a given policy problem. ‘Problem-independent’ mechanisms, which include emulation and coercion, are mechanisms through which policies ‘spread irrespectively from their problem-solving capacity’ (Gilardi, 2003, p. 5), in which the diffusion process will be driven by motivations or drivers which are external to a policy problem:

*First, learning is purposive: a problem is set and a solution is sought. Second, a solution is chosen on the basis of observed experience and a better understanding of which policies may lead to particular outcomes...But this is not the case when imitating others: emulation is usually driven by motivations other than problem solving and does not entail reflection on causal paths leading from policies to outcomes.*

*(Meseguer, 2005, p. 73)*

This distinction somewhat resembles March and Olsen (2004)'s concepts of logic of appropriateness vs. logic of consequences – whereas the basis for decision making under a logic of consequences would be anchored in a cost-benefit calculation, and decision making based on a logic of appropriateness would be biased towards existing social norms. However, the two conceptual structures are not identical: for example, where considerations of legitimacy ('problem independent') would be weighed into a cost-benefit analysis ('logic of consequences').

For example, a pandemic might prompt policymakers to search for measures to stop its outbreak. On the other hand, copying organisational structures may result from a need to secure legitimacy (Scott, 1995, p. 44; Radaelli, 2000). The mechanisms may occur independently, but a policy process might also exhibit elements of more than one mechanism (Shipan & Volden, 2008). Furthermore, diffusion mechanisms may be interrelated, for example, 'governments may learn about how to compete with one another better' (Graham et al., 2013, p. 695).

Note that some scholars use the term 'emulation' to refer to the *outcome* of the diffusion process, describing it as 'adoption, with adjustment for different circumstances, of a programme already in effect in another jurisdiction' (Rose, 1991, p. 22). However, in this paper, emulation is referred to as a process as described above. This is not only a linguistic clarification, but an essential distinction, which relates to the problem-dependent versus problem-independent typology: if the motivation for the adoption of the innovation had little to do with the policy problem, it is likely to be in the realm of emulation (as the concept is used in this paper). This distinction is useful, for example, when one considers adoption of policies due to rationally-bounded learning processes. When the key motivation is solving the policy problem, but it is accompanied by shortage of resources (time, capacity) for devising a custom policy solution, the result may be adoption or mimicry of an existing policy. However, since the motivation was solving the problem, this process will be situated within the (bounded-rationality) learning variant of diffusion. If, however, adoption by mimicry was

driven by considerations which are external to the policy problem, the diffusion process will be classified within the emulation mechanism.

Increasingly, scholars are engaging with questions regarding the conditionality of policy diffusion, exploring different possible frameworks and conditions that might explain the variance in the observed patterns of diffusion. A key question, which has significant scholarly and policy implications, is under what conditions might policymakers be more inclined and motivated to look for successful policies, and when are they more prone to look for appropriate ones? Scholarship suggests certain factors including political orientation (Gilardi, 2010), size of government (Shipan & Volden, 2008), variations in interest-group organisation, strategic framing, and venue (Boushey, 2010). Other empirical research on diffusion points to actors, showing the effect of gender (Bouché & Wittmer, 2015), ideological preferences (Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, & Peterson, 2004; Gilardi, 2010; Butler, Volden, Dynes, & Shor, 2014), professionalism, and expertise (Shipan & Volden, 2006, 2014).

### **3.2.2 Attributes, motivations, and actions**

Innovation attributes<sup>15</sup> have been modelled to explain variance in the rate and pattern of adoption of innovations. The rationale for engaging with the content of the policies is put forth by Eyestone:

*We do not yet know enough about policy content, I think, to risk the confusions of lumping together large numbers of policies, especially if in doing so we would be mixing representatives of several distinct diffusion models...the common elements among the policies in these clusters will presumably also be important in explaining the observed diffusion pattern.*

*(Eyestone, 1977, pp. 444, 447)*

The case for attributes as decision-shaping factors stems from categorisation theory, anchored in organisational theory, asserting that people form cognitive

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<sup>15</sup> When discussing innovations, the reference point of ‘newness’ is the adopting unit or actor: “‘new’ means only new to the adopting agent, and not necessarily to the world in general’ (Downs & Mohr, 1979, p. 385).



categories based on their observations of attributes of issues or objects (Lyles & Mitroff, 1980; Mervis & Rosch, 1981). These categorisations are formed as part of a problem formulation stage (Cowan, 1986) by translating cues into linguistic labels and cognitions, which, in turn, influence decision-making (Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Lyles, 1987; Jackson & Dutton, 1988). In short, assigning perceived attributes to an issue is part of sense-making of that issue, and is linked to subsequent action: 'If the first question of sense-making is "what's going on here?" the second, equally important question is "what do I do next?"' (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005, p. 412).

Organisational literature on the diffusion of innovations has engaged with understanding the effect of various innovation attributes, including clarity, 'politicality', complexity, specificity, relative advantage, compatibility, observability, and pervasiveness (Rogers, 1962; Perry & Kraemer, 1978; Lyles, 1987). Building on these concepts, public policy scholars turned to investigate the effect of attributes of policy innovations on policy diffusion. Lowi (1972) was the first to suggest that policies affect politics, in the sense that policymakers' actions are impacted by the type of policies that they are dealing with – specifically, whether they were distributive, redistributive, regulatory, or constituent policies.

In analysing the salience and complexity of regulatory issues, Gormley (1986) claims: 'Salience and complexity shape the contours of regulatory politics. They affect incentives to participate, the choice of tactics, the selection of a forum, and the kinds of criteria that are invoked' (p. 603).

Nicholson-Crotty (2009) finds that high salience and low complexity of a policy explain the rapid diffusion of policies. Based on the assumptions that policymakers are rational actors, whose primary goal is re-election, he suggests that policymakers will gather information on policy choices made elsewhere (learning), to increase the probability of a positive policy income; he further states that in some cases, policymakers will opt for an immediate electoral gain

by forgoing information gathering (no learning), or by ‘relying very heavily on information shortcuts, cues from trusted states, or other tools of boundedly rational learning’ (footnote 7).

Karch (2007b) suggests that imitation is likely to occur under uncertainty and disagreement about a certain policy’s merits, and when the impact of a policy is more symbolic than economic, including morality policies. Diffusion by competition will occur where there are cross-border externalities, causing the situation in one jurisdiction to affect another – this mainly relates to economic policies (see also Brueckner, 2000).

Attributes of the policy transfer itself have been suggested by Strebel and Widmer (2012) to predict the diffusion mechanism which is likely to take place. The attributes they use are visibility (a transfer that is clearly recognisable in legislation) and facticity (a tangible, demonstrable fact, which is not only on paper).

There is often a confusion of terms between issue attributes and policy attributes, for example: ‘a salient policy, or issue...’ (Nicholson-Crotty, 2009, p. 195). Shipan and Volden (2012) say their findings must be seen ‘in light of political circumstances and *policy contexts*’ (p. 792), and Mooney and Lee (1999) ask ‘do different classes of policy have unique reinvention patterns, based on the characteristics of those policies and the politics surrounding them?’ (p. 81). While there is sometimes semantic overlap, the conceptual difference between what Kingdon calls the ‘problem stream’ and the ‘policy stream’ is clear; with the latter often independent of the former, as ‘solutions are developed whether or not they respond to a problem’ (Kingdon, 1984, p. 88). In the context of the different policy diffusion mechanisms, this difference is critical, as cognitions and actions (based on innovation attributes) can only be formed in relation to the desired outcome or the motivations driving the policy process.

Issue attributes are often more difficult to assess or measure than attributes of policy instruments (D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014). Nevertheless, the question of

issue attributes has occupied scholars from early on. Jack Walker and Virginia Gray's seminal works on policy diffusion (Walker, 1969; Gray, 1973) were the first to ask whether policy diffusion varies across policy issues. While Walker claimed that 'there does not seem to be much difference in the diffusion patterns of issues of different types' (1969, n. 9), Gray demonstrated a different rate of diffusion among education, welfare, and civil rights policies, suggesting federal intervention as a possible explanatory factor (Gray, 1973, pp. 1180-1181). Issue salience, complexity, and level of policymaking (state/federal) have been used to explain variance in the rate of diffusion by learning in the context of the American states (D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014).

Problem severity has been found to play a role in determining government attention in the agenda setting stage (Daley & Garand, 2005; Pacheco & Boushey, 2014). The rate of diffusion of morality issues is explained by the different attributes of abortion regulation (Mooney & Lee, 1995) and the death penalty (Mooney & Lee, 1999). Taking into account their (high) issue salience, (low) complexity, and debate over basic moral values, it is suggested that these attributes involve less learning. Further work has tended to focus on salience (Boushey, 2010; D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014), complexity (Boushey, 2010; D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014), and level of government (state/federal) (D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014). Adopting Rogers' typology of innovation attributes, Makse and Volden (2011) demonstrate that with regards to criminal justice policies, these attributes predict the likelihood and rate of adoption of innovations among states. However, their analysis is limited to learning processes, as they note:

*Other diffusion mechanisms are likely to be less relevant to the spread of criminal justice policies. Simple imitation (e.g., Shipan & Volden, 2008) or ideological similarity across states (e.g., Grossback et al., 2004) may have some relevance in this policy area*

*(p. 112, n.4).*

Although there is growing evidence of the link between issue attributes and policy diffusion, this link has not been explained. In their work on transnational

advocacy networks, Keck and Sikkink (1998) assert that issue attributes affect its amenability to advocacy networking – comparable in some ways to policy diffusion. They point to two issue attributes around which most networks are organised: issues of bodily harm to vulnerable individuals, where the normative logic calls for change, and issues of legal equality of opportunity where change is prompted by juridical and institutional logic. Damore (2005) suggests that in presidential campaigns, a competitive dynamic is created by interdependence when a given issue is on someone else's agenda (and see Soroka, 2002).

The scholarship on policy diffusion makes a useful distinction between problem-dependent and problem-independent diffusion mechanisms, which can be traced back to the motivation to engage in policy formulation based on others' experience. These motivations may be shaped by different factors, including the attributes of the policy issues in question. In their framework of policy transfer Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 10) , present a variety of alternatives to why, how, by whom, and to what degree ideas, goals, policies, and instruments 'travel' between jurisdictions. Among others, they sketch a continuum of reasons (or motivations) to engage in policy transfer: from 'want to' (perfectly rational lesson drawing), to 'have to' (e.g. direct imposition, political pressure), through a mixture of the two (e.g. conditionality, international pressures, and perceptions). Yet, the alternatives are identified without drawing pathways between the different elements. The following section proposes the next step in modelling pathways of policy diffusion: it introduces a conceptual model suggesting that issue attributes affect the motivations of policymakers to act, which in turn affect the process or mechanism of diffusion. The model is then applied to five attributes and examines their potential explanatory power for two diffusion mechanisms.

## **3.3 Linking issue attributes to diffusion mechanisms – an exploratory model**

### **3.3.1 Conceptual model**

The model that is described below is used for conceptualising the relationship between issue attributes and diffusion mechanisms; it follows the general logic presented by Perry and Kraemer's (1978) model of diffusion of innovations: they suggest that innovation attributes affect motivations, which in turn affects diffusion outcomes. They also note that attributes of the innovations are seldom empirically tested for their explanatory power regarding processes of diffusion, but are rather used mainly for case selection. Similarly, the model presented in this paper seeks to unravel the explanatory power of issue attributes: it suggests that issue attributes have the capacity to affect policymakers' motivations to act - the greater the value for an attribute (for example, the more complex an issue is), the more it is likely to elicit certain motivations; motivations, in turn, affect the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms to occur – as the different mechanisms are driven by different forces, including the motivation to replicate experience.

The model goes further to suggest two possible variations: the first, is that certain issue attributes affect the likelihood for certain actors to be involved in the policymaking process, which in turn affects the propensity for certain motivations. This is consistent with Gormley (1986), who suggested that the actors and institutions involved in policymaking vary according to the configuration of salience and complexity. For example, there is evidence that high-level involvement in policy issues correlates with the issue's salience (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006), and complex issues are identified by (or defined by) the involvement of professional experts. Their set of motivations and incentives may differ from those of 'generalist' policymakers. The second variation, is that assemblages of certain attributes have a combined effect on the likelihood that

certain motivations will manifest themselves, which goes beyond the effect of each of these attributes separately.

The model does not suggest an injective function – motivations may be influenced by more than one attribute; an attribute may also operate in more than one way, depending on context. It is important to note that the different diffusion mechanisms are *not* diametrically opposed, e.g. if a high value assigned to an issue attribute increases the propensity for learning, a low value will not automatically increase the propensity for emulation, unless a separate motivation or explanatory mechanism is in place. Understanding this allows predictions regarding different combinations of attributes.

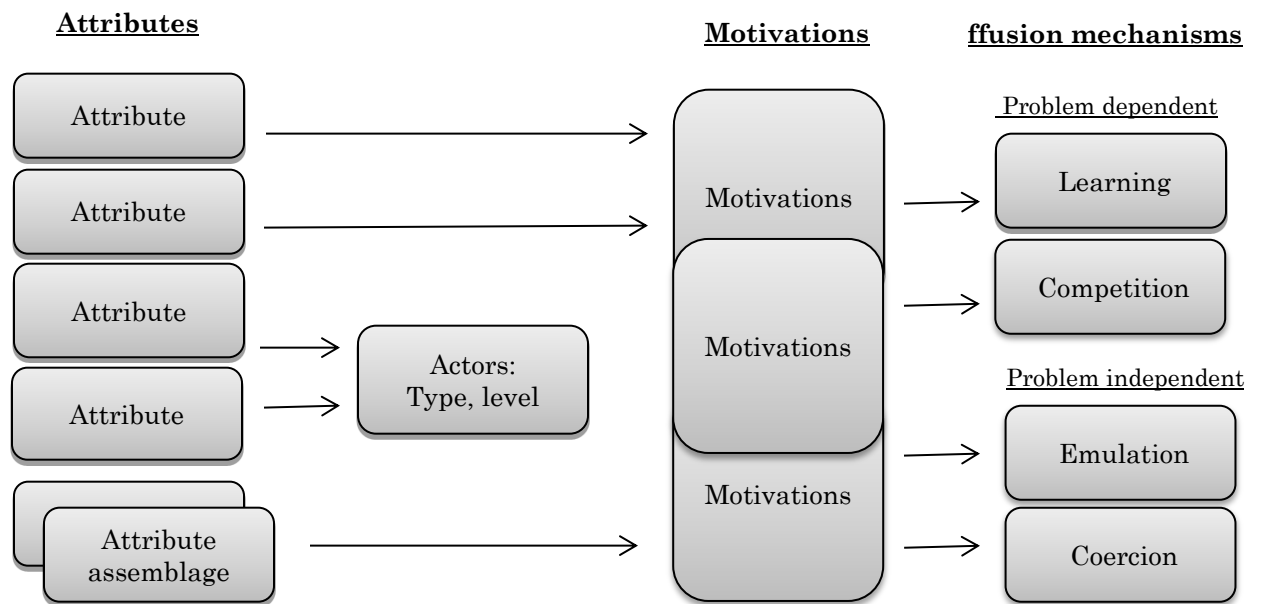
As described in section 3.2.1 above, policy diffusion is the process of influence and decision-making, rather than a given outcome (Elkins & Simmons, 2005). In defining policy transfer, one of the branches of policy diffusion, Dolowitz and Marsh described a process “in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting’ (David P. Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000: 5). This broad framework lends itself to a variety of policy outputs, from ideas to specific policy instruments; it therefore allows a focus on the *motivation* to look outwards, recognising that the final outcome will depend on multiple factors which go beyond the original motivation. The conceptual model presented here follows that logic, by focussing on the early stages of the diffusion processes, and not on the outcome of these processes. Thus, it offers a prism which goes beyond most of the existing diffusion literature, which deals with policy outcomes, often as these are more visible and measurable.

Policymaking is an intricate, messy process, shaped by numerous forces tugging in opposite directions, and does not always lend itself to a single explanatory model. It is clear that some of the logical pathways sketched in this model will be more relevant for some issues and policies than for others (as some issues will

feature certain attributes more prominently)<sup>16</sup>, and some hypotheses will be stronger than others. Nevertheless, the model facilitates observations about the propensity of certain motivations and mechanisms.

Figure 1 below depicts the hypothesised pathways between the different elements in the conceptual model (as described above). The basic pathway sketched shows that certain attributes may trigger certain motivations, which in turn affect the propensity for the occurrence of certain diffusion mechanisms. The main distinction is between problem dependent and problem independent mechanisms.

**Figure 1 – conceptual model**



This conceptual model is developed and applied to five issue attributes: salience, complexity, fragility, opportunity/threat, and locally- or internationally-oriented

<sup>16</sup> For example, applying Rogers' (2003) typology of innovation attributes to criminal justice policies, Makse and Volden (2011) note, that while they use attributes to predict likelihood and rate of adoption of innovations among states, their analysis is limited to learning processes, as 'other diffusion mechanisms are likely to be less relevant to the spread of criminal justice policies.

issues. These attributes are discussed in detail in sections 3.3.2-3.3.6 below. Salience, complexity, and fragility are comparative (or analytic) attributes, meaning that they are used to measure issues in relation one to another, e.g. one issue is *more salient* than another. Opportunity/threat and geographical scope attributes are used to organise issues into discrete groups, e.g. an issue is either perceived as a threat *or* as an opportunity (Cobb & Elder, 1972; Dutton, Walton, & Abrahamson, 1989). The motivational effect is explored with regards to two diffusion mechanisms: learning and emulation, respectively representing ‘problem-dependent’ and ‘problem-independent’ mechanisms, and highlighting the distinction between these two types from a motivational point of view .

### **3.3.2 Salience**

Salience can be defined as the importance that an actor attaches to an issue (Laver, 2001) measured in relation to other issues (McLean & McMillan, 2009). A salient issue is one that ‘stirs the blood’ and ‘affects a large number of people in a significant way’ (Gormley, 1986, pp. 596,598), giving rise to a situation where people ‘will likely notice and care about new policy’ (D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014, p. 23).<sup>17</sup> In the face of salient issues, the response of elected officials is a realisation of their responsibilities, exercising the mandate they received upon election: taking care of the problems that matter. Salience therefore invokes accountability, and an inadequate or unsuccessful response may lead to ‘electoral consequences or a decline in public support’ (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006, p. 227). Salience is a subjective attribute, as it is defined by people’s (public, media, policymakers’) perception of an issue, which varies between actors as well as over time (Gormley, 1986). Moreover, different measurements

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<sup>17</sup> Attitude research literature distinguishes between importance and salience, where important attributes (of a product) are perceived to have significant consequences attached to them, while salient attributes are those that come to mind first when prompted to think about that product (Myers & Alpert, 1977).



of salience in the literature produce different results (Warntjen, 2012). Nevertheless, most of the literature makes assumptions about which, or to what extent, issues are salient. Models that include salience as a predictor of decision-making tend to perform well (Schneider, Finke, & Bailer, 2010). Salient issues tend to be dealt with by higher levels of the organisation (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006; Häge, 2007). Brief, Delbecq, Filley, and Huber (1976), suggesting that elites are more likely to adopt innovations for problems with high perceived severity.

There is evidence that policies with high salience tend to diffuse more quickly. This is explained by constituents' high demand for a policy solution, which generates an electoral-driven incentive for policymakers to respond quickly (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010; Foucault & Montpetit, 2011). Nicholson-Crotty (2009) concludes that for high-salience low-complexity policies, the need to respond quickly influences policymakers to forgo policy learning in favour of immediate adoption. Alternatively, He suggests that this quick response may alternatively involve rapid diffusion bounded learning, but this avenue remains unexplored. This argument is especially relevant to elected officials, and may be less relevant to non-elected officials. D. M. Glick and Friedland (2014) find no link between issue salience and the propensity to learn, as measured by policy researchers' reporting on others' policies. Salience has previously been found to be a good predictor of decision-making (Schneider et al., 2010).

A related attribute to salience is urgency, or the perceived accumulated loss from inaction, may also play a role in the salience of the policy, as it adds a notion of time-sensitivity to the relative salience of the issue (Scanlon, 1975). A sense of urgency, causing 'impatience of the various actors to secure agreement on a policy' (Pollack, 1997, p. 122) can drive processes of rapid diffusion, as it compels decision makers to react quickly, often taking shortcuts by replicating existing experiences (or even experiments) of their peers, based on expected outcomes (May, 1992; Foucault & Montpetit, 2011; Boushey, 2012). In that regard, David P. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000, p. 8) note:

*If a government searches hurriedly for a solution to an urgent problem, it is more likely that there will be transfer, because the need for a 'solution' is imperative, but less likely that the transfer will be successful, because limited time will inevitably lead to a limited search for models, and thus probably to flawed transfer.*

However, urgency in itself does not rule out a learning process, but instead may increase the propensity for bounded learning, implying informational shortcuts and other heuristics (see Nicholson-Crotty, 2009, p. n. 7). Notably, although not restricted to urgent issues, when faced by a salient challenge, policymakers may turn to ready-made solutions from respectable counterparts because they assume that a copied policy will be a successful one. While this 'taken for grantedness' or mimicking of others is not a rational learning process, it is still driven by the motivation to solve the problem. Therefore, it belongs to the 'problem-dependent' side of the typology.

Urgency is a concept which may be inter-twined with salience – there are some issues which are truly time-sensitive with irreversible consequences of not acting on them (e.g. responding to security threats), while the urgency of other issues is derived from their perceived salience – high salience drives a desire to act promptly (to some extent, this applies even to 'objectively' time sensitive issues – if their salience is low, they would not be perceived as urgent despite the cost associated with inaction). The notion of perceived urgency is difficult to disentangle from the salience of an issue, which is why it is not dealt with here as a separate attribute but rather within the framework of salience.

Salient issues are problem-focused; therefore it seems more likely that the solution will be 'problem dependent'. The logic of response to constituent demand can be extended to anticipate that policy response to salient issues will be driven by need to adopt successful policies rather than appropriate policies, as the relevant audience seeks an answer to a problem, rather than a need to be aligned with a certain normative position. Moreover, when policymakers are inclined to make 'appropriate' decisions, it may be easier for them to resort to less salient issues, as the main drive is independent of that issue.

*h1: Issues with perceived high salience are more likely to exhibit learning-based diffusion rather than emulation-based diffusion.*

### **3.3.3 Complexity**

Complexity ‘exists to the extent of the number and variety of elements and interactions in the environment of a decision process’ (Dryzek, 1983, p. 346). It can be described as ‘the number of moving parts’ in an issue. Highly complex issues require special knowledge and ‘raise(s) factual questions that cannot be answered by generalists or laypersons’ (Gormley, 1986, p. 598). Complex issues can be identified by asking whether generalist policymakers are likely to seek specialised expertise, and whether policy instruments are generally multidimensional. For example, a congressional committee’s performance relies on the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) experts with regard to a complex environmental issue, whereas such dependence on an external agency is reduced with regards to consumer protection measures (Price, 1978, p. 572). In the context of innovations, complexity is defined as ‘the degree to which an innovation is perceived as relatively difficult to understand and use’ (Rogers, 2003, p. 242). Complexity is an attribute which is more rigid than salience, as it changes less over time – although changing conditions, such as technological developments, may alter its value with regard to an issue (Gormley, 1986). Examples of highly complex issues include the environment, health, genetic research, occupational safety, and electricity regulation (Gormley, 1986; D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Highly complex strategic problems have been referred to as ‘unstructured’ or ‘wicked’ problems (Ackoff 1974, Mitroff, Mason and Barabba 1982). Apart from their technical complexity, as analysed in this paper, these are problems that have a significant influence on the organisation as a whole and are more ill-defined than other problems, therefore more resistant to resolution. While examples could include nuclear energy, use of stem cells, or genetically modified food, the majority of the policy literature on wicked problems relates to health– and environmental issues (Van Bueren, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 2003; Blackman et al., 2006; Batie, 2008; Hannigan & Coffey, 2011; Australian Public Service Commission, 2012). ‘Super wicked problems’, a category so far applied only to climate change, acknowledges climate change’s unique challenge in terms of time, actors, and long– and short-term planning dissonance (Levin, Cashore, Bernstein, & Auld, 2012; Head, 2014).

Complexity has been found to be important in understanding administrative behaviour (Price, 1978; Gormley, 1986), and with regard to regulatory policies, suggesting that high-complexity policies affect different actors in different ways: politicians are ‘repelled’ by complexity (Gormley, 1986, p. 603) while bureaucrats are drawn to it, and being professionals, they are also most influential with regard to complex policies. This has been found to be consistent across various types of policies such as civil rights, clean air, and domestic farm policies (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006). The involvement of more experts at the policy formulation stage suggests they may be more inclined to focus on *successful* professional decisions, rather than on broader considerations of *appropriateness*, unlike generalist politicians:

*If a policy is technically complex, politicians are unlikely to look to the public for guidance because they are not motivated by electoral or other democratic concerns to adopt complex policies. Instead, politicians will look for expert opinion to inform their decisions on complex policies, or defer to experts to make policy decisions. Because they are experts, bureaucrats are likely to dominate the implementation of complex policies without much political oversight.*

*(Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006, p. 227)*

It has been suggested that complexity impacts the diffusion of innovations (Perry & Kraemer, 1978; Rogers, 2003). Complexity of policies has been found to slow down the rate of diffusion, mitigating the effects of high-salience policies (Clark, 1985; Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010; Makse & Volden, 2011). The slower pace is explained by the need to collect data, create infrastructures, train professionals, etc. (Clark, 1985). The greater the amount of information required for consideration, the less the impact of policy learning on decision-making (Mooney & Lee, 1995). It is, however, important to note, that while scholars use the observations about the reduced rate of diffusion to demonstrate that complexity slows down the learning process, they do not consider alternative diffusion mechanisms.

***h2:*** *Issues with perceived high complexity are more likely to exhibit learning-based, rather than emulation-based, diffusion.*

### 3.3.4 Fragility

Fragility refers to the level of divisiveness, conflict or disagreement surrounding an issue. It has been referred to as ‘the attribute of a proposal which elicits irrational (or emotional) responses among members of the (decision-making) elite’ (Brief et al., 1976, p. 229), and is described as ‘the degree of perceived organized resistance to their adoption’ (Savage, 1985, p. 117). Fragility may provoke a perception of risk among adopters of innovations, which in the case of policymakers is defined in terms of potential conflict with opponents. The more influential the opponents, the greater the risk (Savage, 1985).

From a policy diffusion perspective, there is evidence that less fragile issues diffuse more quickly (Savage, 1985). Controversy arising during policy diffusion processes can lead to policy reinvention; the case of living wills and the highly conflictual abortion reform (pre *Roe v. Wade*) are suggested to have led ‘to a truncation of the temporal learning curve’ (Mooney & Lee, 1995, p. 621). In a comparative analysis of three policies, Hays (1996) suggests that later adopters of innovations will learn from the mistakes of early adopters by taking more limited, cautious approaches, and that this pattern would be even more pronounced for controversial policies, driven by fear of opposition (cf. Nishita, Liebig, Pynoos, Perelman, & Spegal, 2007). Recently, similar reasoning has been suggested for the diffusion pattern of the controversial ‘Stand Your Ground’ laws (Butz, Fix, & Mitchell, 2015). Exploring the controversial abolition of the death sentence, Mooney and Lee (1999) suggest that learning will take place; in particular, negative- and political lessons will be drawn. Brief et al. (1976) do not find evidence for their hypothesis that fragility reduces probability of adoption of innovations.

This body of work suggests that if an issue is highly divisive, the debate on policy alternatives will be shaped by different forces, each actor or group of actors raising claims supportive of their position, while scrutinising and dismantling

claims made by their opponents. This may be conducive to learning processes as it makes it more difficult to overlook failed policies (as those opposing them will intentionally bring them up). Additionally, the likelihood of agreeing on what is an *appropriate* point of reference is reduced, as different actors will have different views of appropriateness.

The combination of fragility and salience has been addressed in international relations literature, arguing that in negotiating salient issues, actors will be more willing to make concessions in order to reach an agreement (Keohane & Nye, 1977; Schneider et al., 2010, p. 92). Research on congressional committees shows that issues with perceived high conflict and low salience will be least attractive to legislators, while those with perceived low conflict and high salience are the most attractive (Price, 1978).

The compromise and negotiations required when addressing a fragile issue are more likely to be conducted in the realm of *what is possible* than in the realm of *what is appropriate*, adhering to a logic of learning rather than one of emulation. On the other hand, it is possible that salient issues will split policymakers and the public along ideological lines, decreasing the importance of others' policies (D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014); this can lead to stagnation or inaction, or heightened considerations of appropriateness, by identifying a policy choice with a broader agenda and alignment.

***h3:** Issues with high fragility are more likely to undergo diffusion by learning than by emulation, especially if they are salient.*

### **3.3.5 Opportunities and threats**

Threats and opportunities are complex attributes, defined by a combination of conditions: a threat is a (a) negative situation, (b) in which loss is likely, and (c) over which there is little control, while an opportunity is a (a) positive situation, (b) with potential gains, and (c) over which there is a fair amount of control (Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Jackson & Dutton, 1988; Barrett, 2003). The strategic

issue interpretation literature (Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981; Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Jackson & Dutton, 1988; Ocasio, 1995; Sharma, 2000; Chattopadhyay, Glick, & Huber, 2001) has identified that categorisation of issues as threats and opportunities has a consistent effect on actions, regardless of organisational context. According to this body of literature, managers who view innovations as threats are unlikely to search for innovative solutions, while categorisation as opportunities will tend to increase proactive approaches to problem solving. There is evidence that the greater the degree to which a company's managers interpret environmental issues as opportunities, the higher the likelihood of the company exhibiting voluntary environmental strategies, and the more they are perceived as risks, the more conforming approaches are taken (Sharma, Pablo, & Vredenburg, 1999; Sharma, 2000). Haney (2015) suggests that in the case of the perceived threat of climate change, firms demonstrate innovative behaviour due to mechanisms of social liability and moral legitimacy. Dutton and Jackson (1987) suggest that issues categorised as opportunities will be dealt with at lower levels of the organisation, while threats will be dealt with by higher levels. Following the same logic as with complexity, general political considerations – taking the organisation's overall position and status into account – are more likely to be dealt with at higher levels, while lower levels are more concerned with the specifics of the issue entrusted to them.

Some of these observations have also been extended to policymakers. Berry and Berry (1992) identify that policymakers respond to perceived opportunities and threats in policy adoption decisions: for example, they find that policymakers adopt tax policies in conditions that are consistent with the avoidance of political risk, and that alternative explanations (supporting economic development or party control) are not supported by evidence. However, the authors do not propose which diffusion mechanisms might be at work. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) claim that policy diffusion in times of social, political, and economic stability are more likely to be voluntary, while risks and crises may generate a need to conform: 'If there is some form of "global" crisis, such as the economic

downturn during the mid-1980s, actors are more likely to feel some pressure to engage in transfer' (David P. Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000, p. 16).

Simply put, when faced with an opportunity, policymakers are likely to investigate if the opportunity is worth pursuing. This is likely to involve a process of scanning the environment, gathering information, and assessing alternatives; this process resonates more with a learning mechanism. On the other hand, when faced with a threat, or even a crisis, decision makers will be under pressure to show that they have acted in order to resolve the threat. This may mean they resort to appropriate means, as the motivation will be to act, and because actors involved are more likely to have broader policy agendas.

***h4:** Issues which are perceived as a threat are more likely to undergo diffusion by emulation.*

***h5:** Issues which are perceived as an opportunity are more likely to undergo diffusion by learning.*

### **3.3.6 Geographical scope**

The final attribute considered is perhaps the most intuitive of all: it asks whether an issue is perceived as being mainly relevant to the local policy unit, or whether it is also relevant in a broader geographical context. Notably, this paper refers to the transnational context, but the general concept can be expanded to any level of policy unit (for example other states or levels of government in a federal setting). Having a primarily transnational context does not mean that an issue does not have local consequences. The question, therefore, is whether an international focus generates an incentive to adopt more successful policies or more appropriate policies, and how the locally-induced motivations interact with those that are internationally-induced.

A large body of literature on policy convergence is split on whether its driving forces are economic or ideational-normative (see Drezner, 2001 for a review).



Both forces operate within a larger context than the issue in question, and generate an incentive to conform to prevailing practices:

*Theoretical consensus on an appropriate economic model raises the intangible costs of nonconformity. Perceived policy failures associated with 'heterodoxy' will suffer greater public condemnation than similar failures of conforming policy. Governments that resist ideational trends face reputational consequences that cast doubt on their approach to the economy and potentially the legitimacy of their governance.*

*(Simmons & Elkins, 2004, p. 173)*

This does not mean that policy diffusion will necessarily take place for issues with an international focus, as an intricate set of considerations – including domestic policies – affects this dynamic. For example, Busch, Gupta, and Falkner (2012) suggest that in the case of genetically modified organisms, international contestation over appropriate regulatory directions hindered policy convergence.

D. M. Glick and Friedland (2014) propose that the American states are more likely to learn from each other on issues which are state-local rather than federal, attributing the anticipated difference to federal constraints which reduce the incentive for learning. Note that while their argument revolves around a low propensity for learning, they do not claim that emulation is more likely to take place instead. Indeed, they find only limited evidence in this regard. Noting the differences between learning and emulation, Cao (2010) proposes that emulation is more likely to occur where there is a high level of interaction in networks:

*Policy learning is often based on shared information that travels through cognitive shortcuts bridging connected actors....Policy emulation, on the other hand, considers the affective dimension of the relational governance, and relies on trust, empathy, and sympathy among countries...High levels of interactions in networks are expected to strengthen this sense of affinity, and therefore facilitate policy emulation.*

*(p. 825)*

It is suggested that internationally-oriented issues are more likely to adhere to norms and a sense of appropriateness, as the context of policy-making is wider than the given issue, by definition. In addition, social constructs and networks generate more opportunities for engagement with external actors than for locally-oriented ones, thus increasing the likelihood of emulation.

*h6: Issues which are perceived as international are more likely to undergo diffusion by emulation.*

### **3.4 Concluding remarks**

The policy diffusion literature has been struggling with sketching causal pathways to explain the different mechanisms comprising the phenomenon of policy diffusion, and the different conditions which may elicit specific mechanisms. In an attempt to achieve a better understanding of this question, this paper offers a few unique contributions.

First, it proposes a conceptual model to explain how the attributes of a policy issue, or policy problem, have the capacity affect the motivations of policymakers to engage with the issue. These motivations, in a policy diffusion setting, may influence the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms to take place. Detangling the conceptual knot which confuses between policies and policy issues, it applies this general conceptual model to five attributes and two diffusion mechanisms – learning and emulation – and proposes ways in which attributes influence the likelihood of each of the mechanisms. By doing so, it may help researchers to improve the design of their research questions and distil their arguments.

For example, what is the role of information for different mechanisms? What is the relative power of competing explanations? Can bounded learning be distinguished from emulation, given that they might express similar rates of diffusion? Are patterns of adaptation and reinvention different? Additionally, it

could encourage a more informed selection of datasets for quantitative and qualitative research, either by selecting issues with similar attributes in order to control for other factors that may explain diffusion patterns, or by selecting issues with different attributes to deepen the investigation of their impact. Future research would benefit from considering the attributes and motivations affecting competitive diffusion as well. There are also potential practical implications to the notion that some conditions are more favourable to policy processes which seek appropriate policies rather than successful ones, as those may be sub-optimal in terms of performance. The awareness of a higher propensity for convergence around a limited set of policies which are considered appropriate may serve as additional input in the choice to adopt them, or encourage potential interventions.

The paper suffers from several limitations, the first of which is the multivariate nature of the problem. Sketching the vectors of potential forces influencing policymaking generates a complex map of hypotheses and assumptions – some of them related to issue attributes and some not at all. There are grey areas resulting from attributes ‘behaving’ differently under varying circumstances. These circumstances can either be assemblages of attributes, or other factors, which the mechanisms may be conditional upon. The literature suggests that salience is a powerful variable impacting the behaviour of other attributes. Exploring different combinations of attributes, as well as combinations with other explanatory factors, is a key direction for moving this research forward.

Another limitation of this model is that it makes assumptions about homogeneity of motivations and perceptions of actors and does not delve into the intricacies of organisational inconsistencies. One possible way to further disentangle motivations is by refining the reference point of ‘policymakers’; in this analysis, it has been pointed out that professional experts may have different motivations than generalist policymakers. For example, Gilbert (2006) shows that perceptions of opportunity and risk can coexist in different sub-units of an organisation. Motivations may play out differently on different political

levels, and policymakers in federal states or at the sub-national level may have motivations and considerations that are absent from non-federal or national settings, and vice-versa.

The limited attention that issue attributes receive may be attributable to the empirical and methodological challenges: in order to identify which diffusion mechanism is at work, evidence needs to be collected at the pre-adoption phase of policymaking. The vast majority of research focuses on the binary decision of adoption or non-adoption (notable exceptions include Karch, 2007a; D. M. Glick, 2014; Pacheco & Boushey, 2014; Karch & Rosenthal, 2015). Additionally, in order to understand the underlying motivations that lead policymakers to look at their neighbours' grass, evidence needs to be gathered, either directly by qualitative research, or by robust inference from supporting data. An empirical challenge which will have to be addressed in future research is the need for robust definitions and measurement methods for the attributes. A first empirical exploration of the theoretical concepts is detailed in Nachmany (2016)<sup>19</sup>.

Scholars have assumed that learning or competition occur more in certain fields than in others and, therefore, when selecting empirical data to advance an argument, they tend to choose an area that they assume would fit. However, some of these intuitions are faulty, and some simply preclude more experimental research designs and empirical sets. The model presented in this paper takes a step back from those assumptions by deconstructing issues into their components. It will hopefully encourage scholars to abandon some long-standing assumptions and make some adventurous new discoveries.

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<sup>19</sup> Chapter 4 in this thesis.

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# Chapter 4: Can issue attributes explain different mechanisms of policy diffusion? Evidence from three environmental issues

## Abstract

*Recent developments in the policy diffusion literature explore how different factors may condition the patterns and nature of policy diffusion. While attributes of the policies (solutions) have been suggested to affect the dynamics of diffusion, and especially the variance in rate of diffusion, the explanatory nature of the issues (problems, e.g. education or air pollution) remains largely unpacked. Recently, Nachmany (2016b) developed a conceptual model<sup>20</sup> suggesting that various attributes of policy issues influence policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the likelihood of certain diffusion mechanisms. This paper offers a first empirical application of this model. Based on 34 interviews with policy officials and other policy actors in Israel, the model is applied to the processes of diffusion in three environmental policy issues: climate change, air pollution, and waste. Through the analysis of the differences in the attributes of these three issues, and variance in diffusion mechanisms in practice, the paper lends support to Nachmany's conceptual model, as well as to some of her specific hypotheses. Its micro-level approach provides empirical evidence not only on correlational, but also on the causal, pathways tying issue attributes to specific diffusion mechanisms. Particularly, there is evidence that salience and complexity, and to a lesser degree, fragility, influence the propensity for learning-based diffusion to occur, and that international orientation increases the propensity for emulation-based diffusion to occur. There is insufficient evidence regarding the hypotheses on perceived threat and opportunity. Other contributions offered by the paper include advancing the understanding of policy diffusion processes in the pre-legislative stage, which is hard to capture in most quantitative studies, as well as advancing the literature on policy diffusion in non-federal settings.*

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<sup>20</sup> Chapter 3 in this thesis

## 4.1 Introduction

Recent reviews covering half a century of policy diffusion scholarship (e.g. Graham, Shipan, & Volden, 2013; Gilardi, 2015) acknowledge that broad consensus has been achieved on its definition and dominant mechanisms: learning, emulation, competition, and coercion. However, questions remain regarding the conditionality of policy diffusion. Scholars point to the nature or attributes of the diffused policies, and the policy area in which diffusion is taking place, as potential directions for deciphering these different mechanisms (Gray, 1973; Clark, 1985; Shipan & Volden, 2008; Graham et al., 2013; Jordan & Huitema, 2014; Gilardi, 2015).

The small but existing literature on attributes suffers from a series of shortcomings: First, existing work predominantly addresses the rate of diffusion (Savage, 1985; Rogers, 2003; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010; Makse & Volden, 2011; Boushey, 2012; Mallinson, 2015), rather than the essence of the mechanisms at work. Second, it is generally focused on learning, thus overlooking alternative mechanisms of policy diffusion while making assumptions on the causal mechanisms of the diffusion process. Third, it fails to distinguish between attributes of issues (problems) and attributes of policies (solutions). While there is an intuitive correlation between the two, higher conceptual precision is needed as they are analytically distinct (Kingdon, 1984). Fourth, most diffusion studies focus on the phase of policy adoption (notable exceptions include Karch, 2007a; D. M. Glick, 2014; Pacheco & Boushey, 2014; Karch & Rosenthal, 2015), and are therefore short of capturing the decision-making process itself. Fifth, the vast majority of existing empirical data is from the US. The literature could benefit from more diverse data to broaden the discussion beyond an American context and, moreover, beyond a federal context. Finally, most empirical diffusion studies focus on a single issue area, overlooking the potential difference between issues.

A main question that remains unanswered is whether policy diffusion occurs in the same way across different issues of policy concern, or whether certain

attributes of the issue increase the propensity for one diffusion mechanism over another. For example, if learning can be seen as a quest for *successful* policies and emulation a quest for *appropriate* policies (Goertz, 2006; Maggetti & Gilardi, 2015), are there conditions under which policymakers are more likely to seek successful, rather than appropriate, policies, or vice versa? Recently, Nachmany (2016a)<sup>21</sup> proposed that issue attributes have an effect on policymakers' motivations, which in turn affect the tendency towards different mechanisms. Specifically, it is suggested that learning-based diffusion is more likely to occur for issues which have perceived high salience, high complexity, high fragility, and which are perceived as opportunities. It is further suggested that emulation-based diffusion is more likely to occur on issues which are perceived as a threat, and are perceived as internationally-oriented rather than locally-oriented. However, although these hypotheses provide an analytical framework for advancing the understanding of different diffusion mechanisms, they remain untested.

This paper provides several contributions towards addressing these gaps. By using empirical data to test the hypotheses developed in Nachmany (2016a), it looks to discover whether some attributes have more substantive significance than others, and to discern the attribute assemblages in which the effects on diffusion mechanisms are more expressed. This makes an empirical contribution but also feeds back into the theoretical concepts, allowing their further development.

The paper examines case studies of policymaking processes in three environmental issues from Israel: waste, air pollution, and climate change. These three issues exhibit different issue attributes and the policy processes examined – leading to the formulation of the Packaging Waste Law (2011), the Clean Air Act (2008), and the National Greenhouse Mitigation Action Plan (2010) – appear to have been subject to different diffusion mechanisms. Israel makes an interesting case study as its position as an environmental laggard

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<sup>21</sup> Chapter 3 in this thesis.

(Vogel, 1998) leads to heavy influence by international policies; indeed, air pollution and waste policies exhibit evidence of learning-based diffusion, while climate change policy demonstrates evidence of emulation-driven diffusion. The results support some of the hypotheses raised in Nachmany (2016a): There is evidence to suggest that the propensity for learning is affected by salience and complexity, and to a lesser degree by fragility of the issue area. There is also evidence that international orientation increases the propensity for emulation. Finally, there is insufficient evidence regarding the hypotheses on perceived threat and opportunity.

The data consists of 34 in-depth interviews conducted with senior policymakers and others heavily involved in the policy-making processes, supported by evidence from textual analysis of parliamentary protocols and media articles. By offering empirical qualitative evidence based on self-reporting, rather than on inferential statistics, the paper is able to offer insights which are harder to be provided by quantitative, binary-measured indicators such as adoption or non-adoption, and also contributes to the measurement of attributes.

The concepts employed in this paper operate at the micro level, contributing to a level of analysis largely absent from the policy diffusion network, which tends to focus mainly on the state level (notable examples include Weyland, 2006; Sugiyama, 2008; Taylor & Tadlock, 2010), and filling an often-mentioned methodological gap (Hecló, 1974, p. 306; Bennett, 1997, p. 225; Graham et al., 2013, p. 695). Looking at policymakers as the unit of analysis is not only a methodological contribution, but an essential one, as it is their motivations and incentives that shape the policy processes (Grandori, 2000, p. 20).

The policymaking phase is largely understudied, predominantly due to data access issues faced by researchers. This analysis, on the other hand, enables engagement with processes rather than outcomes alone, thus sketching pathways that are independent of results in the form of adopted.<sup>22</sup> This

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<sup>22</sup> See Jacobs and Barnett (2000) for an example of the study of process rather than outcome.

contribution sheds light on causation, rather than only correlation, and opens the way to studying future empirical cases where the result is more difficult to measure, such as cases of non-diffusion (see Barth & Parry, 2009; van der Heiden & Strebel, 2012). The detailed case studies also contribute to the literature on Israeli environmental policymaking (Vogel, 1998; Pedahzur & Yishai, 2001; Weinthal & Parag, 2003; Parag, 2008) and on the influence of foreign policies on Israel discussed, for example, in the context of education reform (Eyal & Berkovich, 2010), trade and competition law (Gal, 2007), fiscal policies (Maman & Rosenhek, 2009), and workfare (Helman, 2009).

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 briefly reviews the relevant literature on policy diffusion and issue attributes. Section 3 describes the methodological approach of the paper. Section 4 presents the three case studies in focus, preceded by comments on Israel's environmental policymaking. Section 5 discusses how the findings from the case studies correspond to the theoretical hypotheses. Conclusions, limitations and suggestions for future research are brought together in Section 6.

## **4.2 An overview of the literature**

### **4.2.1 Policy diffusion**

In order to understand governments' adoption of policies, literature has traditionally offered two explanatory paradigms: that of internal determinants, contending that policymakers respond to internal characteristics of their environments when adopting or adapting policies, and that of external determinants – or policy diffusion – which claims that policy choices in one unit are influenced by policy choices in other units (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2006; Gilardi, 2012; Graham et al., 2013). Recent reviews of the policy diffusion literature (Gilardi, 2012; Graham et al., 2013; Gilardi, 2015) acknowledge the four main mechanisms by which this influence may be manifested: learning, competition, emulation, and coercion.



Learning is a mechanism in which actors scan their environments for new information about policies and their success, and update their beliefs and ideas based on the information obtained. The learning literature overlaps significantly with the literature on lesson drawing (Rose, 1991, 1993), policy transfer (Dolowitz & Marsh, 1996; Evans & Davies, 1999; Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000), and policy convergence (Bennett, 1991b; Holzinger, Knill, & Somerer, 2008). Learning can be limited by cognitive shortcuts and heuristics (Meseguer, 2005; Weyland, 2006) and may sometimes undergo a process of reinvention, or purposeful changes made to innovations in the phases of diffusion and implementation (H. R. Glick & Hays, 1991; Rogers, 1995; Hays, 1996).

Competition is a mechanism by which choices made by one policy unit alter the payoffs from the policy in another policy unit (Simmons & Elkins, 2004; Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin, Simmons, & Garrett, 2007). Taking the form of 'race to the bottom' or 'race to the top', this mechanism has been observed predominantly for economic-oriented policies such as tax, welfare, and state lotteries (Peterson & Rom, 1990; Brueckner, 2000; critical notes by Volden, 2002; Cao, 2010; Baybeck, Berry, & Siegel, 2011).

Emulation is a process which is driven by a logic of appropriateness, desire for conformity by following orthodox developments or a quest for legitimacy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Rose, 1991; Mizruchi & Fein, 1999; Radaelli, 2000). Emulation could take the form of 'ceremonial' or symbolic imitation (Evans & Davies, 1999; Gilardi, 2005), or even 'policy label diffusion' in which the label or rhetoric of policy is adopted as a vessel, without its essential content (Mossberger, 2000). These adoptions are motivated by and serve purposes different to those stated (Goldfinch, 2006).

Coercion is a mechanism by which powerful actors try to impose their preferred policy solutions on a particular government by altering the payoffs of action or inaction (Braun & Gilardi, 2006; Dobbin et al., 2007; Graham et al., 2013). It is excluded from some widely accepted typologies of policy diffusion as it is more focused on vertical than horizontal dynamics (Braun & Gilardi, 2006).

Nevertheless, as the definition of vertical power is a fuzzy one, similar observations can be made about other mechanisms (see Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000, p. 9).

Both learning and competition share the motivational logic of a quest for the solution to a given problem: policymakers identify a policy problem which is inadequately addressed (Rose, 1991) and scan the environment for a remedy. Unlike these ‘problem-dependent’ mechanisms, another mechanism group including emulation and coercion can be defined as ‘problem independent’. These are mechanisms through which policies ‘spread irrespectively from their problem-solving capacity’ (Gilardi, 2003, p. 5) and are subject to drivers which are external to the problem they wish to address. Maggetti and Gilardi (2015) summarise the difference between two core mechanisms as follows: ‘Learning means being influenced by successful policies; emulation copying “appropriate” policies’ (p. 6).

Note that some scholars use the term ‘emulation’ to refer to the *outcome* of the diffusion process, describing it as ‘adoption, with adjustment for different circumstances, of a programme already in effect in another jurisdiction’ (Rose, 1991, p. 22). But in this paper, emulation is referred to as a *process*, as described above. This is not only a linguistic clarification, but an essential distinction. Learning-driven diffusion, especially its bounded-rationality variants, may take the form of adoption (with or without adjusting for circumstances) of an existing programme. This distinction relates to the problem-dependent versus problem-independent typology: if the motivation for the adoption of the innovation had little to do with the policy problem, it is likely to be in the realm of emulation (as the concept is used in this paper).

#### **4.2.2 Issue attributes**

The traditional divide, mentioned above, between internal and external determinants has started to fade away, with the growing recognition that they are not mutually exclusive, and may be conditional one upon another. There have been significant advancements in the study of conditionality of policy

diffusion, focusing on, among others, political orientation (Gilardi, 2010), size of government (Shipan & Volden, 2008), gender (Bouché & Wittmer, 2015), ideological preferences (Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, & Peterson, 2004; Gilardi, 2010; Butler, Volden, Dynes, & Shor, 2014), professionalism and expertise (Shipan & Volden, 2006, 2014).

Building on the concepts developed by Rogers (1995) on the attributes of innovations, and on scholarship of the categorisation theory (Lyles & Mitroff, 1980; Mervis & Rosch, 1981), scholars have turned to investigate how the attributes of the diffused policies themselves impact the dynamics of policy diffusion. The basic logic is that people's perceptions of an object (for example, a policy) are translated into linguistic labels and cognitions, which in turn influence actions (Dutton & Jackson, 1987). Policy innovation attributes have mainly been used to explain the variance in the rate and pattern of policy diffusion. Saliency and complexity received notable attention (Mooney & Lee, 1995, 1999; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010, 2012; Winburn, Winburn, & Niemeyer, 2014; Mallinson, 2015), but other attributes have included fragility, defined as the level of divisiveness or conflict around a policy (Clark, 1985; Savage, 1985; Mooney & Lee, 1995; Hays, 1996; Mooney & Lee, 1999; Tews, Busch, & Jörgens, 2001; Karch, 2007b), symbolic nature (Clark, 1985), and observability (van der Heiden & Strebel, 2012). Combinations of attributes have also been explored – mainly policies with high saliency and low complexity (Nicholson-Crotty, 2009; Boushey, 2010, 2012; Winburn et al., 2014; Mallinson, 2015).

Although the question occupied early diffusion scholars (Walker, 1969; Gray, 1973), the variance among policy issues – or policy problems – has been studied to a very limited extent. The intuition that issue attributes matter has been simply stated: 'Scholars and practitioners should not expect the same degree of competition surrounding policies limiting youth access to tobacco as over welfare policies, the same amount of learning about trash collection as about education reforms' (Shipan & Volden, 2012, p. 792). Apart from a general conceptual

muddling between issues (problems) and policies (solutions), there has been very little systematic engagement with issue attributes, with existing work (Gray, 1973; Mooney & Lee, 1995, 1999; van der Heiden & Strebel, 2012; Winburn et al., 2014) offering contributions either on the probability or the rate of adoption, with few comparative insights across issues.

Recently, Nachmany (2016a) attempted to model policy diffusion conditionality on issue attributes by suggesting that issue attributes prompt different motivational cues for policymakers, which in turn affect the likelihood of occurrence of problem-dependent or problem-independent diffusion mechanisms. Borrowing the terminology from Maggetti and Gilardi (2015), she seeks to understand which issue attributes (or combinations thereof) prompt a quest for *successful policies*, and which attributes or combinations prompt a quest for *appropriate policies*. She argues that issue attributes have the capacity to affect policymakers' motivations to act – and that the prominence of an issue attribute is (for example, the more salient an issue is) increases the chance that it will elicit certain motivations. She further argues that motivations, in turn, affect the propensity for the occurrence of certain diffusion mechanisms – as the different mechanisms are driven by different forces, including the motivation to replicate others' experience. Her model does not focus on policy outcomes, but rather on the process leading policymakers to look outwards and seek to replicate or build on experience by others. The actual outcome – whether a policy or specific instrument or adopted, or even if they do not end up being adopted for a variety of reason, is somewhat less relevant in this context.

Four perceived attributes are hypothesised to increase the propensity for learning-based diffusion: high salience, high complexity, high fragility, and the perception of an issue as an opportunity. Perceived high salience means that the actor attaches high importance to an issue (Laver, 2001). In the context of policymaking, this is likely in response to constituent demand. If the demand is problem-dependent, then it is anticipated that the policy response to salient issues will be driven by the need to adopt successful policies rather than

appropriate policies. It is suggested that complex issues, defined as issues that require special knowledge and expertise that typically cannot be answered by generalists (Gormley, 1986), are also prone to a quest for successful policies. This is mainly because the people who are likely to be involved in the policymaking process are professional experts who care less about broad considerations of legitimacy and appropriateness and more about the problem itself (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006). High fragility is suggested to prompt a debate on policy alternatives, informed by different actors, approaches and claims. The debate itself will be conducive to a learning process and there will be a reduced likelihood of seeking an appropriate policy, as there will be no consensus on what that might be. This effect is increased for salient policies, in which there is an added motivation to reach a solution. When faced with an opportunity a positive situation with potential gains, and over which there is a fair amount of control (Dutton & Jackson, 1987; Jackson & Dutton, 1988; Barrett, 2003), policymakers are prone to explore if the opportunity is worth pursuing. This is likely to involve gathering information, and assessing alternatives, which resonates with a learning mechanism. However, when faced with a threat, which is a negative situation in which loss is likely, over which there is little control, decisionmakers will be pressured demonstrate action to resolve the threat. This may lead them to resort to *appropriate* means, as the motivation will be to demonstrate action (or reaction). Lastly, Nachmany (2016a) hypothesises that issues with an international-orientation are more likely to undergo emulation-based diffusion: interdependence between countries will increase the tendency for symbolic imitation (Falk, 2005; Cao, 2010).

While Nachmany's framework is currently developed to include only two diffusion mechanisms – learning and emulation – and a limited set of attributes, its general concepts are expandable to other mechanisms and other issue attributes. Nonetheless, the framework is theoretical only, and has no empirical backing. This paper offers a first attempt to provide evidence to test the hypotheses put forth.

### 4.3 Methodology

The paper employs a qualitative research design based on the analysis of three case studies. This approach is consistent with the aim of gaining insight on the micro level of policymaking at the phase of policy formulation, through analysis of policymakers' perceptions of issue attributes and decision-making dynamics. It advances the predominantly quantitative work on conditionality of policy diffusion in general, and with regards to the understudied pre-legislative stage of policymaking in particular, as pointed out by recent reviews of the diffusion literature:

*Without clear and well-founded facts on the ground, often best provided by qualitative research, Quantitative scholars have an insufficient understanding of the relevant politics to produce ultimately fruitful analyses...we are now at a point where **qualitative research could nicely complement Quantitative analyses**, such as with fuller assessments of what exactly policy makers seek to learn from others or how socialization comes about.*

*(Graham et al., 2013, p. 695, emphasis by the author)*

The cases studies discussed relate to policy formulation processes in three issues on the Israeli environmental policy agenda between 2005 and 2011. The existing literature on policy diffusion and attributes focuses on federal states (mainly the USA) and features only a handful of non-federal case studies (Bennett, 1991a, 1997; Tews et al., 2001). Innate similarities among these policy units, as well as the structural effects of a federal system, may provide explanatory power that is not generalisable to other geographies. Stepping out of an American federal setting, therefore, makes an important contribution.

The issues and respective policies analysed in this paper are: packaging waste and the formulation of Packaging Waste Treatment Law 2010 ('the packaging law'), climate change mitigation and the formulation of the National Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Plan 2010 ('the mitigation plan'), and air pollution and the Clean Air Act 2008.<sup>23</sup> For key information about the issues, see Table 7. These cases

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<sup>23</sup> The Clean Air Act does not cover most greenhouse gases so there is little, if any, overlap between the Clean Air Act and the mitigation plan.

were chosen because they have a balance of similarities and differences which allows a close examination of the hypotheses regarding issue attributes: all three are environmental issues, dealt with primarily by the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), frequently even by the same people, over the same approximate time period. Policy formulation processes for all three issues exhibit evidence of policy diffusion. However, the issues differ in their attributes and in the apparent diffusion mechanisms in operation. This allows the studying of the connection between attributes and diffusion mechanisms while limiting alternative explanations, such as the differences attributable to actor differences.

Analytical attributes are perceived in relation to other issues (Dutton, Walton, & Abrahamson, 1989). These perceptions allow policymakers to allocate resources of time, budget, and political capital according to their preferences. The issues below are discussed primarily in relation one to another, in accordance with the general low salience of environmental issues on the Israeli public agenda (see Section 4.4.1 below). There was a risk that assessing them with regards to other issues would have clustered them too closely together.

Most of the existing scholarship measures attributes either by making assumptions or by employing an external proxy-measurement, such as media coverage (one exception is Mooney and Schuldt (2008), who use direct questions to assess salience and complexity during interviews). For the framework proposed in this paper, these assessments or measurements are limited since the policymakers' subjective perceptions of the attributes are the focus of the analysis. This shift in focus enables a clearer understanding of the attributes impact on policymakers' motivations. This methodological gap is pointed out by Makse and Volden (2011): 'Surveys that include more of the actual policymakers who bring about policy change might better capture their true underlying perceptions of the policies and their attributes' (p. 23). Warntjen (2012) finds that expert interviews, text analysis and media coverage yield different results when measuring salience, and notes that 'expert interviews provide the most

fine-grained and least ambiguous measure but are costly to conduct for a large number of proposals' (p. 168). Mallinson (2015) finds a difference in the rate of diffusion for policies considered salient by the public, and those considered salient in the media, suggesting that legislators 'may be taking more time with policies that are popular among the public than when a policy area is receiving increased national media attention.' (p. 15). Introduction of a direct measurement of salience allows a further refinement of motivations.



**Table 7: Case studies**

	<b>Packaging waste</b>	<b>Climate change</b>	<b>Air pollution</b>
Policy formulated	Packaging Waste Treatment Law 2010	National Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Plan 2010	Clean Air Act 2008
Type of policy	Law	National plan, mandated and budgeted by government decisions	Law
Main formulation period	2009-2010 (passed in January 2011)	2010	2005-2008
Influential policies	European Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste, specifically the Belgian implementation model	Climate change framework laws and action plans worldwide; a variety of specific measures from the EU and US	US Clean Air Act, European Directive on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC)

As this paper is concerned with policymakers' perceptions and motivations, interviews were chosen as the primary data collection method, as 'interviews yield rich insights into people's biographies, experiences, opinions, values, aspirations, attitudes and feelings' (May, 2001, p. 120). In 2012-2013, the author conducted thirty-four interviews with Israeli-based policy officials identified as POs (n=21) and other actors identified as OAs (n=13) who were directly involved in the formulation of one or more of the policies in question. See **Table 8**.

The interviewees represent a significant and senior sample of the people involved, some of whom were involved in more than one policy, providing comparative views on the different issues. Because the Israeli environmental policymaking scene is very small, interviewees' institutional affiliation is not specified, in order to protect their anonymity (Kaiser, 2009). The higher proportion of interviewees responding to the climate change issue is attributable to the fact that they were assessed with regards to the authors' other parallel

research work (Nachmany, 2016b)<sup>24</sup> as well as to the fact that many of the people involved in waste or air pollution are also involved, and could offer input on, climate change. The fact that some interviewees were involved in more than one case study may pose a risk of case study ‘contamination’, where overlap between the accounts of different experiences blend together. However, the underlying rationale for picking individuals who were involved in more than one case, was precisely meant to neutralise the individual differences that lead to different motivational structures and behaviours. Individual interviewees described very different thought processes and motivations for action on the different cases, illustrating that there is significance to the case itself and not only to the position or character of the policymaker involved.

**Table 8: Interviewees, per policy issue**

	Interviews		
	Total	Policy officials (POs)	Other actors (OAs) (NGOs, think tanks, consultancies, industry organisations)
Climate	29	11	18
Air	12	6	6
Waste	15	8	7

Interviewees were identified on the basis of their continuous involvement in the policy-making processes, and were approached either by cold-calling or by using the author’s contact network developed through prior research for an environmental think tank involved in policy consultancy for the packaging law and the mitigation plan. During the interviews, it was reiterated that they were conducted in an academic capacity only. Interviews were conducted in person (save one that was conducted on Skype) and took 47 minutes, on average. Interviews were conducted in Hebrew and translated by the author where required.

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<sup>24</sup> Chapter 2 in this thesis

It should be noted that research interviews are an artificial situation (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000) carrying a risk of interviewees providing answers they think the researcher wants to hear (Schwarz, 1999), especially when the researcher seeks to uncover motivations or uncomfortable truths. At the same time, interviewees sometimes offer exaggerations or falsehoods (Lilleker, 2003). In order to reveal those, the researcher can facilitate a narrative-based interview in which interviewees are presented with the opportunity for storytelling, thus generating *reflexive progression*, a discursive activity in which questions which were previously unasked push the interviewee to gain new insights into his or her own experience (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

The interviews prompted a general recollection of the policy formulation and required the interviewees to construct 'their story', rather than answering a set of fixed questions. This process was punctuated by deliberate prompts to advance and refine the narratives and insights offered by the interviewees. This method allowed interviewees to reflect on matters they hadn't previously considered; some of them noted appreciatively that participating in the research offered them a chance to reflect on the way they were processing information and making decisions, and upon this reflection said they may choose to do things differently in the future (this is consistent with Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).

Interview prompts included how the issue got onto the agenda in the first place, what was included in the information-gathering and alternative assessment stages and sought thoughts on interaction with policies from other countries as well as interaction among actors during the policy process. Interviewees were not directly prompted to discuss issue attributes, but they emerged from the text and context.

Interviewees often had a vivid recollection of events and offered their reflections on the processes, including critical hindsight on themselves and their respective institutions. Israeli straight-talking, Sabra<sup>25</sup> cultural values of openness and frankness (Katriel, 1986; Almog, 2000), and an established rapport with the

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<sup>25</sup> A social-cultural term used to describe an archetype of native-born Israelis (Almog, 2000).

author make it probable that the views expressed were indeed candid. The author's prior knowledge of, and involvement in, the policy processes reduced the risk of exaggeration, but also posed a risk of confirmation bias (the partial seeking or interpretation of evidence to support preconceived beliefs or hypotheses) (Nickerson, 1998). In order to mitigate this risk, several actions have been taken, including acknowledging potential bias prior to conducting the research and phrasing questions in an open ended rather than in a leading way and suggesting alternative interpretations to the data wherever possible.

In order to complement the interviews, 206 media articles from five Israeli daily newspapers were analysed. Articles covered the policy processes from commencement until right after the law or plan was passed. The publications were identified by scanning online archives for key words, and were scanned for quotes by policy officials and other key actors in the policymaking processes. Despite this effort, the quotes did not yield any meaningful insights that added to the interviews, and were therefore excluded from the analysis.

Finally, parliamentary protocols dealing with the three issues were also reviewed. There are considerable differences between the protocols for the different issues, as debates took place in different stages in the policy process: the Knesset mainly debated packaging waste (n=8) and air pollution (n=23) after legislation proposals had been tabled. Air pollution legislation was debated for nearly three years, which explains the high number of debates. The Knesset's climate change-related debates (n=5) were broad and thematic; practical deliberations on policy measures were conducted by the inter-ministerial committee which did not keep protocols. While the supplementary data for the three issues is not perfectly consistent, quotes from parliamentary debates provide complementary, albeit not systematic, information to that obtained from interviews.

Interviews were transcribed in full and coded by the author using thematic analysis, a narrative analysis approach in which a narrative typology is

organised by themes based on occurrences in the data text. Illustrations are provided by case studies or vignettes. This approach is useful for comparative analysis among a number of cases which display common thematic elements (Riessman, 1993). An inductive-deductive approach (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008) was applied, which allows engagement with existing frameworks while identifying themes not originally anticipated: a basic coding framework was devised based on an initial literature review, with additional codes added based on narratives identified in the data.

The coding framework consisted of (1) issue attributes (as perceived by the interviewees) and (2) diffusion mechanisms, including broader reference to diffusion mechanisms, and policy-related interactions with other countries. Identification of these elements and narratives was based on key phrases in context, and a 'thematic map' was created for every case study in each interview, mapping the instances from both groups that were expressed or referred to. It was not always possible to extract direct quotes for the analysis, as the narrative was built along the discursive path, and the author exercised her judgement on whether a certain narrative was more dominant - for example, because it was elaborated on more at length, or because specific language was used (e.g. 'this was the *most important* thing'). However, the number of times a word or a phrase was repeated, did not serve as sole evidence, due to differences in the conversation style of different respondents. Concise examples for theme instances are detailed in Table 9. Annex I includes a more detailed list of instances.

**Table 9: Coding framework with examples**

Themes coded	Examples
<b>Attributes</b>	
Saliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘core issue’ (OA10)</li> <li>• ‘super important’ (OA6)</li> <li>• ‘defined as a strategic goal’ (PO2)</li> <li>• ‘the government didn’t really care’ (PO20)</li> <li>• ‘something no one really cared about’ (PO8)</li> </ul>
Complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘government officials didn’t really understand the issue’</li> <li>• ‘It’s pretty simple: there’s waste, you need to get it out of the way’ (OA7)</li> </ul>
Fragility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘It was a common experience, and very good, very strong one...it is beneficial and serves to soften the conflict. NGOs aren’t always invited (on government delegations), and this time we were’ (OA13)</li> <li>• ‘NGOs also understood...all the actors dealing with it were ripe and ready for a more rational discussion’ (PO4)</li> </ul>
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘When there were electricity shortages, we said – ah, that goes hand in hand with climate, so let’s ride that wave’ (PO20)</li> <li>• ‘There are great benefits from dealing with this, net profit to the market’ (OA1)</li> </ul>
Threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘There was a crisis of electricity demand shortages’ (PO20)</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘It is a local and not a global problem’ (OA7)</li> </ul>
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘an international atmosphere’ (PO20)</li> <li>• ‘a large, sweeping international process’ (OA8)</li> </ul>
<b>Diffusion mechanisms</b>	
Learning & Seeking successful policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘We read a lot...we saw a variety of systems and models, we saw it with our own eyes; (in Europe) we saw the difficulties they were struggling with’ (OA12)</li> <li>• We employed students to do research and had a team of legal experts analyse their findings (OA9).</li> </ul>
Emulation & Seeking appropriate policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Israel should be a part of the world, not some third world country’ (OA2),</li> <li>• ‘We should act like one of the industrialised countries’</li> <li>• ‘It was fashionable’</li> </ul>

In compiling the results from the interviews for a given case study, both the quantity and the quality of the emerging narratives were considered: first, the number of interviewees who, based on the thematic maps drawn up for each of them, identified certain attributes or the lack thereof, provided evidence for a certain diffusion mechanism, or for its absence; second, any qualitative evidence which sheds further light on the case – particular emphasis by the candidate, repetition, etc. Cases of internal inconsistency (in the same interview) or of external contradiction (between interviews) were noted, and are elaborated in detail section 4.4 below.

A critical element in content analysis is replicability of the coding frame, represented by inter-coder reliability. This is done by having another researcher recode a sample of the data to measure the ‘extent to which the different judges tend to assign the same rating to each object’ (Krippendorff, 2004). In this paper, two methods were applied: first, the author coded a sample of the interviews twice, two years apart. The compatibility of the coding was 96%, differences attributable mainly to coding a long sentence as one instance in one round, and as two instances in the second round or vice versa. Second, a sample of the data was re-coded by a colleague who was not exposed to the first coding. The second researcher coded 6 of 34 interviews (17 per cent) and 52 of 206 media articles (25 per cent), as well as 7 protocols (20 per cent). The sample size was determined based on common practice, which ranges from 10 to 22 per cent (see for example Bae, Anderson, Silver, & Macinko, 2014; Heikkila et al., 2014; Maggetti & Gilardi, 2015). The coding frames were generally consistent between coders, and inter-coder reliability was approximately 80 per cent. The second coder’s limited knowledge in the field led to a different classification of some instances, or to neglecting to code some instances altogether, not having fully understood their context. The author revisited all cases of conflicting or incomplete coding and settled these differences after consultation with the second coder.

## 4.4 Case studies

### 4.4.1 Israel as an environmental policy adopter

Almost unaffected by the wave of environmental policy in the 1970s and 1980s, Israel remained an environmental laggard, establishing its Ministry of Environmental Protection only in 1988. Israel doesn't have an independent Green Party (Pedahzur & Yishai, 2001),<sup>26</sup> and environment is absent from most political parties' platforms. The low prioritisation of the environment on the Israeli agenda can be explained by cultural factors as well as by the dominance of security and related concerns (Vogel, 1998). But public opinion shifted somewhat in the 1990s, facilitated by an increase in civil society presence and actions (Mekelberg, 2012) leading to several policy changes.

All interviewees agreed that the point of departure for formulating new environmental policies in Israel is international policy. They explain and justify this by Israel's limited experience in environmental policymaking. Nine different interviewees used the expression 'there's no need to re-invent the wheel' (PO6, PO16, PO20, OA2, OA6, OA8, OA10, OA11) and PO20 summarised: 'We look outwards all the time. We don't necessarily adopt it all, but wherever it makes sense, we do...while we have twenty or thirty years of experience, other countries have forty or fifty, so we always have to screen what is already out there'. PO14 added that 'if it's good for them (other countries), it must be good for us...they have experience, they're ahead of us, they know, and they're doing it. They're big, they're strong, they have money. Let's check what they are doing and copy it'. Others explained this outward look by citing limited resources such as budget, human resources and political capital: 'We are too small to invent regulation...it is more logical, convenient and cheap to take policy which is formulated elsewhere as a basis and adopt it to our needs' (PO17). Looking for external solutions as a default starting point became so engrained in the policymaking culture (OA2) that presenting policy suggestions as 'policies from

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<sup>26</sup> The green faction partnered up with the 'Zionist Camp' party, and its first member entered the Knesset in December 2015 following the resignation of an elected MP.



elsewhere' helped promote them (PO20, OA1, OA2, PO2, PO7, PO11, PO13, PO19), whereas deviating from them often required persistence and struggle (PO1, OA2). Several interviewees also recalled that there was a government decision or policy to approximate Israeli laws to those of the EU (PO2, PO3, PO15, PO16, PO19); however, this could not be corroborated by the author despite significant efforts.

PO18 noted that promoting existing international environmental practices was her way of expressing Israel's normality and global engagement in contexts outside of the Palestinian conflict. Interviewees from the MEP said that they generally look to the EU as a first source; they referred to EU countries as environmental leaders and mentioned geographic and cultural similarities, including regulatory history. Often, this would be contrasted with the US, seen as being very different, whose environmental approach is therefore unsuitable for Israel. However, the convenience of turning to the EU was also mentioned: while both US and EU materials are accessible and written in English (the most common second language in Israel), geographical/political/cultural ties with Europe mean there are stronger existing working connections. Civil society organisations, including the prominent NGO Adam Teva V'Din (ATD), had initially adopted a more American approach, including litigation as an important front for advancing environmental issues; in part, this can be attributed to the fact that the founding members of the Israeli environmental movement were mainly Americans or people who had studied and lived in the US. But senior leaders of the environmental movement who were interviewed for this research noted that in recent years, there has been a shift in civil society's focus away from the US, and it is no longer regarded as a default point of reference.

In 2010, Israel joined the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). During the accession process, it had to meet a set of requirements (OECD, 2007), about a third of which were related to the environment. The accession was perceived as having many economic and reputational benefits for Israel, shifting away from being considered a third

world country. An interviewee who had been heavily involved in the accession process noted that part of the motivation was acceptance: ‘We’re never wanted in any neighbourhood, and finally there’s a posh neighbourhood that wants us. The details of the commitments didn’t matter’ (OA3). The MEP saw the accession process as an opportunity to promote their agenda, and achieving the OECD accession requirements by adopting existing policies from OECD members: ‘If we want to be in the OECD, let’s do it like the OECD does it’ (OA5). The OECD was consistently referred to by interviewees as one bloc, overlooking the diversity of approaches to environmental legislation represented within the OECD countries.

Embarking on a policy formulation process by scanning the environment for existing solutions is not a unique practice (see examples in D. M. Glick, 2014; D. M. Glick & Friedland, 2014), but in the case of Israeli environmental policies, looking outwards became both the default and the dominant path.

#### **4.4.2 Packaging waste**

The Packaging Waste Treatment Law (‘the packaging law’) introducing an extended ‘polluter pays’ principle into Israeli law, was passed in the Knesset in January 2011. The law imposes direct responsibility on Israeli manufacturers and importers to collect and recycle the packaging waste of their products; it also sets recycling targets and a zero landfill target for 2020. It obligates local authorities to make arrangements for the separation, collection and disposal of packaging waste. The law complements other waste policies including a landfill levy, a tire recycling law, and a law imposing a deposit on beverage containers (MEP, 2016). Efforts to promote a packaging law commenced in the late 1990s, ‘following the spirit of existing packaging waste laws in the world’ (Avnimelech, 1999, p. 142), but also taking negative lessons into account:

*Countries like Israel should learn from other nations’ mistakes, and try to avoid repeating them. This is particularly true in regard to the hasty imposition of command and control rules and regulations (e.g. the packaging ordinance in Germany) prohibiting landfilling, which have proved to be economically inefficient.*

*(Ayalon, Avnimelech, & Shechter, 1999, p. 11)*

In 2008, ATD drafted a private members' packaging bill, which did not pass. In fact, no real progress was made on packaging waste until 2009, when it was elevated to a key priority for the MEP in conjunction with the arrival of a new and determined minister. A willing and cooperative coalition between the MEP, the Manufacturers Association of Israel and ATD translated into rapid joint efforts to pass legislation (despite the fact that multiple interviewees claimed to have initiated the law). Facilitated by joint learning delegations to Europe, interviewees representing all actors commented on the generally broad agreement on principles and ways forward. An expert report was commissioned by the MEP and a delegation led by the Director General of the MEP (a waste expert himself), representatives of industry, local authorities and experts from environmental NGOs visited Holland, Belgium and Germany in order to learn about their waste treatment policies. Within a few months, the proposed legislation was brought to the Knesset, and the law itself was passed in January 2011.

#### **4.4.2.1 Issue attributes - packaging waste**

Waste was recognised as 'one of Israel's most pressing environmental problems' (Vogel, 1998, p. 253) and was referred to by interviewees as a 'foundation of MEP policy' (OA13), a 'strategic objective' (PO11) and as a 'core issue; daily existential issue' (OA11). As OA9 noted:

*Waste was not on the agenda of the ministry; it **was** the agenda of the ministry. It's like it was not the Ministry of Environmental Protection, but rather the Ministry of Waste and Recycling: in terms of budgets, human resources and media focus.*

*(OA9, vocal emphasis by interviewee).*

Waste was also visible on the political agenda, internally as well as externally: 'Any member of the Knesset that wanted an environmental agenda wanted to suggest creative solutions for packaging waste' (OA5). In the MEP's brief note to the OECD environment policy committee, as part of Israel's accession process, waste policy is the first issue to be addressed in detail, mentioning that

packaging waste legislation was in the process of being drafted (Ministry of Environmental Protection, 2008).

Packaging waste is a relatively non-complex issue. Without minimising the complication of multiple actors (households, local authorities, waste contractors, recycling and landfilling facilities, packaging producers, retailers), the issue was nevertheless manageable within a single department in the MEP, requiring relatively little technical expertise beyond generalist skills. Complexity of packaging waste management was not raised in interviews except to say that it was a 'concrete issue with clear boundaries' (PO11). The low complexity also implied less inter-ministerial coordination, increasing the political feasibility of passing legislation. OA7 commented on the relative low complexity of waste:

*It's pretty simple. There's waste, you need to get it out of the way. It's simple especially in comparison to an issue like climate change. Everyone knows what it means to separate waste. To get the policy right is just a matter of plugging in the right numbers. It's not like assessing the greenhouse gas emissions reductions achieved by increased efficiency of an industrial chiller. I mean, most people don't even know what a chiller is or what it looks like, but everyone has a garbage can.*

There is little evidence with regards to the opportunity/threat perception of the issue: only one interviewee used language referring to the issue as an explicit threat: 'We were to be faced with mountains of waste if we didn't do anything' (OA9). It was noted by some (PO4, PO10, OA7, OA9) that the packaging law was an opportunity for the minister to demonstrate legislative action; as noted by PO6: 'The minister explicitly said when he assumed the role that he wants to focus on issues where MEP has the sole authority, that's where the influence will be most significant. And that was waste'.

Overall the policymaking process was characterised by low fragility and enjoyed an overall sense of agreement and cooperation. A sense of 'openness and connection' between the industry and the MEP (PO10) was facilitated by a joint educational trip to Europe, which created 'a very good, very strong, common experience' (OA13). PO4 notes: 'Not only did we (the MEP, industry and NGOs)

talk to each other, we also went abroad together, saw everything with our own eyes together, asked the questions together'. OA6 said that after the trip to Europe, 'everyone, including everyone: the greens, the minister, the industry, agreed that the Belgian model was the best model for us'.

There were several references to the local nature of waste, and the relevance of local features to good policymaking (PO20, A04, OA9). Interviewees made no references to international status, positioning or commitments. Nevertheless, the introductory notes to the bill, which included several references to the European packaging directive (mentioned in six of fifteen paragraphs), included that 'joining the group of countries that deal with packaging waste will help position Israeli exports as more environmental for the international public and authorities' (Knesset, 2010). This subject was not brought up by interviewees, nor was it mentioned in any of the relevant parliamentary protocols.

To summarise, packaging waste was a salient, non-complex issue, which did not manifest clear evidence of being either an opportunity or a threat, save a political opportunity to demonstrate legislative action. Low fragility among the actors was observed, and the issue was perceived as entirely local.

#### **4.4.2.2 Evidence of policy diffusion – packaging waste**

The fact that the resulting packaging law was modelled after the European Packaging Waste Directive<sup>27</sup> and the Belgian model was explicit in parliamentary debates, introductory notes to the legislation, in professional conferences (Manufacturers Association of Israel, 2010), and recognised by all interviewees. In terms of the policy process, there is evidence of a rapid environmental scan seeking and assessing alternatives based on the need to design a successful policy. These elements, as described below, correspond with learning-based emulation.

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<sup>27</sup> European Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (94/62/EC).

Interviewees noted that the packaging law emerged as part of a methodological evolution of Israeli waste policy, which had been in place since the 1990s; facilitated by a supportive and enthusiastic minister, it became an idea whose time had finally come (OA7, OA13, PO10, PO11, PO20). In this regard, the MEP director general's long-time expertise in the area of waste was also mentioned (PO10, PO20).

The policymaking process included a review of several alternatives, with the European policy serving as a departure point. Interviewees explained this, as well as the influence of the Belgian model, by citing geographical and cultural similarities (PO4, PO20, OA13, OA6, OA7, PO15, PO19): 'The EU is the closest to us. The US or Australia or Japan are just irrelevant to us, with their vast land and endless landfill options' (OA7); 'Belgium is close to us in terms of population size and distribution' (PO19). One interviewee said that he also researched countries with reduced organisational, managerial, and financial capacities, to see their achievements, in order to get a full picture (OA13). A policy report commissioned by the MEP included a literature review examining international policy solutions on packaging (including those of Japan, South Korea, the US, and Europe); however, only the European models were examined in detail (Ayalon et al., 2010). This, along with sending a delegation to evaluate existing models, is consistent with an approach of learning from 'front-runners', while restricting the quest to tried and tested solutions.

Interviewees described a rational process of assessing strengths and weaknesses, saying they were engaged in 'a very deep learning process', and mentioning extensive reading of research and policy papers, as well as initiating follow-up conversations with authors. Several said they came back from the European trip with mixed impressions which allowed them to make choices based not only on what works, but also what doesn't (PO4, PO11, PO20, PO15, OA6, OA11). Summarised by OA12:

*We can't just take legislation from Europe, throw it on the table and say – it's all or nothing. That doesn't work. You need to adjust, to adapt. We read a lot. We all read a lot. We were informed by the NGOs, by think tanks. We looked at everything. We compared all the models. We saw a*

*variety of systems and models, we saw it with our own eyes; (in Europe) we saw the difficulties they were struggling with...we weren't only impressed by the numbers we were presented with. We asked a lot of questions. We were very critical. We analysed all the models one by one, the Dutch model and the German model too.*

The learning process was characterised by some shortcuts and heuristics. Several interviewees acknowledged that the EU was chosen because material was readily available in English (OA13, PO11, PO15; this is also mentioned in a general context by PO14, OA4, OA8). There was also political pressure to pass legislation quickly, so not all the options were evaluated; as PO10 reflected: 'Why didn't we consider Korea, which is very advanced in waste management? I don't have a wise answer to that, maybe partially because it was a very rushed process'. PO4 reported that a combination of drivers led to the consideration of the Belgian model:

*Industry promoted the Belgian model from the start; they were in touch with the Belgians, read their papers, but it also made sense because of the characteristics of the Belgian market – in terms of size, and waste quantities, and population distribution, and even in terms of their way of thinking...they're not as pedantic as the Germans...it worked better for us'.*

(PO4)

There is some evidence suggesting emulation-based effects on the process, as illustrated by several examples. OA7 said 'I wouldn't consider looking at policies from African countries; we want to look like a developed country'. When debating the recycling target for glass bottles, OA12 recalls a senior policymaker insisting on retaining the European recycling rate: 'If we're doing it like Europe let's do it like Europe – I don't care how much beer they drink'.<sup>28</sup> A very senior policy official summarised, albeit with a smile, that the choice of which countries to visit for learning purposes was based on 'where the best chocolate was' (PO16).

To summarise, the evidence points to a process of learning, rationally-bounded and rapid, with a drive to create a good, successful policy by adapting existing

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<sup>28</sup> Beer consumption in Europe is five to ten times higher than in Israel, affecting the number of recyclable glass bottles.

models to the local reality. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest the issue was driven by emulative forces.

#### **4.4.3 Air pollution**

Until 2008, Israel did not have legislation to deal with air pollution. High levels of pollution were attributed to fossil fuel-intensive energy and industry, rapidly growing population concentrated in a small area combined with Israel's geographic and climatic circumstances (for example, heavy dust pollution which serves as a carrier for other pollutants). Add to that the fact that industry had no binding obligations to limit or reduce pollution, ambient air standards (aligned to World Health Organisation recommendations) were breached daily, leading to increased pollution-related mortality and illness (Traubman, 2002; Ministry of Environmental Protection et al., 2003). In 1998, the MEP and the Manufacturers' Association of Israel (MAI) signed a voluntary covenant controlling industrial emissions, adopting German and EU industrial emissions standards; however, the covenant failed to achieve any improvement in air quality (Kerret & Tal, 2005; Parag, 2006, 2008). ATD sought to advance comprehensive air pollution legislation; initial draft legislation was tabled as a private member's bill in May 2005, and after three years of deliberations, the Clean Air Act was passed in the Knesset in 2008.<sup>29</sup>

##### **4.4.3.1 Issue attributes – air pollution**

The salience of air pollution during this time was on the rise, both for civil society organisations and for the MEP. The proposed legislation was supported by 48 (of 120) members of the Knesset, indicating the wide concern for the issue. In parliamentary committee meetings dealing with the proposed legislation, air pollution was referred to as: 'essential', 'important to Israeli society', and 'desired'. The Ministry of Transportation stated that the burdens resulting from the Clean Air Act will outweigh its benefits, but nevertheless that dealing with

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<sup>29</sup> The Clean Air Act does not cover greenhouse gases, and the discourse on clean air did not include any reference to climate change, allowing a clear distinction between the two issues.



air pollution was 'vital' (Knesset Internal and Environmental Affairs Committee, 2005a, 2007). The classification of air pollution as salient is consistent with the literature (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006).

Air pollution bears technical complexity as well as institutional complexity, and is recognised in the literature as highly complex (e.g. Künzli et al., 2000; Nadadur et al., 2007; Nicholson-Crotty, 2009). It entails identifying, isolating, measuring and controlling numerous sources of pollution, as well as assessing the costs of action and inaction, in completely a-generic processes, industries, and environments, with numerous internal and external variables with various levels of certainty and predictability. Over 20 detailed parliamentary debates took place over three years, with the participation of over 250 different people affiliated with over 70 organisations: 10 ministries, government agencies, NGOs, industry, and trade associations. The majority of the debates were highly technical, both scientifically and legally. Without exception, air pollution was perceived by those involved as a highly complex issue, as one interviewee summarised: 'There was nothing generic about dealing with air pollution. No two industrial plants are the same; no two processes are the same. Everything has to be tailored. It's as complex as it gets; complex and very important' (OA9).

Air pollution was perceived as an imminent threat to the health and wellbeing of citizens: 'critical to human lives'; 'a matter of health, of life and death' (Knesset Internal and Environmental Affairs Committee, 2005a, 2007). Although threat-related language was sparse in the interviews, various policymakers and NGO officials were cited in media articles and parliamentary protocols using strong and consistent references to the threat posed by air pollution. This could be the result of legislation already having been put in place by the time of the interviews, reducing the sense of perceived threat. Interviewees noted that politicians identified the issue of air pollution as a political opportunity: 'It was clear that this bill can provide you with lot of political credit; it was an important matter that needed its own law, and not a generic reference in the public nuisance law' (OA9); 'There was a strong public opinion. Politicians realised they

can use that' (PO15). Prior to the proposing/drafting/debating/passing of the legislation, members of the Knesset increasingly raised the issue and criticised the existing covenant as insufficient (e.g. Hirschzon, 2004; Ness, 2004).

#### **4.4.3.2 Evidence of policy diffusion – air pollution**

Originally, the proposed legislation was inspired and influenced by the US Clean Air Act; this outward gaze was influenced by American-oriented civil society leaders, as well as Israel's laggard position. One interviewee recalls: 'The director of ATD, who was an American lawyer, once came back from the States with a thick blue book, and told me in his thick American accent: "This is the US Clean Air Act. Go for it"' (OA9). Introductory notes to the proposed legislation declare it is based on 'deep learning of similar arrangements from other countries, notably the US Clean Air Act, European directives and German regulation, adapted to the existing legal state, and the governmental and public institutions in Israel' (Knesset, 2005). There is ample evidence that the development of the Israeli Clean Air Act was far from copy-pasting the American law, despite its initial branding. Although there were 'fingerprints of collecting ideas from different places' (PO15), there were also processes of learning, adapting, and coming up with new ideas; one interviewee described the formulation of the law:

*We took a bit of everything. Some nice ideas from the American law, some nice ideas from the European directives, from the German TA Luft...we collected examples of many air pollution laws from all over the world. We employed students to do research and had a team of legal experts analyse their findings. We had inter-disciplinary round tables – scientists, legal experts, economists, and policy experts, and that's how we got to the proposed legislation. It didn't take one day.*

(OA9)

Parliamentary debates contained limited references to foreign models; although the first debate was concerned with an introduction to the American Clean Air Act (Knesset Internal and Environmental Affairs Committee, 2005b), subsequent debates only included anecdotal references to American and European policies. This contrasts with the parliamentary discourse on climate change, which included numerous mentions of 'the developed world' (Nachmany,

2016b). During the debates there was explicit discussion on whether the law should refer to foreign legislation or not – for example, using the IPCC directive as a terms of reference. Proponents of direct reference, notably representatives of the industry and transportation sectors, noted that adopting existing regulations would contribute to competitiveness by increasing certainty and standardisation for the industry; for that matter, they claimed, it does not matter which model is chosen:

*We wanted to have legislation like any other developed country. We don't care which one, as long as it's developed. Let's go there and take whatever they have and adopt it as is. Not just cherry pick like we're used to. Europe is more convenient. It's closer, it's more approachable. It's easier to be in touch with the Europeans than the Americans...that was a large part of the motivation to go there.*

(OA5)

Opponents highlighted that foreign legislation may be formulated according to considerations that are alien to the sovereign interests of Israel. In this regard, one of the legislators noted:

*Although I agree that there's no need to invent the wheel, especially where other countries have accumulated knowledge, I have witnessed more than once that international criteria have been subject to various extensive lobbying; do not think that anything that is imported from other countries is pure and is the bible; you'll be very wrong.*

*(Knesset Internal and Environmental Affairs Committee, 2008).<sup>30</sup>*

All the interviewees involved in the drafting of the law (both civil servants and employees) justified their policy choices as being the right fit for local circumstances: 'I never said "this is how it was done in the world". I didn't take a fixed model from one place, but said that here we should do so and so, for essential reasons' (OA2). Several interviewees commented that adopting existing legislation seemed to be met with greater receptivity: 'It is easier for me to explain and justify and defend something which is anchored in European

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<sup>30</sup> The final legal text achieved a compromise by requiring that secondary regulation (setting emissions standards, ambient air standards etc.) take into account, among others, similar arrangements in developed countries, including the EU – see Clean Air for Israel Act, Articles 6, 19, 32, 35, and 29.

regulation than something which is unique to us' (PO5). Nevertheless, policymakers asserted that they insisted on essential considerations, illustrated by the example of the MEP's 'green taxation' of imported vehicles which was based on the emissions of six pollutants, deviating from the EU model which only considered CO<sub>2</sub> emissions:

*I thought that the European method is wrong...they will end up suffering health costs of particulate matter from diesel engines, and I insisted on doing it differently. There was shouting, and resentment. They (the ministry) said 'it can't be that the entire world says one thing and you say another'. But I shouted back, and they ended up accepting it.*

(PO4)

To summarise, clean air was perceived as a salient, complex issue, and branded as a threat. While air pollution was local, there were international consequences to the chosen regulatory approach. Evidence shows that the policymaking process was predominantly one of learning and re-invention, and less of emulation. Competitive forces played a role with regard to the industry's position. Although competition-based diffusion was not explored in detail by Nachmany (2016a), it belongs to the same 'problem-dependent' group of mechanisms, together with learning. From a motivational point of view, the competitive dynamic of the air pollution issue is therefore closer to learning than to emulation.

#### **4.4.4 Climate change**

Until 2009, Israeli engagement with climate change mitigation had been very mild. Ahead of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen in 2009, a greenhouse gas emissions reduction bill was tabled in the Knesset,<sup>31</sup> but was abandoned after an initial reading. At the COP15, Israeli president Shimon Peres declared that by 2020, Israel would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent compared to a business-as-usual scenario. The declaration was not based on a concrete action plan, and there was ambiguity regarding how the

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<sup>31</sup> Draft bill for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Bill, 2009.

specific figure was arrived at (PO20, OA1, OA8, OA9, OA12): ‘We joked that he would say 30 and then later everyone could say that they heard 13’ (OA12). Following the Peres declaration, the government passed a resolution to formulate a national greenhouse gas mitigation plan consistent with Peres’s declared target.<sup>32</sup> The director general of the Ministry of Finance was appointed head of an inter-ministerial committee (‘The Shani Committee’), which consisted of three sub-committees: energy efficiency, transportation, and green building. The sub-committee for energy production never assembled due to a deep political divide between the MEP and Ministry of National Infrastructures (MNI); consequently, renewable energy and coal-powered plants were not addressed in the national plan. The National Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Plan (‘the mitigation plan’) was approved by the government in late 2010,<sup>33,34</sup> and included a variety of policy measures regarding energy efficiency (mainly relying on a plan previously developed by MNI), green building and transportation. Some of the specific policy measures were based on similar practices elsewhere, for example: regulation for minimum efficiency for appliances, schemes to replace inefficient refrigerators for low income families, and various measures to increase fuel efficiency were modelled after similar policies in Europe and the US. For a more detailed discussion on Israeli climate change policy, see Nachmany (2016b).<sup>35</sup>

#### **4.4.4.1 Issue attributes – climate change**

Until 2009, climate change had virtually no place on the policymaking agenda. Within the MEP, climate change was dealt with by one or two people in the air quality department, and climate activities were generally not budgeted for – even funds streamed through the Shani Committee. Interviewees across the board noted the low salience of the issue and, consequently, policymakers’ low motivation to address it: ‘nobody really cared’ (PO5); ‘global warming was never

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<sup>32</sup> Government resolution 1504, 14 March 2010, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2010/Pages/des1504.aspx>

<sup>33</sup> Government resolution 2508, 28 November 2010, <http://www.pmo.gov.il/Secretary/GovDecisions/2010/Pages/des2508.aspx>

<sup>34</sup> The budget for the plan was frozen in a 2012 round of budget cuts. Funding was not restored until late 2015, when the mitigation plan was replaced with a new plan for energy efficiency and emissions reduction.

<sup>35</sup> Chapter 2 in this thesis.

an issue' (OA1); 'the government was not bothered with climate change' (PO20); 'it was not really important for the (MOF) budget department' (PO13); 'I never identified climate change to be of any significance according to my worldview' (PO18); 'marginal effect' (OA8); 'Even if it didn't cost (politicians) anything, in terms of conflict with rich people or budget, even then nobody cared...there was ignorance, borderline dismissal' (PO22).

Several interviewees (PO1, PO7, PO13, OA7, OA9) explicitly acknowledged the complexity of climate change as an issue. PO1 noted that 'many people in the different ministries just don't understand climate change. It's not their profession', and other policy officials admitted that it was indeed beyond their expertise (PO6, PO13). Climate change is widely recognised as the most complicated problem humanity has ever dealt with; so complex, in fact, that a new classification was invented to describe it alone; *Super Wicked Problems* (Levin, Cashore, Bernstein, & Auld, 2007; Levin, Cashore, Bernstein, & Auld, 2012). It encompasses almost every aspect of human activity, interfacing with numerous functions regulated by the state. Even when disaggregating climate change to a number of simpler issues, for example reducing emissions from a specific sector such as transportation or energy production, each of these requires specialised knowledge and expertise. Sectors are also often co-dependent.

There was no clear fragility regarding climate change *per se*, perhaps due to the low salience of the issue. Parliamentary debates, most of which preceded the Shani Committee, were fairly uniform in their generalist approach that 'something must be done'. However, there was a deep conflict between the MEP and the MNI, the two key ministries involved. This led to energy production being omitted from the Shani Committee altogether, slashing its potential for emissions- and pollution reduction (PO3, PO7, PO13, OA7) while also affecting the work of the energy efficiency sub-committee. Additionally, politically volatile planning aspects of transportation were not discussed by the sub-committee (PO1, PO2, PO7), and the green building sub-committee was so divided over

appropriate policy measures that they resorted to merely recommending several pilot projects (PO6, PO7, OA9).

Climate change in Israel was not perceived as a threat. This could be attributed to the low salience of the issue, to the negligible contribution of Israel to global emissions, and to other threats, mainly security, which dominate the threat discourse in Israel. Only one interviewee said that Israel treated climate change as an existential threat, and was 'behaving hysterically like all the other countries' (OA6).

Most of the interviewees said they saw climate change as an opportunity to promote local causes, or sub-issues, which were perceived as very salient. PO20 said 'the crisis was not climate, but a shortage in energy supply. Since climate goes hand in hand with that, riding that wave was the right thing to do'. Other sub-issues included energy efficiency (PO1, PO7, PO17, OA1, OA5, OA7, OA8, OA9), air pollution (PO1, PO6, PO7, PO17, OA7, OA9), energy independence (PO1, PO7), leading clean-tech solutions (PO7, OA2, OA5), and finally, as an opportunity to adopt financially profitable policies (PO6, PO7, PO14, PO17, OA1, OA5, OA7, OA9, OA12). The latter consideration was meticulously reflected by the mitigation plan, which included only net-profitable measures (Ministry of Finance, 2011). OA10 noted that 'the minister understood more than all his predecessors...that climate change was a way to leverage other environmental issues'.

It is important to note that the sub-issues addressed by the Shani Committee were perceived as independent issues with different attributes. For example, air pollution and energy efficiency were regarded as 'serious' (PO9) and 'important' (PO20). Green building and transportation did not receive any mentions regarding their importance and, accordingly, only 10 per cent of the budget for implementation in 2011-2012 was allocated to them.

Climate change was a distinctly international issue. Nachmany (2016b) finds that nearly half the instances where the importance of climate change was

mentioned in parliamentary protocols and media articles were in an international context. Interviewees mentioned ‘an international atmosphere’ (PO20), ‘a large, sweeping international process’ (OA8), ‘a global problem’ (OA7), ‘a vibe around Copenhagen’ (PO6) and more. As will be evident from Section 0 below, this was a defining factor in the policymaking process.

At the same time, the sub-issues had a clear local focus, which was explicitly preferred to the global cause (PO9, PO13, OA1, OA12): ‘We rode the international wave to deal with a domestic problem. We don’t contribute anything to climate change, even if we go crazy, but it helps lead important domestic agendas’ (PO20). PO9 added:

*Our goal was to deal with local environmental issues... the by-product would be climate policy, understanding that Israel has negligible global emissions and at the same time **has serious problems of air pollution and inefficient energy use**, and is a few steps behind the world in the policy tools it employs, so this would be a good time to close this gap, and if we get some positive climate impact, that would be a fantastic bonus.*

*(Emphasis by the author)*

#### **4.4.4.2 Evidence of policy diffusion – climate change**

Ample evidence from the interviews and supplementary documents suggests that on the whole, the decision to formulate a mitigation action plan was an emulation-driven diffusion process. Engaging with the climate change agenda resulted mainly from a drive to align with the developed world. Interviewees said it was ‘fashionable’ (OA1), ‘sexy’ (PO3), that Israel should be ‘a part of the world, not some third world country’ (OA2), ‘act like one of the industrialised countries’ (PO1) and that it couldn’t ‘be a lone wolf, with everyone going in one direction and you in another’ (PO1). Several interviewees mentioned the contribution of climate action to Israel’s international status (OA10), including the diversion of attention from the Palestinian issue (OA12). Some of the interviewees explained that climate action was done in order not to lose face: ‘The Ministry of Foreign Affairs cared that we wouldn’t look bad, and the MOF



didn't want us to look like the last of the third world countries, especially on the verge of entering the OECD' (PO13). PO22 said: 'Only potential embarrassment ahead of an international forum generated some action...anything they did was to look okay, but they never cared about the topic'. OA9 asserted that the climate action plan was an act of public relations: 'We need to do this because Peres said, because otherwise we'll look stupid to the rest of the world'. OA7 summarised the approach to climate change, derived from its global characteristic:

*This was a global problem, and the solution had to resonate with global policies. There was no point in inventing the wheel. We set out to find a solution to copy. Unlike waste, which is a very domestic issue, with very local-specific characteristics – for climate change there was no point in developing any localised solutions.*

(OA7)

There is limited evidence that learning took place. A report on potential greenhouse gas emissions reductions was commissioned by the MEP, and completed in early 2009. Ahead of the COP15, the MEP commissioned two more similar reports: one from a local think tank and the other from the international consultancy McKinsey, which was chosen, according to numerous interviewees, because of its recognised international brand rather than any advantage over locally produced reports (PO5, PO6, PO19, OA7, OA9). PO6 quipped that it allowed us to say 'we both have McKinsey curves; you'll show me yours, I'll show you mine; it was a matter of prestige'.

Overall, the formulation of the mitigation plan was only loosely informed by a learning process. The reports only specified the mitigation potential of different policy categories, rather than assessing specific policy measures. Mitigation strategies in other countries were not studied as a whole, and there was no outlet for discussion of climate mainstreaming or inter-dependencies among the different sub-committees. There were no visits to other countries or consultations with international peers. OA8 recalls:

*It was a pretty eclectic process, and there was no clear decision-making process. People would show up, present different things, and then there would be offline meetings with experts and consultants, where we would*

*process items from committee meetings, and then it would go as a draft document to the steering committee where things would be decided independently both of the sub-committee meetings and of the expert meetings.*

(OA8)

Each sub-committee was tasked with formulating net-profitable measures in its mandated area, supported by a small expert team which provided a short literature review of international policy measures. As in other issues, the default reference was policies already in place elsewhere (PO3, PO6, PO13, PO17); however, in the restrictive time frame provided, researchers sought to bring solutions that would respond to local challenges (PO3, PO6, PO13, PO17, PO20, OA9). Energy efficiency policy measures were *de facto* an adoption of a detailed plan formulated by the MNI (PO3, PO13, OA7). The green building team examined numerous international models, but rejected them all, claiming that the differences between countries meant that emulation of existing models was not justified. Members of the sub-committee agreed that the high degree of uncertainty of the outcomes required local pilot projects which were not based on existing models (PO6, PO7, PO13, OA9).

A senior policymaker commented on the limited ability to assess international policy measures: ‘They would say “this was a great success in Germany”. They didn’t tell me that it failed in 10 other places or that other countries have considered it and decided against it’. (PO13). Other policymakers also commented on their limited ability to make informed decisions due to lack of expertise (PO1, PO6).

Overall, the main exhibited drivers of engaging with the climate agenda are considerations of appropriateness and legitimacy, suggesting that an emulation-based diffusion took place, with strong evidence that this was symbolic ‘label diffusion’. Policy formulation related to sub-issues of the mitigation plan exhibited elements of diffusion, selectively driven by bounded-learning.

## 4.5 Discussion

The case studies provide evidence on the level of salience, complexity and fragility of the issues, their local or international orientation, and their perception as opportunities or threats. The main mechanism of diffusion is also identified in each case.

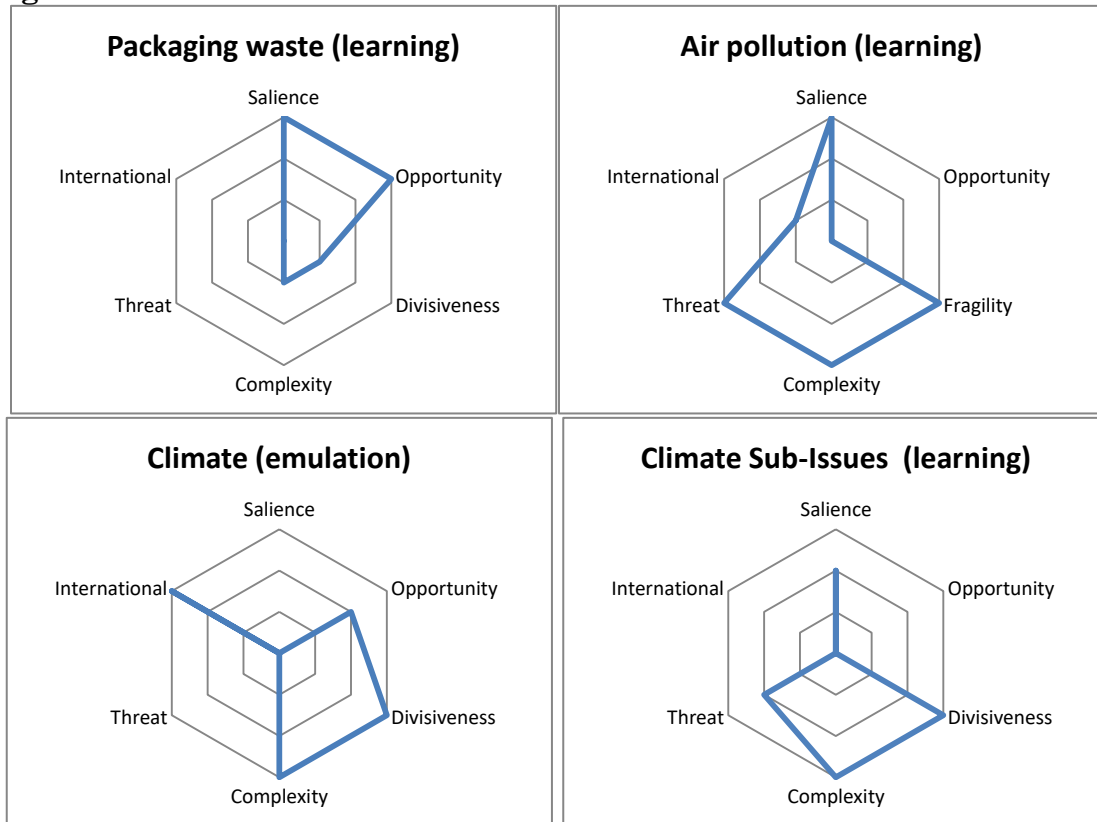
Table 10 and

Figure 2 summarise the key findings.

**Table 10: Summary of issue attributes and diffusion mechanisms**

<b>Perceived attributes</b>	<b>Packaging waste</b>	<b>Air pollution</b>	<b>Climate change</b>
Saliience	High	High	Low (high for some sub-issues)
Complexity	Low	High	High
Fragility	Low	High	High
Opportunity/threat	Political opportunity	Threat	(Threat for some sub-issues)
International/local	Local	Local	International
Main diffusion mechanism	Learning	Learning	Emulation

**Figure 2: Issue attributes and diffusion mechanisms for the case studies**



*Source: the author*

Note the partial but not insignificant overlap between air pollution and sub-issues of climate change. These sub-issues are discussed in the context of climate change, rather than as independent case studies, as they are not methodologically difficult to deconstruct from broader contexts, which included other parallel policy processes such as the green taxation for vehicles scheme.

Driven by Israel’s laggard position, environmental policymaking in all three cases was prone to processes of policy diffusion, albeit by varying mechanisms. However, deciphering these processes is complicated by each policy issue having different attributes, generating a ‘pull’ in different motivational directions. For some attributes, this discussion sheds light not only on the correlation between attributes and diffusion mechanisms, but also on the causal pathways that explain these correlations. For other attributes, this causal connection has proven more elusive.

It was hypothesised that high salience, high complexity, high fragility, and perception as an opportunity, will increase the propensity for learning, stemming from the motivation to formulate '*successful policies*' (rather than '*appropriate policies*'). Learning was identified as the main diffusion mechanism for packaging waste and air pollution. There is evidence that waste was perceived as highly salient and as an opportunity for electoral gain. Air pollution was perceived as highly salient, highly complex, and highly fragile. On the other hand, climate change was perceived as highly complex, highly fragile and, to a limited extent, as an opportunity, and demonstrated very limited evidence of learning-based diffusion.

The salience of an issue appears to be a key explanatory factor for understanding the learning-based mechanism. Motivated by the electoral considerations and, to an extent, by ideological considerations (which, in turn, contribute to the perception of salience), policymakers are more prone to take a course that will lead them to a successful policy. For both waste and air pollution, decision making was informed by years of research into policy alternatives; policymakers made efforts to understand these alternatives in detail, employed critical thinking, and resisted the notion that they were merely copying an existing model. Policymakers talked about how important the subjects were, and how important it was to get them right. Climate change, on the other hand, had very low perceived salience for policymakers, did not elicit these motivations, and did not, in fact, demonstrate evidence of learning-based diffusion.

There is evidence to support the hypothesis that the high complexity of an issue will increase the propensity for learning. The analytic framework anticipated that complex issues would be dealt with by specialists – as opposed to generalists – who would be less affected by considerations of appropriateness which are external to their focused field of expertise. Air pollution, for example, was highly complex and was indeed dealt with by numerous experts over the years, exhibiting very limited evidence of emulation-driven diffusion, but rather adaptive learning-based diffusion. While climate change, another highly complex

issue, was overall characterised by emulation-based diffusion, the adoption of measures for specific sub-issues corresponds with the hypothesis. Sub-issues such as energy efficiency and green building were highly complex and demonstrated evidence of (albeit bounded) learning, including the rejection of measures due to differences between the source country and Israel.

High fragility was suggested to increase the propensity for learning. In the case of air pollution, a divide between industry and environmentalists engendered a long process of evaluating alternatives which were brought to the table by the various parties. In contrast to air pollution, in which fragility contributed to a learning process, the fragility of the climate change issue led to stagnation and inaction; so deep was the political divide between government agencies regarding energy production that the sub-committee refused to convene. The essential difference between air pollution and climate change may be traced to the difference in salience between the two issues: air pollution was a problem that *needed* a successful solution, so the different actors engaged in a process that brought their diverse inputs to the table. Climate change, on the other hand, was not perceived as a salient issue, reducing the motivation for finding a solution and resulting in inaction – the least resource-intensive option. Energy, a highly salient sub-topic, was simply removed from the climate change framework and dealt with under other domains.

There is mixed evidence regarding the opportunity hypothesis, suggesting that issues perceived as opportunities are more prone to a learning process. There is evidence that the packaging waste law was identified as an opportunity, and that a learning-based process took place. However, it does not follow the basic logic of the hypothesis that opportunities (positive, net gain, controllable situations) will be dealt with by lower levels of the organisation, and on a smaller scale, allowing more space for a considered, expert-led response. Climate change was also identified, to an extent, as a political opportunity to advance other agendas, and there is very limited evidence regarding learning. In addition, packaging waste differed from climate change on the salience attribute,

which may be a more significant attribute than opportunity. The literature on opportunity and threat generally refers to a threshold of strategic importance; in other words, if an issue (e.g. climate change) is not perceived as strategic, perceived opportunity will have little or no significance for predicting the diffusion mechanism.

It was hypothesised that the following attributes increase the propensity for emulation: perception of a strategic issue as a threat, and perception of the issue as international rather than local. Climate change has both of those attributes. Air pollution has evidence of perception as a threat, but is generally local. Packaging waste did not exhibit either of those attributes.

It is hypothesised that when issues are labelled as threats, they will be more prone to undergo emulation. This is because the issue is more likely to be dealt with at higher levels of the organisation, suggesting that broader considerations are at work. Additionally, presenting a solution will be a priority, whether the essential content lives up to the label or not. The evidence supporting this hypothesis is limited and inconsistent. Once again, the hypothesis relies on the issue being perceived as strategic, ruling out this hypothesis for climate change. On the other hand, from an international perspective, climate change was perceived as both highly salient and as a threat. It is possible that the combination of these two attributes can explain the emulation-based process. Nevertheless, air pollution, both salient and perceived as a threat (perhaps explaining the wide support in the Knesset for the initial Clean Air bill), did not exhibit evidence of emulation. Altogether, there is limited empirical evidence regarding perception of threat in these three case studies.

The hypotheses also suggests that an issue will be more prone to emulation if it is perceived to be internationally oriented. This is supported by the case of climate change, which was perceived as such, while not bearing any local significance *per se*. The rhetoric on engaging with climate change revolved predominantly around Israel's status as a developed country; devising a national

mitigation plan appears to have been a quest for an appropriate solution to fit with Israel's perception, by itself and others. (Nachmany, 2016b). Limited but supportive evidence is also provided in the case of air pollution, which industry regarded as having some international implications in terms of facilitating export through harmonisation of environmental standards. This is consistent with the industry's preference to adopt *comprehensive arrangements*, rather than what they called 'cherry picking', as the context and *appropriateness* of the policy were more relevant.

In contrast, waste policy was a completely localised issue, not bound to any international agreements or norms, and without implications for international issues such as trade. Therefore, there was no need for appropriateness. This rationale was summarised by PO2: 'In general, we wanted to be like the enlightened countries. But if it was a local issue then plain mimicking doesn't make much sense' (PO2).

## 4.6 Conclusions

As the policy diffusion literature matures, and most of the 'what' questions addressed, it turns more and more to the 'why' and 'how' questions, especially with regard to the operation of different variants or mechanisms of diffusion. Scholars' engagement with conditionality of policy diffusion is related more to the rate of diffusion, and less to the specific conditions favouring specific diffusion mechanisms. In an effort to address a gap in the literature, and building on Gray's (1973) early question 'does the issue matter', an exploratory framework was put forth by Nachmany (2016a): it suggests that certain perceived issue attributes prompt different motivations for policymakers, which in turn affect the propensity for certain diffusion mechanisms to occur. Specifically, it seeks to distinguish between issue attributes that motivate policymakers to seek successful policies, and those that influence them to seek appropriate policies.



This paper takes Nachmany's framework a step further, providing an empirical contribution from three case studies which vary in their attributes and diffusion mechanisms. The evidence presented in the paper lends support to the general model: not only does it sketch a correlation between issue attributes and diffusion mechanisms, but it also supports the notion that motivations serve as a link between the two. Thus, through a body of first-hand accounts, a causal chain is established: from policymakers' perceptions of different issues, through their motivations to scan their environment and respond to prompts, to actions expressed in the policymaking process.

Furthermore, the paper lends support to some of the specific hypotheses on attributes. One of the main challenges of this model is the multivariate nature of the problem: there are inevitably interaction effects between the variables, and while some attributes demonstrate consistent behaviour with the hypotheses, others do not. There is evidence to suggest that high salience, high complexity, and an international orientation have the potential to affect the diffusion mechanism in operation. There is mixed evidence regarding fragility, which may be traced back to differences in salience. Finally, there is not enough evidence regarding the hypotheses on threat and opportunity. Perceived salience seems to have the strongest explanatory power, as it appears to play a role in interactions with other attributes as well.

The case studies discussed allow a relatively controlled examination of the explanatory power of attributes: the issues discussed are all defined within the larger issue area of 'environmental policies', all occurred around the same time frame under the main influence of a single ministry, and often involved the same people. These unique circumstances resist competing explanations for differences in diffusion mechanisms, for example, personal differences. Future cautious explorations of the interactions between issues with similar perceived attributes, but differences in other variables, could deepen the understanding of interactions between different explanatory frameworks.

Although it is widely accepted that scholars would benefit from more in-depth accounts of the 'black box' of policymaking, micro-analysis has been largely absent from policy diffusion research. Attributable partly to difficulties in obtaining data, and partly to research approaches, this has limited the ability to expand the research agenda. This is because, conceptually speaking, it is people, not states, who have motivations and incentives, and who take action. It is people who seek and absorb information, and evaluate alternatives. It is people who make decisions in the hope that they will be re-elected, or make decisions that plainly make sense to them. When asking 'why' questions, it is only logical to go back to the micro level as a core unit of analysis. Another reason for engaging with the micro level is that, methodologically speaking, perceptions and motivations are very difficult to assess without first-hand accounts. The difficulty of obtaining access to policymakers has meant that most research is based on proxy measures and assumptions. This paper benefitted from a unique dataset of 34 interviews with people closely involved in environmental policymaking processes. The non-mediated account of their experiences, perceptions, and motivations allowed an exploration of the research question in depth, thus contributing to filling the two gaps described above, and offering highly valuable insights.

A question arises about the generalisability of this research, given the unique geopolitical circumstances of Israel. While there are some considerations which are unique, such as a heightened need for legitimacy, the subject area of this research is environmental. Most of the interviewees have been environmental policy experts most of their careers, and had relatively little to do with broader agendas such as security or the Palestinian issue, in which Israel may be an outlier. This mitigates the concern regarding Israel. At the same time, a large proportion of the diffusion policy scholarship is concerned with federal settings (notably the USA, whose unique circumstances are perhaps no more generalisable to other countries). Adding non-American, non-federal case studies to the literature is another contribution of this paper.

The three cases were studied in the context of one another, and not in comparison with wider issue areas (such as health, education, or security). Operating in a relatively narrow field of environmental policies, one might ask if these results are generalisable to other issue areas. While the conceptual model is applicable, some attributes might be more fully expressed in other issues. For example, while the concept of threat and opportunity was not found to be significant in the perception of environmental issues, it may play a role in other issues such as education or migration. While more evidence is needed, there is also merit contributing to the understanding of environmental policies and policymaking – an area which is likely to receive significant attention in the coming years.

While this paper is only an initial, small sample exploratory research with certain important limitations as noted above, it nevertheless suggests that issue attributes are indeed a promising research direction. In order to reinforce the model's explanatory capabilities, more rigorous empirical evidence is needed – on different issues, different geographies, and different diffusion mechanisms (such as competition).

Understanding the dynamics of policymaking and policy diffusion has the potential to yield highly valuable insights; for example, it may reveal whether some issues are more likely to attract genuine attempts at achieving good, successful policies, while others get diverted by other considerations, leading to convergence around a limited set of policies that are considered appropriate. Faced with great uncertainty regarding the outcome of policies, especially for highly complicated problems such as climate change, focusing on good policy processes may be the way forward.

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## Annex – Illustrative quotes for coding frame

### Issue attributes

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Salience</b>	<p>Air pollution was a hot, important topic. There was a strong public opinion around it. Politicians realised they can use that. (PO15)</p> <p>(Air pollution) was an important matter; one that needed its own law and not a generic reference in the Public Nuisance Law. (OA9)</p> <p>The minister realised what an important topic it was. (PO3)</p> <p>There is nothing generic about dealing with air pollution. No two industrial plants are the same; no two processes are the same. Everything has to be tailored. It's as complex as it gets. Complex and very important. (OA7)</p>	<p>Waste was not on the agenda of the ministry. It was THE agenda of the Ministry. It was not the Ministry of Environmental Protection, it was 'the Ministry of Waste and Recycling' – in terms of budgets, human resources, and media focus. (OA7)</p> <p>It is one of the more important topics because it is one of the most relevant to citizens. Between us, who cares about climate change? What can I do? But waste? Waste I can separate. (PO20)</p> <p>The minister made waste a key issue in his policy, out of the perception that it's an area where he has most of the power – as opposed to other things, which may be more important but in which he doesn't have the authority. (PO1)</p> <p>Any member of the Knesset that wanted an environmental agenda</p>	<p>Maybe two people in the ministry thought this was of any importance. No budget was allocated to dealing with climate change, except for funds which were streamed through the Shani Committee, and that's where it stopped. I don't think it's important either. Only for PR purposes. And that's what drove the entire mitigation plan – there was a hysteria caused by 'we need to do this because Peres said, because otherwise we'll look stupid to the rest of the world'. (OA7)</p> <p>Slowly we entered into climate change and explained that climate was relevant to local air pollution. We rode the international wave to deal with a domestic problem. We don't contribute anything to climate change, even if we go crazy, but it helps lead important domestic agendas. (PO20)</p> <p>Ahead of Copenhagen we wanted to</p>

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
		<p>wanted to suggest creative solutions for packaging waste. (OA5)</p> <p>The pressure on decision-makers is much larger and on many levels when it comes to waste. Local authorities have recently been busy with calculating their GHG emissions etc. etc., but it's clear to everybody that this is for PR, and if not PR then it's some general policy measure...waste, on the other hand, is our core problem. That is what is pressing local authorities. Climate change is much less pressing, on the local and national levels. (OA10)</p> <p>We could have researched and constructed a suitable law. That would not have taken three or four months like this law did, it would have taken three or four years – and in the meantime, the environment would have been screwed. (OA3)</p>	<p>pass a few bills in the Knesset. I met with the head of the opposition. She said she doesn't care, she doesn't care at all. Even if it doesn't cost anything – conflict with rich people, budget – even then nobody cares. Only potential embarrassment ahead of an international forum generated some action. There is ignorance, borderline dismissal. Anything they did was to look ok, they didn't care about the topic. (PO22)</p> <p>Engaging in any activity around it was 'cover your ass'. Playing along to do the bare minimum. Can't afford to go to an international conference without a paper. (PO21)</p> <p>Once the gas was discovered, all renewables were taken off the table. The Ministry of Finance said: 'Israel doesn't care about international issues if they don't have anything to do with Palestinians, security etc.' There is no real connection to international community. Maybe to some financial arrangements. (PO22)</p>

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
			I personally think Israel is making a giant mistake by disengaging from the international community...climate change is a very important and relevant issue to Israel – we’re highly vulnerable. Dramatic, important, big, it’s happening now. And nobody cares. It’s appalling. (PO22)
<b>Complexity</b>	<p>There is nothing generic about dealing with air pollution. No two industrial plants are the same; no two processes are the same. Everything has to be tailored. It’s as complex as it gets. Complex and very important. (OA7)</p> <p>Air pollution became a more and more complex problem as industry has become more sophisticated and dominant, and as life itself became more complex. (PO15)</p>	<p>This [issue] is a pretty simple one, especially in comparison to climate change. Everyone knows what it means to separate waste. To get a policy right is just a matter of plugging in the right numbers. It’s not like assessing the greenhouse gas emissions reductions achieved by increased efficiency of an industrial chiller. I mean, most people don’t even know what a chiller is or what it looks like, but everyone has a garbage can. (OA7)</p>	<p>Many people in the different ministries just don’t understand climate change. It’s not their profession. If someone comes and tells you with confidence that this is what needs to be done, you do it. (PO4)</p>
<b>Threat/opportunity</b>	<p>It was clear that this bill can provide you with a lot of political credit. (OA9)</p>	<p>We were to be faced with mountains of waste if we didn’t do anything. (OA7)</p>	<p>Climate change was an opportunity; pre-Copenhagen, Israel was even hoping to see some money flowing from investors. (OA7)</p> <p>A crisis in my perception was not the climate, but a shortage in energy</p>

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
			<p>supply, and since climate goes hand in hand with that, it was the right thing to ride that wave. (PO20)</p> <p>For years we tried talking about climate change and heard 'let's deal with our own problems first'...and finally we changed the discourse. We said sorry, this has nothing to do with melting ice caps and polar bears. This is about money. (PO20)</p> <p>The minister understood, more than all his predecessors, what environment is and how you can leverage it, especially the economic benefits of it. He internalised the OECD concept of green growth, and of climate change as a way to leverage other environmental issues. (OA10)</p> <p>We wouldn't have been able to promote the climate agenda without clarifying to the government and to the public that there are numerous benefits – energy savings, energy independence, financial savings, more competitiveness. (PO10)</p>
<b>Fragility</b>	NGOs also understood...all the	'It was a common experience, and	[relevant references were off the

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
	actors dealing with it were ripe and ready for a more rational discussion' (PO4)	very good, very strong one...it is beneficial and serves to soften the conflict. NGOs aren't always invited (on government delegations), and this time we were' (OA13)	record]
<b>Local/International</b>		Household waste is local and not a global problem (PO20)	This was a global problem, and the solution had to resonate with global policies. (OA7)

## Diffusion mechanisms

	<b>Air Pollution</b>	<b>Waste</b>	<b>Climate Change</b>
<b>Learning-based evidence</b>	<p>I never said ‘this is how it was done in the world’ or ‘you adopted the Dutch model but the Belgian model is actually better’. I didn’t take a fixed model from one place, but said that here we should do so and so, for essential [intrinsic] reasons. (OA2)</p> <p>We took a bit of everything. We took some nice ideas from the American law, some nice ideas from the European directives, from the German TA Luft...we collected examples of many air pollution laws from all over the world. We employed students to do research; and then had a team of legal experts analyse their findings. We had inter-disciplinary round tables – scientists, legal experts, economists, and policy experts, and that’s how we got to the proposed legislation. It didn’t take one day. (OA9)</p> <p>The Clean Air Act is a classic example where you can see fingerprints of collecting ideas from different places. (PO15)</p> <p>Nothing will be adopted in Israel unless it is fully adapted to the local needs and circumstances; we as NGOs worked very hard to make those adaptations, to offer the system what is right for the system – to challenge it, to advance it, but to be the right thing. (OA1)</p>	<p>We performed a very deep learning process. (PO20)</p> <p>We can’t just take legislation from Europe, throw it on the table and say: all or nothing. That doesn’t work. You need to adjust, to adapt. We read a lot. We all read a lot. We were informed by the NGOs, by think tanks. We looked at everything. We compared all the models. We saw a variety of systems and models and we saw it with our own eyes and we saw (in Europe) the difficulties they are struggling with...we weren’t only impressed by the numbers. We asked a lot of questions. We were very critical. We analysed all the models one by one; the Dutch model and the German model too. (OA12)</p> <p>I usually refer to substantial research and policy papers, look up the author and email them with questions. (PO1).</p> <p>Coming back from the educational visits, policymakers came back</p>	



	<p>We didn't take the fine details as is; we made changes to reflect the local circumstances, including the institutional setting. (OA9)</p>	<p>with doubts, and questions. They weren't convinced so easily. (OA10)</p> <p>You never adopt without knowing what you're taking. Sometimes you came back from these trips with a positive impact and sometimes with a negative impact. You usually go to conferences and talk and talk and talk. We never said we're going for the Belgian model. There were a few models and we wanted to know which one worked best. There were a couple of crossroads where we had to make choices, compromises. (PO7)</p> <p>I make a point of analysing less successful countries as well, with reduced organisational and managerial and financial capacities, and to see what are the achievements there. (PO1).</p> <p>Industry promoted the Belgian model from the start; they were in touch with the Belgians, read their papers, but it also made sense because of the characteristics of the Belgian market – in terms of size, and waste quantities, and population, and even in terms of</p>	
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		<p>their way of thinking...they're not as pedantic as the Germans...it worked more for us. (PO12)</p>	
<p><b>Emulation-based evidence</b></p>	<p>The director of ATD, who was an American lawyer, once came back from the States with a thick blue book, and told me in his thick American accent: 'This is the US Clean Air Act. Go for it'. (OA9)</p> <p>The ministry cherry picked things that were convenient; some things from Germany, some things from Holland, some things from Belgium, or Canada or New South Wales. (OA5)</p>	<p>When asked to justify what you do, and you say 'guys, it works in a range of countries, in all the European countries. There's no reason why it shouldn't work here'. If I could stick to existing legislation, why not? (PO20).</p> <p>When we started working there was already something in the air about the way the Belgian model was purposefully presented as the 'successful Belgian model'; it was no doubt in the air, or deliberately put on the table by the industry. (PO2)</p>	<p>This was a global problem, and the solution had to resonate with global policies. There was no point in inventing the wheel. We set out to find a solution to copy. Unlike waste, which is a very domestic issue, with very local-specific characteristics – for climate change there was no point in developing any localised solutions. (OA7)</p> <p>(Policymakers) understood that although Israel is not a central player in climate change because of its low overall emissions, it could still upgrade its international status by doing the right thing. (OA10)</p>

# Chapter 5: ‘A very human business’ – trans-governmental networking initiatives and domestic climate action

## Abstract

*The past two decades have witnessed a proliferation of networking initiatives, in both the private and public spheres, aimed at addressing climate change. Previous work has suggested that these initiatives largely achieve their governance functions through learning and the provision of resources. Our particular contribution in the present paper is to advance the current understanding of networking initiatives by suggesting that they may also perform emotional roles which are important in motivating domestic action on climate change. In order to illustrate our argument, we examine GLOBE International, an inter-parliamentary institution focused on supporting the development of domestic legislation in the area of sustainable development. Based on interviews with 26 legislators, we provide evidence that GLOBE functions as a network for learning – particularly political learning. Yet of equal, if not greater, significance is that involvement in the networking initiative has fostered a sense of common purpose, feelings of unity, inspiration, and an ‘esprit de corps’ amongst participants. In doing so, it has given rise to emotional energy, which has helped to motivate and sustain climate action by legislators.*

## 5.1 Introduction

The past two decades have witnessed a ‘Cambrian explosion’ (Robert O. Keohane & Victor, 2011) of public and private initiatives in the transnational realm to address climate change. These initiatives have taken on a number of different forms, mandates, and regulatory functions (Hoffmann, 2011; Castán Broto & Bulkeley, 2013). Yet a feature of many of them is elements of networking. That is, they seek to connect spatially disparate actors, typically with the express aim of sharing information and ‘best practice’. Examples of such initiatives with a

networking function include the C40 cities, the Climate Group, and, the focus of the present paper, GLOBE International.

A frequently made assumption is that these networking initiatives – which can be understood as a type of ‘governance network’ (Blanco, Lowndes, & Pratchett, 2011) – accelerate climate action amongst participants through two possible mechanisms. The first is learning. Through their involvement in networking initiatives, actors can learn about and draw practical lessons about policies already deployed in other contexts, using this knowledge to develop policies of their own (Hoffmann, 2011; Legrand, 2012; Stone, 2013; Busch, 2015). A second mechanism is resource acquisition. Networks provide additional resources, such as legitimacy, finance, and political leverage, which better enables participants to pursue climate action (Raustiala, 2002; Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004).

While we do not dispute these roles, we nevertheless argue that this view of networking initiatives is too narrow. In particular, conventional accounts largely omit more social and emotional roles performed by networks. Most importantly, and largely ignored in the literature, we posit that networking initiatives may help to generate solidarity and an ‘*esprit de corps*’ (Blumer, 1939). They may also be a source of ‘inspiration’ for participants (Thrash, Moldovan, Oleynick, & Maruskin, 2014). In doing so, network encounters potentially galvanise actors and give rise to emotional energy and motivation which are instrumental in sustaining commitment and subsequent climate action amongst participants.

In order to illustrate our argument, we examine the dynamics of GLOBE International – an inter-parliamentary institution (IPI) focused on promoting sustainable development. More specifically, we focus on GLOBE’s climate change-related initiatives, which have sought to ‘provide a forum for legislators to share experiences in developing, passing and overseeing the implementation of climate change legislation and to support legislators as they move forward’ (GLOBE International, 2015). Our concern is with the constituent mechanisms through which GLOBE has catalysed domestic climate action, with a particular

focus on the networking aspects of the initiative. Empirically, we focus on the experiences of participants in the network (i.e. legislators in national parliaments) in the run-up to, during, and following major summits.

Our paper makes a number of important contributions. First, we advance the current understanding of how networking initiatives in the transnational sphere bring about changes in participants' knowledge, beliefs, feelings, and practices. The academic literature has made significant progress in describing the emerging architecture of the climate governance system(s), highlighting the growing role of transnational and transgovernmental networks (Abbott, 2012; Kütting & Cerny, 2015). Yet, much less well-understood are the mechanisms through which these boundary-spanning organisations achieve (or otherwise) their governance functions. Through an analysis of GLOBE, we are able to provide more refined insights into how networking organizations influence, empower and inspire the actions of their participants. Our study also responds to calls for more work which documents how informal coordination and formal cooperation at the international level contributes to domestic climate-related policies and practices (Falkner, 2014).

A second contribution is that we go beyond existing accounts in invoking a role for emotions. Inspiration for doing so comes from a growing body of work within disciplines ranging from sociology, political science, geography, through to international relations, which has identified a role for emotions in shaping human behaviour. Among other things, this literature has shown how participation in collective endeavours may forge a common identity amongst participants, as well as giving rise to heightened enthusiasm and commitment for particular causes (Hercus, 1999; Jasper, 2011; Hutchison & Bleiker, 2014). It has also drawn attention to the role played by inspiration in motivating individuals to bring certain ideas or visions into being (Thrash et al., 2014). We draw from, and build on, these insights to explain how the relational context of transgovernmental networks – and particularly those which involve episodes of corporeal co-presence – may stimulate emotions, feelings, and aspirations which

facilitate subsequent animate climate action. In doing so, we offer a complementary narrative to existing accounts, which have almost exclusively focused on learning and/or the acquisition of resources, amongst other, by refining the distinction between the concept of emotional energy from the concept of normative learning (e.g. Henry, 2009; Huitema, Cornelisse, & Ottow, 2010; Haug, Huitema, & Wenzler, 2011),

Third, we contribute to understanding the role of IPIs and, more broadly, trans-governmentalism<sup>36</sup> (Slaughter, 2002) in contemporary environmental governance. The (somewhat limited) literature on IPIs (e.g. Cutler, 2006; Legrand, 2012) has largely ignored their growing engagement with environmental issues. By analysing GLOBE International, we are able to begin to fill this gap in the current understanding. GLOBE has a long-running involvement in global environmental issues, has attracted parliamentarians from a wide range of countries, and its activities have received high-profile media attention. Our study is, to the best of our knowledge, the first of its kind to investigate its activities, dynamics, and impacts. An in-depth analysis of GLOBE additionally allows us to provide applied lessons for the design of networking initiatives in the area of the environment.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: Section 2 provides a more detailed background of GLOBE International and its activities focused on climate change. Understanding the structure, membership, and activities of GLOBE is important because it shapes the relational context in which interactions take place. Section 3 critically reviews past contributions to the understanding of networking initiatives and argues the need to take greater account of the emotional roles they perform. Research design and methods are described in Section 4. Section 5 presents our empirical findings, while discussion and conclusions are presented in Section 6.

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<sup>36</sup> Keohane & Nye (1974, p. 43) define transgovernmental relations as, 'sets of direct interactions among sub-units of different governments that are not controlled or closely guided by the policies of the cabinets or chief executives of those governments'

## 5.2 GLOBE as an inter-parliamentary network

Much of the existing literature on the role of networking initiatives in climate governance has focused on so-called transnational networks (Bulkeley et al., 2012). These networks are engaged in governance in the sense that ‘they possess the authority and actually undertake to steer the conduct of target actors toward collective goals’ (Abbott, 2012, p. 572). Yet, a distinguishing feature is that they include at least one non-state and/or sub-national governmental actor. Our focus in the present paper is on a closely-related category of network governance which has received far less attention in the literature, namely inter-parliamentary institutions (IPIs). IPIs are transgovernmental organisations in which parliamentarians (i.e. legislators) from different states interact, deliberate, and co-operate ‘with a view to formulating their interests, adopting decisions, strategies or programs, which they implement or promote, formally and informally, in interactions with other actors, by various means such as persuasion, advocacy or institutional pressure’ (Šabič, 2008, p. 258).

GLOBE International<sup>37</sup> – the subject of the present paper – was founded in 1989 by legislators from the US Congress, European Parliament, Japanese Diet, and the Russian State Duma ‘with the mission to respond to urgent environmental challenges through the development and advancement of legislation’ (GLOBE International, 2015). It exists outside of any inter-governmental agreement and is intended to function as an action-oriented international knowledge and policy network, focused around peer-to-peer information exchange and the provision of support to national parliamentarians. Underlying this model of informal transgovernmentalism is the assumption that legislators will gain credible and authoritative information which they can use domestically to inform the development of new legislation through conventional domestic legislative channels, or else by influencing agency decision-making (Slaughter, 2002).

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<sup>37</sup> Originally ‘Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment’

Our focus in the present paper is on GLOBE's climate legislation initiative – although the organisation also operates international initiatives on deforestation, fisheries, and the conservation of marine environment and natural capital accounting. GLOBE's involvement in climate dates back to 2005 when Tony Blair, then UK Prime Minister and President of the G8, asked the organisation to create a legislators' forum consisting of parliamentarians from major parties of the G8, European Parliament, Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa. In 2008, GLOBE entered a second phase with a consensus agreement between 100 senior legislators on a framework agreement on climate change at the G8+5 legislators' dialogue on climate change in Tokyo. The framework agreement expanded GLOBE's activity to G20 countries and established international policy commissions – including an International Commission on Climate & Energy Security, chaired by US Congressman Ed Markey. In October 2009, GLOBE hosted its Copenhagen forum in the Danish Parliament, ahead of the COP in Copenhagen, during which over 100 legislators from 16 countries adopted, by consensus, a set of legislative principles on climate change drafted by Ed Markey together with Chinese Congressman Wang Guantao.

GLOBE operates through cross-partisan national chapters, which include at least 10 active parliamentarians in office – some of the larger chapters have over 50 members. Chapters exist in over 40 legislatures across all continents, in some of which GLOBE has had dedicated staff (Japan, Mexico, India, Nigeria, EU, UK). There are focal points in approximately 40 other legislatures worldwide, and legislators are invited to participate in activities and events regardless of whether there is a formal GLOBE chapter in their country or not. National chapter members convene in varying frequencies, from bi-weekly to semi-annually. GLOBE has an international board elected by the network members. The board is composed of the President, the Chairman of the Board and the Vice Presidents of Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe.



An important feature of GLOBE's activities has been a series of international summits. Important recent summits include: the first and second World Summit of Legislators held in Brazil in 2012 and Mexico in 2014, which were attended by legislators from over 70 countries, the first and second Climate Legislation Summits held in London in 2013 and Washington DC in 2014, and the Climate Adaptation Legislation and South-South Cooperation Summit held in Beijing in 2013. Held in venues such as the US Senate and Mexican Congress, the summits have typically featured a combination of expert briefings and presentations by international organisations. Notable examples include the presidents of the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Secretary General of the UNFCCC and of UNEP; the vice-president of the IPCC; and heads of state and ministers. The formal outcome of the summits is often a declaration or statement signed by legislators which they pledge to take back to their parliaments. Such documents have included the legislative principles on climate (Copenhagen, 2009), legislative principles on adaptation legislation (Beijing, 2013), and a resolution on climate change (Mexico City, 2014). The summits have also seen the launch of the legislation studies produced by GLOBE in partnership with academic institutions – including climate legislation studies.

GLOBE's members have featured prominent and influential politicians ranging from Al Gore (former Vice President of the US), Shinzo Abe (Japan's Prime Minister), Prakash Javadekar (India's serving Climate Change Minister), Rafael Pacchiano Alamán (Mexico's environment minister), and Bukola Saraki (Chairman of the National Assembly of Nigeria). However, participation in GLOBE has also attracted many lesser-known parliamentarians. In fact, the structure of the network, and especially its cross-partisan nature, means that some countries are represented, at times, by members of the opposition, and/or by people with little influence over decision-making in their respective parliaments. This reflects an important feature of GLOBE: membership is voluntary with participants being 'invited' by the GLOBE organisation to take part. In this respect, the organisation differs from some other IPIs, whose

members are purposely chosen by national or regional parliaments as formal representatives (Kissling, 2011).

The structure of GLOBE provides an opportunity for single parliamentarians to pursue their own interests independently of national governments – although they may seek to subsequently influence the domestic and foreign policies of these governments. Moreover, through the constituent networks, GLOBE allows single parliamentarians to connect, co-operate, and problem-solve directly with their counterparts in other countries. Importantly, participants in the GLOBE network are not bound by any formal obligations. Instead, the organisation relies on ‘softer’ governing processes such as learning, persuasion, and agenda-setting to achieve its goals of advancing domestic climate change legislation in its various countries. In this sense, GLOBE has much in common with several high-profile transnational networking initiatives, such as the Cities for Climate Change Initiative (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004; Giest & Howlett, 2013; Hakelberg, 2014).

## **5.3 Understanding networking initiatives**

### **5.3.1 Conventional explanations and their shortcomings**

The existing literature which has sought to understand networking initiatives – including those focused on climate change – has largely focused on two key roles that they are assumed to perform: learning and the acquisition of resources. Learning comprises a potentially complex set of phenomena but, at its core, learning can be understood as a process whereby actors alter their thoughts and/or potential behaviours in relation to a particular issue (Sabatier, 1987). Actors can learn by analysing their own experience or, alternatively, by observing and interacting with others (Radaelli, 2008). A number of different typologies of learning exist (Sabatier, 1987; Bennett & Howlett, 1992; May, 1992; Baird, Plummer, Haug, & Huitema, 2014). One common distinction – widely made in the political science literature – is between policy learning and political

learning (Nilsson, 2005; Radaelli, 2009). The former encapsulates learning about the means (instruments) and ends (goals) of policy<sup>38</sup>. Within the context of cross-border learning, one of the most commonly mentioned forms of policy learning is 'lesson drawing' (Rose, 1991), whereby actors purposely learn from observing the previous experience of others. A second broad category of learning is political, which is concerned with new strategies and tactics to achieve specific political goals. Political learning covers a number of different activities ranging from the substantive use of information to influencing political agendas through to the symbolic incorporations of concepts to increase policy-making legitimacy (May, 1992; Radaelli, 2008).

Scholarship on social learning in networks (e.g. Newig, Günther, & Pahl-Wostl, 2010; Newig & Kvarda, 2012; Vinke-de Kruijf, Bressers, & Augustijn, 2014) also distinguishes between change of knowledge and change of norms. An important concept to note is that of normative learning, which can be defined as 'Learning encompassing a change in norms, values, and belief systems' (Huitema et al., 2010, p. 9). Normative learning (which will be distinguished from other concepts in section 5.3.2 below) is a process that is subject to social influence, amongst others by groups or networks, including advocacy coalitions (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Henry, 2009; Sabatier, Flowers, & Weible, 2011). This is demonstrated, for example, by the change in values by jurors after participating in Dutch Citizen's Juries for water management (Huitema et al., 2010). Normative learning is also related to second-order or double-loop learning (Argyris, 1976, 1982), which is a learning process in which there is change to the underlying norms ('double loop'), unlike learning processes in which new information is used to bridge a mismatch to existing norms and values ('single loop'). Previous work has demonstrated an important role for networks in

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<sup>38</sup> Several streams of literature – including work concerned with the cross-border diffusion of innovations – distinguish between forms of policy learning where the aim is to improve the understanding of 'what works' and learning which is oriented towards enhancing 'legitimacy' (Radaelli, 2008; Gilardi, 2012). The latter is often referred to as 'emulation' and can be interpreted as a more symbolic form of policy learning. In the present paper, we do not make this distinction, not least because our central concern is not with the underlying motivations for policy learning.

fostering cross-border learning processes. One stream of research has explored the activities of transnational professional networks and policy communities in creating 'circuits of knowledge' through which ideas, policies, and ensembles of assumed 'best practice' are created, legitimated, and diffused across geographic space (True & Mintrom, 2001; Stone, 2004; Goldman, 2007; McCann, 2008; Healey, 2013). For example, Paterson et al. (2013) document how networks of elite experts – comprising, amongst others, academics, NGOs, and international organisations – were instrumental in disseminating 'common-sense' ideas about the appropriateness of market-based approaches (e.g. emissions trading) as a solution for addressing climate change. Additional empirical support for the existence of learning through networks comes from various transnational governance initiatives in the area of climate change. Studies have provided evidence that transnational municipal networks (TMNs) facilitate policy learning through information sharing and lesson drawing (Gore, 2010; Hakelberg, 2014; Busch, 2015). They have also demonstrated how TMNs help to re-shape discursive framings of the problem of urban sustainability amongst participants (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). What limited research has been undertaken into IPIs has also provided evidence that they facilitate information exchange and learning. Thus, Legrand (2012) shows how the Windsor Conference – an informal network comprising senior civil servants – provided a setting for positive and negative lesson drawing.

A second role commonly ascribed to networking initiatives in the literature is the provision of resources. An underpinning assumption of this work, which has its roots in the notion of resource dependence in policy networks (Rhodes, 2006; Blanco et al., 2011), is that actors participate in networks in order to acquire resources that they might not otherwise be able to obtain. One of these resources, closely bound up with learning, is the provision of useful, credible, and authoritative information (Slaughter, 2002). However, the literature also variously discusses finance (accessing additional streams of funding), political resources (leveraging the support of wider coalitions of actors), and legitimacy (acquiring the right and acceptance to govern) (Eden, 2009; Hoffmann, 2011;

Meckling, 2011). As an example: Betsill & Bulkeley (2004) find that the principal contribution of participation in the Cities for Climate Change Initiative was the provision of enhanced resources that helped to build local capacities to address climate action at the municipal level. Amongst others, these resources included ‘political kudos’, which granted actors heightened legitimacy to realise climate- and energy-related goals domestically.

We do not dispute the two roles performed by these governance networks – though we do note the limited amount of empirical work evaluating their incidence within the specific context of networking initiatives. Rather, our argument is that (by themselves) learning and resources provide a potentially unsatisfactory account of how networking initiatives achieve their governance functions. Networking initiatives are invariably voluntary and require time, commitment, and energy on the part of their members. Moreover, participants may lack the power, authority, and means to readily follow through on new knowledge, ambitions, and obligations which are hypothesised to come about from their involvement in networking initiatives. The result is potential disappointment, disillusionment, and even feelings of failure. This raises questions, not only about why participants engage in such initiatives in the first place, but also how participants sustain their commitment. An additional puzzle, which is not fully addressed by the existing literature, is why participants should necessarily engage in some of the co-operative activities they are alleged to within network settings – including the exchange of information. One response to these questions is resources. However, it remains unclear as to whether all participants should necessarily stand to gain resources, or whether participation in network governance (as opposed as policy networks (Blanco et al., 2011)), can always be portrayed in terms of a model reciprocal resource exchange.

### **5.3.2 Bringing emotions into networking initiatives**

One way to begin to address these questions is by recourse to scholarship which is broadly concerned with emotions, collective action, and social movements. An

important insight from this body of work is that collective ventures can forge solidarity amongst participants, whereby individuals identify with the collective unit (Hunt & Benford, 2004). The significance of solidarity not only lies in securing individuals' participation, but also sustaining and reinforcing loyalty and commitment to the goals of a particular movement, collective enterprise, or organisation. Solidarity is closely aligned with the concept of '*esprit de corps*' which seeks to capture 'feelings of devotion and enthusiasm for a group that is shared by its members' (Hunt & Benford, 2004, p. 439). The literature documents how *esprit de corps* is important in cementing a collective identity, a shared sense of purpose, and commitment to a common cause.

Commitment is of particular significance because it defines whether (or not) individuals continue to participate and offer their time, energies, and ongoing support. Without sufficient commitment, individuals may decide to abandon a particular movement, cause, or organisation, or fail to carry out the requirements of its members (Hercus, 1999). Indeed, it is for this reason that *esprit de corps* has been deployed to understand how particular bureaucratic and judicial organisations realise (or otherwise) their goals, including in contexts where opposition exists (Vauchez, 2012; Juncos & Pomorska, 2014; Greenwood & Roederer-Rynning, 2015).

One way of thinking about how commitment is generated, but also sustained, is through the concept of emotional energy (Gould, 2002). Emotional energy is a form of energetic arousal which creates feelings of excitement, enthusiasm, and vigour (Spreitzer, Lam, & Quinn, 2013). In the organisational and psychological literature, several phrases are used to describe to what degree people feel energized amongst others, energetic activation (Quinn, Spreitzer, & Lam, 2012), energetic arousal (Thayer, 1990), positive activation (Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999), zest (Peterson, Park, Hall, & Seligman, 2009), and emotional energy (Collins, 1981). These concepts can be 'experienced as feelings of vitality, vigor, or enthusiasm' and manifested 'in emotions (feelings with short durations targeted toward a specific object, event, or person), moods (longer-lasting, less-

targeted feelings), or dispositions (enduring tendencies to be energetic or not)' (Quinn et al., 2012, p. 342).

Collins (1993) develops a model of 'interactional rituals' which sheds light onto the relational nature of emotional energy. According to his model, social interaction within a group setting can generate (amongst others) positive feelings of enthusiasm and confidence, particularly within a context of co-presence, a common focus of attention, and a shared set of feelings. The energetic arousal from interpersonal interactions may be temporary, although the emotional charge stored up from a series of successful 'rituals' can translate into more enduring affective commitments. Collins suggests that ongoing participation can be sustained by collective symbols which, in a political setting, could include slogans, pledges, policies, or even charismatic leaders. Symbols provide a common focus for interaction rituals and shared ideas around which collective thinking takes place.

An important distinction to make is a between normative learning and emotional energy. As mentioned in section 5.3.1 above, normative learning encompasses 'a change in norms, values, and belief systems' (Huitema et al., 2010, p. 24). It is a process in which one's beliefs about right and wrong change. Emotional energy is a complementary concept to normative learning, and goes beyond a change in beliefs and norms. It is the embodiment of the willingness or energy to *act* upon those beliefs or norms. To illustrate this, one can hold a *normative* position that reducing the use of energy is good. This normative position can be a result of (normative) learning. However, it does not mean one *feels driven to act* upon their norms. This drive, a desire for action, is propelled by emotional energy. If norms serve as one's compass, normative learning can turn the needle, but emotional energy is the wind that actually blows the sails.

Emotional energy is also not to be confused with relational learning (Huitema et al., 2010; Baird et al., 2014), which results in 'improved understanding of mindsets of others; building of relationships; enhanced trust and cooperation'

(Baird et al., 2014, p. 53). The two concepts are not unrelated - emotional energy may be generated more easily in an environment of trust and cooperation - but they are not synonymous.

A further concept which sheds additional light on how actors might be motivated to take a particular course of action is that of inspiration.<sup>39</sup> Defined as ‘the process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something’ (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016), inspiration remains a comparatively under-explored concept in social science. However, its role is widely invoked, particularly in relation to understanding acts of devotion, creativity, and political activism (e.g. Marx, 1967; Hellmanzik, 2012; Oleynick, Thrash, LeFew, Moldovan, & Kieffaber, 2014). Thrash & Elliot (2003) suggest that inspiration arises where individuals become aware of new or better possibilities. Moreover, inspiration combines being inspired by, and inspired to, something (Thrash & Elliot, 2004). The former refers to the experience of being moved by the perceived value of a particular ‘eliciting object’, such as a role model, creative image, or idea. Being inspired to do something, on the other hand, describes the motivation to reproduce or extend the qualities of this evocative object.

Past work provides support for several of these theoretical ideas. The empirical literature therefore documents how participation in collective endeavours is animated and sustained by feelings of solidarity, affective attachment to particular causes, and by positive emotional energy. Much of this has come from research into social movements which can be interpreted as constituting a particular type of network governance (Nicholls, 2009). Work has emphasised the emotional experiences of participants and, moreover, how emotions propel the creation, maintenance, and functioning of activist networks (Bosco, 2007; Gruszczynska, 2009). To take one example: Hercus (1999) describes how participation in protests, rallies, and other forms of activism provided feminist

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<sup>39</sup> While some scholars do not classify inspiration as an emotion, Shiota, Thrash, Danvers, & Dombrowski (2016, p. 369) nevertheless note that ‘instances of inspiration are certainly emotion-laden’.



activists with a recharge of emotional energy which allowed them to continue their activities in the face of several setbacks.

Yet the importance of emotional energy is not restricted to social movements. Henn and Bathelt (2015) document how networking and face-to-face communications at business conferences helped to foster a sense of solidarity and community. Moreover, it was this camaraderie which created a context for interpersonal trust, in which information was freely exchanged amongst participants. There is also some evidence – albeit largely anecdotal – that international political conferences and summits are instrumental in generating a degree of emotional energy. For example, Mintrom (2004) briefly notes how various UN World Conferences on Women generated ‘excitement and energy’ which led to subsequent policy action. The standing ovations, tear shedding, and spontaneous hugs at the end of the Paris Summit (COP21) in 2015 may also provide a recent example for this energy. Witt (2003)

The role of inspiration is less well-documented in the empirical literature. A number of authors have suggested that environmental policy adoptions in one country have ‘inspired’ the incorporation of similar policies elsewhere – although the motivational underpinnings of these alleged instances of inspiration are rarely unpacked (e.g. Kronsell, 2002). Betsill & Bulkeley (2004) describe how the Cities for Climate Protection Programme provided a ‘source of inspiration’ for participants seeking to advance domestic climate action. Others have highlighted how principles inscribed into global environmental treaties have inspired policies in various countries (Wapner, 2003). Witt (2003) notes the role that emotional affection take in shaping action when encountering policy problems, specifically economic policies. Furthermore, it seems that the resilience of policy issues in face of risks of being swept off the agenda or resisting reinterpretations, as well as their likelihood to experience favourable policy interventions, is correlated with the emotional potential these issues can activate (Meier & Durrer, 1992, cited in; Witt, 2003, p. 81).

Drawing from these insights, we posit that networking initiatives – and especially those which involve corporeal co-presence – could well be a vehicle for animating and sustaining subsequent climate action by fostering solidarity, an *esprit de corps*, and emotional energy. In the context of GLOBE, the summits might be expected to create a bounded, relational space wherein delegates develop a sense of solidarity around the ‘common’ cause of climate change mitigation. The notion that such international gatherings constitute a form of staged ritual or spectacle, involving emotionally arousing displays of ambition, hope, and collective endeavour, has previously been recognised in the literature (Haas, 2002; Death, 2011; Mahony, 2013; Schüssler, Rüling, & Wittneben, 2014). Participants in GLOBE might be inspired by exemplars of climate leadership, ambitious policies, and stories of climate action. They moreover may well leave feeling energetically charged, with heightened enthusiasm and confidence to advance climate action domestically upon their return. Additionally, participants could sustain (or re-charge) their energy and commitment through ongoing interactions within networks created by GLOBE, both of the sort forged through attendance at the summits and those created by the GLOBE chapters.

## **5.4 Research design and methods**

In order to investigate these dynamics (learning, resource acquisition and the creation of solidarity, emotional energy, and inspiration) semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 26 legislators, policy officials, and secretariat staff of the GLOBE network (see Table 1). Seven additional interviews were conducted with members of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) who were not members of GLOBE. The rationale for including IPU members was to gather comparative insights into whether the dynamics of GLOBE were similar to other inter-parliamentary organisations. The interviews were all conducted by the authors in 2015, either in person or remotely via telephone or Skype,

although two of the respondents sent in their answers to interview questions in writing.

Interview questions sought to uncover the respondent's personal motivations for participating in GLOBE activities, their experiences, and the perceived impact of the network on their knowledge, beliefs, feelings, and actions. Respondents were encouraged to reflect on memorable experiences and feelings during and following the summits. They were also asked about their involvement in other inter-parliamentary networks. All interviews were transcribed and coded thematically, with themes emerging from the text and organised and refined into a broad coding frame.

A thematic map was then created, identifying for each interviewee key themes that they had referred to in their interview, and making qualitative notes about the perceived strength of these themes. These assessments relied on interviewees' accounts of their experiences, using words such learning, information, knowledge, inspiration, and excitement. For some interviewees, it was possible to identify the most prominent theme(s) for them by relying on explicit expression (e.g. 'the most important thing for me was...'). Yet, not all interviewees made such clear assertions. The analysis in the paper is based both on a count of interviewees who recalled motives, experiences, etc. aligned with the different themes, as well as on the accounts of interviewees who expressed that a certain theme was particularly prominent (**Table 12** below summarises this information).

It is important to note, that one of the key contributions of this paper was identifying and mapping the different roles that the network performs, rather than assessing the importance of these respective roles in relation to one another. Therefore, the qualification of the prominence of the themes serves (a) to ensure that comments were not taken into account beyond their original meaning; and (b) to lend support to the identification of new, under-explored roles of the network. Finally, while the interviews alone could not measure what

roles the network successfully performed, they point to the role(s) of the network as perceived by its members.

Insights from the interviews are supplemented by results from a structured survey which was distributed to legislators and policy officials during a legislator summit organised by GLOBE in the Mexican Congress in June 2014. The survey was offered in 5 languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Arabic) and comprised 28 mostly closed-ended questions (multiple choice or Likert-type scale). The questions focused mainly on the motivations, experiences, and impacts arising from participation. Responses were collected over the last two days of the three-day summit. The survey was completed by 34 legislators and 7 policy officials from 27 countries.

**Table 11 - Interviewees and survey respondents**

	<b>Number of interviews (countries represented)</b>	<b>Number of people who responded to survey (countries represented)</b>
GLOBE staff	4 (n/a)	-
Legislators from GLOBE network	20 (16)	34 (24)
Policy officials from GLOBE network (e.g. legal counsels)	2 (2)	7 (7)
Legislators from other inter-parliamentary networks who are not members of GLOBE	6 (6)	-
Policy officials from other inter-parliamentary networks who are not members of GLOBE	1 (1)	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>33 interviews (22 countries)</b>	<b>41 respondents (27 countries)</b>

One of the two authors was employed by GLOBE between March and July 2013, and furthermore was the lead author of the climate legislation study, produced in collaboration between GLOBE International and the LSE.<sup>40</sup> Surveys were distributed during the period of her employment, but were accompanied by a participant information sheet clearly stating that the questionnaire was for academic purposes only, and that there was no obligation to respond. All of the interviews were conducted after the author’s employment with GLOBE was terminated, and it was made clear to interviewees that the author was no longer an employee of GLOBE. A potential problem of this association with GLOBE is respondent bias – which could manifest itself, for example, in respondents providing answers which might be expected to ‘please’ someone who has worked for the organisation. In the event, respondents provided open and frank accounts of their experiences of GLOBE, including both positive and negative aspects. If anything, familiarity appeared to make respondents more willing to be candid towards the interviewers, which we interpreted as a potential product of trust.

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<sup>40</sup> Note, the other author has had no prior association with GLOBE International.

In order to gain additional contextual detail into GLOBE International, and its impacts on climate change debate and policy, we additionally carried out a review of the available (non-academic) literature. Numerous references to GLOBE summits and to the legislation studies were found in print and electronic news media – both in developed and developing countries (see Annex I for detailed coverage). Although these news stories say relatively little about how GLOBE International operates, or how it might impact on policy at the domestic level, they nevertheless provide some evidence about the level of visibility and political attention that the network has attracted. GLOBE International has received less attention in government and other grey literature, although there are several notable mentions of GLOBE’s work in UK parliamentary debates (the UK held the GLOBE International presidency and housed the international secretariat for several years until 2014).

## **5.5 Evidence from participants**

### **5.5.1 A network for learning and resources?**

GLOBE is conceived as a forum for experience exchange amongst legislators. Furthermore, the organisation seeks to empower legislators with policy-relevant knowledge, both through the legislation studies and through top-level expert presentations and dialogues. In the interviews, leaders of the GLOBE network repeatedly emphasised that the construction of formal knowledge by the organisation was purposefully tailored to the specific needs of legislators:

*You have legislators that are dealing with all sorts of things on a daily basis, not just for their constituents but also some issues in parliament, legislation and so on...they just simply don't have the time to get into the detail on some of these complex issues. By building something that is specifically for them, tailored for them, I think you can create a new baseline of knowledge that underpins or actually almost creates the motivation for them to act as legislators.*

*(I010)*

Learning emerged as a major theme in the interviews; it was cited as the leading motivation for participation. Many legislators enrolled themselves into the network in the expectation that GLOBE would serve as a valuable platform for knowledge exchange and learning from experts and peers. Within this context, a number of respondents from developing/emerging economies mentioned their lack of prior knowledge and experience in the area of climate change policy, and how this hampered their ability to initiate legislative measures to address climate change.

The majority (but not all) of the respondents highlighted the learning value of the network, and the summits in particular. For some members, the condensed learning opportunities provided by GLOBE were transformative in nature:

*I had zero knowledge prior to GLOBE...I was an environmental advocate, but it was limited to 'the three Rs' – reduce, reuse, recycle...but now I've learned about climate justice, climate finance, IPCC reports, and what's going on internationally.*

(I015)

Given the aspirations of GLOBE, one might expect lesson drawing to be a central feature of the networking initiative. Certainly, participants reported learning about legislative, policy, and administrative developments in other countries (e.g. interviewees 1, 2, 5, 20, 18, 21). As one respondent wryly noted, '[T]he capacity for legislators to learn from each other and to shamelessly steal policy ideas is really important' (I04). Participants moreover reported gaining insights into the experience of other countries in putting policies into effect – learning about good practices as well as potential pitfalls to avoid in implementation.

Yet, alongside policy learning, the GLOBE network also appeared to function as a site for political learning. For example, commenting on the value of the network, one legislator noted:

*GLOBE was also useful just to get in touch with other parliamentarians in other countries, who may be aware of what's happening in those countries, but also will have experience in dealing with political issues that are common in any jurisdiction.*

(I021)

Likewise, one respondent succinctly observed, 'It was useful to get to know how people succeed, how they manage to pass legislation' (I09). Another highlighted how '...this gathering of experience helps legislators put forward their proposals more boldly and more effectively' (I016).

The significance of political learning is perhaps unsurprising. The main participants in GLOBE are members of legislatures whose responsibility is to write, champion, and pass laws. They are not bureaucrats charged with designing specific policies to realise the ambitions and requirements enshrined in climate change legislation. It therefore makes sense that legislators should be interested in learning from their peers about the various ways in which they have sought to advance climate change legislation in their own countries. Many legislators exist in a context where there is significant domestic opposition to climate change policy, such that learning from others about potential political and administrative strategies assumes heightened importance.

However the significance of political learning went beyond lesson drawing. Another theme that emerged from the interviews was how legislators had used their knowledge from GLOBE in a 'substantiating' capacity (Radaelli, 2009), that is, to help support their political position domestically. Important in this regard were the GLOBE legislation studies, which provide a compendium of climate laws and policies in various developed and developing countries. A number of legislators testified to 'waving them around' as 'political weapons' in parliaments.<sup>41</sup> Information from the studies regarding the number of countries which had adopted climate change legislation was used strategically by participants, for example, to spur on further legislative action domestically. An example is the statement made in the UK parliament by Barry Gardiner, MP:

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<sup>41</sup> Amongst others, mentions of the study were made in parliaments and by governments in China, India, South Africa, and Mexico.



*The hon. Gentleman talked about our country legislating for this area and leading alone, but will he peruse the GLOBE International report on 33 countries, 32 of which are making what I would call progress—I am sure he would not—in the area? Britain is not doing things alone; 32 like-minded countries are passing legislation to similar effect.*  
(September 10, 2013<sup>42</sup>)

It was suggested that one important consequence of GLOBE was heightened oversight of domestic government policy. Asked about the role of the organisation, one respondent noted that it contributed to:

*...ensuring that governments actually have legislatures who were on it, looking at what they were doing, monitoring it, auditing it, scrutinising government policy, and saying, 'Hang on. No, you haven't got that right. You need to be going further in this, because actually you're not doing as well as this country over there or that government over there, and we don't want to lag behind here, and we think this is important.'*

(I04)

More broadly, political learning was important in the sense that it provided a better understanding of the realities of climate politics in other countries, which helped legislators form their positions on certain issues. While legislators are domestically-oriented, climate change comprises an international collective action dilemma, necessitating co-operation between nation states. Participation in GLOBE provided legislators with information about the domestic political challenges facing other countries and why, or why not, countries were making progress in tackling climate change (I025). For legislators from developed economies, in particular, this information had instrumental value. Several respondents therefore reported that learning about the problems faced by developing countries had allowed them to adjust their positions on international negotiations and/or climate-related foreign aid (I02, I020).

Nearly all of the respondents said that their key learning experiences had been through interactions with other legislators at the summits, which allowed

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<sup>42</sup> HC Deb 10 Sep 2013 : Vol 567, Col 229WH.

participants to compare practices with each other and gain insights into more—and less effective administrative and legislative measures. Face-to-face contact, in particular, provided an opportunity for legislators to ask questions and seek out information directly relevant to their needs. Additionally, it enabled parliamentarians to forge connections with their counterparts from other legislatures, with whom they could stay in touch with after the summits (e.g. through email exchange, etc.). Interactions took place both formally, during the organised sessions (e.g. focused discussions on particular topics), and informally, between the sessions (e.g. during coffee breaks) (e.g. I018, I019).

Contributing to learning was the general atmosphere in summits, which was reported by interviewees as being open, honest and conducive to candid discussion. For example: in one panel discussion on renewable energies in Mexico, one legislator elaborated on Germany's 'best practices' in implementing feed-in-tariffs, while another legislator from Spain shared parallel insights from her country under the title 'worst practices'. A contrast was sometimes drawn between GLOBE – which was described as a collaborative, non-competitive environment in which all legislators had a voice – and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – which was seen as a more closed, competitive venue for traditional inter-state diplomacy between government representatives. One respondent noted:

*I think what was interesting is that the motivations were much less geopolitical in the GLOBE process. For example, in the UN negotiations all the developing countries negotiate together as a block, in the G77 plus China, and it's sort of almost like we have to get as much out of the developed countries as possible and don't commit to doing much themselves, whereas in the GLOBE process I think there is very much more geopolitical neutral type stance that it was viewed as an issue of national benefit, national security.*

(I010)

Important in this respect is the particular membership of GLOBE. Delegates are not official representatives of their national governments, irrespective of whether they are members of the ruling party/coalition or even the opposition.

Participants are therefore not bound to take an ‘official’ party line, but can express their opinions more freely. Interviewees remarked on how this helped to ‘create a sense of trust’ between legislators (I04). The membership of the network was important for other reasons. Insights about policy and practice imparted by legislators were considered as more relevant, in the sense of being ‘...more attuned to the different pressures that you....as a parliamentarian understand’ (I021). Indeed, participants were more likely to be more receptive to information, advocacy, and persuasion from fellow parliamentarians, as opposed to civil society. As one parliamentarian bluntly noted: ‘I’m not bloody having Friends of the Earth feeling like they can pretty much instruct my office what to do’ (I06).

Learning did not simply take place through personal interactions. Several interviewees and survey respondents mentioned that their most significant learning episodes had been the high-level speakers – notably the scientific presentations from the IPCC, the US National Academy of Sciences and the UK Royal Society, as well as the dialogue with the President and Vice-President of the World Bank. References were also made to the climate legislation studies. Results of the survey (which was distributed in proximity to the launch of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the climate legislation study) revealed that over 60 per cent of respondents had read parts of the study. Interviews revealed that the study helped legislators to inform themselves – and, at times, their advisors – on developments in other countries they engage with:

*To have as a reference and guide so that when you go into a country, you need to see what's going on, so I open the book [The climate legislation study], and I say, ‘Right, they've done that. They haven't made a great deal of progress on this, but they're doing that.’ To be able to do that is hugely helpful, so that... when you're engaging with somebody, to show the respect that you've bothered to find out what their own legislation looks like...*

(I04)

It was moreover noted how the studies were instrumental in stimulating a process of self-reflection, comparison, and benchmarking. As one representative of GLOBE commented:

*We started to generate a real competition, particularly between those major powers of what were they doing different and how they were advancing their domestic agenda. The GLOBE events were events in which you could cap off that and recognise that.*

*(I019)*

Inevitably, assessing the impacts of learning – including through legislators’ subsequent involvement in advancing domestic, or even international, climate legislation – is fraught with difficulty, not least because of the multitude of factors potentially impacting their actions. We would caution against suggesting that GLOBE alone has had a decisive effect on domestic climate action because such a claim is not readily supported by the data. At least two respondents speculated that the involvement of members of national legislatures in GLOBE had contributed to the passing of a major climate law in Mexico, followed by attempts in several other Latin American countries (Costa Rica, Columbia, Peru) to introduce similar legislation (I01, I010). Another legislator from a developing country noted that, ‘I was the one who initiated the climate legislation law in my country, and I wouldn’t have thought about it if I had not[sic] been attending GLOBE’ (I014). A further respondent said that the knowledge exchange in GLOBE summits is what allowed his country to begin a process of legislating on climate change (I011). Yet across the interviews there was only limited evidence linking participation to specific instances of policy diffusion whereby learning about innovations in one country had unambiguously informed the development of particular policies (or administrative innovations) in another. Instead, the impact of learning through GLOBE lay more with empowering legislators, providing them with policy-relevant knowledge, strategies, and ultimately greater confidence which they could use in domestic legislatures to shape discourses and legislative activity. As one legislator observed, ‘What GLOBE would do is support legislators in their own agenda’ (I06). This support extended beyond the summits. There were also regional and bi-lateral meetings, ongoing communications with the secretariat, a newsletter, and a whole host of conversations (via emails, etc.) going back and forth between legislators in the network.

While participants made frequent references to learning, the importance of resources was mentioned far less by respondents. A number of legislators from developing/emerging economies mentioned the enhanced opportunities provided by the summits to learn more about climate finance, as well as the chance to meet senior representative from organisations such as the World Bank, GEF, and from the United Nations programme on deforestation (UN-REDD+) (I01, I05, I014). Yet it was not apparent that the prospect of enhanced financial resources was a significant motive for participation or a consequence of legislators' involvement.

Where involvement in GLOBE appears to have been of greater value was in terms of providing legislators with enhanced domestic political recognition, legitimacy, and influence. One respondent noted how his involvement in an 'international framework' had meant that 'the speaker of parliament gave me a free hand', in the sense of granting him additional opportunities to, for example, table bills (I09). Another noted how, as a result of his involvement in GLOBE, his country's Minister of Environmental Affairs regularly consulted with him on climate change issues (e.g. international policy developments, the positions of other countries, etc.), and included him as part of the delegation for COP21 (I05). Additionally, it was noted how participation in GLOBE could raise the domestic 'profile' of participants, and how 'an international stage is good for them politically, domestically' (I010). A further theme that emerged from the interviews was how GLOBE was instrumental in (re-)affirming the importance of domestic legislative action in addressing international climate goals and, with it, the central role of parliamentarians. There was a real sense that participation had psychologically 'empowered' certain legislators and helped them to reclaim 'ownership' over the climate agenda domestically (I01, I03, I05, I010, I019). In order to understand the nature of this 'empowerment' further, however, it is necessary to unpack some of the emotional dimensions of the networking initiative, including notions of camaraderie and inspiration.

## 5.5.2 Unity, *esprit de corps*, and inspiration

*Politics is a very human business, and GLOBE is a very human business. It creates human relationships around a topic. It provides information, a sense of common endeavour, and it provides shared solutions to help tackle what is an extreme form of a long-term problem.*

(I06)

One of the most striking findings to emerge from all the interviews was how participation in the summits had forged a ‘human’ connection amongst participants and, moreover, how this created a psychological momentum and increased motivation to act. Commenting on the experience of GLOBE, one legislator noted how ‘a relationship was built...not only professionally, but also sometimes personally’ (I01). Likewise, a legislator highlighted the ‘comradery that builds up across the floor’ (I06), while a representative from GLOBE described how the organisation helped to create a ‘community’ amongst parliamentarians (I010). While most of the participants had a pre-existing interest in climate change, it was the very experience of participating in the network that was responsible for forging a sense of unity amongst parliamentarians.

Legislators expressed an affinity to other participants in the network. An important factor underlying this affinity arose from the realisation that parliamentarians are ‘not on their own’ (I04), ‘a trust that other people are doing it [i.e. climate policy]’ (I010) and a sense of common purpose. Indeed, the interviews revealed an *esprit de corps* amongst participants, as evidenced by the following quote:

*It is very inspiring and very useful to build sort of a community, of people from different countries, that gives me the feeling that we fight the same battle – and we come back home and continue doing what we believe is right, and I have this feeling of being connected to them.*

(I016)

Another legislator observed how ‘at GLOBE meetings, you couldn’t see easily that they [the legislators] were from this party or this party. It was like a common position’ (I01).

One factor which was identified as contributing to this collective sense of purpose was intensity of the summits. As one of the leaders of the GLOBE network summarised:

*That openness, the fact that it isn't formal negotiation, the fact that it is so well-informed, the fact that it's so extreme, in a way, and there you are, everyone's tired, flying in from everywhere and they're spending all bloody day, Saturday and Sunday, wrestling this thing, not going out and seeing any light, gives a sense of the group that's meant to do something. I think that infects Chinese members of the National People's Congress as much as it does everybody else.*

(I06)

A common and dominant theme was that this *esprit de corps* was associated with feelings of 'enthusiasm' and 'excitement'. In fact, interviewees used these very terms to describe their experience of GLOBE (I01, I017, I020, I015) and recalled how these feelings helped to motivate them. One interviewee summarised the impact that being a part of the GLOBE network had had on him:

*The psychological impact of talking to people who are pursuing the same goals - that creates an environment in which a spark was happening. A spark was happening for me. You get a lot of energy from people doing the same thing...that's probably one of the more useful things that a summit or a conference can do - just to refocus, recharge your batteries, and then you have energies for another round.*

(I013)

Another legislator commented how 'you come back really motivated and wanting to work more on it [i.e. climate policy]' (I020). Likewise, one delegate recalled:

*Every time I have to opportunity to attend, I notice that it encourages you [sic] - that once you go back to your home country you look for issues that you can really advocate on, draw the executive arm of government's attention, so that we can take a stance to mitigate or to adapt.*

(I017)

Along similar lines; '[C]oming back from the summits, I was motivated, reassured, because having colleagues in other countries doing the same as what we are doing, gives you a sense of community that helps' (I016). What this suggests is that involvement in GLOBE was not simply about exchanging

information, learning from best practice, or increasing actors' political legitimacy. Of equal, if not greater significance, participation in the networking initiative was instrumental in generating an 'emotional energy' (Gould, 2002) which helped to propel subsequent action by legislators. This point is encapsulated in the following quote:

*I think legislators come because they feel empowered, perhaps more psychologically than technically. Because at the end of the day there is only so much knowledge transfer that can be replicated to different countries, so I think at least half of the impact or half of the benefit is to feel psychologically empowered and motivated.*

(I03)

Along similar lines, legislators emphasised how being part of the GLOBE network helped to increase feelings of self-efficacy, understood here as an individual's belief in their capacity to execute necessary actions to achieve specific goals (Bandura, 1986). For example, one commented how 'it is really a bit disappointing to fight this really important battle not surrounded by colleagues, and having conversations with others in other countries really helped' (I016). Another noted how 'coming from a small country you are isolated and feel helpless and there's nothing we can do, and coming to a big meeting...it's a positive reinforcement thing – reinforces sense of confidence in your own country, in your own parliament, in what you can do' (I013). Heightening this sense of self-confidence was the fact that participation in GLOBE helped to make legislators feel 'important' (I010). The summits provided an opportunity for individual legislators to speak at prestigious venues (e.g. the US Senate, Mexican Congress), to network with senior representatives from organisations such as the World Bank, and 'to be in the room' with distinguished international figures (I05, I016, I019). They also gave a 'voice' to countries, including smaller ones, which have historically been neglected in multilateral meetings under the auspices of the UNFCCC (I05).

Several legislators noted how the experience of attending the GLOBE summits, combined with the non-partisan structure of GLOBE, was instrumental in



generating an increased sense of unity *within* their national delegation. Travelling together created opportunities for a range of social interactions amongst domestic political rivals, or legislators from other branches of the legislature, which might not otherwise happen (I01, I08, I016, I017, I021). In doing so, it helped to forge bonds between members of national delegations, raising the prospects for subsequent co-operative behaviour. In at least one case, a heightened sense of national unity was recognised as a key factor in passing significant legislation. In the process of drafting Mexico's framework climate legislation, several separate proposals for a climate change law were tabled by different parties, and the GLOBE chapter convened a meeting in which members from all parties succeeded in creating a unified version, which later became Mexico's General Law on Climate Change (I01, I08).

Our findings regarding GLOBE resonate with previous research on social movements and activist networks in the sphere of civil society (Hercus, 1999; Bosco, 2007), for example, in highlighting how interpersonal interactions can give rise to heightened solidarity, confidence, and emotional energy to pursue a common goal. Yet, going beyond this body of work, a further important topic to emerge from our work was how participation 'inspired' participants. This was neatly summarised by a legislator from an emerging/developing country: '[W]hat happened [at the GLOBE summits] was a bit of everything – knowledge sharing, competition, but mainly inspiration' (I01). For some, this inspiration had come from keynote speeches and others' presentations:

*In Washington we had the occasion to be in the room with a really exceptional leader, Nancy Pelosi. She was really able to transmit not only a very strong engagement but also a highly effective action on these issues and she was really inspiring. But in general every presentation is inspiring – you learn from each other. If a colleague in another country has achieved that result it means we can do it too.*

(I016)

Others were inspired by direct contact with delegates from other countries. One legislator therefore commented on the impact of meeting face-to-face with one of their counterparts from Micronesia:

*To hear from first hand from legislator there, what's happening there and that they still fight against climate change and didn't get frustrated. That they didn't get frustrated and said 'okay, we cannot do anything anymore'. I really like the first hand contact with somebody who is faces the problems directly. I read about it before and knew all the examples and so on, but to talk to this person, literally right there...[that was] my moment in Washington.*

(I04)

At least one respondent noted that 'inspiration' had directly contributed towards subsequent efforts to advance climate action: 'We were inspired by all the information we got at that conference and we went back we asked the parliament to put forward a standing committee on climate change' (I07). Others reported being inspired to renew their efforts to increase pressure on domestic governments to accelerate climate action. In line with Thrash & Elliot (2004), participants in GLOBE were *inspired by* (speeches, actions by other countries, etc.), and *inspired to* (scrutinise government policy, table bills to amend existing or introduce new climate legislation, etc.).

Interviews of members of other networks, notably the IPU, did not generate similar findings with regards to emotional energy. Interviewees who were members of both networks (for example IO4, IO5, IO12, IO13) clearly said that the IPU meetings had a different feel to them than GLOBE meetings, that they were more political and diplomatic in nature.

Interviewees who were members of the IPU (but not of GLOBE) did not once raise notions of inspiration or motivation, even when directly prompted to talk about their 'state of mind' during and after IPU summits. Instead, they focused on the diplomatic, negotiation-like side of the interactions at the summits, and the need to represent their countries' interests as would be done in other international forums, such as the United Nations.

This may be attributed to several factors. First, which arises from the fact that delegates to the IPU are official representatives of their country, unlike GLOBE, where members do not necessarily represent their country or governments.

Second, while GLOBE focuses on environment and climate issues (with parliamentarians participating precisely because of their interests in these topics), IPU members deal with a variety of issues, ranging from human rights, international peace and security, to education and culture. One consequence is that the propensity of IPU members to be emotionally aroused by issues, which are often not in their field of expertise or enthusiasm, may be less than their counterparts in GLOBE. Third, it may be that the size of the forum (IPU holds much larger meetings), does not lend itself as easily to forging personal ties and emotional energy.

While evidence from the interviews mostly portrayed a positive account of legislators' experience of GLOBE – how it had energised, motivated, and inspired action – a note of caution is in order. Although a number of legislators testified to having taken concrete steps to advance domestic legislative action on climate change, qualifying the impact of the emotion-laden aspects of participation remains highly problematic. An important question in this regard is the degree to which the emotional 'buzz' from legislators' involvement in GLOBE was ephemeral. One legislator voiced his frustration that, despite initial enthusiasm, an initiative to set up a sub-national GLOBE chapter never materialised (I020). Another legislator drew attention to the 'shelf-life of parliamentarians' and how this made it more difficult to build and sustain relationships over time (I03). We cannot discount the possibility that, for certain legislators, the emotional energy generated by involvement at the summits dissipated afterwards. It is also possible, that some people are more prone by their nature to experiencing emotional energy and to being driven by it. At the same time, it is hard to discount outright testimony that participation in GLOBE played a role in energising and inspiring certain legislators in the network, heightening their commitment to advancing legislative action domestically.

## 5.6 Discussion and conclusions

Networking initiatives have come to occupy an increasingly important position in the emerging landscape of climate governance (Hoffmann, 2011; Bulkeley et al., 2012; Busch, 2015). Yet, comparatively little is known about how they achieve their governance functions and, more specifically, the mechanisms through which participation leads actors to take actions which contribute towards advancing climate mitigation or adaptation. Our particular intervention in the present paper seeks to address this gap by focusing on one trans-governmental initiative, GLOBE International, which has been largely been ignored in the existing academic literature.

Table 2 below summarises the main findings from the interviews. For each of the identified roles of the network, it specifies the number of interviewees who mentioned the theme, as well as the number of interviewees who assigned particular importance to this theme.

**Table 12 – frequency and dominance of themes in interviews**

	Number of interviewees who referred to particular theme	Number of interviewees who mentioned particular as prominent for them
Learning	24	17
Resources	7	2
Competition	1	0
Emotional energy	16	11

We found evidence to support the oft-made assumption that networking initiatives fulfil a substantive learning role (Legrand, 2012; Stone, 2013). Interviews with legislators highlighted how the information-rich social ecology of the GLOBE summits (in particular) created an environment which was conducive to learning by legislators in the network. Some of this learning was focused on policy and included examples of both positive and negative drawing from the experience of other countries (Bennett & Howlett, 1992). Yet, of greater significance in the present context was political learning. Involvement in

GLOBE provided legislators with opportunities to gain insights into the political realities of climate policy, strategies to advance legislative action and ‘substantiating information’ (Radaelli, 2009) which could be used to shape discourses in their domestic parliaments.

Another role commonly ascribed to networks is the provision of resources to participants (Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). However, interviews with legislators indicated resources were generally neither a major motive for-, nor a significant outcome of, their involvement. The one area where the contribution of GLOBE was evident was in granting participants enhanced political legitimacy and influence domestically. The learning and networking experiences translated into a reputation for GLOBE legislators ‘being in the know’ which, in a number of cases, had enhanced their opportunities to advise governments and table new legislative climate initiatives.

Our most significant finding concerns the emotional (and social) roles performed by GLOBE. The importance of the networking initiative went beyond learning from and about others – although this empowered legislators in ways which enabled them to form political positions, make more informed choices, and more effectively engage in legislative advocacy. Indeed, GLOBE helped to generate feelings of unity amongst legislators, forged around the idea that they are ‘fighting the same battle’, are not ‘alone’ in this battle, and are part of a wider ‘community’ with a common purpose. Additionally, the experience of participation was infused with positive emotions, giving rise to excitement and energy amongst legislators. We also found an important role for inspiration, especially around particular speakers, narratives of climate policy and action in the face of adversity.

The significance of these emotions, feelings, and inspirations was three-fold. One is that the *esprit de corps* amongst participants facilitated discussion, debate, and the exchange of information in a comparatively open, honest, and unrestrained fashion. This openness also arose from the non-partisan nature

of the network and the fact that participants were not official government representatives. However, beyond the particular social composition of GLOBE, there was a sense in which being part of a collective entity working towards a common goal facilitated exchange. Another reason as to why the emotional dimension of the network was significant is that the emotional energy was instrumental in invigorating participants' commitments towards climate action during and following the summits. Although many of the legislators who were selected into the GLOBE network already had a pre-existing interest in climate change, interviews suggested that participation helped to strengthen and sustain their climate-related ambitions, advocacy, and actions. A third reason is that the comradery and feelings of unity which arose amongst certain national delegations was important in facilitating greater cross-party co-operation on climate change. This, in turn, increased the possibilities for subsequent legislative climate action domestically.

We feel bound to qualify our findings. GLOBE International is an IPI with a particular set of characteristics. The organisation's climate initiative has a comparatively narrow thematic focus in which many of its members have a particular interest. The climate summits are a carefully staged context in which one might expect to witness intense episodes of network learning. Additionally, the network creates multiple opportunities for learning between summits, ranging from bi-lateral meetings and dialogues with the secretariat through to informal emails exchanged amongst parliamentary members. The particular experience of GLOBE for legislators also involves a set of conditions which one might suspect are particularly favourable to the development of solidarity, emotional energy, and inspiration. Revealing in this regard were interviews with members of another IPI, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in which respondents made scant reference to terms such as energy or unity. Instead, the IPU was perceived as a more broadly-focused forum for inter-state diplomacy, wherein delegates represent and report back to national governments. What this suggests is that caution needs to be exercised in assuming that our findings can be generalised to all IPIs, or indeed

environmental networking initiatives – though the fact that some of the latter have characteristics which overlap with GLOBE suggest that they may be sites where emotional aspects are more relevant.

Accepting this caveat, our paper makes several wider contributions. One is that it offers a corrective to accounts of networking initiatives which have failed to consider their emotional roles. While previous literature has acknowledged the relational nature of network encounters, it has largely done so within a cognitive framework concerned with understanding how actors come to develop a common language, inter-subjective understanding, and discourse around particular problems (Knight, 2002; Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004; Bathelt & Schuldt, 2008). Our paper suggests that it may additionally be necessary to take account of the emotional aspects of networks and how, within the relational context of group settings, actors may come to develop a sense of solidarity, emotional energy, and inspiration. Indeed, we argue that these emotional aspects are potentially a useful complement to conventional accounts of networks focused on information and resources. For example, it was within the setting of the *esprit de corps* that existed at the GLOBE summits that particular episodes of learning became more meaningful, resonant, and inspiring for participants. That is, while learning may provide the cognitive blueprints for action, emotional aspects potentially supply the motivational propellant for putting these into practice.

Another contribution we make is to understanding the conditions under which networking initiatives are likely to promote actions towards environmental goals. Our study suggests that a number of factors may be important in this regard. One is corporeal co-presence. Echoing the findings of recent work on international businesses conferences, trade fairs, and IPIs (Bathelt & Schuldt, 2008; Legrand, 2012; Henn & Bathelt, 2015), the present analysis underlines the crucial significance of face-to-face contact and interactions. However, while this literature emphasises their role in learning only, we additionally suggest that interpersonal interactions are important in generating an *esprit de corps*

and emotional energy. A further insight is that the credibility, saliency, and legitimacy of information matters. One reason why participants were receptive to the information circulating, exchanged, and presented as part of the GLOBE process was that it was seen as ‘usable knowledge’ (Haas, 2004). Hence it was salient in the sense that it addressed knowledge gaps and contributed to policy– and politically-relevant understanding, of direct value to legislators. The information was credible in that it was not seen as ‘politically aligned’. Much of the information was also perceived as legitimate, coming from authoritative information providers, not least the legislators themselves acting in a non-partisan capacity. We would also add that the information was emotionally arousing and inspiring, conveying positive stories of climate action, a common purpose, and a sense of hopeful anticipation that actions can make a difference.

GLOBE is only one amongst a large number of networking initiatives in the environmental sphere – many of which have received surprisingly limited attention in the academic literature. Our study has made a preliminary contribution in unpacking some of the emotional aspects of participation and how these can impact the thoughts and behaviours of participants. An important task for future research is to further explore these emotional dynamics and understand where, when, and how they contribute to the governance functions of environmental networking initiatives.



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## **Annex I - Media mentions of GLOBE and the climate legislation study, 2014-2015**

CNN: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/27/opinion/climate-change-international-opinion/>

The Economist: <http://www.economist.com/node/21597964/print>

Financial Times: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/718a1060-9e51-11e3-95fe-00144feab7de.html>

Inter Press Service: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/02/global-study-finds-impressive-wave-climate-legislation/>

The Guardian: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/feb/27/report-progress-climate-change-laws>

Business Week: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2014-02-26/emerging-nations-lead-climate-action-as-laws-near-500-worldwide>

Bloomberg: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-02-27/emerging-economies-lead-climate-action-globe-study-finds.html>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-26366989>

Huffington Post: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/27/global-climate-legislation\\_n\\_4869685.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/27/global-climate-legislation_n_4869685.html) and [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-bjerregaard/progress-in-climate-legis\\_b\\_4862245.htm](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-bjerregaard/progress-in-climate-legis_b_4862245.htm)

The Australian: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/latest/legislative-study-details-nations-efforts/story-e6frg90f-1226840196452>

India Times: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/environment/global-warming/us-british-science-academies-climate-change-is-real/articleshow/31103364.cms>

Business Green: <http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/feature/2331385/the-28-countries-leading-the-way-on-climate-change-legislation;>

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/analysis/2331184/legislators-around-the-world-unite-to-pass-almost-500-climate-laws> and

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/interview/2331160/lord-deben-the-technique-of-those-opposed-to-action-on-climate-change-is-spreading-doubt>

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/james-blog/2331405/carbon-budgets-and-green-manifestos-big-winners-as-climate-consensus-renewed>

Financial Times:

Letter: Developing countries lead the field in climate legislation, From Lord Deben, Senator Edward Markey and Mr Cedric Frolick, 2 March 2014

Climate chief warns battle to curb warming is becoming harder, March 11, 2014

Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/mikescott/2014/02/27/we-are-not-alone-climate-change-laws-span-the-world/>

Scientific American: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/most-worst-polluting-countries-now-have-laws-to-combat-climate-change/>

China Daily: [http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2014-02/28/content\\_17312961.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2014-02/28/content_17312961.htm)

Jerusalem Post: <http://www.jpost.com/Enviro-Tech/Nitzan-Horowitz-to-represent-Israel-at-US-Senate-climate-change-summit-343627>

Argentina

Independent: <http://www.argentinaindependent.com/currentaffairs/latin-america-news-roundup-27th-february-2014/>

IEDE: [http://www.iede.co.uk/news/2014\\_4067/global-study-finds-%C3%A2%E2%82%AC%C5%93impressive%C3%A2%E2%82%AC%C2%9D-wave-climate-legislation](http://www.iede.co.uk/news/2014_4067/global-study-finds-%C3%A2%E2%82%AC%C5%93impressive%C3%A2%E2%82%AC%C2%9D-wave-climate-legislation)

RTE (Ireland): <http://www.rte.ie/news/2014/0227/507207-climate-change/>

Washington Examiner: <http://washingtonexaminer.com/international-legislators-plan-global-climate-push-ahead-of-2015-un-talks/article/2544794>

GNOM: <http://news.gnom.es/news/climate-change-is-it-time-for-international-agreements-to-recognize-national-laws>

RE New Economy: <http://reneweconomy.com.au/2014/abbotts-climate-policy-so-unintellectual-to-as-to-be-unacceptable-21542>

Trust (Thomson Reuters

Foundation): <http://www.trust.org/item/20140227222858-t37li/?source=hptop>

The Hill: <http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/199420-mexico-china-led-on-climate-action-in-2013>

Business Spectator: <http://www.businessspectator.com.au/news/2014/2/27/policy-politics/legislative-study-details-nations-efforts>

Think Progress: <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2014/02/27/3338011/countries-climate-legislation/>

News Tonight (South Africa): <http://newstonight.co.za/content/no-doubt-about-impact-climate-change-scientists>

Periscope Post: <http://periscopepost.com/science-27/report-welcomes-progress-in-international-law-on-climate-change-6027.html>

KSPR: [http://www.kspr.com/news/nationworld/Climate-change-Time-for-international-deals/21051646\\_24711000](http://www.kspr.com/news/nationworld/Climate-change-Time-for-international-deals/21051646_24711000)

Eco Business: <http://www.eco-business.com/news/global-climate-laws-now-cover-nearly-90-cent-carbon-pollution/>

EE News: <http://www.eenews.net/stories/1059995234>

Morocco World

News: <http://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2014/02/123796/moroccan-parliamentary-delegation-in-washington-to-take-part-in-2nd-globe-climate-legislation-summit/>

News Today:

[http://www.newstoday.com.bd/index.php?option=details&news\\_id=2371166&date=2014-02-26](http://www.newstoday.com.bd/index.php?option=details&news_id=2371166&date=2014-02-26)

Nam News

Network: <http://www.namnewsnetwork.org/v3/read.php?id=MjYwNzc0>

UNRIC: <http://www.unric.org/en/latest-un-buzz/29074-climate-change-cannot-be-fought-without-legislation>

Blue And Green Tomorrow: <http://blueandgreentomorrow.com/2014/02/27/report-welcomes-progress-as-nearly-500-climate-change-laws-pass-globally/>

Revista Exame (Brazil): <http://exame.abril.com.br/rede-de-blogs/pegada-sustentavel/2014/02/28/62-paises-ja-possuem-leis-para-combater-as-mudancas-climaticas/>

Instituto Carbono

Brasil: <http://www.institutocarbonobrasil.org.br/noticias2/noticia=736509>



El Pais (Brazil):

[http://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2014/03/01/sociedad/1393696243\\_051746.html](http://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2014/03/01/sociedad/1393696243_051746.html)

Andi (Brazil): <http://www.mudancasclimaticas.andi.org.br/node/213>

Brasil Post (Brazil): [http://www.brasilpost.com.br/2014/03/10/acordo-climatico-legislacoes-avancam\\_n\\_4919670.html](http://www.brasilpost.com.br/2014/03/10/acordo-climatico-legislacoes-avancam_n_4919670.html)

Envolverde (Brazil): <http://envolverde.com.br/ambiente/impressionante-onda-de-legislacao-climatica/>

Diario de Macae (Brazil):

<http://www.odebateon.com.br/site/noticia/detalhe/30832/leis-climaticas-ja-estao-vigorando-em-66-paises>

Gulf news:

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/paris-to-finalise-new-global-framework-1.1627076>

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/the-climate-summit-can-deliver-1.1630024>

ENS Newswire: <http://ens-newswire.com/2015/06/07/world-governments-are-limiting-carbon-emissions/>

Greenbiz:

<http://www.greenbiz.com/article/dont-fall-behind-more-climate-legislation-rules-world>

<http://www.greenbiz.com/article/dont-fall-behind-more-climate-legislation-rules-world>

The Hindu Business Line:

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/policy/solid-momentum-in-global-legislative-architecture-on-climate-change/article7278958.ece>

Climate Wire:

<http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/stories/1060019397/search?keyword=copy>

Eco-business: <http://www.eco-business.com/news/overheating-earth-staggers-into-last-chance-saloon/>

The Financial: [New study finds \*\*75\*\* per cent of annual global greenhouse gas emissions](#)

Edie.net: [75% of global \*\*emissions\*\* covered by national targets](#)

The Daily Telegraph: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

Perth Now: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

Courier Mail: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

Business Spectator: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

Herald Sun: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

The Australian: [World has policy handle 'on \*\*75%\*\* of \*\*emissions\*\*'](#)

# **Chapter 6: Thesis conclusion and reflections on contributions**

The key aim of this thesis is to contribute to the scholarly efforts unpacking motivations that drive international policy diffusion processes. This research aim is derived from a critical review of the literature, suggesting that some substantive gaps hinder potential advancements with regard to conditionality of policy diffusion mechanisms. Specifically, the explanatory power of policy issue attributes has been largely unconsidered, although raised as a potential research avenue, in the nascent days of policy diffusion research (Gray, 1973) and briefly mentioned in later scholarship as a gap which requires more careful attention (Karch, 2007; Fulwider, 2011). Some of the gaps reflect the particular methodological approach taken by political science scholars, and some reflect the hardships of obtaining high-quality empirical data which is capable of shedding light on more complex questions of causal pathways of decision making. This thesis aims to address some of the conceptual, empirical and methodological shortcomings identified in the literature. This concluding section summarises the key advancements and contributions made in the thesis, while recognising its limitations, and offering potential directions for future research.

## **6.1 Key contributions of the research**

### **6.1.1 Theoretical contributions**

The first contribution offered by the research is the unpacking of the link between policy issues and diffusion mechanisms, in an attempt to understand if certain issue attributes affect the propensity for different diffusion mechanisms. Policy diffusion scholarship has increasingly engaged with conditionality of diffusion patterns on various factors, among others political orientation (Gilardi, 2010), policy type (Mooney & Lee, 1995; Boushey, 2010), the role of intergovernmental institutions (Cao, 2009; Strebel, 2011), size of the government (Shipan & Volden, 2008), programme scope (Clark, 1985; Taylor, Lewis,

Jacobsmeier, & DiSarro, 2012), variations in interest-group organisation, strategic framing and venue (Boushey, 2010), strong versus weak tie arguments, spatial proximity, and cultural proximity (Strang & Soule, 1998). One of the areas that have been flagged by scholars as potentially possessing substantive explanatory power is attributes of the ‘diffused matter’ (Karch, 2007; Fulwider, 2011; Jordan & Huitema, 2014, p. 724). To date, most of the work on attributes focused on the nature of the policy *solutions*, and far less attention has been devoted to the nature of the *problems* – on the attributes of different policy issues. Furthermore, the fundamental distinction itself between problems and solutions is largely missing from the literature. This thesis contributes to the unpacking of the causal relation linking issue attributes and different policy diffusion mechanisms. It puts forth a conceptual model, suggesting that issue attributes prompt different motivations for policymakers, which in turn, influence the likelihood of certain diffusion mechanisms. In particular, it is concerned with a fundamental difference between ‘problem dependent’ diffusion mechanisms, and ‘problem independent’ mechanisms (Gilardi, 2003), each grouping stemming from different motivational roots: *Problem-dependent* mechanisms, namely learning and competition, are driven by a motivation to solve a given problem. Meanwhile, *Problem-independent* mechanisms (emulation and coercion) are driven by motivations which are external to the specific policy issue, for example a quest for legitimacy or for peer approval.

As existing literature is focused mainly on the likelihood and rate of diffusion, and less on the different mechanisms at work (see, specifically, Table 1 in section 1.2 of this thesis), it bypasses the causal factors at the root of these differences. This research uses motivations as a linking mechanism between attributes and diffusion mechanisms. While there is evidence to suggest that motivations affect diffusion mechanisms, and in addition, that issue attributes affect motivations (Perry & Kraemer, 1978; Dutton & Jackson, 1987), the chain leading from attributes to motivations through to diffusion mechanisms has not been formalised. By using the concept of motivations, the model unlocks elements of

causality, potentially allowing predictions on the dynamics of decision making even in the absence of a complete identifiable diffusion ‘outcome’.

The second contribution the thesis makes is by addressing the role that emotional energy plays in network dynamics, linking literatures on solidarity, emotional energy and inspiration to literatures on learning and resource acquisition. Literature on global governance mechanisms focuses largely on roles of transnational networks as facilitating learning platforms (Hoffmann, 2011; Legrand, 2012; Stone, 2013; Busch, 2015) or resource-acquisition (Raustiala, 2002; Betsill & Bulkeley, 2004). Until now, it has been divorced from literatures on inspiration (Thrash, Moldovan, Oleynick, & Maruskin, 2014) and emotional energy, which have the capacity to generate heightened enthusiasm and commitment for certain causes (Hercus, 1999; Jasper, 2011; Hutchison & Bleiker, 2014). The thesis elaborates on the role of emotional energy as a propellant for action, distinguishing it from concepts such as normative learning (e.g. Huitema, Cornelisse, & Ottow, 2010) which shape the *direction* for desired action. By tying these literatures together, the thesis complements the literature on the roles of network governance.

### **6.1.2 Empirical contributions**

This thesis advances the understanding on why policy diffusion takes place and what are the key motivational themes behind it. This is investigated particularly with regard to Israel, which remains little studied in the literature in general, and from an environmental perspective in particular.

Through a series of three environmental case studies, the thesis contributes empirical evidence to support the conceptual model on issue attributes and diffusion mechanisms. In particular, evidence is provided with regard to the specific conditions in which learning- and emulation-based diffusion mechanisms are more likely to occur. Five attributes of the policy issues are used as explanatory attributes – namely salience, complexity, fragility perception as opportunity/threat, and international-orientation. Through the empirical case

studies, hypotheses on salience, complexity, and international-orientation are confirmed.

Furthermore, the thesis provides insights on the processes which led to the adoption of climate change policies in Israel, and particularly the National Mitigation Plan. Through a series of interviews with policymakers and analysis of parliamentary protocols, it suggests that a combination of motivational factors play a role in the formulation of climate policy. While a quest for external legitimacy was expected to play a dominant role, in fact it hadn't; rather, considerations of internal legitimacy and identity-building seem to have played a role, in addition to motivations of promoting domestic co-benefits.

Lastly, the thesis advances understanding on networking initiatives and the pathways through which they exercise their governance. Through an empirical analysis of GLOBE International, a previously unstudied Inter-parliamentary institute focused on climate change and sustainable development, the thesis provides insights into how networking organizations support, empower and inspire the actions of their participants, not least through emotional constructs.

### **6.1.3 Methodological contributions**

The thesis also offers several contributions by applying a methodological approach and using methods differing from the ones prevailing in the relevant literatures, recognizing the shortcomings of those prevailing approaches and their limited ability to support the research questions (for a review of the literature which captures the methodological issues which are depicted below, see Table 1 in section 1.2 of this thesis):

First, most of the studies on conditionality of policy diffusion are quantitative studies. By nature, they are thus only capable of capturing what is measurable. Notably, they struggle to capture policy processes and focus on policy outcomes. This is important when looking at processes which happen at the pre-legislative

stage, at negative lessons (the decision not to adopt a policy drawing on others' experience), or on policy reinvention (or adoption with change). This is acknowledged as a gap in the literature (Graham, Shipan, & Volden, 2013, p. 695) By employing a qualitative research design, this thesis is able to focus on the policy process rather on the policy outcome. A qualitative design is also better suited to offer insights into causal pathways resulting in the different policy diffusion mechanisms, and to unpack these differences.

Second, there is limited research focusing on individual policymakers as the unit of analysis. This level of analysis has received comparatively limited attention in the policy diffusion literature (notable exceptions include Weyland, 2006; Sugiyama, 2008; Taylor & Tadlock, 2010). By taking a micro-level approach and bringing the attention to policymakers, whose motivations are pivotal to the research questions, the thesis is able to engage with the motivational dynamics and themes which underpin decision making processes. This approach is facilitated by a unique set of over 60 elite interviews conducted with legislators, public servants and other prominent environmental leaders, which were accessed through the author's personal network. The unmediated accounts provided by them have been able to shed light on previously unconsidered questions, and to provide valuable insights on the research questions.

Third, most of the existing policy diffusion literature is situated in a federal setting, notably in the United States ((which is represented in 21 of 27 identified publications on attributes in the policy diffusion literature, see Table 1 in section 1.2). This thesis diversifies the empirical offering to non-federal, non-US/European geographical settings. It does so by examining case studies from Israel (Papers 2 and 4), as well as evidence from legislators from over 20 countries, in the GLOBE case study (Paper 5). This offers a contribution towards the distinction between inter-federal and international diffusion patterns, which may differ in their motivational origins, as well as the diffusion mechanisms that are operationalised in each case.

## **6.2 Key limitations and suggestions for future research**

### **6.2.1 Limitations**

While offering new theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions to the literature, this thesis has several methodological limitations, which should be acknowledged with care to allow building on its foundations when developing the ideas brought forth. Three main challenges are discussed below:

**Generalisability of case studies:** Israel's position in the international arena is not common. Its political circumstances raise the concern that findings regarding its policymakers' motivations or problem-solving approach may not be generalizable to other countries. While this is a partly-justified concern, especially with regards to legitimacy seeking behaviour, findings suggest that external legitimacy was not the main motivation for engaging with climate policy. Furthermore, forthcoming research from Perkins and Sharman indicates, that similar motivational themes exist in less politically-charged geographies. Finally, most of the interviewees in the Israeli case studies were environmental policy officials and members of environmental NGOs. They are not engaged on a regular basis with broader policy agendas (for example, security or the Palestinian issue), and are therefore more likely to express motivations and behaviours which are similar to their counterparts in other countries.

**Interviews as a main research method:** in this thesis, the author sought to uncover underlying motivations, feelings and emotions, by way of interviewing key actors involved in environmental policy processes. At times, the answers could have been unflattering or revealing uncomfortable truths about decision making processes. There is a concern that interviewees would bend or ignore certain elements potentially reflecting negatively on them. In addition, in the Israeli case studies, interviewees were asked to discuss events that occurred a few years earlier, which raises the concern that their memory may fail them on some points. Nevertheless, the interviews featured self-critical and generally

honest accounts, with different interviewees, at times from different institutions, corroborating each other's factual information. The author's knowledge of the events and political and context (as discussed below), aided in ensuring no large falsehoods were conveyed. The fact that interviewees *knew* that this was the situation seems to have contributed to their candid accounts.

**Positionality** – as discussed in detail in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, the author had prior knowledge and involvement in the case studies explored in this thesis. This posed several risks: but was mitigated in a variety of ways, as described in Chapter 1 section 1.4.5. Among those were explicitly acknowledging the risk of positionality bias and respondent bias, purposefully open interview question design, and critical analysis. The latter element was carried out by several means, including joint work on one of the chapters, allowing the other researcher to play 'devil's advocate' for some hypotheses, and by ensuring coding frames were not based on pre-conceived notions by employing another independent coder. Furthermore, the author's positioning as an 'insider' mitigated risks of exaggeration and falsehoods in interviews, as well as allowing access to a large and unique sample of elite interviews, including prominent members of legislatures from numerous countries.

### **6.2.2 Directions for additional research**

While the abovementioned limitations do not undermine the research as such, additional research could rectify the findings by bypassing some of them at least. While this doctoral thesis enjoyed only limited resources (mainly time and budget), which restricted its ability to draw on larger datasets, it suggests that potential advances could be made with regards to key themes emerging from it:

**Exploring other issue attributes in relation to the conceptual model portrayed in Paper 3:** Currently, the thesis draws mainly from existing scholarship on attributes, and especially on those discussed in a policy diffusion context. Expanding the model hypotheses to include other attributes, for example urgency (an attribute which is difficult to disentangle from salience).



Another promising direction is exploring assemblages of different attributes. While salience and complexity have been long-coupled, especially in their high-salience/low-complexity variant, researchers should consider looking at other combinations: the combination of salience and fragility is one of those that might benefit from further attention, as the findings of paper 4 suggest.

**Testing the hypotheses in other issue areas:** although the three case studies differ from each other in their attributes, they are all environmental issues. The caveat this poses is that environmental issues enjoy a certain status of good-doing, mainly limiting the applicability of the fragility attribute. As one of the interviewees noted ‘who can say they were against a *Clean Air Act*?’ Furthermore, environmental policymakers may have a self-selection bias, driving them to engage in these issues. Investigating the hypotheses of the model in a non-environmental context will allow to refine it further, in order to increase its robustness.

**Testing the hypotheses in other geographies:** as the model was empirically tested only in one country, future research can test the hypotheses in other, perhaps less politically-charged geographies than Israel, as well as in different political settings – states within a federal country, states operating within a supra-national setting etc.

**Investigating the motivational power of emotions:** are the findings from Paper 5 extendable to other types of networks, or is climate change special? Would we expect to find the same emotional energies at work across policy areas?

### **6.3 Potential policy lessons**

Finally, alongside contributions to the scholarship, the findings from this thesis and the questions it raises bring about several potential policy lessons:

**Are there circumstances under which we would expect to find the symbolic- rather than substantive learning?** Findings suggest that under certain conditions, there may be a higher propensity for emulation-based diffusion, potentially leading to convergence around a limited set of policies which are considered appropriate, but are in fact sub-optimal in terms of performance. Bringing attention to this potential caveat in policymaking, may serve as additional input in the choice to adopt them, or alternatively encourage potential interventions.

**Are narratives used today in the policy literature mapped onto what really makes policymakers tick?** There has never been a shortage in explanations why countries should act on climate change. Scientists, economists, sociologists and philosophers have been trying out various narratives which would propel action among countries. Testing those narratives against policymakers' motivational constructs may advance the efficacy of the narratives.

**How can networks be purposefully designed in order to maximise their desired effect?** Evidence from the GLOBE case study shows that specific elements of the network's design and operation contributed to the heightened emotional energy which was reported; these include, for example, high-level keynote speeches, the selection of members, and arranged seating at dinner. Taking elements as such into consideration may help other organisations enhance their governance capabilities.

## **6.4 Concluding note**

In considering these contributions and limitations, this thesis argues that academic literature and policy-makers alike, as well as other actors in engaged in global governance mechanisms, need to turn their attention to policymakers' motivations. These seem to encapsulate explanatory power underpinning policy

diffusion processes, and unpacking them may also serve in better design of policy narratives and governance mechanisms.

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