

An appeal to the Iron Curtain of Climate Security

Is the current Historical Demarcation of Climate Security
justified?

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Abstract

Climate security and to that extent environmental security, has been demarcated by security scholars to a relatively contemporary time period. As climate change and the environment become ever more important security issues in our society, so does the history of the subject. A history that has largely been left alone due to perceived irrelevance by security scholars. This Paper begs the question of how justified such a limited demarcation is. Through a comparative discourse analysis, supported by a contextualization, this Paper shall investigate if comparatives in securitization can be found. Specifically, comparing the 2008 *Working together with Water* and the 1989 *National Environmental Plan*. While climate change through the NMP was not securitized, there is evidence for security moves that carried political consequences. Therefore, the demarcation is not wholly justified, suggesting a further search and clarification concerning the demarcation to be appropriate.

Introduction

The environment is a term that tends to be regarded in relation to problems within a geographic space. Arguably, these problems are mostly conceived in relation to ourselves and the society we live in. Be it social, economic, political or many other categorisations ending with environment. This is even more so with the nature variation of environment. Especially in current western society, if an individual is confronted with the term 'the environment', they will most likely associate it with the natural version of 'the environment'. Contemporary association with 'the environment' to the natural is partially a reflection with the looming problem of climate change and its perceived threat to us and our surroundings. Many academics would agree that the emergence of the conceived problem of climate change narrative could be considered one of the largest influential impacts to the environmental movement. Some might even argue that the term itself is being "subsumed under the hegemonic imperative of climate change."¹The language of risk and security tends to diffuse through the narrative of climate change, and thus, through the term 'the environment' as a whole. In a risk based view, climate change is framed as an external force that can and will harm us and which we must secure ourselves from. The impacts of climate change are viewed catastrophically to such the extent that critics compare it to an 'apocalyptic' narrative, justifying the securitization

¹ Sarah J Whatmore, "Remaking Environments: Histories, Practices, Policies," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 40, no. 8 (August 2008): 1777, <https://doi.org/10.1068/a41189>.

climate change.² When authors within security studies engage with climate change, it is often done around the 2000s. This seems to be mostly due to institutional conventions of the field. As far as the researcher of this Paper could find, there seem to be no academic papers that engage with climate change as a distinct or delineating security concern before the 2000s.³ When the history of climate change and security is addressed, the pre millennium is largely glossed over. Institutions such as the IPCC or the UNPCCC are usually used as reference points, with the UN Security Council discussing the security implications of climate change in 2007 being given particular emphasis. When discussing climate change and security, also known as climate security, in the 1990s, it is often bundled with the 'General Security Trend' under the heading 'environmental security complex' with various other environmental issues.⁴

If one searches further back in the literature, one may find the occasional reference to the *Our Common Future*, more commonly known as the Brundtland Report, but environmental security and, hence, climate security, is usually dismissed as not being relevant before the 1990s. This is claimed by 'traditional' and 'human centred' security academics alike who, if giving an explanation at all, claim that the cold war was a more important consideration.⁵ This Paper strongly questions the general periodization and justification of security and climate change and, to an extent, the environment to the 1990s or later. As some authors acknowledge, the Brundtland Report notably made claims of "environmental security".⁶ It even brings up the human centred idea of security,

² Slavoj Žižek, *Living in the End Times*, Rev., updated paperback ed (London: Verso, 2011); Jeroen Warner and Ingrid Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change: How Invoking Global Dangers for Instrumental Ends Can Backfire," *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 37, no. 8 (December 2019): 1473, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2399654419834018>.

³ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change"; Maria Julia Trombetta, "Rethinking the Securitization of the Environment: Old Beliefs, New Insights," *Securitization Theory*, September 13, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203868508-16>; Peter Haldén, "The Past, Present and Future(s) of Environmental Security Studies," ed. Christine Agius and Karen Devine, *Cooperation and Conflict* 46, no. 3 (September 2011): 406–14, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010836711407660>; Simin Davoudi, "Climate Change, Securitisation of Nature, and Resilient Urbanism," *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 32, no. 2 (April 2014): 360–75, <https://doi.org/10.1068/c12269>; Cornel Zwierlein, "Historicizing Environmental Security," *European Journal for Security Research* 3, no. 1 (February 2018): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41125-017-0026-4>; Art Dewulf, Daan Boezeman, and Martinus Vink, "Climate Change Communication in the Netherlands," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science* (Oxford University Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.455>; Chris Methmann and Delf Rothe, "Politics for the Day after Tomorrow: The Logic of Apocalypse in Global Climate Politics," *Security Dialogue* 43, no. 4 (August 2012): 323–44, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612450746>.

⁴ Haldén, "The Past, Present and Future(s) of Environmental Security Studies," 409; Trombetta, "Rethinking the Securitization of the Environment," 586.

⁵ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1998), 74; Maria Julia Trombetta, "Environmental Security and Climate Change: Analysing the Discourse," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 21, no. 4 (December 2008): 585, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557570802452920>; Davoudi, "Climate Change, Securitisation of Nature, and Resilient Urbanism," 365.

⁶ Trombetta, "Rethinking the Securitization of the Environment," 146; Simin Davoudi, "Climate Risk and Security: New Meanings of 'the Environment' in the English Planning System," *European Planning Studies* 20, no. 1 (January 2012): 65, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2011.638491>.

which is typically a foundational part of security and climate change. It claimed that “security cannot only be political or military [...] it must ensure the fulfilment of the aspirations of humanity,” and called for a “broader security assessment and embrace military, political and environment.”⁷ As previously mentioned, before climate change gained ‘hegemony’ in the subject of environment, it was bundled with it. This is no different within the Brundtland Report, where ‘climate change’, ‘global warming’ or ‘the greenhouse effect’ are bundled under environmental subtitles. The report goes further by making the direct connection between security and climate change when stating, “Environmental threats to security are now beginning to emerge on a global scale. The most worrisome of these stem from the possible consequences of global warming caused by the atmospheric build-up of carbon dioxide and other gases.”⁸ Not only did the Brundtland Report propel the idea of being able to co-join a growing economy with the protection of the environment but also popularized terms such as sustainability, win-win situations and end-of-pipe solutions. These are all terms which continue to dominate political and business discussion on the environment 40 years later. Thus, there is some evidence that climate security, as well as environmental security, are rather unjustifiably neglected. Considering the Brundtland Report is one of the most impactful works concerning the environment of the end of the 20th century, this seems even more worthwhile investigating that era for security moves that go beyond the Brundtland report or even securitization attempts in its own right.

The Netherland’s 1989 National Environmental Policy (NMP), titled ‘To Choose or to Lose’, is an example of one of the earliest government policies to incorporate sustainability ideas. It sought out to suggest policy objectives to prevent exhausting “the carrying capacity of the environment” and ensure the same quality of life of future generations.⁹ Objectives that are very much inspired by the Brundtland Report and “provide a point of departure for this [NMP]”¹⁰ In terms of security, no analysis has been committed upon the NMP to investigate if there was a security attempt. However, due to its close relation with the Brundtland Report, there may be a securitizing attempt that has yet been ignored by scholars. The *Deltacommissie* of 2008 is another Dutch policy plan influence by the Brundtland Report. It was mandated and formed by the Dutch government to present a strategy to secure the Dutch coast from climate change.¹¹ This included that the “mandate embrace all aspects of a sustainable living environment.”¹² Its report, *Working together with Water*, bears similarities with the Brundtland Report such as resembling the sustainable vision of the Brundtland Report. Instead of looking at pure

⁷ World Commission on Environment and Development, ed., *Our Common Future*, Oxford Paperbacks (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 242, 250.

⁸ World Commission on Environment and Development, 242.

⁹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan* (The Hague, The Netherlands: SDU, 1989), 65, 42.

¹⁰ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 42.

¹¹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water” (Deltacommissie, September 1, 2008), 103–4, <http://resolver.tudelft.nl/uuid:af79991f-31e7-47a4-a6ef-bfd54ca59c57>.

¹² Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 104.

dike improvement, which might have been cheaper, *Working together with Water* looks to also craft a vision where economic, human and ecologic needs are respected and can prosper not to the expense of future generations.¹³ From a security dimension, it is considered to an example of attempted securitization.¹⁴ The report takes the worst case sea level rise scenarios and calls for the Netherlands be take action or suffer from extreme flooding and droughts. Since there seem to be a conceptual connection spanning 30 years, is it plausible that there are security concerns that do so too?

This Paper aims to further investigate the aspects of climate change and security. Specifically, this Paper will investigate if the current historical demarcation of climate securitization is justified. Are security scholar correct in the assumption that climate change or even environmental concerns are not worth investigating before the 1990s? Is there evidence of a securitization attempt in the late 1980s? If there are comparable narratives in climate change security discourse, to what extent are the sources similar? If the sources are not comparable, then to what extent do the sources differ? To investigate these questions, a comparative analysis of two influential institutionally commissioned Dutch reports on or related to climate change will be compared. The primary sources analysed will be *To Choose or to Lose* of 1989 and *Working together with Water* of 2008. The initial hypothesis is that the NMP commits to a securitization attempt, which can be comparable to that of the Deltacommissie. Both sources were selected due to the conceptual connection to the Brundtland Report. A report which demonstrates securitization moves. By suspicion of association, the NMP might also commit to a securitization attempt. Furthermore, the Deltacommissie, as some academics agree, is committed to a securitization attempt.¹⁵ The securitization attempt will not only be shown through a the context and discourse of both sources, but through the a comparative discourse analysis of said sources. The Netherlands were focused upon due to its consistent tradition of policy planning. Considering the similarity of the subject, related influences and similar institutional environment, a comparative is relatively justifiable.

¹³ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 37–38.

¹⁴ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change," 1481.

¹⁵ Daan Boezeman, Martinus Vink, and Pieter Leroy, "The Dutch Delta Committee as a Boundary Organisation," *Environmental Science & Policy* 27 (March 2013): 162–71, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2012.12.016>; Simon Verduijn, S. Meijerink, and Pieter Leroy, "How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy: A Dutch Case Study on Framing Strategies for Policy Change," *Water Alternatives* 5, no. 2 (June 1, 2012); Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change."

Methodology

The Methodology will primarily consist of undertaking a comparative approach to the two primary sources of *Our Common Future* of 1987 and the *Deltacommissie* of 2008 using discourse analysis. This is secondarily supported by contextual research both primary sources through the works of secondary sources. Furthermore, risk based literature, especially related to climate change, should help guide the comparison of the sources, aiming to provide a satisfying answer to the research question. The rest of this section will delve deeper into these three factors.

Interrelated terms of Security and Risk

Environmental security and to that extension climate security, continue to be a divisive field in the traditions of security studies. Peter Hough likely created one of the more accurate categorizations when he divided advocates into Traditional International Relations Realists, Security Wideners, Traditional Political Ecologists and Human & Critical Security International Relations Scholars.¹⁶ Traditional Realists by definition oppose environmental security due to the Traditional Realists narrow definition of security being solely the military defence of the state. Security Wideners see the potential for the environmental impacts to invoke wars or threaten the state through resource depletion. However, there is little concerns for human focused security. Traditional Ecologists are sceptical of environmental security. Traditional Ecologists traditionally approached the subject environment through a more social rather than political lens, hence having a social view to conflict. Traditional Ecologists oppose the 'militarization of the environment' that is, at best, a distraction which could have negative social consequences and detract from more effective political solutions. Human & Critical Security Scholars view environmental impacts as a different type of threat to life than Traditional Realists and see the security label as a means giving issues such as climate change the same level of political priority that is given to military affairs.¹⁷

This Paper, when it refers to security, is not primarily interested in the practice of security, in external or internal security threats or even the condition of human security. This Paper primarily focuses on how security is perceived in the context of climate change. The Paper is most closely aligned with the Copenhagen School stance on security, which sees security as a speech act and views issues as a security a threat only as far as actors view it as such, thus placing it in the sphere of the Human & Critical Security Scholars. While this paper does acknowledge that climate change has objective security concerns and consequences, the nature of the research question is primarily geared towards the perception of actors. A difference that is critical to highlight are security moves and securitization. Following Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, representing something as an existential threat is not necessarily securitization but a security move.¹⁸ For there to be a securitization, the audience has to accept it as such.¹⁹ While securitization presumes security moves, security moves do not necessarily presume securitization. It would be less justifiable for security academics to overlook successful securitization than a security move or security attempt. Security attempt in this Paper is meant to bundle several security moves while avoiding implication of securitization.

¹⁶ Peter Hough, "Back to the Future: Environmental Security in Nineteenth Century Global Politics," *Global Security: Health, Science and Policy* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 2019): 4, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23779497.2019.1663128>.

¹⁷ Hough, 4.

¹⁸ Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, *Security*, 25.

¹⁹ Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, 25.

The term risk is often closely used with security because both subjects tend to discuss what might happen.²⁰ This is especially relevant to climate change, where the degree of consequences and impacts are nebulous. Security, in terms of status, is rather a yes or no situation. Either one is free from danger or not. Risk can give security a degree of probability to the state of security. While one may not know if one would be secure or not, but one can determine the risk of being in an insecure state. There tends to be a close relationship between security and risk. Thus the term 'security risks' is often used in security literature, policy paper and this Paper.²¹

²⁰ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change," 1473.

²¹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water"; Davoudi, "Climate Risk and Security."

Comparative Discourse Analysis

There are two fundamental assumptions that will be undertaken when undertaking the discourse analysis. Firstly, that individuals tend to simplify large complicated concepts into simpler, more understandable narratives. Especially in the primarily political issue of climate change, these narratives or 'storylines' are used, according to Maarten Hajer, as a 'short hand' in discussions.²² The discussions typically structure a problem having a beginning, middle and an end. Secondly, the problem definition is not fixed but in flux and will thus differ between individuals and groups.²³ Climate change is a charged problem that will have a variety of mental narratives between different individuals but that can be used as a short hand in activating these narratives in a 'you know what I mean' fashion. Identifying these narratives can help differentiate between the discourse between individuals and groups.

Following Hajer, discourse is "an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices."²⁴ It focuses on the argumentative rationale of individuals or groups rather than equating discourse with discussion. Multiple narratives can be more easily 'revealed' instead of focusing too much on a singular narrative. Similarly, Buzan Wæver and de Wilde focus not on any measurable security threat but rather dependant on the acceptance of the security narrative by the audience.²⁵

Additionally, Hajer recommends focusing on how might an issue seem emblematic of a larger problem.²⁶ Plastic waste is an example of this. Typically, it is depicted in piles and or floating in water. However, it is not just simply pollutant waste. It is also used as an emblematic example of the wider issue of pollution. Issues such as fossil fuel use, marine life suffering from plastic and the negative environmental impacts intersect with the image of plastic waste. The 'victims' portrayed are often the flora, fauna or even future generations with the 'perpetrators' being contemporary and human centred.

Rhetorical figures, especially metaphors and binary distinctions will be scouted out and be implemented, in part, in the discourse analysis. Metaphors carry "meaning from one semantic field to another."²⁷ A turtle struggling with a caught plastic ring around its neck is not simply just a turtle struggling. I could also be viewed in light of all the marine life struggling with plastic pollution. Metaphors and emblematic issues are not exclusionary but overlap. However, emblematic issues could be seen viewed in a wider and more multifaceted context. Binary distinctions are typically used to highlight an imbalanced

²² Margo van den Brink and Tamara Metze, eds., *Words Matter in Policy and Planning: Discourse Theory and Method in the Social Sciences*, Netherlands Geographical Studies 344 (Utrecht: Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap: Netherlands Graduate School of Urban and Regional Research, 2006), 69.

²³ Brink and Metze, 69.

²⁴ Brink and Metze, 67.

²⁵ Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, *Security*, 25.

²⁶ Brink and Metze, *Words Matter in Policy and Planning*, 65.

²⁷ Ziemann and Dobson, 19

social distinction between two social groups. Binary distinctions serve not only to highlight the imbalance of groups but also shows that the absence of one group can still contrast the other. Ziemann and Dobson would point towards how defining women as neurotic or weak could reflect what society thinks about man as the polar opposite.²⁸ Similarly, while unnatural waste is often depicted in the form of plastic pollution, natural waste would be biodegradable and composting waste. To an extent, asymmetric binary distinctions can be used in a political context, especially in situations where there is a projected binary choice. In climate change, particularly in narratives where there is an emphasis on security and risk, there tends to be an urgency in taking action in measures to reduce risk and increase security. It often leaves little room for alternatives and thus creates a stark distinction and rejection of the current status quo.

Secondary Contextual Literature

the period the primary sources were embedded will be contextualized through the support of secondary literature. For one, this assist in distinguishing this work as a history paper from that of a policy paper. While there can be surprisingly little differences between policy and historical papers, there is often a lack of consideration, sometimes even a vacuum, for the historical context these issues and events are embedded in. Furthermore, in order to make a healthier analysis to what extent the primary sources commit to a securitization attempt, light should be shed upon the context. Security moves are not only done within the text but to some degree outside of it. Exploring the context should help determine this. It must be reinforced that the aim of this paper is not to create a historiographical context of the two primary sources but to use the context more instrumentally for the primary sources. This focus on contextual thinking stems from a core conviction that the "whole must always inform our understanding of the parts."²⁹ By having a more contextual understanding, the hope is to be less inhibited by viewing the primary literature in an established framework, adding to the value of the discourse analysis.

²⁸ Ziemann and Dobson, 7

²⁹ John Tosh, 29

Context

As previously mentioned, a component of this Paper will be setting the primary source in its historical environmental security context. A better understanding of the primary sources political role with their time and space should give a better insight into explaining their similarities and differences. The context sections aims to provide a rough linear histography and understanding of the relevant political, institutional and ideological subjects. Focus was laid upon institutions and the Dutch government due to them being identified as primary actors in securitization, especially before the 2000s. With that in mind, this section will first follow Our Common Future, then transition into the NMP followed by the Deltacommissie.

The Brundtland Report i.e Our Common Future and an incomplete Account of what came before it

Since the Brundtland Report itself has been somewhat covered in previous chapters, this chapter will briefly investigate early sustainable, environmental and security measures that have been undertaken, not only outlining these ideas potentially existed well before the 1980s but also connect them to the Brundtland Report.

The current young historiographical field of environmental security is dominated by a view that one cannot speak of environmental security as such before the 1990s. Critics would agree that with the rise of Western eco consciousness and its headway into the political sphere that one could conceive the origins of our modern understanding of environmental security.³⁰ Martin Zwierlein would even argue that “environmental security’ [...] enter[s] histor(iograph)y like a deus ex machina.”³¹ Zwierlein resigns that overlapping predictors of security, environment and international history, form our current notion of environmental history but seem to have their separate divergent history.³² He concluded that placing the environmental security ‘project’ back further in time runs in danger of committing ahistoricism by projecting current values on unrelated or foreign regions and societies.³³ However, Peter Hough would disagree with this assessment completely. He observes closer similarities than assumed, pointing towards how our current environmental security concerns, especially climate security, are anthropocentric now as then. Several anthropocentric policies from the 19th century were enacted to protect humans as well as to maintain a stable state.³⁴ A fitting example is the anti-pollution acts issued by the German Reich, the United Kingdom and Sweden in the late 19th century, where, similarly to climate security concerns, economic advantages were forgone in place of benefits to human health and security.³⁵ Another glaring example is Malthus’s theory on the exponentiality of human growth and how it will eventually outstrip the Earth’s capacity to subsist food supplies. Although not dealing with term environment in the same modern distinction with a myopic view of food supply, it expressed concerns that if measures are not taken, the food supply cannot be sustained for future generations and thus the human population will decline. It showed similar concerns we have today of in terms of sustainability. Malthusian Theory was a key thought when the British government rationalized seceding further food supplies towards the victims of the Irish famine of the 1840s as a morbid form of population control Malthus would likely approve of.³⁶

³⁰ Trombetta, “Environmental Security and Climate Change”; Haldén, “The Past, Present and Future(s) of Environmental Security Studies”; Ingolfur Blühdorn and Ian Welsh, “Eco-Politics beyond the Paradigm of Sustainability: A Conceptual Framework and Research Agenda,” *Environmental Politics* 16, no. 2 (April 2007): 185–205, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644010701211650>.

³¹ Zwierlein, “Historicizing Environmental Security,” 6.

³² Zwierlein, 6.

³³ Zwierlein, 6.

³⁴ Hough, “Back to the Future,” 5.

³⁵ Hough, 8.

³⁶ Hough, 7.

Neo-Malthusian ideas would come to rise in the 1970s with the publication of *Limits to Growth*. *Limits to Growth* is a report that makes the claim that the rate of our consumption coupled with humans population growth cannot be sustained by our environment. Thus, nations of the 21st century will be confronted with a rapid decline in industrial output, food, services and population.³⁷ At the time, this was largely legitimized with computer models that were conducted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Two points need to be considered. For one, *Limits of Growth* was the accumulation of the limits of growth movement. The movement consisted mainly of Neo-Malthusian who were inspired in the 1960s by *Population Bomb* and *Silent Spring*.³⁸ the *Population Bomb* making the doomsday claim that the 1970s will see mass starvation due to lagging food production. *Silent Spring* helped individuals register the extent of adverse effects humans can induce on to the environment. Thus, the tone was set for Neo-Malthusians when drafting *Limits of Growth*.³⁹ Secondly, while *Limits of Growth* and the Brundtland Report share similarities, it is typically their contrast in the solutions that is highlighted. Both have the understanding that our current growth is unsustainable, damaging the environment, could cause future conflicts and, if ignored, will harm future generations. Both, implicitly or explicitly, view these unsustainable developments not only as a threat to nations but to human security.⁴⁰ Both solutions differ in that *Limits of Growth* propagates a negative reduction and subsequent equilibrium of population and economic growth while the Brundtland Report propagates sustainable measures where economic, environmental and human needs are considered and can be positively enlarged. Although the solutions brought by the Brundtland Report put 'Malthusian ideas on their head', the Report acknowledge and deals with the very same issues and security concerns that can be traced back to 1800s Western Europe. There is potential to make a more thorough historiography of securitization. One could also potentially find successful instances of securitization beyond the era researched in this Paper. However, this Paper will now continue into approaching the contextualization of the NMP.

³⁷ Donella H. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (New York: Universe Books, 1972), 23–24, <https://doi.org/10.1349/ddlp.1>.

³⁸ Paul Dragos Aligica, "Julian Simon and the 'Limits to Growth' Neo-Malthusianism," *The Electronic Journal of Sustainable Development* 3, no. 1 (2009): 2.

³⁹ Rachel Carson, Lear Linda, and Edward O. Wilson, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962); Paul Ralph Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (Cutchogue, New York: Buccaneer Books, 1971).

⁴⁰ Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth*, 189; World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*.

The National Environmental Plan and its Brother

In the Netherlands, climate change would emerge to become a political issue around the mid 1980s. Before then, it was a rather marginal topic with “only a small circle of environmentalists and scientists talk[ing] about the greenhouse” throughout the 1970s.⁴¹ The Royal Dutch Meteorological Institute made a simple model of the Earth’s carbon cycle but did not invest further resources into the subject.⁴² The Central Bureau of Statistics even failed to gather any statistical data on CO2 levels during this period.⁴³ Occasional discussion would be held in the second chamber about climate change, such as when in 1979 Leon Jansen warned of the seriousness of climate change.⁴⁴ Momentum for the climate change subject within Dutch institutions started mounting after many of them participated in the World Climate Conference of 1979 in Geneva, becoming a factor in energy issues such as Coal and Nuclear Energy.⁴⁵

Interestingly, the first dedicated report by a Dutch institution entertaining climate change was done by the ‘Health Council’ in 1983.⁴⁶ The central conclusion of the commission was the expectation that an ‘increase in the CO2 content of the atmosphere over the next century will lead to far-reaching and irreversible environmental impacts on a global scale’.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, It would take several years until climate change would be properly entertained in the second chamber with the first dedicated Dutch parliamentary report on climate change being presented in 1987.⁴⁸ This publication was foremost drafted as a response to contemporary pressures originating primarily from the national development of the Health Council’s second publication on their opinion of the ‘CO2 problem in the Netherlands’.⁴⁹ The Health Council second publication was not the only source of pressure to caused larger interested within the second chamber. International influences such as the Villach conference or the Brundtland Report provided further sources of information and pressure.⁵⁰ Security concerns were rather tacit and still only

⁴¹ Wijnand Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme: het drama van 25 jaar klimaatpolitiek* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2013).

Clarification – This Duyvendak’s work was only available by using an E-Book. Regrettably, no pages numbers accompany the E-Book.

If there are any direct quotes, they have been translated from Dutch to English to the best ability of the researcher and should thus be not viewed as completely accurate.

⁴² Gerda Dinkelman, “Het Nederlandse luchtverontreinigingsbeleid,” *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 23, no. 1 (June 1, 1996): 136.

⁴³ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁴⁴ Duyvendak.

⁴⁵ Dinkelman, “Het Nederlandse luchtverontreinigingsbeleid,” 136.

⁴⁶ Cornel Zwierlein, “Historicizing Environmental Security,” *European Journal for Security Research* 3, no. 1 (February 2018): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41125-017-0026-4>.

⁴⁷ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁴⁸ Tweede Kamer, “Klimaatverandering Door CO2 En Andere Sporegassen,” June 3, 1987, https://repository.overheid.nl/frbr/sgd/19861987/0000113322/1/pdf/SGD_19861987_0007216.pdf.

⁴⁹ Tweede Kamer.

⁵⁰ Tweede Kamer, 4, 24.

concerned with that of water security. The Health Council itself saw no direct health problems from climate change, only expressing coastal and water security as relevant. The parliamentary report mainly concluded that more research and international awareness should be promoted. At this point, there were little signs for any security moves.

Around the same year, the Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment Agency (VROM), led by Ed Nijpels, was beginning work on the National Environmental Plan. Nijpels seems to be considered a fundamental agent in driving forth the NMP by Duyvendak's interviews and therefore should be considered.⁵¹ After being evicted as leader of the centre right liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), Nijpels joined the VROM as the environmental minister.⁵² Concerns were already mounting over the potential dangers of climate change within the organisation and Nijpels immediately saw the importance of the issue.⁵³ Work gradually began on making a plan on what to expect and how to deal with climate change with the NMP being one of the first climate change action plans to emerge from a nation. Several events helped influence the NMP and or give it considerable political and societal traction. Firstly, the Brundtland Report would provide an important source of influence for the Environmental Minister. Nijpels would adopt its values and argue that any environmental policy in the Netherlands should begin from a sustainability stance.⁵⁴ With sustainability providing a core consideration, its securitizations moves may follow with it. Nijpels could reasonably have motivation to attempt at securitizing the NMP. Furthermore, the values for sustainability were not an entirely new phenomena to the Netherlands. Ruud Lubbers, the Minister of Economic Affairs in 1976, argued for the 'Selective Growth' of the economy, balancing environmental needs, natural resources and the needs of developing countries with economic growth.⁵⁵ Lubbers was the same prime minister Nijpels would advise and consult with during his tenure as environmental minister. Proto-sustainability ideas as known from the Brundtland Report may have been involved within Dutch Institutions. However, there is little evidence besides this note that this Paper could find. Inter-institutional assistance on the NMP was typically difficult since VROM could not agree with other institutions on 'basic facts' about climate change and the state of the environment.⁵⁶ It was therefore unsurprising when the NMP propose that the Health and Hygiene Institute (RIVM) complete a comprehensive report on the state of the environment.⁵⁷

When RIVM's *Zorgen Voor Morgen* would come out in 1988, it would prove to be the necessary factual basis for the NMP. It is closely related to the NMP, being subtitled 'the

⁵¹ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁵² Duyvendak.

⁵³ Duyvendak.

⁵⁴ Jan van der Straaten, "The Dutch National Environmental Policy Plan: To Choose or to Lose," *Environmental Politics* 1, no. 1 (March 1992): 50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644019208414008>.

⁵⁵ van der Straaten, 50.

⁵⁶ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁵⁷ Duyvendak.

national environmental reconnaissance.⁵⁸ *Zorgen Voor Morgen* was the technocratic report that led its own analysis and modelling regarding the issue of climate change. It differed to the reports of the Health Council in that it was more comprehensive, put a much larger emphasis on taking a global scale, and used their own simulation to model the future. Its findings were eye-catching, estimating that the Netherlands needed to reduce their CO₂ emissions by 80% per citizen or else potentially face repercussions that “have consequences for the survival of humankind on earth.”⁵⁹ Here, one can also find influences from the Brundtland Report. It places a two front emphasise on not only accompanying the NMP with scientific knowledge but integrating within its report the values of sustainability.⁶⁰ It as well argued for safeguarding the same quality of life for future generations, proposing that emissions reduction, recycling and the minimization resource can be accomplished without needing to endanger economic growth.⁶¹ Despite this, a preliminary investigation found that *Zorgen Voor Morgen* was a very technocratic report, cautious of making any strong political or security statements. It is remindful that association with the Brundtland Report does not equal securitization.

Societal traction would also help form room for the NMP. The Monarch of the Netherlands herself, Queen Beatrix, was very impressed with *Zorgen Voor Morgen*.⁶² Soon after it was published, the Queen addressed in her annual Christmas speech her concerns about the state of the environment, how the “Earth is dying” and how “we shove the losses onto future generations.”⁶³ Nijpels saw the Queen’s speech as an important turning point: “Partly as a result of social pressure, there was suddenly room in the Cabinet for an ambitious environmental policy.”⁶⁴ What is to note it that the political traction of climate change and environment before the 2000s was significantly dependent upon the economic cycle of the country. If the Netherlands found itself in a negative business cycle, environmental issues would be less present in the political arena compared to a positive business cycle. The years 1988 and 1989 provide the exception, where environmental issues maintained importance despite economic headwinds. Breeman and Timmermans explain this as having to do with “a number of specific circumstance” and would probably agree that, despite the economic headwinds, the considerable societal and political tailwind from the Brundtland Report, *Zorgen Voor Morgen* and the Queen’s speech gave Nijpels the confidence to bring forth an ambitious NMP.⁶⁵ The favourable political

⁵⁸ Ir F. Langeweg, ed., *Zorgen Voor Morgen: Nationale Milieuverkenning 1985 - 2010; RIVM Onderzoek in Dienst van Mens En Milieu* (Alphen aan den Rijn: Tjeenk Willink, 1988).

⁵⁹ Langeweg, XXIII. Translated by researcher

⁶⁰ Langeweg, VII.

⁶¹ Gerard Keijzers, “The Evolution of Dutch Environmental Policy: The Changing Ecological Arena from 1970–2000 and Beyond,” *Journal of Cleaner Production* 8, no. 3 (June 2000): 186, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-6526\(00\)00003-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-6526(00)00003-2).

⁶² Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁶³ Jeroen den Blijker en Harriët Salm, “De kersttoespraak van Beatrix uit 1988 is heel actueel: ‘Langzaam sterft de aarde,’” *Trouw*, December 24, 2018, <https://www.trouw.nl/gs-ba67866b>. Translated by researcher

⁶⁴ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁶⁵ G.E. Breeman and A. Timmermans, *Politiek van de Aandacht Voor Milieubeleid: Een Onderzoek Naar Maatschappelijke Dynamiek, Politieke Agendavorming En Prioriteiten in Het Nederlandse Milieubeleid*, WOt Report 77 (Wageningen: Statutory Research Tasks Unit for Nature & the Environment, 2008), 27.

environment potentially could have been perceived as an indication that the framing had been successful for Nijpels and VROM. Perceiving the audience has having accepted their narrative might indicate not only security moves outside the NMP. Interestingly enough, the Second Lubbers Cabinet, which was the leading centre right coalition government, provided one of the strongest spearheads in investigating the greenhouse gas phenomena. Something which might further support this suspicion of a perceived favourable political climate. While Duyvendak generally frames Nijpels as having a personal conviction to investigating the issue, the Lubbers Cabinet was largely supportive of Nijpel's actions.⁶⁶

When it came to financing the NMP, deep splits formed in the party. It was initially proposed that consumers would bear most of the financing of the NMP through an increased levy on fuel. Strong opposition came especially from the Finance Minister who insisted that increasing the levy in isolation would harm the export capabilities of the Netherlands and potentially worsen an already downwards trending economic cycle.⁶⁷ Both the Minister of Economic Affairs and the Finance Minister suggested that if there would be an increase in tax, there needs to be a decrease in spending elsewhere in the budget.⁶⁸ Consequently, a proposal was put forth by the Lubbers Cabinet to abolish the tax break for commuters and homeowners.⁶⁹ The majority of the VVD, which were the minor party of Lubbers Coalition, were up in arms about the proposal. The VVD saw it as going a step too far. For one, the VVD thought it could hurt its liberal oriented middle class voter base, leading to a loss in the polls in the next election.⁷⁰ That is not to say the VVD was necessarily against the NMP. In the coming election, the VVD would argue for a more sustainable economy, even going as far as advocating to "spend more of our income to improve the quality of the environment."⁷¹ A stance it would not come to advocate for again until the 2010s. Secondly, there were already considerable tensions within the Coalition between the Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDU) and the VVD. Members of the VVD felt sidelined for too long and this being the straw that broke the camel's back. Nijpels thought the VVD used the NMP as an excuse to falter the Coalition, speculating that the VVD could have 'ridden' the NMP into a victory for the coming election.⁷² Nonetheless, the NMP brought the fall of the Government before it was published, leading to new elections.⁷³ Nijpels might have been correct to an extent. In the next election, the VVD lost 5 seats and a new coalition was formed between CDU and the centre left. The election of 1989 was said to be "one of the greenest elections in history" at the time, with 42% of Dutch voters claiming in a national survey that the environment was the most

⁶⁶ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁶⁷ van der Straaten, "The Dutch National Environmental Policy Plan," 60.

⁶⁸ De Volkskrant, "Ruding verwerpt lastenverhoging door milieuplan," November 4, 1989, <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identificer=ABCDDD:010856337:mpeg21>.

⁶⁹ De Volkskrant.

⁷⁰ van der Straaten, "The Dutch National Environmental Policy Plan," 61.

⁷¹ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁷² Duyvendak.

⁷³ De Volkskrant, "Tweede kabinet-Lubbers gevallen," March 5, 1989, <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identificer=ABCDDD:010857073:mpeg21>.

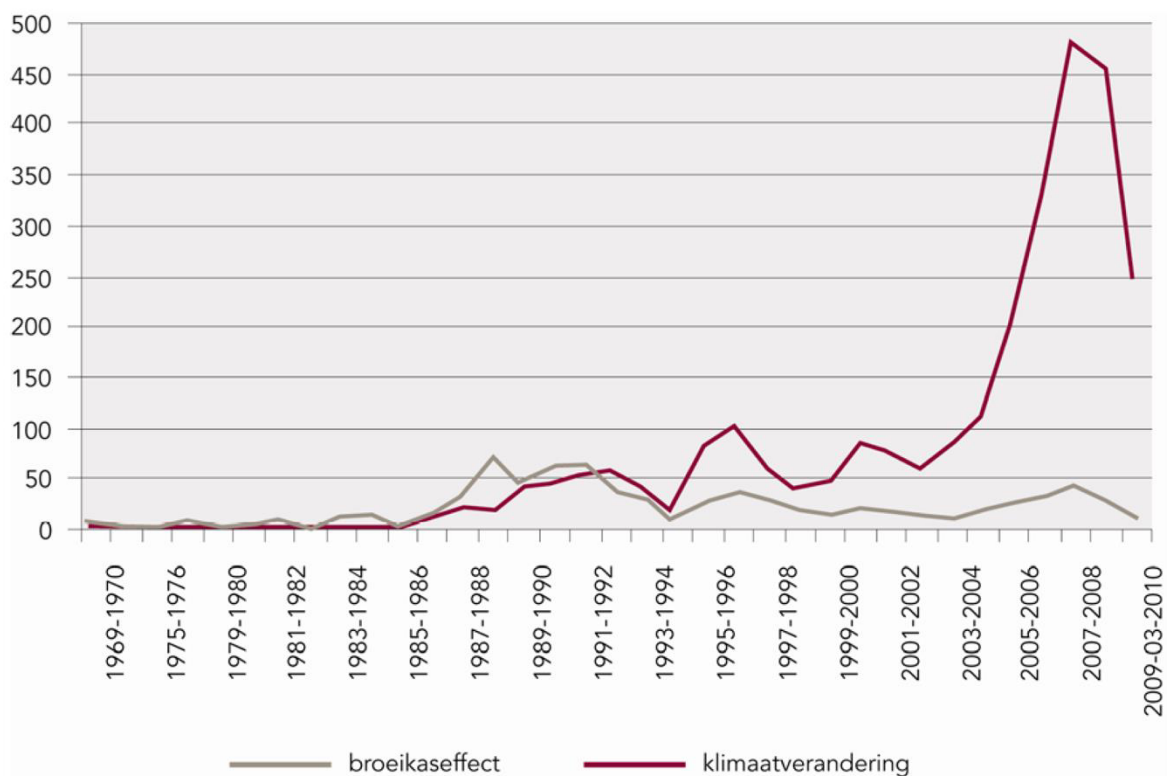
important national issue.⁷⁴ With the NMP falling through despite some of the audience potentially accepting the framing of the NMP, securitization was not achieved if it was committed. The political climate could have been perceived as favourable as ever, potentially encouraging a more confident NMP.

⁷⁴ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*; Mary E. Pettenger, ed., *The Social Construction of Climate Change: Power, Knowledge, Norms, Discourses*, Global Environmental Governance (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 51.

Deltacommissie and the Netherlands after the first NMP

The Dutch Delta State Advisory Committee, or simply *Deltacommissie*, was formally established by the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W) in 2007. According to the Deltacommissie's mandate, it was to devise a sustainable national long term plan that advises the Secretary of State on the expected sea level rise, how it will affect Dutch coasts and suggest sustainable strategies to provide safety and additional values to society.⁷⁵

After the failure of the first NMP, climate change policy would not be pursued with the same élan. According to Breeman and Timermans, climate change tends to be zero sum in the political and media attention hierarchy and needs to be 'seen' to generate attention.⁷⁶ Events such as reports, disasters or conferences are needed for climate change to grab the attention of the public. While the late 1980s saw the crescendo of the Brundtland Report, *Zorgen Voor Morgen*, The Queens Speech and the NMP, attention stagnated, eventually crashing. Thanks to Monique Riphagen's image shown below, this attention deficit can be roughly viewed in the frequency of the words "greenhouse gas emissions" and "climate change" in the documents of the second chamber. As one can observe, there is some justification to coin the late 1980s as the 'first climate wave'.⁷⁷



⁷⁵ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 101.

⁷⁶ G.E. Breeman and A. Timmermans, *Politiek van de Aandacht Voor Milieubeleid: Een Onderzoek Naar Maatschappelijke Dynamiek, Politieke Agendavorming En Prioriteiten in Het Nederlandse Milieubeleid*, 55.

⁷⁷ M. Riphagen et al., "De Verwetenschappelijking van de Klimaatpolitiek" (Utrecht University, 2010), 16.

The following stagnation could not only be partially explained by the ongoing efforts of the new more left leaning government to implement climate change efforts but as well by the founding of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 1992. International news and helped climate change to remain occasionally seen throughout the 1990s. After a short decline, a spike of interest occurred roughly around 1996. This is likely from the release of the IPCC's Second Assessment Report in 1995 and the Kyoto Protocol being established in 1997, with a further spike cropping up around 2001 with the release of the IPCC's Third Assessment Report.⁷⁸ National events seemed less frequent and give a less visible impact. One could even state that Dutch climate change concerns went into a type of dormancy. The various NMP reports that came after the 1989 NMP reports put more weight on various other environmental concerns such as the ozone layer or acid rain. Any mechanism that aimed at reducing CO2 was voluntary. The economic recession of the early 1990s put economic concerns predominantly above climate change concerns.⁷⁹ This merely reinforces the argument that if there was a securitization attempt it largely failed, especially concerning climate change.

In a 2001 study, the Social Cultural Planning Agency saw that climate change, compared to 1989, had fallen out in favour with society due to being fatigued by the narrative for a need for action yet observing no consequence.⁸⁰ Climate change was generally not something Dutch society saw as an existential security threat. What is interesting to note in that a criticism of the Deltacommissie was that its attempts at securitization were too strong, causing it to backfire and similarly damage climate change action.⁸¹ Climate change was further demoted in this respect with the 2001 September 11 Attacks with the security spotlight directed on terrorists. The Netherlands had its own defining events where popular populist politician Pim Fortuyn undermined climate change by not only affirming fears of terrorists but framing climate change as an "elitist concern of the establishment" and questioning "how bad is it now that the earth is warming up?"⁸² His arguments were certainly not adequately refuted when he was murdered by an environmental activist in 2002, morbidly assisting the Pim Fortuyn List party to form a centre-right coalition with the CDA and VVD nine days later. Although the coalition quickly fell apart by 2003, with a new CDA and VVD coalition forming, climate change as a policy issue and thus a security issue, continued to fade into the background. This is further solidified with the findings of the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency

⁷⁸ "Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change," ENER 026 § (1997), https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVII-7-a&chapter=27&lang=en; "Reports — IPCC," The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, accessed February 24, 2020, <https://www.ipcc.ch/reports/>.

⁷⁹ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁸⁰ Duyvendak.

⁸¹ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change."

⁸² Dewulf, Boezeman, and Vink, "Climate Change Communication in the Netherlands," 11; Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

who determined that throughout the years 2003, 2005 and 2006, a downward trend of public interest for climate change can be observed.⁸³

Three events would help bring climate change back into the public eye and back on to the policy agenda. Firstly, the Hurricane Katrina disaster of 2005 was extensively covered by the Dutch media and would be repeatedly used throughout the years as a comparison of a real world potential impacts of climate change.⁸⁴ Secondly, Al Gore's visit to the Netherlands, next to the broadcasting of Gorse's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* in 2006, was significantly influential.⁸⁵ Not only towards Dutch society but the political elite as well.⁸⁶ It garnered much media attention to the point where one newspaper survey found that that 60% of the Dutch population thought that climate change was an important issue and would be willing to incur a less economic growth if it benefits the environment.⁸⁷ Finally, the IPCC's fourth assessment in 2007 provided further attention to climate change by standing out as an impartial source. While Hurricane Katrina was then controversial to what extent climate change could account for the impact and Al Gore has political baggage from being a former US Democratic presidential nominee, the IPCC has been able to establish itself as an impartial authority that is supported by scientific consensus.⁸⁸ The IPCC report has also influential for policymakers such as the Deltacommissie, with them having employed several IPCC authors themselves.⁸⁹ Similar to the NMP, distinctive events could be seen as a key sign that the political climate was favourable for climate change incorporating policy plans. An environment that could provide confident policy moves.

With this renewed élan in climate change, the Deltacommissie brought forth Working together with the Water. It is relatively contested if the Deltacommissie was successful in securitization. On the one hand, Warner and Boas argue that the economic crisis that hit 3 months after the Report was published "killed the securitising move's."⁹⁰ The mandate and budgetary promises were either reduced or deferred and many sustainability oriented measures were ignored.⁹¹ But Warner and Boas do admit that "it is remarkable how much of the original ideas have stood up."⁹² On the other hand, Verduijn, Meijerink

⁸³ Art Dewulf, Daan Boezeman, and Martinus Vink, "Climate Change Communication in the Netherlands," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science*, by Art Dewulf, Daan Boezeman, and Martinus Vink (Oxford University Press, 2017), 11, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228620.013.455>; Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁸⁴ Dewulf, Boezeman, and Vink, "Climate Change Communication in the Netherlands," 12.

⁸⁵ Victor Bekkers et al., "Contested Knowledge in Dutch Climate Change Policy," *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice* 14, no. 4 (November 2018): 578, <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1332/174426417X14996732347757>.

⁸⁶ Bekkers et al., 578.

⁸⁷ Duyvendak, *Het groene optimisme*.

⁸⁸ Bekkers et al., "Contested Knowledge in Dutch Climate Change Policy," 580.

⁸⁹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 23.

⁹⁰ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change," 1480.

⁹¹ Warner and Boas, 1481.

⁹² Warner and Boas, 1481.

and Leroy would argue that the Deltacommissie was successful in securitization.⁹³ The Deltacommissie were successful in the audience accepting the framing of the issue.⁹⁴ Security concerns were shared by the audience and thus fulfilled the securitization requirements. This is reflective of most of the committee's recommendations being translated into policy.⁹⁵

⁹³ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, "How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy."

⁹⁴ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, 480.

⁹⁵ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, 480.

Analysis

To fully realize this Paper's investigation into the feasibility of looking for historical climate change security measures before the 1990s, a comparative discourse analysis will take place. Firstly this Paper will outline the security narrative that underlines the Deltacommissie in order to establish a baseline. Secondly, This Paper will then use the Deltacommissie as the denominator to assess to what extent there are similarities and difference between the NMP and the Deltacommissie.

Deltacommissie

Flood management, to a degree, inherently has a security narrative embedded in it. If floods need to be controlled, it can be in the defence of something but is typically in the defence of someone. The Netherlands, a country famous for its land reclamation, is emblematic of this. While economic incentives were given as a factor for flood defence, humans were at the centre of these calculations. This was very much the case for the First Deltacommissie of 1953, who took a quantitative based approach to risk assessment in securing the Netherlands from flooding. The Second Deltacommissie, claims to derive their risk management approach from the First Deltacommissie.⁹⁶ However, this seems to be far less significant than stated since water safety standards have been broadened based on the Flood Protection Act of 1996, requiring stronger standards for risk prevention.⁹⁷ This is just one of several examples as to how the Deltacommissie falls back on a program that is considered incredibly successful by Dutch society and attempts to frame itself as a descendent or necessary follow up of the first Deltacommissie. In security terms, it does this for several reasons.

Firstly, there is a historical institutional tradition in the securitization of Dutch flood management that has preceded the Deltacommissie and which the Deltacommissie wants to lean on to include climate change adaptation. This tradition has institutionally securitized flood management through repeated security speech acts of the subject; “the need for emergency action or special measures from and the acceptance of that designation by a significant audience.”⁹⁸ The Deltacommissie leans into the Zuiderzee flooding of 1916 and especially the 1953 flooding of the South-West Delta but the tradition extends back further.⁹⁹ Although the 1916 flooding took relatively little lives, it managed to dampen opposition in establishing a dike to secure the Zuiderzee area.¹⁰⁰ The 1953 flooding was comparably much more destructive, with nearly 2000 lives lost and costing the country, that had a national budget of 5.3 billion, 1.5 billion guilders.¹⁰¹ The event sparked the first Deltacommissie which recommendations engendered the ambitious project of the Delta Works, an amalgamation of dams, dikes and storm surge barriers that have come to prove themselves successful in securing the Netherlands from further flooding. It was a monumental project that managed to justify the 680 to 900 million euro price tag as a necessity.¹⁰² The Deltacommissie points out that not only did

⁹⁶ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 40.

⁹⁷ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 120.

⁹⁸ Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, *Security*, 27.

⁹⁹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 46; “History,” Dutch Dikes, accessed March 5, 2020, <http://dutchdikes.net/history/>.

¹⁰⁰ “Deltawerken - De Zuiderzeevloed (1916),” accessed March 5, 2020, [http://www.deltawerken.com/De-Zuiderzeevloed-\(1916\)/223.html](http://www.deltawerken.com/De-Zuiderzeevloed-(1916)/223.html).

¹⁰¹ C. C. van Baalen, “Gods Water over Gods Akker. Het Parlement En de Watersnoodramp (1948-1953),” *Politiek(E) Opstellen* 9 (1989): 11.

¹⁰² A. G. Maris et al., “Rapport Deltacommissie. Deel 1. Eindverslag En Interimadviezen,” *Deltacommissie Deel 1*, 1961, <https://repository.tudelft.nl/islandora/object/uuid%3A0e28dfd8-4e67-4267-a443-54b74a062bcb;Deltawerken-De-Deltawerken>, Deltawerken.com, accessed March 5, 2020, <http://www.deltawerken.com/De-Deltawerken/1548.html>.

this secure the Netherlands from flooding but made more agricultural land available, improved the freshwater supply and open new areas for recreation.¹⁰³ The Netherlands has repeatedly dealt with the perceived need to secure itself from flooding to the extent that dikes and defence imply security and priority.¹⁰⁴ The Deltacommissie acknowledges that there are no contemporary Dutch flood disasters it can rely upon.¹⁰⁵ Thus, leaning on and reinforcing the tradition helps compensate for this shortcoming and helps in associating its future vision of climate change induced flood rise with that tradition.

Secondly, as noted on the side by Verduijnen et al., 'Deltaplan' has a rather prestigious name in Dutch Society.¹⁰⁶ It is used as a metaphor for necessary high investment high rewards national projects. 'Deltaplans' have been called to save the displaced youth, creating a network of measures to mitigate climate change or reverse biodiversity loss.¹⁰⁷ 'Deltaplan' users tend to frame their issue as a national issue, where neglecting it would lead to unacceptable consequences. Urgent action was needed and the presented ambitious plan as the solution.¹⁰⁸ This line of argumentation can also be found in the Deltacommissie. The Deltacommissie even goes beyond the national interests, explaining that not only a "safe Netherlands is a collective social good" but study the issue in an "international context" and see the countries "international reputation" on the line.¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, "the consequences for a flood [...] are unimaginable" by the Deltacommissie, viewing it at as an "urgent matter."¹¹⁰ Although there are structural factors that are dependent on the tradition of flood management that can help explain why the Deltacommissie uses security rhetoric, there is still the conscious choice to frame it as a security issue by employing the word 'Delta'.

Finally, according to Verduijn et al., there is a distinct narrative component that accompanies the identity of 'the Delta' and which the Deltacommissie uses as a further layer to justify their security measures.¹¹¹ The Netherlands has the distinct historically embedded national identity that it has mastered the art of water management which engendered 'the Netherlands'. A modern stereotypical image of Dutch the countryside is a flat, fertile, polders with polder mills arching in the background. The first opening statement of the *Working together with Water* is that "one cannot conceive of the

¹⁰³ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 46.

¹⁰⁴ Buzan, Waever, and Wilde, *Security*, 28.

¹⁰⁵ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 77.

¹⁰⁶ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, "How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy," 477.

¹⁰⁷ Tweede Kamer, "Klimaatverandering Door CO2 En Andere Sporegassen"; "Ondernemers willen Deltaplan voor energie en klimaat," NRC, accessed March 5, 2020, <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/02/14/ondernemers-willen-deltaplan-voor-energie-en-klimaat-a1545917>; "Deltaplan Biodiversiteitsherstel," CBL, accessed March 5, 2020, <https://www.cbl.nl/onderwerpen/180/>.

¹⁰⁸ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, "How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy," 477.

¹⁰⁹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 9, 12, 41.

¹¹⁰ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 21, 87.

¹¹¹ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, "How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy," 474.

Netherlands without water. [...] it is [the rivers and seas] that set our country apart.”¹¹² The tradition of Dutch water management and the metaphor of the ‘Delta project’ are subsidiaries to this national identity. It is this national identity that is supposed to make the issue of flood management so palatable to Dutch society and which the Deltacommissie uses.¹¹³ The Deltacommissie outlines how it broadened water security to also secure “ecological and cultural heritage” where “Nature, landscape and exceptional architecture are and remain valuable goods.”¹¹⁴ The images accompanying *Working together with Water* do not simply reference coastlines and dikes. In the subchapter “The Netherlands some day” we find two images depicting “Het Groene Hart [The Green Heart], a polder landscape” which depicts the stereotypical Dutch landscape.¹¹⁵ Dutch dikes are what have made the Netherlands ‘the Netherlands’. Dutch dikes are not only protecting Dutch citizens and their economy but ‘Dutchness’ itself. The Deltacommissie does not only want the Dutch to be afraid for their national identity, but also show that not only does the Netherlands simply act upon water management but that the Netherlands can *perform* it, it is a part of who the Dutch are. However, the reiterated events of 1956 are given as a warning that the Netherlands must stay vigilant and that “direct action is needed now” to secure long-term safety for the Netherlands.¹¹⁶

Several authors agree that the Deltacommissie wanted to create a sense of urgency as a persuasion attempt.¹¹⁷ However, this could also be viewed in it of itself as an attempt to further a narrative of security; decisive action needs to be taken in the near future that goes beyond financial, social, or ecological considerations in order to protect these very same factors and prevent unacceptable consequences. The narrative helps lead to a widening, deepening and directing of the issue of future flooding that the original mandate might not have intended. Other concerns become smaller, subsidiary to or even dependent upon securing the Netherlands from future flooding. The Deltacommissie makes several important liberates is broadening their mandate.

Firstly, the coastline assessed is not contained to bordering the North Sea but extended to the connected inland rivers, as well as Lake IJssel next to Amsterdam.¹¹⁸ The Deltacommissie justify this in viewing the system as a “single hydrological, ecological and economic entity.”¹¹⁹

Secondly, the Deltacommissie choose the worst case scenarios for sea level rise in their considerations. While the Dutch Meteorological Institute put an upper limit to sea level

¹¹² Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 5.

¹¹³ Warner and Boas, “Securitization of Climate Change,” 1479.

¹¹⁴ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 41, 39.

¹¹⁵ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 33–36.

¹¹⁶ Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, “How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy,” 475.

¹¹⁷ Boezeman, Vink, and Leroy, “The Dutch Delta Committee as a Boundary Organisation”; Warner and Boas, “Securitization of Climate Change”; Verduijn, Meijerink, and Leroy, “How the Second Delta Committee Set the Agenda for Climate Adaptation Policy.”

¹¹⁸ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 17.

¹¹⁹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 17.

rise of 0.85 m the Deltacommissie placed theirs at 1.3 m.¹²⁰ The Deltacommissie's estimates were also higher than those of the IPCC.¹²¹ Fresco and Veerman defend this measure in claiming to have consulted independently both national and international experts, especially from the IPCC, and wanting to be able to secure the Netherlands from flooding even in the worst case scenarios.¹²² The Deltacommissie elaborates that this upper limit was chosen with the mindset that if expectations would fall below reality, it could be too little too late to adapt policy.¹²³ Notably, seeing as the Dutch Meteorological Institute accepted this upper limit by the Deltacommissie, with there being a general agreement that the worst-case scenario is acceptable for delta infrastructure, further shows how strong the tradition of security is established.¹²⁴

Finally, we can see this narrative of security continued by diminishing the scenarios and options given by the Deltacommissie, relying on a single scenario for them to make recommendations.¹²⁵ This is not standard practice with government policies recommendations. For instance, the NMP gives multiple scenarios, several actions to choose from in dealing with future scenarios and acknowledges uncertainties.¹²⁶ Working together with Water has been criticized for ignoring uncertainties and focusing instead on flexibility throughout the process. The Deltacommissie might make the argument that since the aim was to secure the Netherlands even under the most extreme scenarios, expectations could be lowered and adjusted to reality later on down the road. Be that as it may, Warner and Boas put it best when concluding that it is "almost a textbook example of turning the logic of 'choice' into one of 'necessity'."¹²⁷ By narrowing the future down to a single scenario, accompanied with policy recommendations the Deltacommissie presumably views as most desirable, the audience is presented with a false dichotomy. Either the Netherlands is secured through the recommendations by the Deltacommissie or the Netherlands faces an unacceptable risk of flooding.

These three measures not only extend the coverage across the Netherlands but also deepen the impact of the perceived risk from flooding. The Deltacommissie has demonstrably increased the stakes as a security precaution. Although seeing water management as a single system, using the precautionary principle and preferring to maintaining flexibility down the road may sound like reasonable measures, the implications for furthering the security narrative still stand.

¹²⁰ Boezeman, Vink, and Leroy, "The Dutch Delta Committee as a Boundary Organisation."

¹²¹ J. de Vries and M. Wolsink, *Making Space for Water: Spatial Planning and Water Management in the Netherlands* (London: Earthscan, 2009), 10, <https://dare.uva.nl/search?identifier=17f890f3-0336-4110-8bbe-ce05e7fb4b23>.

¹²² De Volkskrant, "De Delta kan zelfs zwartste scenario aan," September 24, 2008, <https://www.volkskrant.nl/gs-b3bfb04a>.

¹²³ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 27.

¹²⁴ Boezeman, Vink, and Leroy, "The Dutch Delta Committee as a Boundary Organisation," 167.

¹²⁵ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change," 1482.

¹²⁶ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*, 18.

¹²⁷ Warner and Boas, "Securitization of Climate Change," 1482.

By framing the issue in terms of width, depth and direction, the Deltacommissie creates a high risk picture of the issue, allowing itself to compete, with other considerations, especially economic ones. The high stakes give it room to even be confrontational, declaring that “money must not be an impediment” and that “The Netherlands *must* [emphasis added] devote 0.5% of GNP66 to water safety.”¹²⁸ However, the Deltacommissie largely frames the opposing consideration not as antithetical but synergetic. In the spirit of the Brundtland Report, the Deltacommissie not only takes a sustainable approach that not only uses “water, energy and other basic materials as efficient as possible” but to even “improve[s] the quality of the living environment” that “leave[s] no opportunity unexploited.”¹²⁹ Opportunities to develop “sustainable sources of energy [...] housing and business environments” and for private parties to “co-invest in sustainable planning and development for the Netherlands.”¹³⁰ Improving the quality of life does not only account on an economic level but also ecological and social development. The Deltacommissie repeatedly mentions the ecological benefits of the project by “building with nature and other ecological processes” with the “expansion of nature and areas of ecological value,” although the only concrete action the Deltacommissie mentions are islands and artificial reefs that provide a positive ecological effect by having extra shallows for fish.¹³¹ In terms of social development, the Deltacommissie relies on the promise of new technology and infrastructure to give future generations a better quality of life next to becoming a “beacon to the rest of the world” in terms of gaining international reputation.¹³² However, the sustainable argument is not the strongest security speech act. Although the Deltacommissie is confident in confronting and synergizing with the competing considerations, the stronger security act is to subsume these considerations, making the different considerations dependent upon securing the Netherlands from future flooding. Without implementing the proposed security measures in the near future, “economic, societal and physical stakes are great and growing still.”¹³³ The Deltacommissie implies that if action is not taken, potentially “9 million people ... [and] roughly 65% of GNP” is at stake, threatening the Netherlands business reputation as well.¹³⁴ Social and ecological factors are also subordinated, viewing that “the consequences of a flood in our densely populated, intensively utilised country are unimaginable” and that immense ecological value is in danger, such as migration and breeding grounds for birds as well as overwintering areas for aqueous flora.¹³⁵ It would be “inconceivable ... [to] ever abandon” these economic, ecological and societal considerations.¹³⁶ With this subsumption, securing the Netherlands from floods

¹²⁸ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 80–81.

¹²⁹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 38.

¹³⁰ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 39, 89.

¹³¹ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 77, 89, 126–27.

¹³² de Vries and Wolsink, *Making Space for Water*, 15; Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 89.

¹³³ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, “Working Together with Water,” 10.

¹³⁴ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 21.

¹³⁵ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 21.

¹³⁶ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, 21.

in not merely a risk aversion but a *necessity*. Thus as previously outlined, by widening and deepening the issue of flooding beyond what the original mandate might have intended, other concerns become smaller, subsidiary to or even dependent upon securing the Netherlands from future flooding. At the very least, calls for securing the Netherlands from flooding would be less feverous if perceived scale and impact were at a lower level. The dimensions and scale of the impacts not only cause pressure but also the repeated emphasise that action should be taken in the near future or even now. This creates a sense of urgency for the implementation of these security measures. This is further underlined by the false dichotomy that is presented by the Deltacommissie.

National Environmental Policy Plan

To understand the NMP, one has to view the Report not primarily as a translation of the contemporary knowledge at the time about the environment but more as a patchwork of different reports put together. Its primary aim is to present a “strategy for environmental policy [...] directed at the attainment of sustainable development” which is based on the conclusions of the Brundtland Report.¹³⁷ It furthermore accredits *Zorgen Voor Morgen* as a foundational report for the NMP.¹³⁸ These two sources have a heavy handed influence to the extent that to understand the NMP one must understand those reports. The fundamental ideas of sustainability are, to an extent, translated from the Brundtland report with its own twist. While ideas such as systematizing sources and effects or deeper introspection concerning the needs of future generations likely originate from the Brundtland Report, there are nonetheless deviations.¹³⁹ The most notable difference being that the NMP structures the issues tackled through different geographic spheres, ascending in order from local to regional, fluvial, continental and global, or forms the idea of an ‘environmental carrying capacity.’¹⁴⁰ Especially when it comes to quantitative extrapolations, it seems the NMP is heavily reliant on *Zorgen Voor Morgen*. For instance, dividing the issues into different geographical spheres originates from *Zorgen Voor Morgen* and the NMP’s 3 different scenarios for the future are taken from it as well.¹⁴¹ Even the language of different reports seeps into the NMP. Centring and describing the impacts on humans in terms of health is something straight out of Healthy Ministries *Zorgen Voor Morgen*.¹⁴² Simplistically, The Brundtland Report could be considered to provide a philosophical aspect while *Zorgen Voor Morgen* provides the practical influences. These reports are underlined since many arguments brought forth in the NMP are implicit. The NMP largely assumed that their audience mostly knew about the project of sustainable development and focused more on providing proper theorizations and policy avenues. Therefore, if one wants to gain a deeper understanding of the NMP, one has to understand where their arguments are coming from.

Before establishing that much of the impacts are implicit and much of the report is about mechanisms, what kind of storyline can we still gather from the Report? A fundamental assumption that the NMP makes is the idea that there is a natural sustainable circular substance cycle which humans are tampering with by adding harmful substances flows to said cycle, such as waste, and are extracting flows from this cycle to meet demands, such as fossil fuels.¹⁴³ This excessive tampering with the cycle is burdening the ‘Carrying

¹³⁷ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*, 5.

¹³⁸ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 5.

¹³⁹ World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*.

¹⁴⁰ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*, 8–9.

¹⁴¹ Langeweg, *Zorgen Voor Morgen*.

¹⁴² Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*, 9.

¹⁴³ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 61.

Capacity of the Environment' at an increasingly unsustainable rate.¹⁴⁴ This trend is not only proven by the increased severity of environmental issues, but also the appearance of 'new' issues.¹⁴⁵ While issues such as acidification are perceived to be becoming more severe, climate change is considered a new issues that is a result of the unsustainable practices. These unsustainable practices are not only causing environmental and economical burdens in the present. Due to the 'lag time' of impacts and 'friction time' of identifying cause and effect, current practices will cause impacts on future generation, with some impacts being irreversible.¹⁴⁶ Thus, while the Report leans heavily on the storyline of sustainability, it is still a distinguishable narrative which follows throughout the whole Report.

Climate change when analyzed, and eventually compared, cannot be done so wholly absent of the other issues in the Report since it views climate change as an element of a larger issue. That being said, there remain some securitization moves which we can identify if we focus alone on climate change. The Report primes viewers by laying out that "current problems are, moreover, frequently not directly visible, large scale, and insidious" and declares that "sooner or later damage to the environment strikes back at human development possibilities."¹⁴⁷ While climate change is an issue that is viewed as outside of the NMP's timespan, it is still framed as an ominous issue with a present concern. It is an issue that is placed on the same pedestal as a nuclear winter, with many measures to fight it but no permanent solution.¹⁴⁸ It has global structural impacts that can not only risk the global food supply but hamper the global economy.¹⁴⁹ It shall cause sea level rise of "several meters" with the Dutch needing to invest "billions of guilders" into upgrading their coastal defence infrastructure.¹⁵⁰ Together with a damaged ozone layer, climate change could tip already stressed ecosystem into vanishing, help spread plagues and generally suppress human health.¹⁵¹ To the NMP, climate change is a sleeping giant with yet unknown largescale consequences. Measures the NMP suggests are mainly to establish relations and consensus worldwide to gather more information on this barely known threat.¹⁵² Maybe even because the arguments brought forward are largely speculation, an already gloomy picture is established. However, there are several problems with the framing of climate change by the NMP. Firstly, although the NMP explains that impacts can travel upwards from say a continental sphere to a global sphere, it does not investigate how climate change and other globally sphered issues impacts occur outside of a global perspective or travel down the spheres. There is an implication that the global impacts can have local consequences such as increased coastal defence but this remains rather implicit and under investigated. The Brundtland Report and

¹⁴⁴ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 62.

¹⁴⁵ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 61.

¹⁴⁶ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 9.

¹⁴⁷ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 48, 42.

¹⁴⁸ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 58, 17.

¹⁴⁹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 58–59.

¹⁵⁰ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 58–59.

¹⁵¹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 59.

¹⁵² Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 23.

Zorgen Voor Morgen have a more complete analysis, quantifying the sea level and temperature rise, with the Brundtland Report going further into depth about potential local issues. However, the NMP underuses these insights. Thus, the NMP is rather lacklustre in its security move when focusing on climate change and or climate change in itself is not the focus. Secondly, while the sources of the issues can be neatly linked to the storyline of the NMP through the distinction of different geographic spheres, these distinctions seemingly hinder the NMP in elaborating more heartfelt impacts of climate change. A neat separation of the different issues via differentiated geographic spheres is preferred rather than a focus on impacts by different issues across spheres. Both problems raised points towards climate change being merely an element of a larger message in line with the storyline. If security moves expressed through climate change are not necessarily there to securitize climate change itself but the storyline presented by the NMP, then what security moves are conducted on behalf of the storyline?

As previously outlines, the storyline relies on the assumption that there is a natural sustainable substance cycle and that this cycle is out of balance. The carrying capacity of the environment is put under pressure and evident by the increase in environmental problems. All environmental problems can be linked back to this disturbance. What the NMP thus proposes are goal oriented measures to grasp control of a cycle that has lost it.¹⁵³ While some solutions proposed to see innovation and voluntary internal motivation of agents, the most effective and long term measures assume state intervention and management of risk. Three scenarios were proposed by the NMP. Scenario I outlines 'business as usual,' Scenario II projects the full use of the current end of the pipeline measures are implemented and Scenario III adds on to scenario II source oriented measures.¹⁵⁴ However, the NMP also suggests that unless the Netherlands strive to achieve goals outlined by Scenario III, only a few or close to none of the necessary emissions reduction could be achieved.¹⁵⁵ In that regard, To Choose or to Loose mainly focuses on Implementing Scenario III. Although it gives an overview of the choice that could be made, NMP frames there only being one reasonable choice to save civilization. After all, if nothing is done and the impacts worsen, the Netherlands does not want to be confronted with a "heads in the sand' strategy and a 'back to the middle ages' strategy."¹⁵⁶ Note how this references the previously mentioned Limits of Growth mindset. Thus to prevent a potentially civilization ending scenario through the collapse of nature, extensive measures should be taken. The measures suggested are spread across society, ranging from the individual sphere and to the private sector towards the national and supra-national institutions. More importantly, these are sometimes deep measures that would significantly change Dutch society. The education systems attention towards environmental management would be 'expanded drastically,' educating the coming generations in an environmental ideology born in the Brundtland Report.¹⁵⁷ There is a

¹⁵³ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 44.

¹⁵⁴ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 18.

¹⁵⁵ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 18.

¹⁵⁶ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 74.

¹⁵⁷ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 174.

carte blanche against private companies for achieving environmental goals. "The duty to care for the environment assigned to the government by article 21 of the Constitution [...] in the absence of private sector initiatives, the government can also make its own arrangements."¹⁵⁸ There is also the shifting of Dutch foreign policy, where the Netherlands would be willing to lead the way by using more stringent environmental regulation than prescribed by the EU at a cost to the Dutch economy.¹⁵⁹ The RIVM has accounted for the economic uncertainty posed by the NMP. Via the "implementation of an [NMP]-Steering Committee for Industry," a balance in economic and environmental aims would have been found.¹⁶⁰ Industry and the private sector may find themselves to have less power in society with the NMP. Expanding the budget for "administrative and criminal enforcement of environmental legislative [...] planned in this [NMP]" would certainly not help them.¹⁶¹ Institutionally, the Brundtland Reports ethics of sustainable development shall be included "as a main element in the strategy of large research institutes (RIVM, TNO, DBW/RIZA, DLO, ECN) and universities."¹⁶² While these are rather significant changes in Dutch society, the RIVM would find itself to be a far more important organization. Through the proposition of the NMP, not only would its ideas be included into other institutions but its environmental duties could expand with the NMP. With the proposed plans costing around 4% of the countries growth national product if fully implemented, it would be hard to imagine not some of the investment dedicated to expanding the organization. Although this may paint the NMP as interventionary, it advocates for as little state intervention as possible. A central philosophy it adopted from the Brundtland Report is the Polluter Pays principle. Those who pollute are themselves responsible for finding means and solutions to reducing this pollution.¹⁶³ State intervention is therefore discouraged as a last resort measure. Many of its policies, such as its diverse information campaigns, rely on internal motivation or are conducted on a voluntary basis.¹⁶⁴ The NMP is dependent upon cooperation for its policies to work. Thus it hopes for, and partially tries to develop, a society with a more conscious perspective regarding the environment and sustainability.¹⁶⁵ Otherwise, many measures are also directed at encouraging rather than controlling behaviour. For instance, the NMP plans to shift Dutch society from a car based to a public transport based society by expanding public transport.¹⁶⁶ The storyline of the NMP does seem to point towards a security moves due to its perceived necessity to protect and control the environment from society. This is also present in some suggested objectives, although many of the objectives could be considered atypical for a securitization move. Nevertheless, in tandem, the objectives would significantly change the status quo out of a fear of necessity.

¹⁵⁸ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 123.

¹⁵⁹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 184.

¹⁶⁰ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 180.

¹⁶¹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 187.

¹⁶² Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 165.

¹⁶³ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 123.

¹⁶⁴ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 196, 185, 122, 19.

¹⁶⁵ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 19.

¹⁶⁶ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 197.

While the Storyline provides evidence for security moves, there are also signs of urgency and symbolism that can be explored as well that hint at securitization moves. As previously mentioned, the environmental issues are framed as potentially civilization ending, with the proposed objectives as, implicitly, the way of preventing decay. This is not only to highlight the importance the NMP but also to build up pressure. Not only outlined within climate change but also concerning environmental issues in general, there is a lag time for the consequences and benefits to demonstrate impact. In other words, if consequent action is not handled now, it may be too late to prevent certain disaster. Shown previously, some current environmental impacts are not reversible which pushes further for an urgent response. This urgency is most apparent in the response time anticipate for by the report. The latest date it sets itself for handling the various environmental issues is 2010, with most of its policies approved and underway in the next five years.¹⁶⁷ Those are, even by in the most optimistic terms, very ambitious goals. Might not more of these goals be more achievable given a longer timescale? However, given all the previous points made, it is not surprising that the NMP views “the earth as slowly dying” and thus presses for urgent action.¹⁶⁸ This reflects in their title “To choose or to loose” as well, which is accompanied by a picture of the earth cracking in two.¹⁶⁹ This is one of the images can be comfortably associated with the storyline. Furthermore, there are many images of, that were at the time, pronounced contemporary visual environmental issues. The most prominent of them being the reoccurring image of dead trees in a desolate landscape.¹⁷⁰ As Hajer has already pointed out, dead trees would be not considered part of the natural phenomenon in this context but become victims of pollution, politicizing them.¹⁷¹ It is a gesture towards the storyline of an environment reaching its carrying capacity. Dead trees are an effective visual impact that everyone would recognize and is still associated today with negative environmental impacts. Politicizing and associating the sign of dead trees with the other environmental issues in the NMP could very well be seen as an attempt at persuasion. Persuading politicians and the public of the storyline and potentially enacting great measures to prevent the consequences it perceives. Something that could be considered a securitization move. Furthermore, there are several more Images that tend to have a similar consequence. One image shows the sweeping of garbage under the metaphorical rug that is the Netherlands, a clear idiom advising us not to ignore the issue.¹⁷² Especially when it is followed up with a sketched image of a distressed dog surrounded by piles of litter in the foreground and a lush forest in the background.¹⁷³ This not only references flora such as trees being the

¹⁶⁷ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 15, 128.

¹⁶⁸ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 61.

¹⁶⁹ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*.

¹⁷⁰ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 39, 64, 87.

¹⁷¹ Maarten Hajer, “Discourse Analysis and the Study of Policy Making,” *European Political Science* 2, no. 1 (September 2002): 63, <https://doi.org/10.1057/eps.2002.49>.

¹⁷² Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, *To Choose or to Lose: National Environmental Policy Plan*, 70.

¹⁷³ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 88.

victim but flora and thus being politicized. The waste is also centred upon as being something 'unnatural'. An image of a pile of plastic, batteries, cans and styrofoam is placed in the context of a short product lifespan.¹⁷⁴ This image is again not just a pile of trash but meant to politicize. This image is different than the previous images in that it does not centre on the environment being a victim but on how humans are the perpetrator.

Despite there being many apparent security moves, some actions by the NMP seem to be rather counterproductive of securitization. At best these may point towards a bad execution of a securitization attempt. At worst, it may hint that the NMP does not intend to securitize. These counterproductive actions and arguments mainly leave the NMP open for criticism and doubt. Doubt is highlighted by the NMP when it admits to a large number of uncertainties in their calculations.¹⁷⁵ The issue is not that there are uncertainties but that it does not explain why these uncertainties are acceptable or do not matter as much. This leaves the audience room to make assumptions. If a reader is sceptical of the suggestions, finding them simply flawed makes the securitization attempt harder than it has to be. Another closely related point is that the NMP gives several laundry list pages of estimated costs and financing.¹⁷⁶ This is in itself not problematic. Weigh offs can be enacted to highlight the benefits next to the costs to create further arguments for securitization. However, in combination with the previous point on uncertainty, such a weigh off is not properly executed in the NMP. Monetary value is far too articulated next to the vague benefits. Furthermore, in an ideal securitization attempt, costs would be considered secondary since the consequences are too critical to otherwise ignore. However, in the NMP, it acquires its own spotlight. The United States did not consider a cost benefit analysis before invading Afghanistan. The United States may have exited Afghanistan much earlier if that were so, seeing as the United States have spent 975 billion dollars by 2019.¹⁷⁷ This direction of meticulous accounting leaves the NMP more open for targeted criticism and distracts from any attempted securitization. A final point is that the NMP takes a very broad, patchwork outlook that leaves it having to rely on general statements. It tackles many issues and perspective and tries to account for everything. However, it lacks depth with most of its goals. Without giving a more detailed elaboration of these goals and threats, it leaves again the audience to fill in their own interpretation and scepticism. This is apparent in the climate change section of the report. While climate change is seen as a serious issue and is related to civilization ending impacts, the NMP does not tell us what that exactly mean. There is some desertification, sea level rise and the environmental capacity of the earth deteriorates but what does this mean for the Dutch citizen? How will this lead to unacceptable consequences? What will

¹⁷⁴ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 67.

¹⁷⁵ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 19.

¹⁷⁶ Ministerie van Volkshuisvesting, Ruimtelijke Ordening en Milieubeheer, 232–39.

¹⁷⁷ Niall McCarthy, "The Annual Cost Of The War In Afghanistan Since 2001 [Infographic]," Forbes, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2019/09/12/the-annual-cost-of-the-war-in-afghanistan-since-2001-infographic/>.

these consequences look like? With the limited roughly 260 pages, the NMP stretches itself too thin. By trying to give a report that covers everything, it covers nothing.

The NMP seems to demonstrate several securitization moves. Its storyline and the subsequent objectives given are one of the strongest factors for there being an attempt at securitization. Climate change has signs of securitization moves as well. Despite it being at the time not very well understood, daunting consequences were related to it that required a strong response. However, it was shown that climate change in the NMP cannot be considered in isolation and that it is connected to other environmental issues as a whole through the storyline. Thus securitizations moves centred around other environmental issues could still be linked to climate change. However, there is still space for doubt, since there are certain directions taken in the NMP that are run counter to securitization. As mentioned previously, the NMP led to the downfall of the government before it was even published. Strong opposition was mounted against the financing of the plan, an already mentioned weak point. Especially concerns surrounding the raising of the fuel levy brought heavy resistance. The following NMP called NMP+ was entirely voluntary and had little impact. Thus, assuming there are securitization moves, the securitization attempt failed.

The National Environmental Plan and the Deltacommissie

The similarities between the sources can be seen in the urgency of both sources. The sources call for action to be undertaken in the near future due to the severity of the perceived detriment of impact. Pressure is applied in the form of not only pushing for action but also by underlining the consequences. In the Deltacommissie, the prosperity, heritage, environment and human life is at risk within the Netherlands through climate change. There are more detailed and focused consequences in the Deltacommissie compared to the NMP. The NMP, partially due to its stronger roots to the Brundtland Report, can sometimes take a more global view, especially with climate change. However, the NMP still views the environmental issues, including climate change, as a threat to the Netherlands. It even goes further than the Deltacommissie in grading it as potentially civilization ending. Furthermore, pressure is applied in both sources by not only selecting a single scenario but also the worst case scenario. The Deltacommissie is more subtle about this. It does not explore or mention multiple scenarios for the Netherlands to follow. Rather, it only focuses on one scenario. A scenario that also assumes a sea level rise that is even higher than the highest estimates of the IPCC. A somewhat less manipulative direction is taken by the MNP. Due to relying on *Zorgen van Morgen*, the MNP seemingly gives three scenarios. However, it frames the third scenario as the most reasonable scenario to pursue, focusing its suggested objectives to meet the requirements of the third scenario. Any other scenario would simply to be not enough to guarantee that the Earth's environmental capacity would not be overwhelmed. Lastly, the pressure is given a somewhat normative edge in both sources by emphasizing that economic concerns are not an issue and that any potential costs are worth preventing the consequences. The Deltacommissie frames it as a long term preventative investment. The NMP, inspired by the Brundtland report, frames the issue slightly differently in that environmental costs as not being incorporated in the current economic system. It could be considered not only a preventative investment but also a form of correction. Another short aspect would be the Imagery used and how it supports security moves by adding a visual dimension. Both sources try to give a vision for its plans, but differ in tone, which can also reflect the tone of the sources as a whole. The Deltacommissie gives a positive, hopeful vision of what the Netherlands could be and can achieve. In a rather negative, pessimistic vision, the NMP warns of what it could become if no action is taken. Regardless of the tone, both call for action, entrenching the preceding rhetorical and argumentative factors. Considering that academics view the urgency pushed by the Deltacommissie as part of a wider securitization attempt, it can be reasonably assumed that the comparable urgencies pressed in the NMP to be somewhat supportive of the idea that it is a securitization move.

The differences between the sources can very much vary. Some minor aspects differ in the sense that it does not necessarily give a strong indication that the NMP does not conduct securitization moves and more akin to a bad or different securitization move. For instance, the Deltacommissie is building upon a tradition that is prone to securitize, while the NMP does not necessarily build upon such a background and focuses more on

attempting to institutionalize it. This does not say if the NMP attempted a securitization move or not. Rather it shows how it had a different character. Then there are minor differences that indicate a missing securitization move. However, this is a relatively weak form of evidence since it does not target the characteristics of securitization but the style. As an example, the Deltacommissie used the term Deltaplan an effective signal by playing on peoples notion of national identity and pride, while the NMP lacked such a symbol. While the NMP might have had a stronger securitization attempt with such an element, it lacking such a symbol does not give much away about its securitization attempt.

Major aspects that do shed doubt on the securitization attempt do not centre on the absence of evidence but on aspects that run counter to one another. As previously mentioned, there are many aspects of the NMP that seem counterproductive in a securitizations attempt. Comparing these aspects to the Deltacommissie further highlights how problematic these aspects are. The NMP sheds doubt onto its own analysis by highlighting the different factors that may influence its predictions. What the Deltacommissie does differently is that it turns that uncertainty into an argument for securitization. There is uncertainty about the range of the sea level rise? The Deltacommissie decides to take the highest possible sea level rise into account as a security measure. What is one of the biggest uncertainties for the future of the Netherlands? "The willingness to invest in the protection and quality of our country."¹⁷⁸ The Deltacommissie is careful to only bring uncertainty in if it serves a purpose. The NMP, in comparison, seems to be leaning more towards 'laying out the facts.' By letting the facts speak for themselves, the NMP leaves securitization open for interpretation. When a securitization attempt is made, especially by the Deltacommissie, the opposite is done. Another Major aspect is how vague and general the impacts are made out to be by the NMP. The Deltacommissie has a clear visual map of the flooding that is expected to reach the Netherlands, why this is a disaster and how it may affect the Netherlands and its citizens. The NMP does none of this. There seems to be a weak link between the fairly detailed theory and the overly elaborate solutions. The NMP fails to explainin why the Netherlands should care. Calling it potentially civilization ending could even be considered damaging if not elaborated upon how this is going to come about. Again, this is something that would tend to not be ignored, but would, if anything, be the strongest link in the argumentative chain. Despite the doubt, it is arguably not enough to dispel the security moves of the NMP.

By comparing the two sources, one can find several security moves. Especially in the context of urgency, one can find several overlaps that point towards securitization moves. However, there are also blatant contradictions in the comparison, with the largest being the weak elaboration of why the Netherlands should care. If it hints towards an ill-made securitization attempt, none at all or some other explanation is unclear. Either way, it leaves some room for doubt.

¹⁷⁸ Veerman, C.P., Stive, M.J., and Deltacommissie, "Working Together with Water," 96.

Conclusion

This Paper concludes that there is significant evidence that the NMP conducted securitization moves. It is unjustified for security scholars to largely wave away climate security before the 1990s. While there was a securitization attempt by the NMP, it broadly failed to securitize. The audience was not convinced of the framing and the suggested measures were largely not implemented. Therefore, the initial hypothesis was incorrect. However, does not mean the NMP was insignificant or dispels the research question. Just because there was a failed securitization does not mean it is not worth considering. The NMP had political and societal impacts, being deemed a core cause for the second Lubbers Cabinet to falter. Climate Change was not the main focus of the NMP but it was nonetheless an important component of consideration for the NMP. Thus, the current historical demarcation of climate security is unjustified. This Paper highlights that securitization attempts were not a rarity and had an impact on society before the 1990s. It shortly navigated how there is potential to find historical links between the 1800s and the Brundtland Report in terms of securitization. Furthermore, the Paper demonstrated in detail how securitization attempts were present and impactful in 1989 with the NMP.

Conducting a chronological historical investigation of the context was at times at odds with focusing on the relevant context and individual discourse analysis. It still provided valuable insight into the security attempt of both sources. Commencing a comparative discourse analysis may not have been wholly critical for the Paper. Plenty of evidence was found in analyzing the NMP on its own to find a securitization attempt and contrary evidence. However, the comparative discourse analysis did further entrench significant points and problems. Especially when compared to the Deltacommissie, for the NMP to be vague with the consequences of not acting seems too uncharacteristic of a report that aims to securitize when compared to the Deltacommissie. It is unclear if this is simply due to a badly executed securitization attempt or evidence for no securitization attempt. The author of this Paper speculates that by relying too heavily on *Zorgen Voor Morgen* and the NMP not fully committing to its own report, interfering aims engendered a lacking compromise. Either way, despite the doubt, this does not justify overlooking the time period given the previously accounted arguments.

The Brundtland Report was a productive point of origin to depart from. It is not necessary that reports which integrate sustainability à la Brundtland will attempt to securitize but it can be a good sign to look out for. More Reports could be potentially found to securitize climate change departing from the Brundtland Report. Departing from the Brundtland Report may also help when investigating further back in history in terms of securitizing the environment. A non-security road of investigation could explore the environmental 'consciousness' of Dutch citizens in the late 1980s or why it faded. The standard answer that environmental concerns are dependent upon the economy does not hold up. That there were certain key events may also not be the whole story.

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