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DISCOURSES OF CLIMATE DISASTERS: THE CASE OF THE 2019-2020 AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES

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Preface & Acknowledgement

Proudly I present my master thesis about climate disasters and their relation to change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action. Looking at the case of the Australian bushfires provided insights on the research topic. I conducted this thesis for my master Sustainable Development and track Earth System Governance. During the 6 months of my thesis, I gained experience working on scientific research and setting up my own project. I enjoyed completing my thesis with fun because of my interest in climate governance.

This thesis is meant for an audience interested in climate disasters and the changes in climate mitigation it causes. It is also meant for an audience that is interested in politics and climate policy.

Finally, I want to thank my supervisor, James Patterson, for supervising me during the six-monthly thesis. James gave me helpful feedback and feedforward to elevate my work and helped me think about issues I faced. Moreover, I want to thank my fellow master students, Paul van Dijk and Evelien Heida, to provide me feedback and feedforward of my thesis work.

Abstract

As a consequence of the increasing global temperatures, more climate disasters will occur. Climate disasters can be referred to as sudden, shocking, and attention-grabbing, together known as focusing events. Focusing events can uncover policy failures and provides opportunities to trigger policy change. This raises the debate whether climate disasters push a change in climate policy discourse to take more climate mitigation to commit to a CO_2-neutral paradigm to reduce future burdens. An empirical case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 provides scientific insights regarding the climate disaster debate. The research objective of this thesis is to analyse how the public discourse about climate policy has changed within the Australian Parliament and Governments due to the Australian bushfires.

The theory of discourse and discourse analysis provided a foundation for explaining a change in discourses regarding climate policy. The concepts of narrative are the foundation to analyse discourses. Using the concepts of *setting and context*, *plot* and *moral of the story* allowed to gain insights on change of policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government due to the bushfires of 2019-2020.

This research chose to focus on desk research since it efficiently collects large amounts of data quickly and effectively in finding past empirical observations of an event. Media and documents were collected to gain insights into the narratives regarding climate policy and bushfires and how the discourses are framed. Subsequently, the data was coded to uncover the climate policy discourses within this research.

The results showed that three discourses are uncovered before, during, and after the bushfires. The first is a climate denialism discourse, which denies climate science and denies the linkage between bushfires and climate change. The climate denialism discourse has not changed due to the bushfires. Second is a fossil fuel centred economic discourse. The fossil fuel centred economic discourse showed a minor change due to bushfires. The third discourse is a pro-climate action discourse. The pro-climate action discourse has not changed because of the bushfire. Of the three discourses, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is the hegemonic discourse before, during and after the bushfires.

The lack of changes in discourse in the case of the Australian bushfires implies that for Australia, the bushfire disasters did not act as a focusing event and did not contribute to change in the public discourse of climate policy within the Australian Parliament and Government.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Scientific background and problem

"*Humanity is waging war on nature. This is suicidal. Nature always strikes back – and it is already doing so with growing force and fury. Human activities are at the root of our descent toward chaos. But that means human action can help to solve it*" (The Guardian, December 2 2020). In this statement, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the UN, emphasises that countries must reduce the future generation's burden. This statement is strongly related to the Paris Agreement to limit global warming below 2, and preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels to prevent future disasters of climate change (UNFCCC, 2015).

The average global temperature has risen by 0.8 degrees Celsius from 1880 to 2012 (IPCC, 2013). Without any serious commitment to limit global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the global climate will change, and climate disasters will increase (IPCC, 2014; UNFCCC, 2015). The most crucial scientific organisation on climate science and policy, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), emphasise that climate disasters will increase in this century with, for example, higher temperatures leading to more drought and wildfires (IPCC, 2012, 2013). These climate disasters will significantly damage infrastructure, economy, natural environment, and human population. Moreover, ecosystems are also affected by climate disasters, as they can reduce biodiversity or increase soil erosion, consequently reducing ecosystem services for humans (IPCC, 2012; UNISDR, 2009). Moreover, the IPCC introduces the term Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to minimise exposure and vulnerability and enhancing resilience against climate disasters (IPCC, 2012) and emphasises the role of mitigating climate change to reduce the risks of climate disasters (IPCC, 2014).

However, the special report *'Managing the risk of extreme events and disaster to advance climate change adaptation*' by the IPCC emphasises that climate disasters are already happening due to anthropocentric influence (IPCC, 2012). Moreover, society is confronted with the consequences of climate disasters and needs action to mitigate climate change. Considering the Paris Agreement raises the debate about whether climate disasters change public discourses of climate policy and put climate mitigation policy on the agenda. Countries are currently struggling to achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), and countries are unknown of what future climate disasters are lying ahead. Thus, the question is whether climate disasters will push countries over the edge towards a CO_2 neutral paradigm (UNFCCC, 2021).

Climate disaster can be referred to as sudden, shocking, and attention-grabbing, together known as focusing events (Birkland, 1998). Scientists argue that these focusing events can lead to windows of opportunity in putting issues on the policy agenda and trigger policy change (Baumgartner & Jones, 2009; Cobb & Elder, 1983; Kingdon, 1995; Light, 1982; Walker, 1977). Focusing events grab attention to problems which Governments or other institutions might not respond to in another situation (Birkland, 1998). In addition, focusing events allow politically disadvantaged groups to advocate messages that have been suppressed by dominant political groups (Birkland, 1998). Birkland (1997) emphasizes that due to the dramatic, sudden, and attention-grabbing moment of a focusing event, policy failures can be uncovered, providing opportunities to champion policy change. Subsequently, focusing events instead indicate that something is wrong and not going well, and the more dramatic, symbolic, and visceral power of focusing events, the more advantage in policy change (Birkland, 1997). Moreover, Birkland (2006) emphasizes that it is evident that actors should learn from a focusing event and lead to an accumulation of knowledge, consequently improving policies. Subsequently, Kingdon

(1995) notes that learning can be captured in the policy discourse of political groups in which a story is captured and changed.

Research on natural disasters as focusing events emphasizes that natural disasters are the most expensive, deadliest, and feared events (Birkland, 1997; Nohrstedt et al., 2021). Natural disasters have a massive toll on the economy, and humans cannot eliminate natural disasters. Natural disasters can influence news and agenda-setting by shifting attention (Birkland, 1997; Rahmstorf, 2004). In Birkland's (1997) empirical research on earthquakes and hurricanes, politically disadvantaged groups often use the opportunity of disasters to put their policy discourse on the agenda and generate public support for policy change. The newly generated policies concern two types of policies: mitigation (reducing unpleasant conditions) and adaptation (changing to suit unpleasant conditions) (Birkland, 1997). Birkland (1997) expects that dominant political groups would be more open to politics and policy making with the opposition to protect the lives and property of the public.

Birkland's research on natural disasters as focusing events presents a trigger in policy change, and currently, new research into climate disasters provides insights into whether it triggers policy change. However, scholars are divided whether climate disaster will trigger policy change, e.g., Anderson et al. (2018) argues that climate disaster trigger no policy change in climate mitigation by looking at empirical cases in the United States and Lahsen et al. (2020) argues that climate disasters trigger policy change in climate mitigation by looking at empirical cases in Brazil. Subsequently, there is still a scientific uncertainty if climate disasters trigger more debate around climate change and push a change in climate policy discourse to take more climate mitigation action. Moreover, will politicians join forces to fully commit to a CO_2-neutral paradigm after a climate disaster and provide a more science-based policy narrative to reduce future burdens (Sanford et al., 2014).

McNutt (2019) questions whether a change in climate policy due to a climate disaster is universal or not and if climate disasters lead to desired climate mitigation action. Answering such a question requires scrutinising the discourses of climate disasters in different countries (Lahsen et al., 2020). In the summer of 2019-2020, Australia was confronted with a catastrophic event of climate change-related bushfires (Burgess et al., 2020). This case provides empirical insights into whether climate disasters would trigger a change in Australia's public discourse of climate policy.

1.2 Discourses and the bushfires

According to (Hajer, 1995) the definition of a discourse is "*a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities*" (Hajer, 1995). Analysing discourse highlights the role of language in politics and reveals the embeddedness of language in policy practices (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Moreover, analysing discourses reveals the perspective of discourses on policy problems and the discursive struggle between discourses to advocate for policy change (Hajer, 1995; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005). Subsequently, analysing discourses is essential to understand the perspective of discourses on the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 and the struggle between the discourses to advocate for change in climate policy.

To date, studies of Australian climate policy discourse have provided a narrative of interactions between individual and collective actors. These studies emphasise that Australia's fossil fuel economy plays a policy-determinant role in Australia's climate policy (Christoff, 2013). The 2021 Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) shows that Australia is the eighth-worst performing country of the 57 assessed countries (Burck et al., 2021; Harter et al., 2021). The fierceness of the bushfires and the strong linkage between the bushfires and climate change would instead expect a change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government to mitigate future

bushfire disasters. Consequently, this would raise the question if the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 led to any change in the policy discourse of climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government.

1.3 Research objective and questions

The research background shows a need to understand how a climate disaster like the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 causes any change in the public discourse in taking climate mitigation action. Therefore, the research objective is to analyse how the public discourse about climate policy has changed within the Australian Parliament and Government due to the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020. The outcomes generate new insights into what extent climate disaster can lead to change in Australia's climate policy discourse in the Parliament and Government. Moreover, it generates general insights if climate disasters lead to change in the public discourse of climate policy. From the research objective, the following question was derived:

To what extent has the policy discourse on climate mitigation action changed in the Australian Parliament and Government as a consequence of the Australian bushfires 2019-2020?

The following sub-questions will answer the main question:

1. What was the policy discourse on climate mitigation action prior, during and after the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 in the Australian Parliament and Government and what changes have happened?
2. What do these changes or lack of changes imply about the role of climate disasters and changes in the public discourse of climate policy?

Answering the research questions will scientifically contribute to understanding whether climate disasters consequently change policy discourse on climate mitigation action. Subsequently, this is scientifically relevant since the research on bushfires provides initial insights on climate disasters and change in climate policy discourse. Moreover, the research provides societal relevancy since the case of the bushfires provides initial insights into whether climate disasters aid in a shift towards a CO_2-neutral paradigm to reduce the burden of future generations. In addition, with the ongoing climate crisis and the projection of increasing climate disasters, the question arises of whether countries put more effort into mitigating climate change.

1.4 Research framework

Based on these research questions, a framework has been developed for the research steps, see Figure 1.
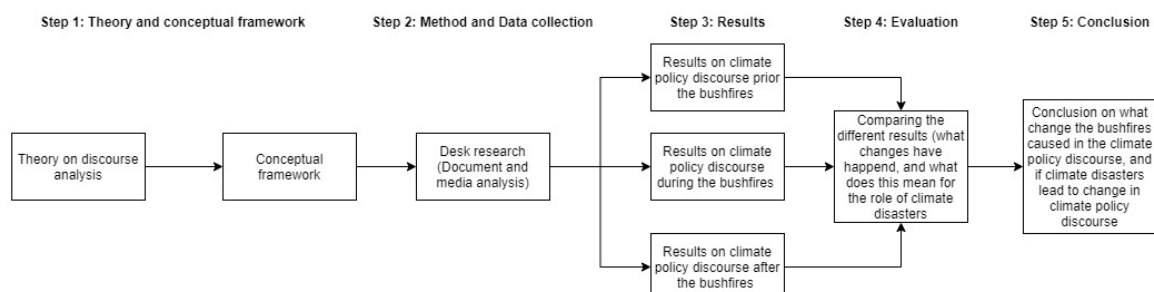
Figure 1. Research framework.

Figure 1 shows that five steps are taken to answer the research questions. The first step is to conduct literature research on theories about discourse analysis. These theories provide key concepts to frame a conceptual framework. The second step is to collect data through media data from newspapers and

document data from political parties. This strategy will provide the Australian Government and Parliament's statements to logically frame the results for step three. Thus, the third step provides an overview of climate policy discourses before, during and after the bushfires. The fourth step is to compare the different results to logically flow to the fifth step to conclude the extent to which change has happened in Australia's climate policy discourse and the role of climate disasters.

2. Theory

This chapter gives an in-depth insight into the leading theory used as a foundation for this thesis. The first section will elaborate on discourse analysis and how discourse analysis is applied within this research. The second section further elaborates on discourses and climate policy. The third section uses narratives to explain a change in discourses regarding climate policy and operationalises the concepts.

2.1 Discourse analysis

Hajer (1995) states that analysing discourses can help understand how the discourse on an environmental problem gains dominance while other discourses are discredited. In addition to Hajer's definition of discourses analysis, Laclau & Mouffe (2014) state that discourses are most powerful when hegemonic, thus normalised and unchallenged in how the discourse is structured. Subsequently to dominant discourses, Litfin (1994) argues that discourse analysis helps uncover dominant discourses, explore how they are articulated, and determine how they change over time. Discourse analysis focuses on what is articulated and the silences that mark and surround dominant discourses (Litfin, 1994). Subsequently, Adger et al. (2001) emphasize that discourse analysis involves analysing regularities in expressions to identify discourses, analyse the actors producing, reproduce and transform discourses, and analyse social impacts and policy outcomes of discourses. This research uses those steps of analysing discourse by Adger et al. (2001) but also emphasises the definitions of Hajer's (1995), Laclau & Mouffe (2014), and Litfin (1994) on dominant discourses and how they change over time.

2.2 Discourse and climate policy

Jones & McBeth (2010) and Hovden & Lindseth (2004) emphasises that discourses are embedded in actors, institutions, and politics and that actors use discourses to discuss climate policy. However, the focus on actors discourses raises the debate about the relationship between agency and structure and discourses structures to exclude other possibilities (Isaksen & Stokke, 2014). Moreover, discourses structure behaviour and discourses have a constraining function than enabling (Foucault, 1972). In contrast, Dryzek (2005) and Hajer (1995) states that discourses are powerful, but they are also penetrable for change. However, Jørgensen & Phillips (2002) argues that discourses cannot change due to structural limitation on actors that cannot articulate elements in new ways and change a discourse. Like Hajer (1995) and Dryzek (2005), this research emphasises how actors produce and transform discourses on climate policy and how discourses structure and understand an event.

Dryzek (2005) states that the impact of discourses is felt in Governments, and policies are products of discursive struggles between politics. Moreover, Dryzek (2005) emphasises that when discourses become dominant, they constitute the proper understanding that provides the context. Hajer (2005) emphasises that the impact of discourse on policy, such as climate policy, can be identified through institutionalisation. Hajer (1995) explains that institutionalisation of discourse means that a set of expressions and practices are formalised to become routinised in policy practices and institutional processes. Within institutionalisation, there is a distinction between structuration and solidification. Structuration happens when a discourse starts to dominate how a given social unit conceptualises the world, and solidification happens when a discourse locks into institutional arrangements. If these two conditions are satisfied, it can be stated that discourse is dominant or hegemonic (Hajer, 1995). A method to analyse and conceptualise this is through narratives. Analysing narrative allows understanding the structuration of discourses and how these discourses are institutionalised within policy practises (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010)

2.3 Concepts of narratives to explain discourse change

A narrative can be described as a story with a temporal sequence of events unfolding in a plot populated by dramatic moments, symbols and archetypal characters that culminate in a moral of the story (Jones & McBeth, 2010). Considering the concept of narratives, Hajer (1995) uses storylines to explain how different elements of physical and social realities are united into specific, closed problems and given meaning. A new storyline can create a political change by re-ordering meaning and making a new discourse dominant (Hajer, 1995). Stories or narratives have a prominent role in understanding how the public discourses of politics are shaped regarding policy, e.g. climate policy (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017).

In analysing narratives regarding policy, multiple concepts are analysed: first, a *setting or context*. Second, a *plot* introduces a temporal element (beginning, middle, end), providing the relationships between the setting and characters, structuring causal mechanism, and characters that are the heroes, villains, and victims. Finally, the *moral of the story*, where a solution is offered (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2018).

The *setting and context* of policy narratives require a policy setting or context. The *setting or context* can be geography or institutional bounded and allows one to understand the idea behind a narrative (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2018). For example, McBeth et al. (2005) use the Greater Yellowstone as a setting to explain narrative to explore the roots of environmental conflicts. The case researched by McBeth et al. (2005) gives insights that narratives can be used to understand within this research the perspective of discourses on specific events but also the struggle between discourses to put their perspective on the agenda.

For policy narratives, *plots* are essential in explaining between parts (e.g., character and setting) and structuring causal explanations that determine the narrative's acceptability (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2018). Stone (2002) emphasises that narratives have causal stories. In addition to the causal explanation, Fløttum and Gjerstad (2017) identify five components to explain the plot by the *initial situation* (linked to the *setting or context*), followed by a *complication* (e.g. a specific event), the *reaction* of the characters (e.g., statements on the complication), consequently the *resolution* by the characters (e.g., policy solutions), and finally the *final situation* which can be positive or negative. Moreover, Stone (2002) and Ney (2006) emphasise that *characters* play an essential role in understanding policy and its discourses. Characters have specific characteristics that can be classified as *heroes/allies* (those who want to solve the complication), *villains/enemies* (those who cause the problems and prevent a solution), and *victims* (those affected by the complication) (Jones & McBeth, 2010).

Finally, *the moral of the story* often portrayed the action that has been taken and a policy solution (Ney & Thompson, 2000; Stone, 2002; Verweij et al., 2006). Moreover, the *moral of the story* allows understanding changes in discourses by identifying how actors produce and transform discourses and how a discourse becomes dominant by institutionalisation, which corresponds to the action part of the moral of the story (Hajer, 1995; Dryzek, 2005).

The concepts of narratives to analyse discourse has also been applied to studies in climate policy discourse. Fløttum and Gjerstad (2017) used narratives to analyse climate policy discourse in South Africa and Norway. The study shows the reaction of both countries on climate change (complication) in which they provide a solution to limit greenhouse gases to mitigate the effects of climate change. Thus, the study of Fløttum and Gjerstad (2017) give insights on how a complication leads to climate policy solutions (Fløttum and Gjerstad, 2017). Verweij et al. (2006) also used the concept of narratives to explain how different political groups frame the climate change debate and use the empirical case

of the Kyoto Protocol on how political groups perceive climate change and put their perception on the agenda. Thus, Verweij et al. (2006) give insights into how the concepts of narratives are used in framing climate policy discourses. Subsequently, the empirical examples by Verweij et al. (2006) and Fløttum and Gjerstad (2017) show that within this research, narratives can be used to understand how discourses perceive climate change, which policy solutions the discourses offer, and how discourses institutionalise those policy solutions.

2.4 Operationalisation

For analysing the narratives in this research, it is necessary to make them applicable for the research of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020. Thus, the concepts need to be operationalised to define indicators and measure them empirically. Figure 2 will give an overview of how the concepts are operationalised.
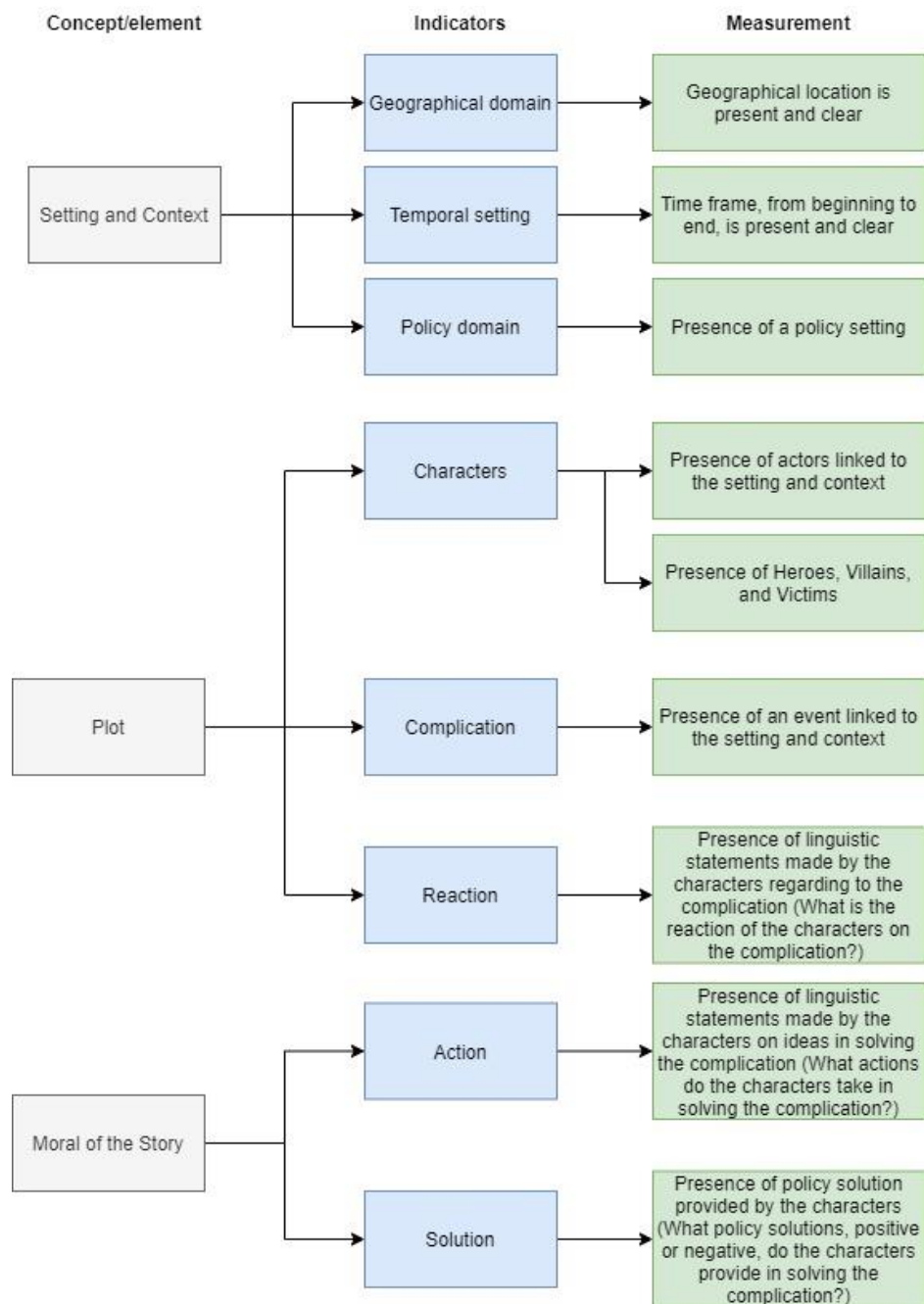

Figure 2. Analytical framework (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2018).

First, looking at the *setting and context*, Jones and McBeth (2010) emphasise that narratives require a policy setting or context, e.g. geographically bounded. As made clear previously, this research focuses on the bushfires of 2019-2020 in Australia and climate policy in Australia; thus, the geographic context is Australia. Moreover, for each discourse, the setting and context are uncovered, e.g., the perspective of each discourse on climate change and the perspective of each discourse on the bushfires.

However, it is also necessary for the *setting and context* to identify the temporal context to have causal mechanisms to understand changes in discourse and frame the *plot* (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Jones & McBeth, 2010; Shanahan et al., 2018). The research question emphasises policy discourse on climate mitigation action of the Australian Government and Parliament prior, during, and after the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020. To define discourses on climate policy *prior* to the bushfires, the Australian election of 2019 is a starting point to define discourses on climate policy. There are two reasons to choose this. First, the Australian elections were one month away from the first bushfire (ABC News, June 27 2019; Parliament of Australia, 2019). Second, elections provide insights into discourses of political parties on specific policies, thus also on climate policy. For defining discourses on climate policy *during* the bushfires, it was chosen to scrutinise the periods of the start of the bushfires and the end of the bushfires, which are June 2019 and May 2020 (ABC News, June 27 2019; Mandurah Mail, May 3 2020). For defining discourse on climate policy after, it is somewhat ambiguous to define "after" a focusing event like the bushfires. Often with focusing events, change happens in a shorter time frame (Birkland, 1998). However, there is no clear definition of a "shorter" time frame, but an advantage is that after the bushfires the Australian Government have placed a Royal Commission to scrutinise the bushfire disaster (Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020). Consequently, the Australian Government and Parliament's reactions to the Royal Commission's report provide a final overview of discourses on climate policy.

Moreover, the *plot* must define the characters involved in this story (Shanahan et al., 2018). For this research, the primary characters considered starting points are members/political parties of the Australian Parliament and the Australian Government members because they play an essential role in framing and transforming public discourse on climate policy (Dryzek, 2005; Hajer, 1995). Furthermore, during the research, it becomes clear which characters are the *heroes* and *villains* in each discourse regarding climate policy (Ney, 2006; Stone, 2002; Verweij et al., 2006). The *plot* should have a *complication* for the characters to react to it. A *complication* can be linked to focusing events as sudden, shocking, attention-grabbing events, which creates the opportunity for policy change (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Cobb and Elder, 1983; Kingdon, 1995; Light, 1982; Walker, 1977). Thus, for this research, the complication is the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020.

Finally, *the moral of the story* will emphasise the action and solution the character provides concerning the bushfires of 2019-2020. These solutions can be positive or negative (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017). Moreover, the *moral of the story* will explain the change of policy discourse on climate mitigation action changed in the Australian Parliament and Government because of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 and if the role of climate disasters leads to change in the public discourse of climate policy by providing an overview of how the characters produce and transform discourses on climate policy from beginning to the end (Dryzek, 2005; Hajer, 1995).

3. Method

This chapter aims to give an overview of the chosen methodology to contribute to gain relevant data to answer the research aim and research questions.

3.1 Research Method

For this research, it was chosen to focus on desk research as a qualitative research method. An essential characteristic of this method is that data is gathered by looking at media articles or specific documents (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). This is also necessary for the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 since, timewise, it happened in the past, and empirical observation at that time by the media or political documents is needed. Furthermore, Corti (2018) emphasises that secondary data allows the researcher to critically interpret existing data to put it in a new perspective. Moreover, analysing secondary data allows for a linguistic understanding of the bushfires and how discourses are framed.

Desk research can be distinguished between a literature survey and secondary research (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). For this research, it was chosen to focus on secondary research. Verschuren and Doorewaard (2010) state that "*when the researcher rearranges existing data, and analyses and interprets this from a different perspective, the researcher is conducting a secondary research strategy*". Thus, this research focus on collecting existing data to answer the research questions. Moreover, the secondary research strategy is efficient since it is expected that the data is available for appropriate research of the research questions. Moreover, for the research, a large amount of data is needed, and secondary research made it possible to collect a large amount of data in a short-range (Corti, 2018)

3.2 Data collection

An essential step for desk research is what type of data will be collected and the data sources (Flick, 2018; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). Thus, based on the research question, there are selection criteria for collecting the data (Flick, 2018; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). First, it was chosen to collect the data through media analysis and document analysis since it is applicable for researching events that happened in the past (Mikos, 2018; Rapley & Rees, 2018; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). Data collection was focused on prior, during and after the bushfires, and the definitions of these terms are explained in Chapter 2.4.

3.2.1   Media analysis

An advantage of collecting the media's data is that the media communicates a large amount of information to a wider audience. Thus, the media provides a comprehensive stream of data and knowledge regarding a specific topic like the Australian bushfires. Moreover, media is also a commonly used source to analyse discourses (Hodges et al., 2008; Whittaker & Mercer, 2004). The media provides data about certain situations, physical objects and processes in the empirical reality, and data on individuals and groups (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). Moreover, media data shows an observation of policy framing by politicians and political parties. Thus, observing how climate policy framing by politicians and political parties are discussed in the media gives insights into the public discourse of climate mitigation action policy (Jackson, 2018; Reynolds, 2019). Within discourse analysis, specific written samples, language and text are collected from the media and analyses how the discourses are constructed (Hodges et al., 2008). However, for a media analysis, it is necessary to decide which media source is used, how to sample it, and how to prevent biases (Mikos, 2018). For this research, it was chosen to use (digital) newspaper since it creates a picture of the Australian climate policy discourse before, during, and after the fires by looking at specific politicians statements.

Moreover, newspapers gave an overview of the change of the discourses on climate policy due to the bushfires by recording their articles. For collecting reliable newspapers, it was decided to focus on national papers in Australia, and the newspapers need to cover and discuss the bushfires widely. Moreover, to prevent biases in newspapers, newspapers with a central-based or near central-based focus and high factual report. Furthermore, the MBFC media check gives an overview of the political focus of newspapers (MBFC, 2021). Based on these criteria, it was decided to focus on the following newspapers: The Sydney Morning Herald (Left-Centre), The Australian (Right-Centre), and ABC News Australia (Left-centre).

However, collecting the correct data on the newspaper's website is necessary to provide an overview by providing consequent search terms (Rapley & Rees, 2018). Table 1 provides an overview of each newspaper's search volume based on the concepts explained in Chapter 2.4 for prior, during and after the bushfires and shows the process of refining the search terms. Refining the search terms allowed a specific search volume to sample enough data. Rapley & Rees (2018) emphasize no golden rule in how much data is sampled, and it depends on the research. However, Rapley & Rees (2018) indicate that search volume should not be too low (under 100) or too high (above 250) since it is timewise practically manageable but also requires refining the search terms to have analytically rich data. Thus, for this research, the ideal search volume is between 100 and 250 newspapers, and Table 1 shows the process of refining search terms to have analytically rich data. By applying the search volume, 300 newspapers were collected as data, see Annex A for collected data. The newspapers were collected in NexisUni to have a direct transcription of the newspapers.

Table 1. Search volume for each newspaper.

Before bushfires			During bushfires			After bushfires		
Search terms	Time frame	Search Volume	Search terms	Time frame	Search Volume	Search terms	Time frame	Search Volume
"Climate Change" AND "Elections Australia"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 30 The Australian: 16 ABC News: 1	"Bushfires"	June 2019 (Start bushfires) - May 2020	The Sydney Morning Herald: 1906 The Australian: 2317 ABC News: 8706	Bushfires AND "Politics" AND "Climate" AND "2020"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 33 The Australian: 35 ABC News: 31
"Climate Policy" AND "Elections Australia"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 6 The Australian: 0 ABC News: 0	"Bushfires" AND "Politics"	June 2019 (Start bushfires) - May 2020	The Sydney Morning Herald: 174 The Australian: 215 ABC News: 198	"Royal Commission"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 416 The Australian: 719 ABC News: 352
"Elections" AND "Australia" AND "2019"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 793 The Australian: 1466 ABC News: 437	"Bushfires" AND "Politics" AND "Climate Change"	June 2019 (Start bushfires) - May 2020	The Sydney Morning Herald: 108 The Australian: 115 ABC News: 111	"Royal Commission" AND "Politics"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 49 The Australian: 92 ABC News: 11
"Elections" AND "Australia" AND "2019" AND "Climate"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 193 The Australian: 358 ABC News: 110	"Bushfires" AND "Climate Policy"	June 2019 (Start bushfires) - May 2020	The Sydney Morning Herald: 69 The Australian: 86 ABC News: 65	"Royal Commission" AND "Politics" AND "Climate"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 13 The Australian: 24 ABC News: 11
"Elections" AND "Australia" AND "Climate"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 193 The Australian: 358 ABC News: 110				"Australian Politics" AND "Climate"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 12 The Australian: 13 ABC News: 11
"Climate policy" AND "Australia"	11 April/2019 (start campaigning elections) - 18 May/2019 (Election day)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 50 The Australian: 78 ABC News: 13				"Climate policy" AND "Australia"	June 2020 (after the bushfires) - Januari 2021 (3 months after the royal commission report)	The Sydney Morning Herald: 77 The Australian: 76 ABC News: 16

To collect data of the newspaper and select the articles from the search volume, it is necessary to judge if a news article is helpful, fits within the research questions, and the quality by access and quality of the content (Jackson, 2018). Rapley & Rees (2018) emphasise that the content's quality is judged by authenticity, credibility, meaning, and representativeness, see Table 2.

Table 2. Assessing data (Rapley & Rees, 2018).

Quality of the content	Criteria
Authenticity	Is a certain statement stated by a politician? Is the article by the newspaper new content or old content?
Credibility	Is the content in the article real or not? Is a statement made by a politician real or not?
Meaning	Are there discourses to be found in the article of the newspaper, e.g. certain statements or reference to statements?
Representativeness	Does the article reflect to the broader body of other data collected? Does the news article add something into answerin9 the research questions?

Thus, for authenticity, an article of a newspaper was judged by its originality, e.g., does the article claim the same as other articles and is a statement by a particular politician or party actually stated? Credibility was judged on the article related to the research content, e.g., does the article emphasize a politician's reaction to the bushfires related to climate policy. The meaning was judged by the document able to judge the discourses in there, e.g., are there discourses in the text regarding bushfires and Australian Climate policy, are there specific statements made? Representativeness is that a sample of an article reflects the broader body of other data collected, e.g., does it add something to answering the research question, or does it contradict the consensus of articles? Moreover, assessing the quality of the newspapers allowed to create a point of saturation of data, meaning that no new findings are found within the collected data, and allowed to collect the 300 news articles.

3.2.2   Document analysis

Documents address information to a particular public (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). Within discourse analysis, specific attention could be made to consult reports/documents of political parties and Governmental reports to gain empirical insights into texts written elements and extra-textual elements such as images that frame discourses (Rapley & Rees, 2018). The documents were collected by looking at published reports about the bushfires of 2019-2020 and climate policy discourse, climate mitigation policy by political parties in the Australian Parliament from before, during, and after the bushfires, transcripts of political debates. Currently, the Australian Parliament is dominated by two political groups: the centre-right Coalition (consisting of the Liberal and National Party) and the centre-left Labor Party (The Guardian, July 2 2019). Thus, the collected documents of the parties are mainly from the Coalition and Labor Party. Collecting the documents for this research was done on specific websites that publish documents related to this research and help answer the research questions, see Table 3. For collecting the documents, the same search terms were used as in Table 1 and resulted in a total of 100 documents collected, see Annex A for collected documents.

Table 3. Websites for collecting documents.

Website name	Website URL	Description
Hansard Transcripts	https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Hansard	The Website of the official record of parliamentary debate (Hansard) provides in-depth insights in documents of debates in the Australian Parliament.
The Liberal Party of Australia	https://www.liberal.org.au/	The Website of the Liberal Party of Australia provides in-depth insights of document about their position on climate policy .
The National Party of Australia	https://nationals.org.au/	The Website of the National Party of Australia provides in-depth insights of document about their position on climate policy.
Australian Labor Party	https://www.alp.org.au/	The Website of the Australian Labor Party provides in-depth insights of document about their position on climate policy.
Analysis & Policy Observatory (APO)	https://apo.org.au/how-to-use	The website of APO collects a record of documents from political parties including documents that have been removed from the websites of political parties.

In addition to the websites in Table 2, scientific papers were collected from google scholar to provide insights of recordings of papers about climate policy discourse of political parties prior, during and after the bushfires. For collecting the papers, the same search terms were used in Table 1; however, the search volume was lower (between 1 and 10) since it was more practically manageable timewise for this research.

For collecting the documents, it was also necessary to judge their relevancy by looking at the usefulness of a document, does the document fit within the research questions, and the quality of the document, e.g. access and quality of the content (Rapley & Rees, 2018). The quality of the content was the same way assessed as in Table 2 and assessing the content of the data allowed to create a point of saturation in which no new findings are found within the data and allowed to collect the 100 documents.

3.3 Processing the data

Collecting and analysing documents and media is related to the research tradition of content analysis. In this approach, data was processed by establishing a coding frame and apply the coding frame to the documents and news articles to research how particular words, statements or themes are used to find a specific paradigm (Rapley & Rees, 2018). Reynolds (2019) provides a framework for a specific coding process for research, which applies a narrative approach to scrutinize discourses, see Figure 3.
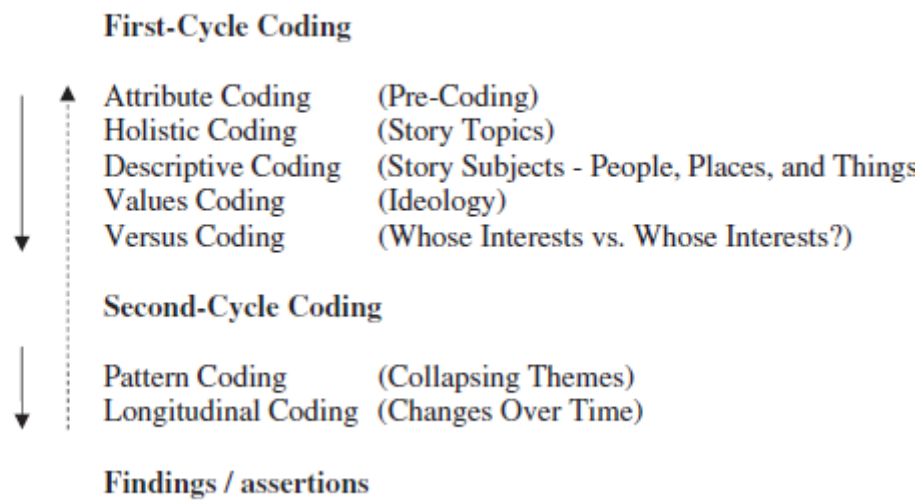
First-Cycle Coding

Attribute Coding   (Pre-Coding)
Holistic Coding   (Story Topics)
Descriptive Coding   (Story Subjects - People, Places, and Things
Values Coding   (Ideology)
Versus Coding   (Whose Interests vs. Whose Interests?)

Second-Cycle Coding

Pattern Coding   (Collapsing Themes)
Longitudinal Coding (Changes Over Time)

Findings / assertions

Figure 3. Coding for a narrative approach to scrutinize discourses (Reynolds, 2019)*.*

As seen in Figure 3, the first-cycle of coding initially focuses on codebook development and starts with attribute coding (Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013). *Attribute coding* involves that descriptive attributes of the collected data are noted in a codesheet in Excel. These notes mainly include primary descriptive attributes, such as the title of the data, publication of the data, type of data (Saldaña, 2013). The second step, *holistic coding*, is to apply codes to capture a data source's overall content to identify the narrative or discourse unit (Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013). Thus, holistic coding gives an overview of what a data source contains. The next step, *descriptive coding*, identifies what is discussed and what is written about within the data source (Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013). From this step and onwards, NVivo is used as a qualitative analysis programme to highlight specific statements, phrases or discourse fragments as specific codes (Hilal & Alabri, 2013; Reynolds, 2019; Wong, 2008). Descriptive coding has been mainly used to identify discourse subjects, e.g., a description of bushfires disaster by certain characters. Thus, providing insight into the characters reaction, action, and policy solution on a complication. The next step is *values coding* and describes the perspective or worldview present in a discourse (Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013). An essential question for this step is "*Whose perspectives are being validated by this narrative?*" and answering this question provides insights into the construction surrounding the discourse (Reynolds, 2019). In addition, to uncover the worldview of the character, value coding uses the terms values, attitude, and beliefs. A value is what a character thinks is important, an attitude is what feelings a character has towards a particular topic, and a belief is a perception of a character towards a topic and considers the rules for action (Saldaña, 2013). The final step of the first-cycle of coding is *versus coding* to identify if the characters are in conflict and how the discourses of the characters on climate policy are produced (Hajer, 1995; Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013).

The second-cycle coding involved identifying specific patterns and trends across the stories of the different data collected based on the first-cycle's codes (Reynolds, 2019). For this cycle, it is helpful to look back at the chronological attribute codes and holistic codes to determine patterns over time. The first step of second-cycle coding is *pattern coding,* in which the coherence between the patterns of the data units are analysed (Reynolds, 2019; Saldaña, 2013). For this step, it is essential to synthesize the first cycle codes under extensive umbrella codes, and these umbrella codes represent the dominant discourse within the narrative. The final step is the *longitudinal codes* to identify the change of discourses over time by looking at changes in the distribution of first-cycle codes (Reynolds, 2019;

Saldaña, 2013). The longitudinal coding allowed to identify paradigm shifts and crucial discourse moments within a narrative, thus understanding the possible change of the policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government due to the Australian bushfires 2019-2020.

Reynolds (2019) framework for coding narratives to scrutinize discourse, the analytical framework, literature, and information within the collected data has been used to provide a coding-scheme. Table 4 provides a coding scheme, and every code is coupled with a character which are the Coalition and the Labor Party and for the definition of the codes, see Annex B.

Table 4. Coding-scheme (codes for only during and after the bushfires).*

Concept/element	Codes	Sub-codes
Setting and context	Future-oriented worldview	Attitude: Climate action is good
		Belief: Climate policy is possible
		Value: Climate action is important
	Economic worldview	Attitude: Climate action is bad for the economy
		Belief: Climate policy is not possible due to economic consequence
		Value: Economy is important
	Climate denialism worldview	Attitude: Climate change is a myth
		Belief: Climate policy is not needed
		Value: Country is important
Plot	Accept climate science	
	Against fossil fuels	
	Empathy for the victim*	
	Interaction Characters	Coalition VS Labor
		Labor VS Coalition
		Within Coalition
		Within Labor
	Antipathy for the victim *	
	Supporting fossil fuels	
	Criticism Characters	Criticism Coalition
		Criticism Labor
Moral of the Story	Climate policy	
	Solution bushfires *	
	No Solution bushfires	
	Thwart climate policy	

Subsequently, the coding-scheme of Table 4 allowed to analyse the data. Within the data, codes were given to certain linguistic statements or sentences corresponding to the code. Annex B shows an overview of applying the codes to the data and steps for coding the data, thus providing insights on coding examples and strategy. Each code gave insights into linguistic statements or sentences and uncovered the climate policy discourses within this research.

4. Background information case study

This chapter aims to give background information on the political parties of Australia and the Australian Parliament, fossil fuels in Australia, the history of Australia's climate policy discourse, and background information on the bushfires.

4.1 Political parties and the Australian Parliament

The Australian parliament consists of the crown, the Senate and the House of Representatives and acts as the legislative branch of the Government of Australia (Parliament Education Office, n.d.). The Senate consists of 76 members representing Australian states (e.g. New South Wales) and territories (e.g. Christmas Island). The Senate has the power to make laws; however, the Senate cannot introduce or amend proposed laws that authorise expenditure for the annual services of the Government or laws that impose taxes. Nevertheless, the Senate can request the House of Representatives to amend financial legislation, or the Senate can refuse to pass any bill. Moreover, the Senate has the role of checking on the Government's actions every day. (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-a). Currently, The Coalition Party has most of the seats (36 seats), followed by the Australian Labor Party (26 seats) (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-b).

The House of Representatives consists of 151 members representing electoral divisions (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-c). The House of Representatives has five functions. Firstly, the House has a law-making function in which members or the Government can introduce a proposed law. The proposed law needs to be passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate to be put into practice. Secondly, the House of Representatives determines the Government. This is done by the political party or parties with the most members and becomes the governing party. The leader of the party becomes the Prime Minister, and the party members appoint ministers. Thirdly, the House of Representatives publicises and scrutinises Government administration by debating legislation, discussing matters of public importance, committee investigation, and questioning Ministers. Fourthly, the House of Representatives represents the people and can present citizens concerns or petitions from citizens. Finally, the House of Representatives controls Government expenditure (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-c). Currently, the Coalition has most of the seats (76 seats), followed by the Australian Labor Party (68 seats) (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-d).

The House of Representatives and the Senate have three main parties: The Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party of Australia, and the Nationals. The Nationals and the Liberals form an alliance called the Coalition (Parliament of Australia, n.d.-e). The National Party has a strong interest in regional Australia and wants to provide stronger regional economies and a secure nation (The Nationals, n.d.). The Liberal Party of Australia has a strong interest in individual freedom and free enterprise and wants to increase the wealth of Australians, and opposes taxes (The Liberals, n.d.). The Australian Labor Party has a strong interest in equality and wants to involve Australian people in decision-making processes and improve Australia's future (Labor, n.d.).

4.2 Fossil fuels in Australia

Australia is one of the largest coal exporters globally, and it is Australia's largest commodity export with an annual worth of more than 40 billion dollars. The primary consumption of energy in Australia is dominated by coal, oil, and gas. For Australia's electricity generation, coal accounts for 75 per cent of the generated electricity (Australian Government, n.d.). In Australia, about 133.000 people work in the fossil fuel sector, with coal being the largest, employing 50.000 Australians. The fossil fuel sector accounts for one per cent of Australia's total employment (The Australian Institute Centre for Future Work, 2020).

4.3 History of Australia´s climate policy discourse

Understanding the discourses within this research also requires understanding the discourses that are returning in the body of literate research on policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government. Thus, this section digs into the history of policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government.

The first sign of policy discourse on climate mitigation action in Australia dates to the Labor ruled Hawke Government of 1988-1991. The period of 1988-1991 was concerned with a scientific revelation about human-induced climate change. The linguistic, political and policy response at the time by Hawke's Governments discourse can be described as naïve altruism. When Australia set its first initial emissions reduction targets, the Hawke Government reflected on these normative concerns along with Labor's enduring commitment to multilateralism. In addition, scant considerations were given to the potential technological, legal, or economic challenges on the carbon emissions targets (Christoff, 2013). However, the Hawke Government acted progressively by reacting to the emerging global response to climate change and pleading for climate mitigation (Christoff, 2005). Thus, the response on climate change by the Hawke Government shows a sign of pro-climate action discourse to achieve climate mitigation action.

The following period of 1992-1996 ruled by the Labor Keating Government showed an increase within the Government of a fossil fuel centred economic and climate denialism discourse that emphasises the costs of climate mitigation, uncertainties of climate science, the role of climate mitigation in the market. At the time, the Australian policies of the Keating Government were predominantly led by a neo-Liberal discourse. The Keating Government made an economic turn within climate policy and deferred climate mitigation because of its economic consequence. The economic paradigm of the Keating Government emphasised modernisation, nation-building, and national economic growth based on a carbon market (Christoff, 2013). Hence, the Keating ruled Labor Government period showed a hegemonic led fossil fuel centred economic discourse.

The next period of 1996-2006, ruled by the Coalition Howard Government, deeply embraced the fossil fuel centred economic discourse by further stating the economic costs of climate mitigation and emphasising the economic advantages by exploiting Australia's fossil fuels (Christoff, 2013). The Howard Government ushered a new age of a fossil fuel paradigm in which climate change is framed into an economic issue, thus emphasising its negative impact on the Australian carbon-based economy and refusing to ratify the Kyoto Protocol (Curran, 2011). The fossil fuel centred economic discourse of the Howard Government introduced the concept of the 'no regrets' policy approach, meaning that climate policy developments should not disadvantage the Australian industry and Australia's sectoral arrangements. In addition, Howard's Government anchored within the fossil fuel centred economic discourse that climate policy resistance would prevail (Curran, 2009; 2011). Thus, the Coalition ruled Howard Government shows the foundation of the fossil fuel interest and the climate policy resistance of the economic discourse.

Subsequently, the period 2007-2010 led by the Labor ruled Rudd Government provide a shift toward a pro-climate action discourse and provided a change in the public discourse around climate mitigation targets, renewable energy targets, and policy measures to decarbonise the economy (Christoff, 2013). Moreover, Rudd's Government introduced an ecological modernisation approach within climate policy, meaning that climate action will lead to economic benefits. Rudd used two key economic arguments: firstly, the economic costs of doing nothing would outweigh the costs of climate mitigation action, and secondly, acting now would benefit the economy (Curran, 2009). In addition to economic arguments, Rudd's Government had a normative foundation as arguments that inadequate response would lead to environmental harm and harm for future generations. However, Rudd's pro-climate

action narrative failed to institutionalise a Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) due to less public support and led to his replacement by Julia Gillard (Beeson & McDonald, 2013; Christoff, 2013).

The following period of 2010-2013 shows a final attempt of the Labor ruled Government of Julia Gillard to institutionalise ecological modernisation through legislation, regulation, and policy by introducing a carbon price, mitigation targets, renewables target, funding measures and agencies (Christoff, 2013). However, while Rudd's Government failed to institutionalise the pro-climate action narrative, Gillard's Government had more success due to more public support for climate action, increase in awareness of climate science and the urgency of climate mitigation action, and more delegitimised firm climate policy (Beeson & McDonald 2013; Christoff, 2013). Thus, the Labor Government led by Gillard successfully institutionalised the pro-climate action discourse and framed the discourse hegemonic.

However, the period 2013-2015 allowed the climate denialism discourse and the fossil fuel centred economic discourse on ruling the climate policy domain with the new led Coalition Government ruled by Tony Abbott. Abbott's Government obliterated the institutionalised climate policies of the pro-climate action discourse and returned to the old paradigm of climate inaction. Abbott's stance on axing taxes resulted in undoing carbon pricing, but he also publicly showed his climate denialism and provided a normative attack on sustainable energy (Cann & Raymond, 2018; Crowley, 2017). Moreover, the action of Abbott's Government to remove carbon pricing is based on the foundation of the carbon-based economy. Thus, the carbon-pricing scheme made by Labor has been dismantled due to climate denialism and carbon-based economic interest (Crowley, 2017).

The final period of 2015-2018 showed a continuing paradigm of the climate denialism discourse and fossil fuel centred economic discourse led by the Coalition Government ruled by Malcolm Turnbull. While Malcolm Turnbull had a more progressive stance on climate action and felt the need for climate action such as a carbon emission scheme, his Coalition lacked Turnbull's ambition. Instead, the Parliament and Government Coalition members continued with the carbon-based interest and denied climate science (Kousser & Tranter, 2018). However, Turnbull's progressive position on climate change came at the costs of its leader and consequently led to the emplacement of Scott Morrison, the current Prime Minister of Australia (McDougall, 2018).

4.4 The Australian bushfires

The 2019-2020 Australian bushfire season had unprecedented consequences. The fires burned away more than 24 million hectares of land. Furthermore, the fires claimed 33 human lives, and over 3 billion animals died in the fires and led to a catastrophic ecological consequence, with endangered species nearly driven to extinction. In addition, every Australian state and territory suffered from bushfires, and on some days, the fires were impossible to control due to extreme conditions (Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020).

Moreover, the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) has estimated that the Australian bushfires emitted 434 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) into the atmosphere (Copernicus, 2020). Another environmental consequence is that the ash from fires caused pollution. Consequently, these pollutions lead to drinking water problems and have adverse effects on coral reefs (UNEP, 2020). At last, the Australian bushfires have led to disastrous economic consequences. The estimated damages and losses by the bushfires are 100 billion dollars. (AccuWeather, January 8 2020; The Sydney Morning Herald, September 22 2020; UNEP, 2020). Moreover, the recovery from the Australian bushfires will take years (Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020).

Scientists argue that anthropocentric climate change is a crucial factor that increases fire frequency in Australia and can be considered a predominantly cause of the 2019-2020 Australian Bushfires

(Vardoulakis et al., 2020). Van Oldenborgh et al. (2020) argues climate change currently increased the risk of bushfires by 30% in Australia, and if the global temperature rise by two degrees, it seems likely such conditions as the 2019-2020 bushfires would occur four times more often, thus also a warning for the future (van Oldenborgh et al., 2020).

Australia is currently experiencing climate change effects, with 2019 being the hottest year on record in Australia. The number, size and severity of the bushfires across Australia consequently led to the debate about the conditions that arise these fires, with a significant focus on the role of climate change (McDonald, 2020).

To prevent catastrophic bushfires in the future, Professor John Shine, the Australian Academy of Science president, states that Australia needs to improve its climate modelling ability and understanding of fire behaviour to mitigate catastrophic events because of climate change. Thus, Australia has a moral obligation to take more decisive action of the worldwide commitment to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees to reduce climate change's worst impact (The Guardian, January 12 2020).

5. Results

The results chapter provides insight into the extent to which the policy discourse on climate mitigation action has changed in the Australian Parliament and Government due to the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020. Firstly, in this results chapter, the policy discourses on climate mitigation action prior, during and after the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 are descriptively presented. Subsequently, the following section presents insights on the changes that have happened and what these changes imply on the role of climate disasters and change in the public discourse of climate mitigation policy.

5.1 Discourses prior to the bushfires

One month prior to the bushfires, there were elections held within Australia (Parliament of Australia, 2019). The elections prior to the bushfires were also called the climate elections in which climate action played a significant role in the political debates between the Australian Labor party and the Liberal-National Coalition party (ABC News, May 3 2019). Thus, the election setting provides insights into the policy discourses on climate mitigation action of the Australian Parliament and Government and the narratives within these discourses prior to the bushfires.

5.1.1 Discourse 1 climate denialism discourse: Climate change is not real, so no climate action is needed

The climate denialism discourse refers to politicians who publicly state that human-induced climate change is not real, thus denying climate science (Cann & Raymond, 2018). Some Coalition members refuse to accept climate science and refuse to take climate action to mitigate climate change (ABC News, May 16 2019-a). Those climate deniers within the Coalition think that climate change is a myth created by scientists, bureaucrats, or politicians. For example, Liberal senator Gerald Rennick accused the bureau of Meteorology of *"rewriting weather records to fit in with the global warming agenda"* and added that *"our public servants are out of control"* (ABC News, April 24 2019). Moreover, former Liberal prime minister Tony Abbott lobbied hard against climate action and stated, *"the environmental catastrophe foretold by scientists would not come"* (The Sydney Morning Herald, May 13 2019). The climate deniers within the Coalition prefer to cut climate science funding, cut effective climate change programs, and ignore advice from experts domestic and international bodies regarding climate mitigation policy. Subsequently, climate deniers hope that climate action gets delayed or no climate action occurs (Climate Council, 2019).

The climate denialists within this discourse are in a setting and context that revolves around Australia itself, and external perturbation that tries to come into the Australian system is seen as a dangerous object. Thus, the climate denialism discourse acts protective for the means of Australia. Subsequently, climate deniers reject climate science since they view it as a danger for Australia, e.g. Liberal-National parliamentarian member Michelle Landry stated, "*Everyone knows that if Australia were to cut its emissions entirely, the planet's climate would not be altered. This would represent an enormous destruction of our quality of life and see the end of Australia as a world leader in anything*" (House of Representatives, April 2 2019).

Moreover, within the plot of this narrative, the climate deniers within the Coalition view themselves as heroes to prevent a complication of climate policy being framed and institutionalised in policy practices that go at Australia's expense. According to these climate deniers, these climate policies would be nonsense since climate change is a myth and climate action is at the expense of Australia. Thus, they react by slashing climate science funding or cut carbon taxes (Climate Council, 2019; The Nationals, 2019). However, within this discourse's narrative, politicians trying to frame climate policy and institutionalise it in policy practices are seen as villains. For example, in a debate between independent parliamentarian Zali Staggall and Former Liberal Prime minister Tony Abbott, Stegall

emphasised: "*she wanted to take climate change out of the hands of politicians with the creation of a climate change commission that would take independent decisions*". Abbott disagreed with her and stated, "*decisions should not be subcontracted out to experts ahead of the people's elected representatives*" (The Australian, May 3 2019). The reaction by Tony Abbott shows that he is objecting expertise of climate scientists in decision-making processes since climate science should not be a part of political decisions and political decisions should be made by politicians and not scientists. Consequently, this instead emphasises that the climate denialism discourse tries to separate climate science from politics to prevent the institutionalisation of climate science in policies.

The moral of the story of the climate denialism discourse is trying to take actions, such as cutting climate science funds or doubting climate science (Climate Council, 2019). Thus, the climate deniers do not present a solution to climate change because it is a "myth" and destruction for Australia. Consequently, this would achieve their goal to prevent climate action. However, there are still climate policy practices in place in Australia (Australian Government, 2019). This meaning that politicians in this discourse did not truly achieve their goal in practice and not institutionalise this discourse.

5.1.2 Discourse 2 fossil fuel centred economic discourse: Climate action is terrible for the carbon-based economy

The fossil fuel centred economic discourse refers to politicians putting the carbon-based economy at their heart (The Australian, April 12 2019-a). In this discourse, the reality of climate science is accepted. However, politicians in this discourse think that climate action is bad for Australia's carbon-based economy. According to the character in this discourse, fossil fuels are the economy's driving force, and without these fossil fuels, the economy would collapse (ABC News, May 8 2019). This fossil fuel interested discourse focus on fossil fuels is strongly present within the Coalition, e.g. *"I have always supported mining, whether it is coal, iron ore, other resources projects or gas. The resources industry - whether it's been coal or anything else - has played an enormous role in our country's development"* (The Australian, May 11 2019). However, the Coalition emphasises that taking climate action by reducing fossil fuels would come at the expense of the Australian economy. Scott Morrison emphasises this by stating, *"You can't go and invest on improving your climate and meeting your emissions reductions, if you have a weak economy. See, if you can't manage money and run a strong economy, you can't take action on anything else. That's why I keep stressing, if you're for climate, if you're taking action on climate change, which I am, then you need a strong economy and a strong budget"* (ABC News, May 16 2019-b).

Furthermore, the Coalition emphasises that their climate policies will meet Australia's current emissions targets of 2030 (ABC News, May 6 2019). The current policy the Coalition has framed is the $ 3.5 billion Climate Solutions Package for investments in practical climate solutions and low-cost abatement currently through the Emissions Reduction Fund (Australian Government, 2019). The Climate Solutions Fund is presented that only a strong economy can provide, e.g. Former Minister for the Environment, Melissa Price, quotes *"It's a good opportunity to refer to our $3.5 billion Climate Solution Fund. Only with a strong economy can you devote that amount of money from the environment"* (House of Representatives, April 3 2019). However, climate experts emphasise that the Coalition's climate policies are not compatible with the Paris agreement to stop global warming, thus not taking actual climate action to mitigate climate change (Climate Council, 2019; The Sydney Morning Herald, May 15 2019).

The setting and context of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse revolve around Australia and its carbon-based economy. As mentioned previously, there is a strong emphasis on a carbon-based economy and this discourse belief that more climate action will harm this carbon-based economy (The Liberals, February 25 2019). Within the plot of this discourse, the Coalition characters view themselves

as the hero in which they prevent the complication of wrecking the carbon-based economy by taking climate action and instead present climate policy practices that do not harm the carbon-based economy and claims to meet the climate targets. As seen in the statement of Morrison, he claims "*Under our Government we turned around a more than 700-million-tonne abatement deficit from Labor that we inherited for our Kyoto 2020 targets and we're going to beat that by 369 million tonnes, so that's a 1.1-billion-tonne turnaround on meeting our climate targets*" (The Australian, April 12 2019-b).

However, those characters who try to institutionalise more ambitious policy practices or doubts the Coalition's climate action policies are seen as villains. Thus, meaning those characters framing and try to institutionalise climate action that goes at the cost of the economy are evil, e.g., Prime Minister Scott Morrison accused Labor Leader Bill Shorten of a risk to the carbon-based economy with his climate plan and tries to shift the debate to the costing of climate action (The Sydney Morning Herald, April 19 2019).

The moral of the story of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse shows that the Coalition acts by stating that Australia achieves its climate targets without wrecking the carbon-based economy (The Sydney Morning Herald, April 22, 2019). Thus, providing the Climate Solution Package as a climate policy solution to act on climate change (Australian Government, 2019). Providing such policies in practice means that discourse is relatively institutionalised.

5.1.3 Discourse 3 pro-climate action discourse: More climate action is needed for future generations

The pro-climate action discourse refers to politicians who embrace climate science for more accurate climate action for Australia's future. This discourse is mainly robust within the Australian Labor Party. Labor accepts climate science that human activity increased the global temperatures, thus leading the climate change. Moreover, they support Paris commitment to keep global warming below two degrees Celsius and a more qualified commitment in the agreement around a 1.5-degree threshold. In addition, Labor states that refusing real climate action will be devasted for Australia and Australia's economy and expect that Australia will face more extreme weather events and instability due to climate change (Labor, 2019). Subsequently, Labor states that they have a more ambitious climate target than the Coalition by committing to a 45 per cent emissions reduction in 2030 and reaching net-zero by 2050 (Labor, May 2019). Labor feels the need to take more climate action, as phrased by the former leader of Labor Bill Shorten that *"the cost of doing nothing is far greater than the cost of acting on climate change"* (The Australian, May 4 2019).

Furthermore, Labor blames the inaction the Coalition has taken on climate change. Bill Shorten said: *"Under this Government, carbon pollution has gone up. If this Government is re-elected, more carbon pollution will be produced and it will go up again. This will inflict damage on our environment that cannot be undone. The cost of inaction grows if you have more inaction."* (The Australian, May 13 2019). Consequently, Labor wants to present as a pro-climate party with Bill Shorten, stating, *"I promise that we will send a message to the world, that when it comes to climate change Australia is back in the fight"* (ABC News, May 16 2019-a).

The setting and context of the pro-climate action discourse is more framed around pro-climate action for the future of Australia and the world. Subsequently, there is more a thoughtful way of thinking in which the consequences of climate change are critically included in Labor's action, e.g., Labor Parliamentarian Tony Zappia quoted *"climate change policy, international unity and commitment is needed to protect the planet. Every country shares responsibility for what is happening to our world.*

The longer the issues are ignored, the greater will be the consequences and the more difficult will become our ability to repair the damage" (House of Representative, April 3 2019).

Moreover, within the plot of this discourse, the pro-climate Labor characters view themselves as heroes that prevent future climate disasters by taking real climate action and having more ambitious climate targets, e.g. Labor parliamentarian Pat Conroy stated during a debate on climate change, "*The truth is we have a concrete plan. It is a concrete plan that will cut emissions by 45 per cent; a concrete plan that will lower power prices; a concrete plan that will deliver at least 86,000 jobs in renewable energy and hydrogen; a concrete plan that will make a strong contribution to international action on climate change; a concrete plan that says to our children and our grandchildren, 'You count, you matter, we take your future seriously and we will do something about it.*" (House of Representatives, April 2 2019). However, characters that thwart climate policy or deny climate science are seen as villains. These villains are doing nothing to prevent a catastrophic future climate disaster and try to institutionalise climate inaction, e.g. Labor leader Bill shorten accuses Prime Minister Morrison and the Coalition of denying climate change, doing nothing about it (ABC News, April 29 2019).

The moral of the story of the pro-climate action discourse shows that Labor is trying to take proper climate action for future generations of Australia and aims for ambitious targets of 45% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050 (The Sydney Morning Herald, May 13 2019). Labor's climate policy solution contains investing in renewables to achieve 50% of Australia's energy from renewables, a $300 million fund to support the industry to transition towards carbon neutrality, cut pollution through Emissions Trading Scheme, and capture carbon on land (Labor, 2019). However, Labor's climate policies and targets are not adopted in Australia, thus emphasising that the pro-climate discourse is not institutionalised.

5.1.4 Overview discourses prior to bushfires

In this section, an overview is given of the three discourses prior to bushfires and their differences, see Table 5. Table 5 displays three discourses: a climate denialism discourse, a fossil fuel centred economic discourse and a pro-climate action discourse. These different discourses provide different discursive struggles to change climate mitigation policy, e.g., both the climate denialism discourse and fossil fuel centred economic discourse view the heroes in the pro-climate action discourse as villains since they are pro-climate action and want the abolish the carbon-based economy, thus harming Australia. However, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is successful within the discursive struggle since the Climate Solution Package, and the 26 to 28 per cent target have been accepted by the Australian Parliament (Australian Government, 2019). This, meaning the fossil fuel centred economic discourse successfully institutionalised its climate policies practices. Moreover, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is the only discourse that institutionalizes its practices, meaning that the economic discourse is hegemonic.

Table 5. Overview discourse prior to the bushfires.

| Types of Discourse | Setting and Context | Plot | | | Moral of the Story | | Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No) |
		Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	
Climate denialism discourse	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate action	Climate action at the expense of Australia	Climate change is a myth and at the expense of Australia	Cut science funding or doubt climate science	No Climate policy solution	No
Fossil Fuel Centred Economic discourse	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the carbon-based economy	Climate action at the expense of Australia´s economy	Climate change is at the expense of the Australian economy	Achieving the climate targets without wrecking the economy	Climate Solution Package; 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030	Yes; Climate solution Package and 26 to 28 per cent target by 2030
Pro-climate action discourse	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	Climate disaster due to climate inaction	Climate action is needed to protect the future of our planet	More ambitious climate action for future generations and committing to 45% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050	Invest in renewables, $300 million for transition the industry towards carbon neutrality, Emissions Trading Scheme, and Carbon Capture on land; 45% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050	No

5.2 Discourses during the bushfires

From June 2019 until May 2020, destructive bushfires went across Australia (ABC News, June 27 2019; Mandurah Mail, May 3 2020). Consequently, the fires claimed at least 33 lives, and hundreds of homes and businesses were burned down (Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020; The Australian, January 11 2020). Moreover, Australia's environment was not spared either from the bushfires, with 24 million hectares of land burned away and 3 billion animals died in the fires (ABC News, March 5 2020; Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020). Climate scientists link the bushfires to anthropocentric climate change and expect that devastating bushfires will occur more due to climate change (van Oldenborgh et al., 2020). This section provides insights into the policy discourses on climate mitigation action of the Australian Parliament and Government and the narratives within these discourses during the bushfires.

5.2.1 Discourse 1 climate denialism discourse: Climate action is not real, so no climate action is needed

During the bushfires, Members of the Parliament and Government stated that human-induced climate change is not real and denied the scientific linkage between the bushfires and anthropocentric climate change. For example, Liberal parliament member Craig Kelly stated, *"Climate change had not caused the bushfires but that unprecedented arson had"* and National parliament member George Christensen stated, *"The cause of the fires was certainly man-made, but it's just not man-made climate change. It's man-made arson that to me almost border on terrorism"* (ABC News, January 15 2020). The setting and context of this climate denialism discourse still revolve around Australia itself, and that external perturbation that tries to come into the Australian system is seen as a dangerous object. Thus, the

climate denialism discourse acts protective for the means of Australia. Subsequently, climate denialists feel that the scientific linkage between bushfires and climate change is another way to institutionalised climate action, and there are still no new arguments to frame climate mitigation policy (The Sydney Morning Herald, January 15 2020).

Moreover, Climate deniers view themselves as heroes, which prevent a complication of climate action from being institutionalised due to the bushfires that go at the expense of Australia. For example, Nationals parliamentarian George Christen rejected a nation that climate change is a cause of the bushfires and stated, "*Climate change is not a bogey man who can go around lighting bushfires*" (The Australian, January 13 2020). Furthermore, the climate deniers argue that other factors such as lighting were the cause of the bushfires and that the bushfires happened all along with Australian history (The Australian, January 23 2020). However, victims that get harmed by the bushfires are instead cast away as characters who are in a victim role and are pro-climate activists, e.g. National parliamentarian Barnaby Joyce quoted that *"two victims who killed in the fires had most likely voted for the Greens",* thus showing a lack of empathy towards the victims (ABC News, November 12 2019).

Subsequently, actors that defend victims by the bushfires and try to frame and institutionalise climate action policy are seen as the villain in this discourse. The heroes want to prevent a complication that the villain uses the bushfires to frame climate action that goes at the expense of Australia; thus, the heroes articulate verbal attacks to prevent this from happening. For example, Deputy Prime Minister attacked fire officers that plead for more climate action as actors that are part of some climate change conspiracy, thus cast them away as villains that try to implement more climate policy (Senate, November 11 2019). Moreover, the climate denialists are trying to make the Australian population and other politicians scared of the villain by emphasising that everyone is going to go back to living huts before the days of electricity because of net zero emissions targets of the pro-climate activists (House of Representatives, February 24 2020).

The moral of the story of the climate denialism discourse is that climate denialists are trying to take action by actively stating there is no linkage between bushfires and human-induced climate change (ABC News, January 15 2020). Those harmed by bushfires or who try to solve the bushfires by taking climate mitigation action are cast away as villains trying to destroy Australia (House of Representatives, February 24 2020). As a consequence of their action, the climate denialists do not provide a solution for the bushfires and neither provide a climate mitigation policy to prevent future disastrous bushfires.

5.2.2 Discourse 2 fossil fuel centred economic discourse: Climate action is needed but not at the expense of the carbon-based economy

Prior to the bushfires, a fossil fuel centred economic discourse was framed around that climate action is disastrous for the carbon-based economy. However, the bushfires revealed to politicians within this fossil fuel centred economic discourse the need for climate action to mitigate climate change. For example, Science Minister Karen Andrews argued that the debate on climate science has stelled and stated, "*Let's accept that the climate has changed, the climate is changing and we need to look at what we're going to do about that*" (The Sydney Morning Herald, January 18 2020). This need for climate action is even confirmed by Prime Minister Morrison that flagged a potential shift within Australia's climate policies and stated, "*The Cabinet and the Government will continue to evolve our policies to meet our targets and to beat them. We want to reduce emissions and the best job we possibly can and get better and better and better at it. I want to do that with a balance policy which recognises Australia's broader national economic interests and social interest" (*ABC News, January 12 2020; January 15 2020*).* However, as mentioned in the statement above, climate policies should balance Australia's broader national economic interests and social interest, thus emphasising that climate action is needed but not at the expense of the carbon-based economy. This is confirmed by the

commitment to more ambitious climate targets for 2050 in which Morrison said, "*never make a commitment like that if I couldn't tell the Australian people what it would cost them",* thus emphasising this discourse frames climate policies on carbon-based economic interests (The Sydney Morning Herald, February 10 2020).

The strong commitment to the fossil fuel centred economic discourse can be traced back to the setting and context around Australia and its carbon-based economy. There is a strong interest around fossil fuels from the Coalition, and Labor and intense climate action could mean the loss of this economic foundation, e.g. Resources Minister Matt Canavan stated, "*Australia's coal-based power is fundamental for energy competitiveness, the aluminium sector and thousands of industrial jobs, many in Queensland*" (The Australian, November 16 2019). Furthermore, Labor Leader Anthony Albanese stated, *If Australia stopped exporting today there would not be less demand for coal - the coal would come from a different place. So it would not reduce emissions, which has to be the objective. I don't see a contradiction between that and having a strong climate change policy. We've got to consider what the actual outcome is from any proposal, and the proposal that we immediately stop exporting coal would damage our economy and would not have any environmental benefit"* (The Sydney Morning Herald, December 9 2019). Instead, the statements amplify the fear of the characters within this discourse that climate action means losing a carbon-based economy that will harm the Australian population. Thus, the Labor and Coalition characters within this discourse view them as heroes that prevent a complication from climate policy being framed that wrecks the carbon-based economy and take climate action without harming the economy. In addition, the hero of this discourse sympathises with two victims: people that get harmed by the bushfires and people that get economy harmed (The Liberals, December 23 2019; The Nationals, January 4 2020).

However, characters that try to frame and institutionalise climate policy that goes at the expense of the carbon-based economy are seen as the villain, e.g. National Senator Perin Davey attacked the pro-climate side of the senate by stating, "*While our Government is getting on with the job of delivering practical climate action, there are some in this place who are instead calling to invoke a so-called climate emergency—to shut down our mining industry and, particularly, our coal export sector, despite the fact that the coal produced in Australia is the cleanest-burning coal in the world*" (Senate, September 10 2019). Thus, the heroes try to frame the villains as actors who use bushfires or climate change to destroy the economy.

The moral of the story of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is that the heroes feel the need to take more climate action due to the bushfires; however, climate action should not be at the expense of the economy. The actions that should be taken needs to be driven by technology and not the use of carbon taxes (The Sydney Morning Herald, February 10 2020). In response to these actions, the Coalition has, in addition to the Climate Solution Package, set up a Technology Investment Roadmap as a long-term emissions reduction strategy to achieve a 26 to 28 per cent reduction by the year 2030. The roadmap guides future energy and emissions reduction technologies, e.g. hydrogen, carbon capture and storage (ABC News, February 28 2020). In addition to these climate policies, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has established a Royal Commission into the bushfire disaster to scrutinise the response of the Federal and State Government to the bushfires, the involvement of the Australian Defence Force, a potentially new role for the Commonwealth after it issued a compulsory callout of 3000 reservists, and emissions -reduction policies and the effects of climate change (The Australian, January 13, 2020). Consequently, by providing and institutionalising climate policy solutions in response to the bushfires, politicians within the fossil fuel centred economic discourse show that they are the real heroes that solve climate change and prevent future bushfires.

5.2.3 Discourse 3 pro-climate action discourse: More climate action is needed for future generations

During the bushfires, Members of the Parliament with a pro-climate discourse had the feeling that the bushfires amplify what they have stated all along that inaction on climate change will lead to climate disasters, e.g. Labor Senator Murray Watt stated, "*The Labor Party has made it clear on a number of occasions that the risk we face to our economy, our environment and our lives is so great that real action is desperately needed on climate change. This is a challenge this Parliament and this Government cannot ignore any longer. We hope that there is no further loss of life or loss of property as this bushfire season continues, and we will stand beside those communities in their time of need*" (Senate, 4 February 2020). Thus, the previous statement emphasises that politicians within this discourse have a setting and context focused on pro-climate action and Australia's future. Moreover, politicians within the pro-climate discourse have an attitude that ambitious climate action is now needed to prevent climate disasters and the general public even being harmed more by the bushfires, e.g. Labor parliamentarian Peter Khalil stated, "*I voted to declare a climate emergency and urged the Government to take action*" (House of Representatives, December 2 2019). The urge to take more climate action translates into the urge to rule out fossil fuels such as coal, and Labor pledged to rule out funding of new coal-fired power station or their extensions (The Sydney Morning Herald, February 21 2020). The pledge to phase out coal is not only coming from the Labor-side of the fraction as Liberal Parliamentarian Trent Zimmerman quoted, "*I don't think we should be funding coal fire power stations*" (ABC News, February 10 2020). Thus, by taking real climate action by removing the source of the bushfires and preventing another complication by climate change, such as the bushfires taking place, the Characters in the pro-climate discourse view themselves as heroes.

However, characters who do not take ambitious climate action, such as phasing out coal or deny climate change, are villains. Moreover, these villains are hated, and heroes are somewhat angry because they could have prevented the bushfires from happening by taking climate action. For example, Labor climate spokesman Mark Butler states, "*Australia is burning. We can feel the impacts of climate change. Scott Morrison's climate policy is ranked dead last, below Donald Trump. This is a crisis and the Government won't act*" (The Australian, December 14 2019). Thus, the heroes have the feeling that the villain does not want to act on climate action and frame them as someone that does not take responsibility for Australia and its future.

The moral of the story of the pro-climate action discourse emphasises that the heroes genuinely want to take climate action to prevent future bushfires by proposing ideas such as phasing out coal (House of Representatives, December 2 2019; The Sydney Morning Herald, February 21 2020). Thus, the heroes provide policy solutions to commit to a net-zero carbon emissions target to be reached by 2050 (ABC News, February 28 2020). In addition, the heroes successfully proposed the Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill that obligates the Australian Government to meet its commitments to replenish a range of multilateral development funds over coming years also include funding international climate change action. The Bill has been successfully accepted, thus emphasising that the heroes take domestic climate action and international (House of Representatives, December 5 2019).

5.2.4 Overview discourses during the bushfires

In this section, an overview is given of the three discourses during bushfires and the differences between them, see Table 6. As seen in Table 6, there are again three discourses with different views on climate mitigation action. These different discourses provide different discursive struggles to change climate mitigation policy, e.g. the climate denialism discourse tries to make the Pro-climate action discourse look like a villain by stating everyone is going to go back to living huts before the days

of electricity because of our net zero emissions targets of the pro-climate activists (House of Representatives, February 24 2020). The impact of discourse can be understood through institutionalisation, meaning that discourse becomes routinised in policy practises (Hajer, 2005). Both the fossil fuel centred economic discourse and pro-climate action discourse have successfully institutionalised climate policy practices. The fossil fuel centred economic discourse has successfully institutionalised the Technology Roadmap and the 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030 (ABC News, February 28 2020). The pro-climate action discourse has successfully institutionalised the Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill (House of Representatives, December 5 2019). However, since both the pro-climate action discourse and the fossil fuel centred economic discourse are successful in policy institutionalisation, neither is hegemonic during bushfires since both are successful in institutionalisation.

Table 6. Overview discourses during the bushfires.

Types of Discourse	Setting and Context	Plot			Moral of the Story		Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No)
		Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	
Climate denialism discourse	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate action	Bushfires lead to unjustified climate action that goes at the expense of Australia	The Cause of the bushfires is not man-made climate change	Showing there is not linkage between climate change and the bushfires; casting pro-climate actors away as villains	No Climate policy solution	No
Fossil fuel centred economic discourse	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the economy	Bushfires lead to more climate action at the expense of the economy	As consequence of the bushfires, climate action is needed. However, climate policy should be imbalance with economic interests	Climate action should be driven by technology and not taxes	26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap	Yes; 26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap
Pro-climate action discourse	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	More climate disaster such as the bushfires in the future due to climate inaction	The bushfires emphasize the need for more ambitious climate action	More ambitious climate action for future generations and phasing out coal (fossil fuels)	Net zero carbon-emissions by 2050; Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill	Yes; Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill

5.3 Discourse after the bushfires

This section focuses on the period after the bushfires and provides insights into the policy discourses on climate mitigation action of the Australian Parliament and Government and the narratives within these discourses. Moreover, after the bushfires, the Royal Commission into bushfires published a report to scrutinise the bushfire disaster. An outcome of the report was that extreme weather event, such as the bushfires, becomes more frequent and intense in Australia because of human-induced climate change and that Australia needs to be prepared for more disasters (Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, 2020). Consequently, these results would provide insights on the response of the different discourses after the bushfires.

5.3.1 Discourse 1 climate denialism discourse: Climate action is not real, so no climate action is needed

After the event of the bushfires, there is still a climate denialism discourse revolving around politicians, mainly from the Coalition, that deny anthropocentric climate change and the linkage between the

bushfires and climate change. For example, Liberal Senator Gerard Rennick said during a climate debate, *"Then we come to the climate doom and climate collapse stuff. It just goes on and on and on and on and on"*, thus emphasising that the climate deniers are tired of the climate debate (Senate, October 6 2020). The anti-climate rhetoric by the climate deniers emphasises that they still do not care about climate mitigation action even after the bushfires. A plausible explanation for this is that the setting and context of this climate denialism discourse still revolve around Australia itself, and the external perturbation that tries to come into the Australian system is seen as a dangerous object. Thus, the climate denialism discourse acts more protective of Australia's means and still denies climate change to protect Australia. For example, National Senator Matt Canavan calls to leave the Paris Agreement, stating that the Paris agreement is a "*fairy-tale*" and "*the agreement is transferring industrial wealth from the west and Australia to China*". Moreover, he emphasises because of the Paris Agreement that "*the manufacturing sector has declined, for the first time on record in the last 10 years. So all this talk of creating new industries and having new jobs - we've gone backwards. And I think it's about time we reframe our priorities here and get back to reindustrialising this nation*" (ABC News, June 2 2020). The statement by Senator Canavan emphasises the conservative and nationalist view of the Climate denialism discourse in Australia, thus acting protective. Hence, the climate denialists also view themselves as heroes that protect Australia from nonsensical climate action.

However, actors that want to take climate action and are pro-climate activists are seen as villains in this discourse. The heroes within the narrative of the climate denialism discourse want to prevent a complication of the villains taking climate action at the expense of Australia. Subsequently, the heroes try to prevent the institutionalisation of pro-climate policy by linguistic attacks. For example, Liberal Parliamentarian Craig Kelly stated, "*But that doesn't mean we should be misleading the Australian public. Unfortunately, when it comes to climate change, we saw a shocking example of deception and lies from none other than the United Nations themselves. Last week, the United Nations put out a report, which was titled The human cost of disasters: an overview of the last 20 years (2000-2019). They put out a press release with it titled, 'UN Report charts huge rise in climate disasters'. And we had the chief of the United Nations, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, state, 'Extreme weather events have risen dramatically over the past two decades.' The only problem with that is, when you go to their report, they've got a chart in there that shows the exact opposite. In fact, since the year 2000 the number of climate related disasters has actually been declining. And yet here we have the head of the United Nations saying something that is completely false and deceptive, misleading the world*" (House of Representatives, October 19 2020). Subsequently, the heroes try to frame the villains as liars and misleading that want to harm the Australian public.

The moral of the story of the climate denialism discourse shows that the heroes try to deny human-induced climate change actively and frame the villain as lairs and enemies of Australia. Moreover, the climate deniers were successfully launched a parliamentarian inquiry to question banks and insurers about cutting support for new mines and coal-fired power plants due to global warming. The inquiry is led by climate deniers such as Nationals parliamentarian George Christensen, thus emphasising that the climate deniers take linguistic actions and even try to launch solutions to have more climate inaction (The Sydney Morning Herald, December 19 2020).

5.3.2 Discourse 2 fossil fuel centred economic discourse: Climate action is needed but not at the expense of the carbon-based economy

After the bushfire event, some of the members of the Parliament and Government have a fossil fuel centred economic discourse that climate action is needed but not at the expense of the carbon-based economy. For example, Energy and Emissions Minister Agnus Taylor stated in a letter to the Parliament, "*Australia has a responsibility to play our part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while*

also making sure we have affordable electricity and a strong economy" (House of Representatives, June 15 2020). The fossil fuel centred economic rhetoric of this discourse can be traced by a setting and context that interests present Australia and its carbon-based economy. Fundamental for the carbon-based economy is fossil fuels since it will increase jobs and welfare for the Australian public and the loss of fossil fuels means the loss of Australia. For example, Nationals Parliamentarian Barnaby Joyce insists that coal and fossil fuels is necessary "*If you want to completely destroy the Australian economy then 'decarbonise' it. Australia's largest export is fossil fuels, whether you like it or not, and there's nothing on the horizon that looks like it's going to take their place*" (House of Representatives, October 19 2020). Moreover, in addition to coal, there is a growing interest in gas from both the Coalition and Labor, e.g. Labor Resources spokesman Joel Fitzgibbon insisted "*to get more gas out of the ground*" (The Sydney Morning Herald, September 24 2020).

Furthermore, gas supporters think it is a cleaner alternative than coal; however, experts emphasise that gas is still emitted greenhouse gas emissions, and gas contains methane that is 100 more harmful than carbon dioxide in the short term. Thus, expert strongly emphasises that gas should not be part of climate policies and investments (ABC News, November 3 2020; Climate Council, 2020). Subsequently, the role of coal has not been put aside as Prime Minister Morrison notifies that coal would be essential and could have a longer life if carbon capture and storage technology evolves (The Australian, September 19 2020). Hence, climate action arguments are also used to justify using fossil fuels and show that they are heroes by taking climate action that does not go at the expense of the carbon-based economy.

Moreover, in response to the results of the Royal Commission inquiry on the bushfires, Emergency Management Minister David Littleproud responded that the Federal Government would adopt all recommendations (ABC News, October 31 2020). In addition, Prime Minister Morrison's reaction to the report regarding climate change is "*One of the key findings, conclusions, of the Royal Commission was that the locked-in impacts of climate change already that are there largely set an elevated risk for the next 20 years. The report actually says that, regardless of what might happen in terms of emissions reduction, that is a known quantity. As a result, a key part of dealing with climate change in this country is dealing with the resilience to what is already there*" (ABC News, November 13 2020). Subsequently, the reaction of this statement implies there is no fierce commitment to climate action made in this discourse.

However, those that criticise the climate policies of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse are still viewed as villains that thwart the Australian carbon-based economy and citizens. The heroes want to prevent the villain from making a complication that climate action is framed that harms Australia carbon-based economy. Thus, the heroes frame the villain as job takers or enemies of Australia, and the heroes show that they have the best climate action plan. For example, Liberal-National Parliamentarian Julian Simmonds states, "*We have a plan to invest in technology that will allow us to meet and beat our targets that we have set in the Paris agreement—and, unlike the Labor Party, we are doing it all in a way that doesn't cost Australians an enormous number of jobs or impose on them taxes that simply can't be quantified*" (House of Representatives, October 19 2020).

The moral of the story of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is that the heroes after the bushfires feel the need to take more climate action; however, climate action should not be at the expense of the carbon-based economy. The actions that should be taken needs to be driven by technology that would also make it able to use still fossil fuels (The Sydney Morning Herald, September 18 2020). In response to the actions, the heroes have framed the technology roadmap to invest in low-emissions technologies, such as hydrogen, without harming the economy (ABC News, June 24 2020; Australian Government, 2020). However, on making more ambitious commitments than the 26-28 per

cent emission reduction target by 2030, Prime Minister Morrison responded that he is more committed to investing in technology and refusing to commit to net zero in 2050. Thus, emphasising that there is no clear climate policy set goal in emission reduction and creates doubts if the heroes in fossil fuel centred economic discourse take climate action serious (ABC News, September 20 2020).

5.3.3 Discourse 3 pro-climate action discourse: More climate action is needed for future generations

After the bushfires, members of the pro-climate action discourse still feel the need to take ambitious climate action so that severe bushfires will never happen again. For example, Labor leader Anthony Albanese emphasise that Australia needed to have grown-up conservation about anthropocentric climate change and "*the long, brutal fire season we endured is something we hope to never go through again-although hope will have little to do with it*" (ABC News, June 14 2020). Moreover, there is also a feeling that more responsibility is needed for Australia's younger and future generation and that the Australian Parliament needs to do more. For example, Labor Parliamentarian Alicia Payne stated, "*Young people see our Parliament doing nothing about the manmade crisis of climate change, even after it was made so brutally apparent through the bushfires and the smoke crisis we had here in Canberra and given the detrimental impact it is having on our world. Young people have been amongst the most actively informed on these issues, and they see us doing nothing*" (House of Representatives, August 27 2020).

The statement mentioned above implies that the reason for the pro-climate action discourse is that the setting and context is embraced around the future of Australia and the world. Thus, there is no place for fossil fuels, and fossil fuels in this discourse should instead be abolished. Moreover, Labor Energy Spokesman Mark Butler displays that coal and gas will not play any part in Australia´s future (The Sydney Morning Herald, September 24 2020). Subsequently, the pro-climate action discourse actors think they are heroes since they take actual climate action and take the bushfires seriously. The heroes are even trying to reach a bipartisan agreement on climate policy with actors outside their discourse (The Australian, June 30 2020).

Furthermore, in response to the results of the Royal Commission inquiry on the bushfires, the heroes show that they take the recommendations seriously. However, climate action should already have been placed in the past to prevent disastrous bushfires. For example, Labor Parliamentarian Kristy McBain stated, "*The bushfire Royal Commission outlined 80 recommendations to make our nations better prepared for such emergencies. Had the recommendations of the 240 previous disaster inquiries been adopted, the insurance sector might have more confidence in our future. Longer bushfire seasons and rising sea levels are the headline when it comes to climate change. These details are now being felt. The time for action is long overdue in terms of both natural disaster preparedness and climate action*" (House of Representatives, November 11 2020).

However, characters that thwart climate policies or deny climate science are the villains. The heroes want to prevent a complication that no climate action is taken by the villain leading to more climate disasters. Thus, the heroes try to frame the villains as actors that are egoistic and do not care about the future of Australia, e.g. Labor Climate change spokesman Mark Butler claimed that it would take 146 years to meet net-zero emissions with the Government's policies and "*this is a commitment Scott Morrison must make. His pig-headed refusal not to commit to net zero emissions by 2050 will continue to see Australia isolated globally and it will come at a huge cost to jobs and investment opportunities being lost*" (The Australian, December 14 2020).

The moral of the story of the pro-climate action discourse emphasises that the heroes genuinely want to take climate action to prevent future bushfires by proposing ideas such as phasing out coal or are

open for bipartisan climate agreement with actors from other discourses (The Australian, June 30 2020; The Sydney Morning Herald, September 24 2020). Moreover, the heroes aim that Australia becomes a renewable energy superpower to achieve net-zero and frames policies based on climate science (Labor, 2021). Subsequently, the heroes provide policy solutions to commit to the net-zero carbon emissions target by 2050 according to the Paris Agreement. To reach this target, the heroes would accept the Technology Roadmap of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse (The Australian, June 30 2020).

5.3.4 Overview discourse after the bushfires

In this section, an overview is given of the three discourses after the bushfires and the differences between them, see Table 7. As seen in Table 7, there are the same three discourses with different views on climate mitigation action. These three discourses provide mutual discursive struggles, e.g. The fossil fuel centred economic discourse views everyone that harms the carbon-based economy as villains; thus, the pro-climate action discourse is viewed as villains since they want to abolish the carbon-based economy. Moreover, Hajer (1995) that the impact of discourse on policy can be measured through institutionalisation, meaning that discourse is routinised in policy practices. After the bushfires, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse has been successful in enforcing the Technology Investment Roadmap through the Australian Parliament, thus making the idea of the technological solution of climate change successful and institutionalised the policy practises of the economic discourse (ABC News, June 24 2020; Australian Government, 2020). Furthermore, the climate denialism discourse has successfully launched an inquiry through the Parliament that scrutinizes banks and insurers that cut support to fossil fuels, thus meaning that the climate deniers successfully institutionalised anti-climate policy practices (The Sydney Morning Herald, December 19 2020). However, since both the climate denialism discourse and the fossil fuel centred economic discourse are successful in policy institutionalisation, neither is hegemonic since both are successful in institutionalisation after the bushfires.

Table 7. Overview discourse after the bushfires.

Types of Discourse	Setting and Context	Plot			Moral of the Story		Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No)
		Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	
Climate denialism discourse	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate action	Climate action at the expense of Australia	Climate change is a myth and climate action is at the expense of Australia	Showing there is not linkage between climate change and the bushfires; casting pro-climate actors away as villains	No Climate policy solution; launching an inquiry to question banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels	Yes; launching an inquiry to question banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels
economic discourse	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the carbon-based economy	Bushfires and climate action at the expense of the economy	Australia needs to be responsible in reducing emissions, however the economy should still be strong	Climate action should be driven by technology and not taxes	26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap	Yes; 26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap
Pro-climate action discourse	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	More bushfires/ climate disasters as consequence of anthropocentric climate change	The bushfire season should never happen again and climate action is needed for the future generations	More ambitious climate action for future generations and phasing out coal (fossil fuels). Offering bipartisan agreement with the opposition, thus accepting the Technology Investment Roadmap. Australia first renewable energy superpower	Net zero carbon-emissions by 2050	No

5.4 Changes in policy discourse on climate mitigation action

Each of the three time periods gives an overview of the policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government. This section will dig deeper into the changes that have happened because of the bushfires and what these changes imply about the role of climate disasters and changes in the public discourse of climate policy.

5.4.1 Overview discourse time periods

In Table 8, an overview is given of the discourses during each time period. An essential finding is that each time period contains the climate denialism discourse, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse and pro-climate action discourse, meaning that the discourses have been consistent throughout the three time periods, and no change has happened. Consequently, no new policy discourse on climate mitigation action has been framed, or policy discourses have disappeared, thus meaning that the bushfires have not caused any change in policy discourse of climate mitigation action within the Australian Parliament and Government.

Furthermore, Table 8 shows that the fossil fuel centred economic discourse has successfully institutionalised its climate policy practices throughout the time periods. Thus, the fossil fuel economic discourse structures climate policy practises and solidifies within climate policy practices, meaning that the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is hegemonic throughout the three time periods. Moreover, the pro-climate action discourse has successfully institutionalised an international climate funding policy during bushfires. Thus, the pro-climate action discourse used the opportunity of the bushfires to implement a minor climate policy and expanded a little bit in the climate policy domain. The climate denialism discourse has successfully institutionalised an inquiry towards banks and insurers divesting fossil fuel after the bushfires. Thus, the climate denialism discourse tries to attack those that want to implement ambitious climate policies. The minor institutionalization by the pro-climate action discourse and climate denialism discourse implies that the climate policy practices are penetrable for change by the climate denialism and pro-climate action discourse. However, they do not solidify within climate policy practices, thus meaning the climate denialism and pro-climate action are not hegemonic.

Table 8. Overview discourses prior, during and after the bushfires.

	Prior the bushfires	**During the bushfires**	**After the bushfires**
Types of discourses	Climate denialism discourse; Fossil fuel centred Economic discourse; Pro-climate action discourse	Climate denialism discourse; Fossil fuel centred Economic discourse; Pro-climate action discourse	Climate denialism discourse; Fossil fuel centred Economic discourse; Pro-climate action discourse
Discourse Institutionalisation	Fossil fuel centred economic discourse	Fossil fuel centred economic discourse and Pro-climate action discourse	Fossil fuel centred economic discourse and Climate denialism discourse

However, it is also essential to understand if the narrative within each discourse changes has; thus, the next section will dig deeper into the storylines of each discourse.

5.4.2 Climate denialism discourse

The climate denialism discourse throughout the three-time periods shows that the narrative remains constant. As seen in Table 9, there is a returning paradigm in which the setting and context revolve around Australia, thus acting more protective for the means of Australia. Furthermore, the narrative

shows that the heroes and villains in the storyline remain the same throughout the time period in which the climate denier is the hero that protects Australia from useless climate action at the expense of Australia, and the villain is everyone that is pro-climate action. In addition, the complication throughout the narratives of this discourse remains the same with unjustified climate action that will lead to the end of Australia. Thus, the hero reacts to the complication by stating that climate change is a myth and climate action is at the expense of Australia. These reactions translate into actions such as creating doubt on climate science, casting pro-climate actors away as villains. Throughout the three time periods, the actions translated into no climate policy solutions, thus emphasising that the hero in this narrative does not want to provide policies for climate actions as a solution; however, these solutions were not adopted by the Parliament and not institutionalised. The only policy solution that is successfully institutionalized was an inquiry led by climate deniers to question banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels (The Sydney Morning Herald, December 19 2020).

Table 9. Overview climate denialism discourse prior, during and after the bushfires.

	Setting and Context	Plot			Moral of the Story		Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No)
		Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	
Prior Bushfires	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate	Climate action at the expense of Australia	Climate change is a myth and at the expense of Australia	Cut science funding or doubt climate science	No Climate policy solution	No
During Bushfires	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate action	Bushfires lead to unjustified climate action that goes at the expense of Australia	The Cause of the bushfires is not man-made climate change	Showing there is not linkage between climate change and the bushfires; casting pro-climate actors away as villains	No Climate policy solution	No
After Bushfires	Pro Australia and present Australia	Heroes: Climate deniers Villains: Everyone that is Pro-climate action	Climate action at the expense of Australia	Climate change is a myth and climate action is at the expense of Australia	Showing there is not linkage between climate change and the bushfires; casting pro-climate actors away as villains	No Climate policy solution; launching an inquiry to question banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels	Yes; launching an inquiry to question banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels

Furthermore, the stability and no changes in the climate denialism discourse can be seen in the quotes in Chapters 5.1.1, 5.2.1 & 5.3.1. This amplifies that the linguistic use within the climate denialism discourse has not changed; thus, the climate denialism discourse has not changed due to the bushfires.

5.4.3 Fossil fuel centred economic discourse

The fossil fuel centred economic discourse throughout the three-time periods shows a slight change within the narrative, see Table 10. The change mainly happened within the complication, reaction, action and policy solution of the narrative. Prior to the bushfires, the complication of the discourse was that climate action would destroy Australia's carbon-based economy. Thus, the reaction is that climate mitigation action will be at the expense of the Australian economy. However, the reaction translates into actions that Australia will achieve its climate target commitments without wrecking the economy. Thus, policy solutions provided are a climate solution package and a 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030 (Australian Government, 2019). According to scientists, these policies are not enough to meet the target or contribute to climate mitigation (Climate Council, 2019).

However, during the bushfires, slightly a change happened. Because of the bushfires, the heroes emphasise that the bushfires show the need for climate action and should be taken seriously.

Nevertheless, the heroes emphasise that climate action should have an economic foundation; thus, no taxes and only through technology. The technology approach should prevent a complication that climate action is taken at the expense of the carbon-based economy. Hence, the heroes react that climate action should be balanced with national and economic interests. This results in policy solutions such as the Technology Investment Roadmap that invest in technologies that reduce Greenhouse Gases. The heroes think that technology is an argument to use fossil fuels and that climate action should not be based on targets but technology (ABC News, June 24 2020; Australian Government, 2020). However, climate scientist argues the action and solutions are not enough to combat climate change (ABC News, November 3 2020; Climate Council, 2020).

Furthermore, the setting and context and characters have not changed. The setting and context still revolve around the carbon-based economy that is essential for Australia. Fossil fuels are essential for job security and export. Thus, if climate action targets fossil fuels, it will mean a significant loss for the economy. In addition, during the three time periods, the heroes are still those that protect Australia's economy, and everyone that harms the economy is seen as the villain.

Finally, the policy solutions provided by the economic discourse are all adopted by the parliaments, thus meaning that the economic discourse is successfully institutionalised in climate policy practices.

Table 10. Overview fossil fuel centred economic discourse prior, during and after the bushfires.

		Plot			Moral of the Story		
	Setting and Context	Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No)
Prior Bushfires	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the carbon-based economy	Climate action at the expense of Australia´s economy	Climate change is at the expense of the Australian economy	Achieving the climate targets without wrecking the economy	Climate Solution Package; 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030	Yes; Climate Solution Package; 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030
During Bushfires	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the carbon-based economy	Bushfires lead to more climate action at the expense of the economy	As consequence of the bushfires, climate action is needed. However, climate policy should be in balance with economic interests	Climate action should be driven by technology and not taxes	26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap	Yes; 26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap
After Bushfires	Pro carbon-based economy and present Australia	Heroes: Pro carbon-based economist Villains: Everyone that harms the carbon-based economy	Bushfires and climate action at the expense of the economy	Australia needs to be responsible in reducing emissions, however the economy should still be strong	Climate action should be driven by technology and not taxes	26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap	Yes; 26 to 28 reduction target by 2030; Technology Investment Roadmap

Furthermore, the slight change in linguistic use can be seen in Chapters 5.1.2, 5.2.2 & 5.3.2. Moreover, the statements move from "*Climate action is bad for the carbon-based economy"* to "*Climate action is needed but not at the expense of the carbon-based economy*". Thus, emphasising that there is still a fossil fuel centred economic foundation with the fossil fuel centred economic discourse; however, it feels the need and responsibility to take climate action. However, climate scientists doubt whether the climate mitigation ambition within this discourse is real or not, thus acting more symbolic (The Sydney Morning Herald, January 30 2021).

5.4.4 Pro-climate action discourse

The narrative of the Pro-climate action discourse remains the same throughout time, see Table 11. The setting and context within the Pro-climate action discourse revolve around the future of Australia and the world. Thus, there is more need to take climate action. Moreover, there is more reflective thinking

in which there is warned that climate inaction leads to more climate disasters and the bushfires confirmed the statements about these warnings. Furthermore, the heroes are still everyone that is pro-climate action, and everyone that is against climate action or is a climate denier is seen as a villain. Throughout the narrative, the heroes want to prevent a complication of a climate disaster due to climate inaction, and the bushfires amplified the need to prevent more climate disasters from happening in the future. Hence, the reaction is that the bushfires show the need for more ambitious climate action and translates into actions such as phasing out coal but also offering bipartisan agreement with the opposition (The Australian, June 30 2020; The Sydney Morning Herald, September 24 2020).

Finally, not all the policy solutions to mitigate climate change have been adopted by the Australian Parliament. The only policy that the Australian Parliament has adopted is the Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligation Bill, thus meaning that the pro-climate action discourse institutionalised its policy practises (House of Representatives, December 5 2019).

Table 11. Overview Pro-climate discourse prior, during and after the bushfires.

| | Setting and Context | Plot | | | Moral of the Story | | Institutionalisation of Policy solution (Yes/No) |
		Characters (Heroes and villains)	Complication	Reaction	Action	Policy Solution	
Prior Bushfires	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	Climate disaster due to climate inaction	Climate action is needed to protect the future of our planet	More ambitious climate action for future generations and committing to 45% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050	Invest in renewables, $300 million for transition the industry towards carbon neutrality, Emissions Trading Scheme, and Carbon Capture on land; 45% emission reduction by 2030 and net-zero by 2050	No
During Bushfires	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	More climate disaster such as the bushfires in the future due to climate inaction	The bushfires emphasize the need for more ambitious climate action	More ambitious climate action for future generations and phasing out coal (fossil fuels)	Net zero carbon-emissions by 2050; Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill	Yes; Official Development Assistance Multilateral Replenishment Obligations (Special Appropriation) Bill
After Bushfires	Pro climate action and the future of Australia and the world	Heroes: Everyone that is Pro-climate action Villains: Climate deniers and everyone that thwarts climate policy	More bushfires/ climate disasters as consequence of anthropocentric climate change	The bushfire season should neve happen again and climate action is needed for the future generations	More ambitious climate action for future generations and phasing out coal (fossil fuels). Offering bipartisan agreement with the opposition, thus accepting the Technology Investment Roadmap. Australia first renewable energy superpower	Net zero carbon-emissions by 2050	No

Furthermore, the stability and no changes in the Pro-climate discourse can be seen in the quotes in Chapters 5.1.3, 5.2.3 & 5.3.3. Moreover, the linguistic statements throughout the periods emphasise that climate action and bushfires amplify the need for more climate action. However, because of the bushfires, the linguistic use within the discourse has not changed.

6. Discussion

The discussion chapter scrutinises the results concerning the theoretical foundation of the thesis. Moreover, speculations about specific results are elaborated and a reflection of the research method and limitations.

6.1 Discussion results

6.1.1 Lack of change in climate policy discourse

The results show a detailed finding on the policy discourse on climate mitigation action prior during and after the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 in the Australian Parliament and Government. An essential finding is that no new discourses have been framed or discourses have disappeared throughout the three time periods, thus meaning there is no change in discourse. Moreover, the narratives within each discourse remained constant; however, a significant minor change happened within the economic discourse. Thus, the fossil fuel centred economic, climate denialism, and pro-climate action discourse narratives show a lack of change, and this section elaborates plausible assumptions that identify the lack of change.

Jørgensen & Phillips (2002) identifies that within discourses, there are structural limitations on actors that cannot articulate elements in new ways, thus not enabling change within discourses or frame new discourses. A structural limitation on actors is their carrying capacity, meaning that actors only address few problems at once due to limitations in time, budget and personnel. These problems are competing for attention in which there is a cycle of rising and decline of attention. The shift of attention can happen when there is extensive media coverage in which some actors who are not interested in an issue become more interested in public discourse because they think the issue is essential and use the issue for self-promotion or policy strategies (Schneider & Ollmann, 2013). The bushfire crisis of 2019-2020 happened from June 2019 until May 2020 and had comprehensive media coverage and coverage related to climate change (ABC News, June 27 2019; Mandurah Mail, May 3 2020). However, from the 25th of January 2020 and onward, Australia was confronted with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis (Australian Government, January 25 2020). This means that from the 25th of January, two attention-seeking events were in Australia and could lead to that Australian Parliament members and Government members shift their attention from the bushfire crisis to the COVID-19 crisis and not enabling to have changed within discourse or frame new discourses.

Another plausible explanation for the lack of change of public discourses is the state of ambiguity of discourses, meaning actors within discourse have many ways of thinking about a circumstance or phenomenon. Information can reduce uncertainty; however, it does not reduce ambiguity. Even if there is scientific consensus on an issue, still actors will have different perceptions (Schneider & Ollmann, 2013). As seen with the bushfires, there is a widespread scientific consensus that the bushfires are linked to climate change, and in the future, more bushfires will happen due to anthropocentric climate change. Parliament members and Government members within the climate denialism discourse view climate change and the bushfires not as an issue and instead state that climate change is a myth. Thus, actors within climate denialism would not change or reframe their discourse to more pro-climate.

Furthermore, actors have preferences and change in discourse depends on how policy actors frame their preferences. A lack of change in public discourse can happen when preferences favour the traditional foundation of a discourse (Schmidt & Radaelli, 2004). As seen in the climate denialism discourse, the foundation for the discourse is its pro-Australian view. Thus, the preferences of Parliament and Government members in this discourse is solely around present Australia. Thus, actors do not easily frame and change their discourse towards pro-climate action within this isolation bubble,

which has a more future-interested preference. The same goes for the fossil fuel centred economic discourse, in which the foundation is the carbon-based economy. Thus, the preference of Parliament and Government members in this discourse is solely around the economy. Thus, actors do not easily frame or change their discourse towards pro-climate action within the carbon-based economic bubble since it means losing the economy's foundation.

Moreover, another explanation for the lack of change is the saliency within discourse, meaning how much a frame dominates the discourse. If a frame is relatively low in discourse, no attention is paid to that frame within policy (Schneider & Ollmann, 2013). As seen within the actor preference and state of ambiguity of discourses, the climate denialism discourse frames around a pro-Australia isolation bubble prior, during and after the bushfires. Thus, the saliency on "*pro-climate action*", "*climate policy*", or "*abolishing fossil fuels*" is relatively low since actors rarely use it for the climate denialism discourse. The same counts for the fossil fuel centred economic discourse that frames around the economy of Australia. Thus, the saliency on "*pro-climate action*", "*climate policy*", or "*abolishing fossil fuels*" is relatively low since actors rarely use it for the economic discourse. However, the saliency on "*pro-climate action*, "*climate policy*", or "*abolishing fossil fuels*" is relatively high in the Pro-climate action discourses since their linguistics is framed around climate action and future interest.

Finally, the lack of change in public discourse on climate mitigation action can be explained through the level of interaction between discourses. This research shows that interaction between discourses, e.g. the pro-climate action discourse is willing to work with the fossil fuel centred discourse on climate policy. However, it is unknown how much the discourses interact and the impact of the interaction between discourses. The level of interaction between discourses provides insights into the process of learning and highlights the meta-power of actors to change identities, interests, and institutions (Barbieri, 2012). In addition, Hajer's (1995) analysis of discourse coalitions provides insight on interaction between actors of different discourses that creates a context through which interests and values are defined, and actors and institutions are reshaped. Moreover, the analysis of discourse coalitions provides insights into discursive struggles between discourses (Hajer, 1995). As seen in the results, there is a discursive struggle between climate denialism, fossil fuel centred economic, and pro-climate action discourse in which the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is successful in institutionalisation throughout the time periods, thus making it hegemonic. However, the three discourses view each other as a villain, thus emphasising the willingness not to interact, resulting in a lack of learning from each discourse. In addition to hegemonic discourses, Schmidt (2011) emphasises that entrepreneurs can use the windows of opportunity to frame their discourse hegemonic in case of an event. Thus, the pro-climate discourse could use the bushfire event as a window of opportunity to become hegemonic; however, it did not happen. This could plausibly mean a lack of an entrepreneur to use the windows of opportunity to frame the pro-climate action discourse hegemonic.

While there are many plausible assumptions to explain the lack of the change in policy discourse in climate mitigation action, the assumption that discourse preference leads to a lack of change and the level of interaction between discourses is most plausible. Throughout the three time periods, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse has successfully institutionalised significant climate policies such as climate targets. Hence, the economic discourse instead dominates the climate policy domain, thus making it hegemonic. The foundation of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is centred around a carbon-based economy that secures Australia's economy, and climate action means given up that economic security. While the bushfires showed the fossil fuel centred economic discourse the understanding of climate science, they still do not want to give up their fossil fuel preference above a CO_2-preference. Thus, their policy discourse on climate mitigation action remained the same after the bushfires, emphasising the same targets prior to the bushfires and no cuts in fossil fuels. Moreover,

the fossil fuel preference of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse should not be jeopardised by climate action, and those actors that try to institutionalise a pro-climate discourse at the expense of economic security are villains. The villains of the fossil fuel centred economic discourse are in common with the villains of the climate denialism discourse. Thus, both the fossil fuel centred economic and climate denialism discourse could plausibly prevent the individualisation of the pro-climate action discourse prior to, during and after the bushfires.

6.1.2 Comparing bushfires discourse with climate policy discourses in Australia´s history

As seen throughout Australian climate policy discourse history in Chapter 4.3, the discourses discovered within the results have been a paradigm for a longer time. Each of the discourses has had the opportunity to become hegemonic. For the climate denialism discourse, Tony Abbott's Government of 2013-2015 contributed to climate inaction and abolishing Labor's pro-climate policies (Cann & Raymond, 2018; Crowley, 2017). The need of denying climate change and acting protective within the climate policy discourse is even self-evident after the bushfires, thus emphasising that the climate denialism discourse is in a state of equilibrium for a longer time. There is a strong emphasis on the fossil fuel centred economic discourse throughout the Coalition's Government, with a foundation on a carbon-based economy and neo-Liberal interests (Curran, 2009; 2011). After the bushfires, the strong emphasis on the economy is self-evident, meaning that economic discourse is in an equilibrium for a longer time. Finally, The Labor's Government shows a pro-climate action discourse within their party with a normative foundation for climate action for future generations and an ecological modernisation interest (Christoff, 2013; Curran, 2009). This foundation has been returning within the results in which the pro-climate discourse shows the need for climate action for future generations and the costs for climate inaction. Finally, the Australian climate policy discourse history shows that the hegemonic discourse changes with a new Government in power with a new political party; thus, a change in hegemonic discourse can happen during election cycles.

6.1.3 Focusing events and climate disasters

The thesis aims to contribute to the literature on whether climate disaster as a focusing event pushes a country over the edge towards a CO_2 neutral paradigm by looking at the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 (UNFCCC, 2015). In addition, there is a debate if climate disasters push a change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action in politics (Birkland, 1998).

The body of literature of focusing events emphasizes that the dramatic, sudden, and attention-grabbing moment of a focusing allows to uncover policy failures and provides opportunities for politically disadvantaged groups to advocate for policy change (Birkland, 1997). In addition, political actors can learn from focusing events and accumulate knowledge, thus improving policies (Birkland, 2006). This so-called policy learning can be captured in the policy discourse of political groups in which the story of the focusing event is captured and changes (Kingdon, 1995). However, the case of the Australian bushfires shows that for Australia, the bushfire disasters lead to no change in discourses or change the narrative within discourses. The fundamental ideas behind the discourses did not change and did not change the policies of the discourses. Climate denialism still framed climate policies around denialism and does everything to prevent it from institutionalising. The fossil fuel centred economic discourse still framed climate policies around neo-Liberal and carbon-based interests. Finally, the pro-climate discourse still framed climate policies with a normative interest for the future. Thus, the bushfire climate disaster did not change policy discourse on climate mitigation action in politics. Subsequently, the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 puts the argument that climate disasters lead to policy change into question since, as a consequence of the Australian bushfires, no policy change has happened and no change in policy discourse.

Birkland (1997, 1998) argues that focusing events allows politically disadvantaged groups to advocate for policy change and that politically dominant groups would be open to politics, and policy making is rather invalid for climate disasters. The case of the Australian bushfires shows that the hegemonic economic discourse was instead kept in place before, during and after the bushfires with its low commitment to climate mitigation targets and climate mitigation policies. Subsequently, the pro-climate discourse did not use its opportunity as politically disadvantaged groups to frame more ambitious climate policies and institutionalise them within Australia's climate policy domain. However, the pro-climate action discourse used the opportunity of the bushfires to institutionalise an international climate funding policy to expand a little bit in the climate policy domain. Nevertheless, the pro-climate action discourse was not successful in locking into significant climate policies, such as climate targets, and make a significant policy change. Thus, the case of the Australian bushfires did not push Australia towards a CO_2 neutral paradigm with a science-based narrative, meaning that this climate disaster did not contribute to change on that ground.

Moreover, Birkland's (1997) empirical research on natural disasters emphasized that two types of policies are generated from disasters: mitigation and adaptation. Anderson et al. (2018) emphasise that climate disaster has a probability of triggering policy responses that are based on the demand for immediate action from the victims; thus, the responses are framed around adaptation. However, in the long term, the responses are ineffective and maladaptive, thus not mitigating the effect of climate disasters (Anderson et al., 2018). Hence, there is a probability that the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 instead led to climate adaptation responses rather than climate mitigation responses. Consequently, this results in a knowledge gap on whether climate disasters would lead to short-term climate adaptation responses.

Finally, Nohrstedt et al. (2021) argues that focusing events do not necessarily trigger policy change based on empirical evidence of natural disasters in 85 countries. First, Nohrstedt et al. (2021) emphasize that exposure to repeating disasters would potentially alter policy beliefs and accumulates in significant policy change. Thus, when climate disasters repeatedly happen, it could trigger a change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action towards the CO_2-neutral paradigm. Subsequently, if the Australian bushfire disaster would repeat each year, it could trigger policy change and function as a "focusing event". Nohrstedt et al. (2021) argue that a single disaster instead results in overreactions and symbolic politics rather than actual actions. The case of the Australian bushfires instead aligns with this, and as a result of the bushfires, the economic discourse provides a Technology Roadmap to mitigate climate change. However, scientists doubt their intention instead of thinking that the action is more symbolic than genuinely mitigating climate change (The Sydney Morning Herald, January 30 2021). This could mean that climate disaster instead results in symbolic action rather than genuinely function as a "focusing event" and trigger policy change. Thus, the case of the Australian bushfires implies that the bushfire disaster did not act as a focusing event for change in climate mitigation policy. This raises the question if climate disasters should be seen as focusing events, and more research in climate disasters is needed if they act as a focusing event to provide a grounded conclusion.

6.2 Limitations of this research
The approach of discourse analysis and the method of desk research with collecting newspapers and documents as data and coding the data fitted well for the goal of the thesis. However, researchers discuss the limitations of such approaches, and this section will discuss such limitations.

As mentioned in the theory chapter, discourse analysis focuses on the articulation of discourses, how discourses become hegemonic, how actors produce, reproduce, transform discourse over time and the policy outcomes of discourses (Hajer, 1995; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Liftin, 1994). Analysing discourses requires analysing texts. Thus, a selection needs to be made of the type of text. However,

the research questions the reliability and validity of discourse analysis methods, especially the sampling method of discourse analysis (Aydin-Düzgit & Rumelili, 2019). In order to provide reliability and validity, a sampling approach was chosen in line with the research questions. Desk research was chosen since the research required a lot of data collected in a short range. In addition, empirical observations in the past are needed for this research and collecting newspapers and documents as data is a valuable method for past observations since both sampling methods record past events.

Furthermore, two methods of empirical data collecting provide a variety of data; thus, the triangulation of data enhances the reliability and validity of the method. However, critics could think that interviews can be an added value to this research since they could provide direct insights into the climate policy discourse of politicians in the Australian Parliament and Government. However, due to the time frame of the research, it is challenging to include interviews and find interviewees within the research, and the statements made by politicians in the Australian Parliament and Government can be found in newspapers and documents and provide direct insights into the climate policy discourse; thus, interviews are unnecessary within this research.

Another limitation for media and documents as data is that the researcher depends on the content of the data and can be an obstacle in answering the research questions (Flick, 2018; Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010). As mentioned in the method, the collected media and document data are judge on the quality of access and quality of content. The quality of content has been judged by its authenticity, credibility, meaning and representativeness. Also, accessing the data quality and comparing it between each other allows data to reach a saturation point where no new findings are found.

In addition to media data, the data was collected from media with a central-political orientation to prevent biases. However, including more far-right media or far-left media could provide more insight in, e.g. the climate denialism discourse. Thus, it could mean that including within the data collection far left or right media would lead to new results. However, for this research, including the more biased media in this research could lead to a distorted picture of the results since it could lead to misinformation of discourse and display false statements. In order to prevent a distorted picture, a possible solution is to collect and analyse the biased and non-biased media separately and compare them to improve the results.

In order to analyse the data, it was chosen to code the data in Nvivo. However, a scientific limitation on coding by individual research is the validation of the coding process. Coding with multiple researchers allows cross-validation between their choices, and as an individual researcher, cross-validation is not possible (Saldaña, 2013). A coding scheme and code-application examples were validated to provide good insights into the coding process to reduce such a limitation. In addition, peer-reviewed feedback is given on the coding process to adapt and improve the coding process, making it more reliable. Nevertheless, the conducted analysis is subjected to individual interpretation. This data can be different or more in-depth analysed than an interpretation by several researchers.

The conducted analysis was bounded to specific time periods. These time periods could be too short to find change in policy discourse on climate mitigation. However, this was limited by providing insights on the body of literature on the history of the Australian policy discourse on climate mitigation action. Comparing the history of the Australian policy discourse on climate mitigation action with the results reduced the uncertainty of a too-short time frame and improved scientific validity. Moreover, it is possible that after the research time frame from "after the fires", still change is going to happen in climate mitigation policy. However, there is still a hegemonic fossil fuel centred discourse dominantly

present in the climate policy domain, and it is not expected that this discourse makes more ambitious climate policies or losses its power in the climate policy domain.

Finally, scientific research on climate disaster and its relation to change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action is in infancy, meaning there is limited research on this phenomenon. The case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 provides the first insights on climate disasters and change in climate policy discourse. However, to provide a theory on this phenomenon, more climate disasters cases need to be researched to provide a theoretical framework. Nevertheless, the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 provides an initial scientific validation on the topic of climate disasters.

6.3 Recommendations for further research

This thesis provides the initial insights on how public discourse on climate mitigation action has led to no change due to a climate disaster. By analysing the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020, insights were given on policy discourse of climate mitigation action. However, while this research provided answers to the research questions, those answers led to more questions for future scientific research.

Firstly, to develop a theoretical framework on climate disasters and their relation to change in policy discourse on climate mitigation action, more cases need to be researched in the future. The case of the Australian bushfires provides an initial insight into changes in public discourse on climate policy. However, adding more cases and comparing them with each other would be of added value and provide a holistic understanding of climate disasters. An example of a possible case is the California Wildfires of 2020, which was widely related to climate change and a climate disaster (Mulkern, August 24 2020).

Secondly, another addition to the research of climate disasters is applying discourse coalition analysis. Hajer's (1995) analysis of discourse Coalitions provides insight into the interaction between actors of different discourses that creates a context through which interests and values are defined, and actors and institutions are reshaped. This thesis focused on uncovering the policy discourse on climate mitigation action before, during, and after the bushfires and explaining the changes. However, this research did not focus on the interaction between the discourse since prior to the research unknown. Applying discourse Coalition analysis on the uncovered discourses allows scrutinising how actors of different discourses have interacted prior, during and after the bushfires and explain the lack of change due to lack of interaction. The application of discourse Coalition is for the scientific value of the bushfire case and other climate disaster cases.

Thirdly, while this research mainly focuses on change in policy discourse on climate mitigation on a macro level, it did not focus on change on the meso and micro levels. By conducting research on the meso and micro level, understanding the policy discourse on climate mitigation action of states, companies or individuals has changed due to bushfires. Moreover, for other cases, analysing from the three levels allows understanding climate policy change on each level scientifically and how each level reacts to climate disasters and changes its policy discourse on climate mitigation action. Subsequently, analysing the three levels allows an understanding, as a consequence of a climate disaster, which level takes the responsibility to mitigate climate change.

Finally, this research did not include whether a climate disaster would trigger a change in climate adaptation policy. Researching this knowledge gap in the future would provide insights into whether climate disaster provides more short-term solutions (climate adaptation) or long-term solutions (climate mitigation).

7. Conclusion

The thesis aims to frame a scientific understanding of whether climate disasters push a change in climate policy discourse to take more climate mitigation action. By analysing the case of the Australian bushfires of 2019-2020 as climate disasters provide insights on the public discourse in taking climate mitigation action. The objective of the thesis is to analyse how the public discourse about climate policy has changed in the Australian Parliament and Governments due to the Australian bushfires 2019-2020. The following question was derived from the research objective: "*To what extent has the policy discourse on climate mitigation action changed in the Australian Parliament and Government as a consequence of the Australian bushfires 2019-2020?*".

The theory of discourse and discourse analysis provided a foundation for explaining a change in discourses regarding climate policy. Analysing discourse offers a holistic understanding of how a set of ideas, concepts and categorisations are produced, reproduced, transformed in a particular set of practices and give meaning to physical and social realities. Moreover, analysing discourses frames insights on how certain discourses become hegemonic while other discourses are discredited. In politics, discourses have discursive struggles to become hegemonic and change policy context. The impact of discourses in becoming hegemonic and their impact on policies can be identified through institutionalisation, meaning that discourse becomes routinised in policy practices and institutional processes. The concepts of narrative are the foundation to analyse discourses and their process of change. Narratives explain how different physical and social realities are united into specific, closed problems and given meaning. A new narrative creates a political shift by re-ordering meaning and making a new discourse dominant. Using the concepts of *setting and context*, *plot* and *moral of the story* allowed to gain insights on change of policy discourse on climate mitigation action in the Australian Parliament and Government due to the bushfires of 2019-2020.

7.1 Policy discourse and change in policy discourse prior, during and after the bushfires

In this thesis, documents and newspapers were collected as data, and by coding them, three discourses are uncovered before, during, and after the bushfires. The first is a climate denialism discourse that has not changed throughout the three time periods. The climate denialism discourse is in an isolation bubble revolving around Australia, thus acting protective for the means of Australia. The climate denialism discourse denies anthropocentric climate change and denies the linkage between bushfires and climate change. The heroes in the climate denialism narrative think that they protect Australia from useless climate action at the expense of Australia, and everyone that is pro-climate action is a villain. Throughout the three time period, the climate denialism discourse does not provide climate policy solutions to tackle climate mitigation action or mitigate future bushfires. On the contrary, climate denialism prefers to offer policies to prevent climate action, such as an inquiry from questioning banks and insures that cut support to fossil fuels.

The second discourse is a fossil fuel centred economic discourse that showed a minor change throughout the three-time period. Before the bushfires, there was a firm idea of the heroes that climate action would lead to a complication that destroys Australia's carbon-based economy and harms the Australian population. Subsequently, those that frame climate action at the expense of the economy are seen as villains. Thus, policy solutions provided by the economic discourse are a climate solution package and a 26 to 28 per cent reduction target by 2030. However, the consequence of the bushfires showed the heroes the need for climate action. Thus, climate action should be taken by using technology to balance climate action with carbon-based economic interests. This resulted in the Technology Investment Roadmap; however, climate scientists argue that the solution is not enough to

combat climate change. Moreover, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse foundation, the carbon-based economy, is still present throughout the three time periods, and policies are still framed with a fossil-fuel interest.

The third discourse is a pro-climate action discourse that remained the same throughout time. Within the narrative of this discourse, there is a strong foundation around the future of Australia and the world. The hero in this discourse is everyone that is pro-climate action, and the hero has more reflective thinking in which there is warned that climate inaction leads to climate disasters and the bushfires backed up their statement. The villains are everyone that is against climate action or is a climate denier. The heroes in the pro-climate denialism want to provide policy solutions such as phasing out coal or aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050. After the bushfires, the heroes are even prepared to offer bipartisan agreements with the opposition.

From the three discourses, the fossil fuel centred economic discourse has successfully institutionalised its climate policy practises. This means that the fossil fuel interested economic discourse structures climate policy practises and solidifies within climate policy, meaning that the fossil fuel centred economic discourse is hegemonic throughout the three time period. Consequently, the bushfires did not bring any changes in the hegemony of discourses; the fossil fuel centred economic discourses remained hegemonic.

7.2 Climate disasters and changes in the public discourse of climate policy

The lack of changes in discourse in the case of the Australian bushfires implies that climate disasters do not act as focusing events and do not contribute to change in the public discourse of climate policy within the Australian Parliament and Government. The consequences of the bushfires did not allow to uncover the policy failures within climate policy and provides opportunities for politically disadvantaged groups to put their pro-climate discourse on the agenda and advocate for policy change. This, instead, means that climate disasters do not necessarily make a pro-climate discourse hegemonic and solidify climate policy.

Moreover, the case of the Australian bushfires shows that the discourses did change their narrative to provide more ambitious climate policies. As seen with the climate denialism discourse, the foundation of its ideas regarding denying climate change and acting protecting remains the same throughout the three-time periods. The same counts for the economic discourse in which the foundation of fossil fuel interest remains the same throughout the three-time periods. Consequently, this could imply that climate disasters do not change discourses outside a pro-climate interest.

Finally, natural disasters result in two types of policies: mitigation and adaption (Birkland 1997). While the bushfires did not result in long-term climate mitigation policies, they could have resulted in more short-term adaptation responses. However, since adaptation is not part of this research, this remains unknown.

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Annex A: Collected Data

In this Annex, insights are given in the collected data for prior, during and after the bushfires in Table 12, 13, 14, 15,16 and 17.

Table 12. Data Newspapers prior to the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
Tightening Polls a reminder that moderation is no virtue	5-5-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
The power of one vote was never so great as it is today	18-5-2019	Dennis Shanahan	Newspaper	The Australian
STANDING FIRM ON THE MIDDLE GROUND	11-5-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
RADICAL TRAP OF A SHORTEN WIN	18-5-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Battle on for young and old	4-5-2019	Simon Benson	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison must prove he's in touch with suburban Australian values to regain momentum at the polls	15-4-2019	Chris Mitchell	Newspaper	The Australian
We've learnt our lesson, Shorten vows	9-5-2019	Sid Maher	Newspaper	The Australian
The worst possible outcome awaits us all	11-5-2019	Peter van Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
Capturing mind and mood of diverse nation of voters	12-4-2019	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Push for halt on new coal plants, fossil fuel subsidies	16-5-2019	Peter Hannam	Newspaper	SMH
I want my childhood back': young climate activist's letter to Australia	4-5-2019	Bella Burgemeister	Newspaper	SMH
Stop new coal plants by 2020 and taxpayer subsidies for fossil fuels, UN chief says	15-5-2019	Peter Hannam	Newspaper	SMH
Bill Shorten's final dash in the long road to the top	12-5-2019	Deborah Snow	Newspaper	SMH
No 'Blanket no': Di Natale offers olive branch to Labor on climate policy	1-5-2019	Judith Ireland	Newspaper	SMH
Australia needs more reformers. We need more Bob Hawkes	18-5-2019	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
Shorten has made a compelling case for change	12-5-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Voters' choice: a fast track to change or the status quo	11-5-2019	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
What is the crossbench and why does it matter?	5-5-2019	Sumeyya Ilanbey	Newspaper	SMH
Seven key seats to watch in the election this weekend	18-5-2019	Fleta Page	Newspaper	SMH
Explainer: Everything you need to know about the election, and where it will be won	11-4-2019	Judith Ireland	Newspaper	SMH

Polarised nation needs much more than pantomime	12-4-2019	George Megalogenis	Newspaper	SMH
The tragedy of the 2019 election	11-4-2019	George Megalogenis	Newspaper	SMH
If Bill Shorten loses the election, three things will follow	29-4-2019	Sean Kelly	Newspaper	SMH
On a wing and a prayer: Shorten and Morrison hit the hustings full hope	13-4-2019	David Wroe, Shane Wirght, and Michael Koziol	Newspaper	SMH
And … They're off	13-4-2019	David Wroe, Shane Wirght, and Michael Koziol	Newspaper	SMH
The UN says we're destroying the world. This should change everything	12-5-2019	Caitlin Fitzsimmons	Newspaper	SMH
Voters get to pick a PM who'll stay for three years	12-4-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Former Murdoch execs say Bill Shorten's attack on New Corp was smart politics	9-4-2019	Jeniffer Duke, John McDulling	Newspaper	SMH
What makes this contest different	12-4-2019	Judith Brett	Newspaper	SMH
Albanese takes swing at left-wing; Party Strategy	10-5-2019	Michael Koziol	Newspaper	SMH
Battle for the burbs: Shorten in the thick of it	11-4-2019	Benjamin Preiss, Noel Towell	Newspaper	SMH
Is that a fact?! Fact checking the final leaders' debate of the 2019 federal election campaign	8-5-2019	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Your guide to the Queensland Senate ballot form	12-5-2019	Allyson Horn	Newspaper	ABC news
Climate change a bigger threat to Australia's interest than terrorism, Lowy Institute poll suggests	8-5-2019	Michael Slezak	Newspaper	ABC news
Bill Shorten invokes Whitlam's It's Time as he and Scott Morrison make their final federal election pitches	16-5-2019	Matthew Doran	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Both sides see Western Australia as a major battleground	2-5-2019	Laura Tingle	Newspaper	ABC news
Prime Minister Scott Morrison says an electric vehicle can't tow a boat or trailer. Is he correct?	10-5-2019	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC news
UN Secretary-General meets Pacific Leaders to discuss 'global catastrophe' of climate change	16-5-2019	Stephen Dziedzic	Newspaper	ABC news
Greens bank on Lavor's win but party hopes to exploit shortfall to push climate action policies	17-4-2019	Alexandra Beech	Newspaper	ABC news
Election day is final stop for major party candidates on Adelaide's democracy tram	16-5-2019	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC news

Federal election 2019: You ask, We Answer your energy questions	8-5-2019	Jarrod Whittaker	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Prime Minister Scott Morrison sets May 18 election date	11-4-2019	Brett Wothington	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Labor pledges millions for electric vehicle industry growth	9-5-2019	Eliza Laschon	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: How Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten give half answers and dodge questions	16-5-2019	Jackson Gothe-Snape	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Richard Di Natale hits back at Scott Morrison, says Coalition are the 'real extremists'	7-5-2019	James Elton	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election campaign heatmap shows electorates most fought over by Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten	18-5-2019	Matthew Doran, Andrew Kesper, Emma Machan	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: RMIT ABC Fact Check runs the rule over Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten's second debate	3-5-2019	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten go head-to-head in second leaders' debate	3-5-2019	Lucy Sweeney	Newspaper	ABC news
Fact check: Is the Coalition´s new spending on climate change just four weeks of keeping Christmas Island open?	8-5-2019	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC news
Scott Morrison and Bill Shorten battle over taxes, electric cars and climate change	29-3-2019	Brett Wothington	Newspaper	ABC news
Labor's policy revolution finally detailed, but will voters buy it?	10-5-2019	Jackson Gothe-Snape	Newspaper	ABC news
Senate candidate Gerard Rennick donated $30k to LNP ahead of preselection	24-3-2019	Dan Conifer	Newspaper	ABC news
Tony Abott says push for 'high-profile scalp' is behind close battle in Warringah	13-5-2019	Bellinda Kontominas	Newspaper	ABC news
Fraser Anning candidate launch ends in punches as leaders debate debating	26-4-2019	Brett Wothington	Newspaper	ABC news
Shorten Reinvents climate politics	4-5-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Shorten's election pitches reflect 'vibe'in voterland	1-5-2019	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Choice for restive voters is stark: Realism or Idealism	14-4-2019	Jennifer Oriel	Newspaper	The Australian
I'll give shorten enough rope, PM Jests	2-5-2019	Primrose Riordan	Newspaper	The Australian
Priceless: Bill's climate costs	30-4-2019	Simon Benson	Newspaper	The Australian
We'll kiss climate action delay goodbye'	13-5-2019	Rosie Lewis	Newspaper	The Australian
Backyard Bill poses threat for calm PM	12-4-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian

Greens stir Gillard ghosts	1-5-2019	Rosie Lewis	Newspaper	The Australian
Letters to the editor	11-5-2019	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
The Coalition can stand out by standing up for Australians	12-4-2019	Daniel Wild	Newspaper	The Australian
Four independents leaning to Coalition	15-5-2019	Alice Workman, Elias Visontay	Newspaper	The Australian
Oakeshott stands on green goals	25-4-2019	Ben Packham, Geoff Chambers	Newspaper	The Australian
Stegall to favour Liberals in deadlocked parliament	3-5-2019	Brad Norington	Newspaper	The Australian
Leaders warned: ditch surplus, cut taxes	15-5-2019	Greg Brown, Ben Packnam	Newspaper	The Australian
PM fails to inspire while Shorten goes for overkill	1-5-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Hopes for a bright new future border on the delusional	18-5-2019	Peter van Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison plays trumps to open	12-4-2019	Rosie Lewis	Newspaper	The Australian
Power and its wicked ways	18-5-2019	Ross Fitzgerald	Newspaper	The Australian
Turnbull attacks fossil-fuel policies	10-5-2019	Ben Packham	Newspaper	The Australian
Abbott's struggle illustrates the reactionary dilemma	27-4-2019	Peter van Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
Coming clean on policies now avoids voters remorse	4-5-2019	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Taks Skirmish sets up the main campaign	13-4-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Nation needs stability now and growth for the future	17-5-2019	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Nation on a knife Edge	11-5-2019	Dennis Shanahan	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison: Hope of the Party	17-5-2019	Joe Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Bulldog Morison can only nip at Shorten's heels	2-5-2019	Niki Savva	Newspaper	The Australian
Battlelines define a contest over hearts and minds	3-4-2019	Dennis Shanahan	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison in last-ditch pitch to hold office	18-5-2019	Joe Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Carbon cuts 'won't damage economy'; Federal Election	19-4-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Greens' moment of truth in the Senate; Climate change	23-4-2019	Judith Ireland	Newspaper	SMH
Coalition climate costs 'not credible'	22-4-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Imperfect solutions: how the parties plan to cut emissions; climate change	13-5-2019	Nicole Hasham	Newspaper	SMH
Final Dash; Bill Shorten's	12-5-2019	Deborah Snow	Newspaper	SMH

Reef on verge of collapse: officials; exclusive | climate change	14-4-2019	Michael Ruffles	Newspaper	SMH
Shorten's united team can end the years of instability	17-5-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Modest Program is PM's best shot	13-5-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Road to the future is going all electric	11-4-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Shorten vows to end 'dud deal' for under-40s; Exclusive	10-5-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Wave breaking at right moment' as Labor targets the undecided; Home Straight	13-5-2019	Judith Ireland	Newspaper	SMH
As voters lower their expectations, there's something missing; Comment	6-5-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Take silicon into Parliament … it leaves coal for dust	16-5-2019	Rory McGuire	Newspaper	SMH
Garnaut heats up climate debate as election looms; Exclusive	16-5-2019	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
Sydney's federal election battlegrounds	11-5-2019	Sam Emery, Brendan King, Mawunyo Gbogbo	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Police called in as pressure minutes for Liberal to dump canidate Jessica Whelan	2-5-2019	Brett Wothington	Newspaper	ABC news
Climate change could slash $571b from property values, study warns	9-5-2019	Peter Ryan	Newspaper	ABC news
Federal election 2019: Labor, Coalition vow to cut emissions while supporting NT fracking. Is that possible?	16-5-2019	Emily Smith	Newspaper	ABC news
Prime Minister Scott Morrison discusses the Coalition's policies	6-5-2019	Leigh Sales	Newspaper	ABC news

Table 13. Data Documents prior to the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
Press Conference / Thursday, 11 Apil 2019	11-4-2019	Scott Morrison	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
$3.8 Billion for Climate and Environment	2-4-2019	Melissa Price	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Climate Policies of Major Australian Political Parties	mei-19	Climate Council	Document	Climate Counsil
Climate Solution package	1-5-2019	Australian Government	Document	Coalition
Labor's climate change action plan	3-4-2019	Labor	Document	Labor
Climate cuts, cover-ups and censorship	1-5-2019	Climate Council	Document	Climate Counsil
Dirty Power: Big Coal's Network of influence over the Coalition Government	8-5-2019	Greenpeace	Document	Greenpeace
Saved by the bench: how the senate crossbench saved Australia's renewable energy industry	3-1-2019	Bill Browne, Rod Campbell, Dan Cass	document	The Australian Institute
Climate Change Action Plan: facts sheet	1-4-2019	Labor	Document	Labor
A strategy for a cleaner transport future	1-4-2019	Labor	Document	Labor
Australia's climate change policies at the Australian and State and Territory Government Levels: A stocktake	8-3-2019	Australian Government	Document	Coalition
Our plan: For Affordable and Reliable Energy	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Our Plan: For a Cleaner Environment	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Our Plan: For a Stronger agriculture, fisheries and Forestry sector	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Our Plan: Supporting Farmers in Drought	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Our Plan for Lower Energy costs for small business	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Our Plan for More Jobs in A stronger Economy	1-5-2019	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Climate Solution package	26-2-2019	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Meeting our climate commitments without wrecking the economy	25-3-2019	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
House of Representatives votes and proceedings	2-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Bill Shorten MP Leader of the opposition	17-5-2019	Labor	Document	Labor
House of representatives Notice Paper	4-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	2-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament

Senate Official Hansard	2-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Real Action On Climate change	1-5-2019	Labor	Document	Labor
House of Representatives Official Hansard	3-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	3-4-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament

Table 14. Data Newspapers during the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
After the fires, we'll have combustive issues to resolve	13-11-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Albanese walks dangerous path back to centre	14-12-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Any climate policy change is going to be slow burn	29-1-2020	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Bushfires blind alarmists to reality	25-11-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Cane for Kean as MPs flag emissions change	21-1-2020	Greg Brown, Yoni Bashan	Newspaper	The Australian
Champion of the left has plaudits for conservative PM	14-3-2020	Ben Oquist	Newspaper	The Australian
Changes in climate key focus of probe	21-2-2020	Olivia Caisley	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate change is not the era's burning issue	14-12-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate coverage just load of hot air	14-10-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate critics are wrong: Cormann	23-1-2020	Richard Ferguson	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate crusaders exploit fires to push their alarmist view	16-11-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate policy caught in the crossfire of warring sides	16-11-2019	Peter van Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
Coalition faces climate brawl	5-2-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Deniers fiddle as the Nation Burns	19-12-2019	Mark Butler	Newspaper	The Australian
Deplorables got it right again	1-6-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Fanning the flames	16-11-2019	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
Fears PM's carbon credit projects gone to blazes	17-1-2020	Geoff Chambers	Newspaper	The Australian
Fringe-dwelling Green Revel in a Nation´s Agony	18-11-2019	Jennifer Oriel	Newspaper	The Australian
Labor MPs eyed cap on coal export	22-2-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Mainstream voters are calling time on self-referential elite	12-10-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison made of right stuff for long haul as PM	12-10-2019	Dennis Shanahan	Newspaper	The Australian
Much more science and far less politics is the best response to the bushfires	11-1-2020	Claire Lehmann	Newspaper	The Australian
NAB shuts branches as bushfires threaten southern states	21-12-2019	Michael Roddan	Newspaper	The Australian

No more carbon cuts, PM warned	16-1-2020	Rosie Lewis	Newspaper	The Australian
Out of the bushfires and into the land management plans	18-1-2020	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
PM courts states for fire inquiry	10-1-2020	Ben Packham	Newspaper	The Australian
PM fires up in push for deeper cuts	13-1-2020	Rosie Lewis	Newspaper	The Australian
PM must plant seeds for the new greening	21-1-2020	Jenifer Oriel	Newspaper	The Australian
PM pushes tech target for climate	18-2-2020	Simon Benson	Newspaper	The Australian
PM taking 'socialist approach on climate'	6-2-2020	Greg Brown Richard Ferguson	Newspaper	The Australian
Regaining lost ground	29-1-2020	Peter can Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
The science is clear on both climate and pandemic	9-5-2020	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Time to come out of the wilderness and cut back the fuel	20-1-2020	Nick Cater	Newspaper	The Australian
Will of the people be damned as 'virtuous' elite browbeats all with gestures and emotion	21-9-2019	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Action needed' on climate change, Deputy PM finally admits	22-12-2019	Dana McCauley	Newspaper	SMH
Albanese says Australia should continue to export coal	9-12-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Australians must target zero figure: British Tory	28-2-2020	Latika Bourke	Newspaper	SMH
Australia's climate policies will protect environment and 'seek to reduce'hazard of fires, says Prime Minister	1-2-2020	Jacqueline Maley	Newspaper	SMH
Bandt defends Greens rhetoric on fires	18-11-2019	Fergus Hunter	Newspaper	SMH
Can Scott Morrison seize this watshed moment for climate policy?	18-1-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Climate strike is a call for urgent action	21-9-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Coal comfort for political climate: Albanese; Exclusive	9-12-2019	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Coalition must follow Labor on net zero by 2050	25-2-2020	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Coalition rethinks climate targets; Exclusive	Emissions	10-2-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Crying out for leadership, we got excuses	14-12-2019	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
Day of Reckoning	22-12-2019	Rachel Clun and Dana McCauley	Newspaper	SMH
Don't be a climate-wars sacrifice, PM	24-1-2020	Tony Wood	Newspaper	SMH
Fire group takes EPA to court over climate	20-4-2020	Peter Hannam	Newspaper	SMH

Hollow the leader with a mountain to climb	1-2-2020	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
Labor pledges zero emission target by 2050; climate policy	21-2-2020	Anthony Galloway	Newspaper	SMH
Lib hopeful opens byelection drive with pledge on climate	25-5-2020	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Liberals spea out to back Science Minister on climate change action	15-1-2020	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Morrison insists cabinet united over climate policy as aid groups issue plea	20-1-2020	Rob Harris, Anthony Galloway	Newspaper	SMH
Morrison urges calm as blame game escalates	13-11-2019	David Crowe, Max Koslowski	Newspaper	SMH
Morrison's big failure is his lack of leadership on climate change	20-12-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Nation's energy security 'at risk'; Exclusive | 'Port Arthur Moment'	14-1-2020	Fergus Hunter, Dominic Powell, Simon Johanson	Newspaper	SMH
Pall of smoke a grim reminder of climate risks	23-11-2019	The Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Pink Test played in shadow of tragedy: PM	2-1-2020	Nick O'Malley	Newspaper	SMH
PM slaps down Kean on cabinet comment; Climate policy	21-1-2020	Lisa Visentin	Newspaper	SMH
PM's miracle could go up in smoke	30-12-2019	Tony Walker	Newspaper	SMH
Politics adapt to a new climate	14-2-2020	Waleed Aly	Newspaper	SMH
Smoke and jitters	18-1-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Stop being a drag, it's money in the bag, says Garnaut	18-1-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
The world watches as Australia burns	4-1-2020	Nick O'Malley	Newspaper	SMH
Treasurer keeps in his balance on climate threat	22-1-2020	Eryk Bagshaw, Shane Wright	Newspaper	SMH
Trunk Call	30-5-2020	David lesser	Newspaper	SMH
Turnbull warns against cutting climate corners	11-12-2019	Mike Foley, Peter Hannam	Newspaper	SMH
Victim's friends say comments are 'disgraceful'	13-11-2019	Tom Rabe, Max Koslowski, Michael Koziol	Newspaper	SMH
We haven't seen the end of Joyce yet	5-2-2020	Jacqueline Maley	Newspaper	SMH
Young Libs break ranks on climate; Exclusive	2-1-2020	Alexandra Smith	Newspaper	SMH
Scott Morrison acknowledges smoke haze concerns as he stands by climate policies	12-12-2019	Brett Worthington	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison says he accepts criticism for Hawaii holiday during bushfires, apologises for any upset caused	22-12-2019	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison to take proposal for bushfire Royal Commission to cabinet	12-1-2021	Matthew Doran	Newspaper	ABC News

Cabinet minister warns climate deniers are robbing Australia of time responding to its impacts	15-1-2020	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC news
Scott Morrison says he shouldn't have gone to Hawaii, and other moments from the David Speers interview on the fires	12-1-2020	Lucia Stein	Newspaper	ABC news
Top academics write to Morrison Government asking for 'deep cuts' to Australia's greenhouse gas emissions	29-1-2020	Michael Slezak	Newspaper	ABC News
What Australians really think about climate action	5-2-2020	Annika Blau	Newspaper	ABC News
Energy policy shake-up flagged as Government looks to dump solar, wind investment	28-2-2020	Tom Major	Newspaper	ABC News
Zali Stegall wants the public to force politicians to act on climate change, Malcolm Turnbull hits out at Nationals over coal	10-2-2020	Stephanie Borys	Newspaper	ABC News
Climate change to be the focus as Scott Morrison attends Pacific Islands Forum	11-8-2019	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News
Regional mayors criticise politicians for failing to link climate change and deadly bushfires	11-11-2019	Jenya Goloubeva, Nour Haydar	Newspaper	ABC News
Australia accused of putting coal before Pacific 'family' as region calls for climate change action	16-8-2019	Erin Handley	Newspaper	ABC News
Pacific leaders, Australia agree to disagree about action on climate change	15-8-2019	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News
Liberal MPs Matt Kean and Susan Ley link bushfires to climate change	11-12-2019	Emma Elsworthy	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison uses UN speech to slam 'internal and global critics' of Australia's climate change policy	26-9-2019	James Glenday	Newspaper	ABC News
Bushfire emergency leads thousands to protest against PM and climate change policies	10-1-2020	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC News
Craig Kelly and Piers Morgan in tense Good Morning Britain exchange over bushfires and climate change	7-1-2020	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
NSW strikes 'landmark' energy deal with Federal Government, Greens MP calls it 'climate criminality'	31-1-2020	Emma Elsworthy	Newspaper	ABC News
Nationals leader Michael McCormack says he accepts more action needed on climate change	21-12-2019	Nour Haydar	Newspaper	ABC News
Royal Commission into bushfire crisis to examine climate change, harmonised approach to hazard reduction	6-2-2020	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Barnaby Joyce NSW bushfire victims 'most likely' voted for the Greens	12-11-2019	Brett Worthington	Newspaper	ABC News

Scott Morrison returns home to face bushfire crisis after cutting holiday short	21-12-2019	Nour Haydar	Newspaper	ABC News
Australia can have zero emissions and still profit from minerals, says Ross Garnaut	13-1-2020	Patrick Wood	Newspaper	ABC News
Malcolm Turnbull attacks Scott Morrison's handling of the bushfire crisis as 'not how a prime minister should act'	23-1-2020	Matthew Doran	Newspaper	ABC News
Morrison told 'he should be ashamed of himself' as he visits bushfire-ravaged Cobargo	2-1-2020	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC News
Adam Bandt defends 'arsonists' comment by Greens Colleague Jordan Steele-John	17-11-2019	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Coming back from holidays? Here's what you need to know about the Australian bushfires	5-1-2020	Bridget Judd	Newspaper	ABC News
Prime Minister Scott Morrison got bushfire 'welcome he deserved' in Cobargo, says Andrew Constance	3-1-2020	Kevin Nguyen, Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison criticised for running 'absolutely obscene' political ads during bushfires	5-1-2020	Alan Weedon	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison says he won't be distracted after being abused, snubbed by bushfire survivors	3-1-2020	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News

Table 15. Data documents during the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
Boost for bushfire recovery	11-5-2020	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Bushfire Relief and Recovery	4-1-2020	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Bushfire response	4-1-2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Bushfires have tested us but Australia will prevail	23-12-2019	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
House of Representatives Official Hansard	4-7-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	23-7-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	1-8-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	17-9-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	14-10-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	25-11-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	2-12-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	5-12-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	4-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	5-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	6-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	12-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	24-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	3-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of Representatives Official Hansard	8-3-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Increased Aerial Support for Australia During Bushfire Season	13-5-2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
National Royal Commission into Black Summer bushfires established	20-2-2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Senate Official Hansard	23-7-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	9-9-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament

Senate Official Hansard	10-9-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	17-10-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	11-11-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	12-11-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	2-12-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	5-12-2019	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	4-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	5-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate Official Hansard	13-2-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Summer of Crisis	2020	Climate Council	Document	Climate Council
The bushfires in Australia and housing	2020	Alan Morris	Document	Housing Finance International

Table 16. Data Newspapers after the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
ABC and Guardian Lobby for failed rich former PMs over jobs for workers	16-11-2020	Chris Mitchell	Newspaper	The Australian
Albanese's Emissions Olive Branch Comes with Prickles	30-6-2020	Judith Sloan	Newspaper	The Australian
Albo's Emission Impossible	14-11-2020	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
BoJo and ScoMo sing from different songbooks	29-10-2020	Alice Workman	Newspaper	The Australian
Bushfires: we know what to do, so let's just do it	29-8-2020	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Carbon target overshadows action	11-12-2020	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate disasters need more funds	4-8-2020	Olivia Caisley	Newspaper	The Australian
Climate snub ALP on the attack	14-12-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Do we need homes among the gum trees?	11-11-2020	Michael Buxton	Newspaper	The Australian
Eden-Monaro Swing Shows PM is Securing the Centre	6-7-2020	Nick Cater	Newspaper	The Australian
Fire chiefs press PM for action on climate change	30-7-2020	Olivia Caisley	Newspaper	The Australian
Focus on targets out of step: MP	26-11-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Forget climate, coal is still king in mining seats	27-11-2020	Geoff Chambers, Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
How we can get to net zero emissions by 2050	28-11-2020	Alan Kohler	Newspaper	The Australian
If politics were fair, Albanese would be flying high	12-12-2020	Peter van Onselen	Newspaper	The Australian
In flooding rains it's time to tackle bushfire threats	10-8-2020	The Australian	Newspaper	The Australian
Labor Left weighs up plan for 'drastic' climate policy	21-8-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Labor puts carbon targets on agenda	15-12-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Labor's Right demands pro-gas	9-11-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Lib says Fitzgibbon a climate ally in 'sensible centre' against ideologues	14-12-2020	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
More disasters inevitable: prepare now	31-10-2020	Olivia Caisley	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison takes hits from pundits, left and right, but he's cooking with gas	28-9-2020	Chris Mitchell	Newspaper	The Australian
Morrison works to strengthen ties	9-11-2020	Geoff Chambers	Newspaper	The Australian

Nation switches on to carbon capture	4-12-2020	Rosanne Barrett	Newspaper	The Australian
Nothing to fear but climate fearmongers	11-6-2020	Chris Kenny	Newspaper	The Australian
Old King Coalition Stepping on the gas	19-9-2020	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
PM charting right course on carbon sans Kyoto treaty	10-12-2020	Simon Benson	Newspaper	The Australian
PM has path to net zero, now he needs the target	16-12-2020	Paul Kelly	Newspaper	The Australian
PM Pledges 'practical' emission cuts as Albanese attacks	24-11-2020	Richard Ferguson	Newspaper	The Australian
PM to control crisis response	31-10-2020	Olivia Caisley	Newspaper	The Australian
Politics of carbon has ended: PM	23-1-2021	Greg Brown	Newspaper	The Australian
Warning signals for Morrison	2-11-2020	Geoff Chambers	Newspaper	The Australian
Why Support this Trifecta of Fails	12-11-2020	Greg Sheridan	Newspaper	The Australian
A call to arms on greenhouse gas emissions	30-10-2020	Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Albanese struggles to find a voice as Opposition Leader	18-9-2020	Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Australia needs to hard essential goods: Pezzullo	7-8-2020	Nick O'Malley	Newspaper	SMH
Canberra told: Cut emissions or risk reputation	10-11-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Climate war' requires new set of tactics	7-7-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Cowardice: a united climate ticket	19-9-2020	Sean Kelly	Newspaper	SMH
Emissions stance begins to show diplomatic cost; Analysis	12-1-2020	Nick O'Malley	Newspaper	SMH
Ex-Howard minister urges leadership on climate	6-8-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Focus on 'cheap energy' pays off for climate policy	1-12-2020	Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Fossil fight: union savages Labor over gas; Exclusive	25-9-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Gas not way forward for nation: Labor	24-9-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Government to fund gas and carbon storage	7-9-2020	Nick O' Malley, Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Grain growers press ahead with own emissions targets; Exclusive	2-10-2020	Mike Foley, Eryk Bagshaw	Newspaper	SMH
Is climaye change being taken seriously? Follow the money	19-12-2020	Nick O'Malley, Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Labor dived in crisis of identity	15-11-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH

Labor MPs Round on Joel Fitzgibbon as climate spat turns nasty	12-11-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Labor pushes 'bedrock' clean energy stance	25-11-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Labor´s climate policy: an olive branch or white feather?	27-6-2020	Nick O'Malley, Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Libs outsiders but confident of poll boil over	1-7-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
Methew.Collins; Exclusive	20-8-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
Morrison needs a Trump victory	8-9-2020	Kevin Rudd	Newspaper	SMH
Morrison's pandemic response: exceptional. Shame about climate change	12-12-2020	Jacqueline Maley	Newspaper	SMH
Nation must plan to battle climate fuelled catastrophes; Royal Commission findings	31-10-2020	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
PM centuries behind Biden on emissions; Net zero Target	13-11-2020	Mike Foley	Newspaper	SMH
PM says world should focus on environment	24-11-2020	Anthony Galloway	Newspaper	SMH
Reset is needed on constipated climate debate	31-10-2020	Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
Shifting powers	1-8-2020	Peter Hannam	Newspaper	SMH
Taylor's gas plan deepens policy uncertainty	19-9-2020	Sydney Morning Herald	Newspaper	SMH
The ascent of Trump's mini-me	1-8-2020	Peter Hartcher	Newspaper	SMH
The final climate straw for Fitzgibbon	11-11-2020	Rob Harris	Newspaper	SMH
The threats surrounding Albanese	4-12-2020	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
Turbulence ahead	30-1-2021	David Crowe	Newspaper	SMH
What climate wars? The Coalition's ship is changing track	16-11-2020	Patrick Suckling	Newspaper	SMH
Adam Brandt says gas is just as dirty as coal. Is he correct?	3-11-2020	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC News
Anthony Albanese says emissions fell just 1 per cent under the Coalition, compared with 15 per cent under Labor. Is he correct?	1-12-2020	RMIT ABC Fact Check	Newspaper	ABC News
Anthony Albanese urges Scott Morrison and Coalition to work with Labor on energy policy	24-6-2020	Jade MacMillan	Newspaper	ABC News
ANZ's climate policy reveals steps away from coal to support net zero emission by 2050	29-10-2020	Rachel Clayton	Newspaper	ABC News
Australia will lose more than $3 trillion and 880.00 jobs over 50 years if climate change is not addresses, Deloitte says	1-11-2020	Kathleen Calderwood	Newspaper	ABC News
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson tells Scott Morrison it's time for 'bold action' on climate change	28-10-2020	Jack Snape	Newspaper	ABC News

Climate change is wreaking havoc on Australians' health. What's our plan to fix things?	5-12-2020	Catherine Taylor, Bridget Judd	Newspaper	ABC News
Energy Minister Agnus Taylor to reveal Australia´s new 'roadmap' to reducing carbon emissions	21-9-2020	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News
Failure to tackle health impacts of climate change putting lives at risk, major report warns	3-12-2020	Olivia Willis	Newspaper	ABC News
Federal Budget 2020: Winners and losers	6-10-2020	Georgia Hitch	Newspaper	ABC News
Federal Government responds to bushfire Royal Commission, will create national state of emergency	13-11-2020	Anna Handerson, Georgia Hitch	Newspaper	ABC News
Federal Government threatens to build gas plant if electricity sector doesn't replace retiring coal-fired power stations	15-9-2020	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News
Government to announce $61m environment and heritage package in Federal budget	30-9-2020	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC News
Heat is the 'silent killer' of Australia's bushfire season and experts say climate change is the root cause	7-12-2020	Alison Branley, Sophie Scott	Newspaper	ABC News
Joe Biden's election as US president will not change Australian climate policy, Scott Morrison says	9-11-2020	Georgia Hitch	Newspaper	ABC News
Labor set for climate change shift as architect of emissions target Mark Butler is moved on	28-1-2021	Jack Snape	Newspaper	ABC News
Malcolm Turbull says Government's energy plans are 'crazy' and 'a fantasy'	22-9-2020	Stephanie Dalzell, Matthew Doran	Newspaper	ABC News
Mark Butler says if asked, he would move from climate change portfolio to end Labor infighting	13-11-2020	Matthew Doran	Newspaper	ABC News
Mike Cannon-Brookes ready to take on PM's energy challenge - without a gas-fired plant	16-9-2020	Lexi Metherell, Scott Mitchell	Newspaper	ABC News
Net zero emissions by 2050 push is on, whether the Federal Government follows or not	2-7-2020	Rachel Pupazzoni	Newspaper	ABC News
New focus on climate change adaptation but no sign of 2050 emissions commitment	25-1-2021	Jack Snape	Newspaper	ABC News
NSW urges climate action as bushfire Royal Commission's recommendations tabled	31-10-2020	ABC News	Newspaper	ABC News
Q+A sees Australia's gas energy future questioned, Matt Canavan defends call to leave Paris Climate Accord	2-7-2020	Paul Johnson	Newspaper	ABC News
Renewables culd power most of Australia by 2040, Australian Enrgy Market Operator plan shows	30-6-2020	Anna Handerson	Newspaper	ABC News
Researchers question soil carbon - a key plank of the new Technology Investment Roadmap	25-9-2020	Lucy Thackray, David Claughton	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison flags shfit on Kyoto climate change carry-over credits	20-11-2020	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News

Scott Morrison outlines details of Government's Jobmaker plan, including fast-tracking infrastructure projects	14-6-2020	Georgia Hitch, Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison refuses to commit to net zero carbon emissions by 2050	20-9-2020	Stephanie Dalzell	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison steps back from use of Kyoto climate change carry-over credits at Pacific climate summit	11-12-2020	Prianka Srinivasan	Newspaper	ABC News
Scott Morrison to be pressured by Pacific leaders at climate change summit led by United Nations	11-12-2020	Melissa Clarke	Newspaper	ABC News
Some of Australia's biggest coal buyers are pledging to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050	29-10-2020	Dan Conifer, Michael Vincent	Newspaper	ABC News
With Australian bushfires seasons set to 'overwhelm', experts recommend strategies go beyond just preventing and putting out blazes	2-8-2020	Elly Duncan	Newspaper	ABC News

Table 17. Data documents after the bushfires.

Title	Publication date	Author	Data type	Source
Budget 2020	2020	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Budget 2020: The Nationals in Government Deliver for Regional Australia	2020	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Budget 2020-21 - Backing Our Farmers, Supporting Disaster Recovery and Protecting Australians	2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Budget Speech 2020-21	2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
House of representatives Official Hansard	15-6-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	16-6-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	25-8-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	24-8-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	27-8-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	1-9-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	8-10-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	29-10-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	9-11-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	11-11-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	30-11-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	9-12-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
House of representatives Official Hansard	19-10-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Labor's Electric Car Discount	2020	Labor	Document	Labor
Lower power Prices	2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Passing Gas: Why renewables are the future	2020	Climate Council	Document	Climate Council
Power to the People: Community Batteries for Household Solar	2020	Labor	Document	Labor
Protecting our environment	2020	Liberal	Document	Coalition (Liberal)
Protecting our local way of life for future generations	2020	Nationals	Document	Coalition (Nationals)
Rewiring the nation	2020	Labor	Document	Labor

| Senate official Hansard	17-6-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	2-9-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	7-10-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	2-12-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	9-12-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	10-12-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Senate official Hansard	11-11-2020	Australian Parliament	Document	Australian Parliament
Special Platform conference 2021	2021	Labor	Document	Labor
Swimming Against the current: Australian climate institutions and the politics of polarisation	2021	Robert MacNeil	Document	Environmental Politics

Annex B: Codes

In this annex, a summary is given of the coding strategy is shown, a coding tree in Figure 4, the definitions of the codes within the coding book are shown in Table 18 and examples of how data is coded in Table 19.

For this research, the first step after collecting all the data is to apply *attribute coding* and *holistic coding* in Excel to get an overview. For *attributive coding*, each document and newspaper get descriptive attributes such as the title of the data, publication of the data and type of data. Furthermore, *holistic coding* gets applied to all the data sources to categorise them in data prior to the bushfires, data during the bushfires, and data after the bushfires. By rearranging the data in their category, gives a clear overview of the data and compares them when coding.

The second step involves coding all the data (*first-cycle of coding*). All the data gets read thoroughly on sentences and statements regarding climate policy or the bushfires. A sentence or statement gets a *descriptive code* if it describes action regarding climate change, e.g., a sentence gets the code "*climate policy*" if it describes a specific climate action taken by a character. A sentence or statement gets a *value code* if it validates the perspective of discourse, e.g., a sentence gets the code "*Attitude: climate change is a myth*" if the character states that climate change is not real. Finally, a sentence or statement gets a *versus* code if it identifies a conflict, e.g., a sentence gets the code *"Labor VS Coalition"* if actors from Labor state something about the Coalition regarding climate policy.

The final step involves *identifying patterns and trends* across the three time periods (*Second-cycle of coding*). By looking back at the categorisation of the data and the codes allows to determine a pattern of the discourses, e.g., scrutinising the primary code "*climate denialism worldview*" by looking at returning phrases and its actions within the plot and its solution in the moral of the story allowed to uncover the climate denialism discourse. Moreover, analysing the uncovered discourses of the three time periods and comparing them allowed us to identify paradigm shifts and understand a possible change of policy discourse on climate mitigation action.
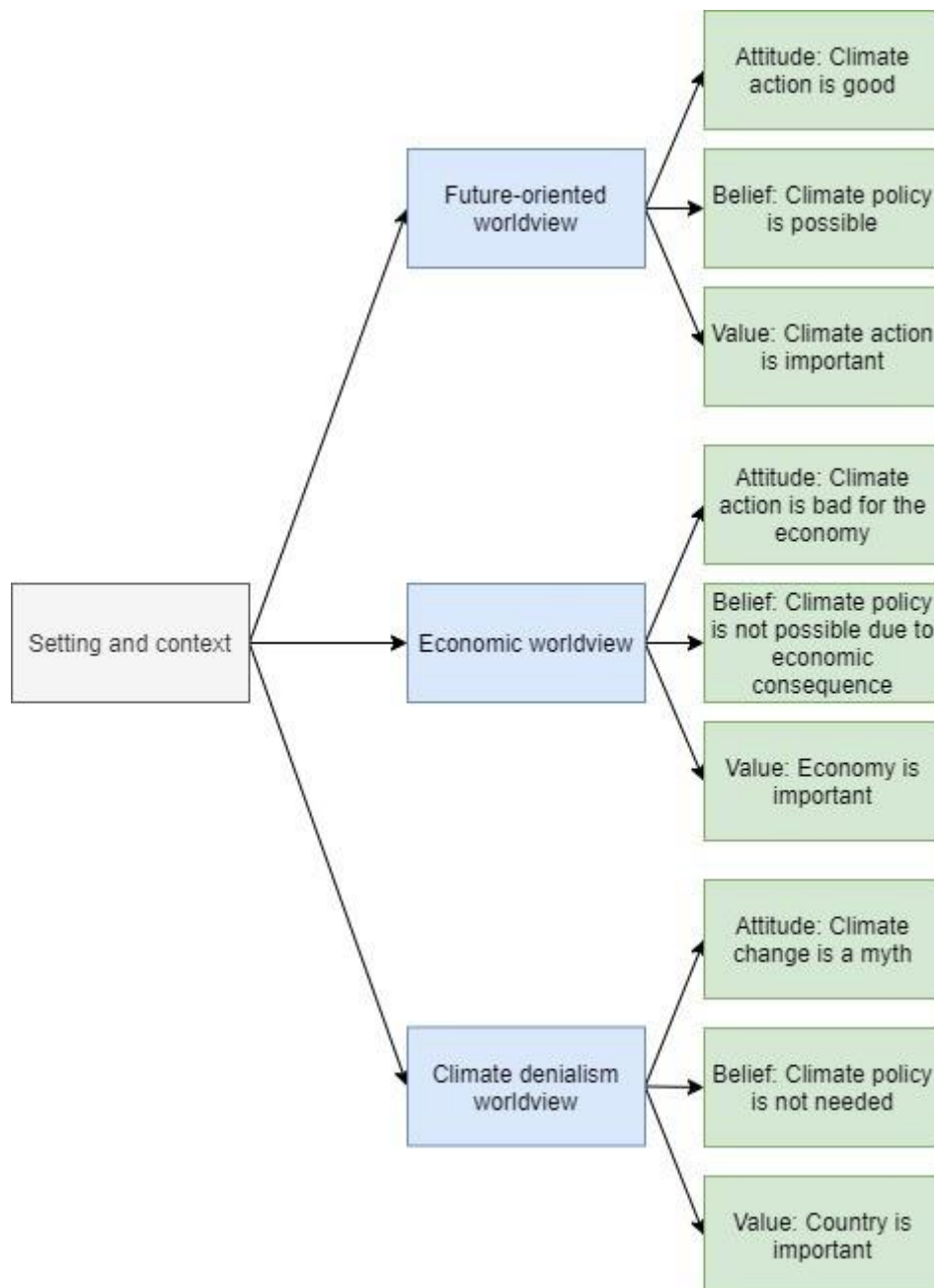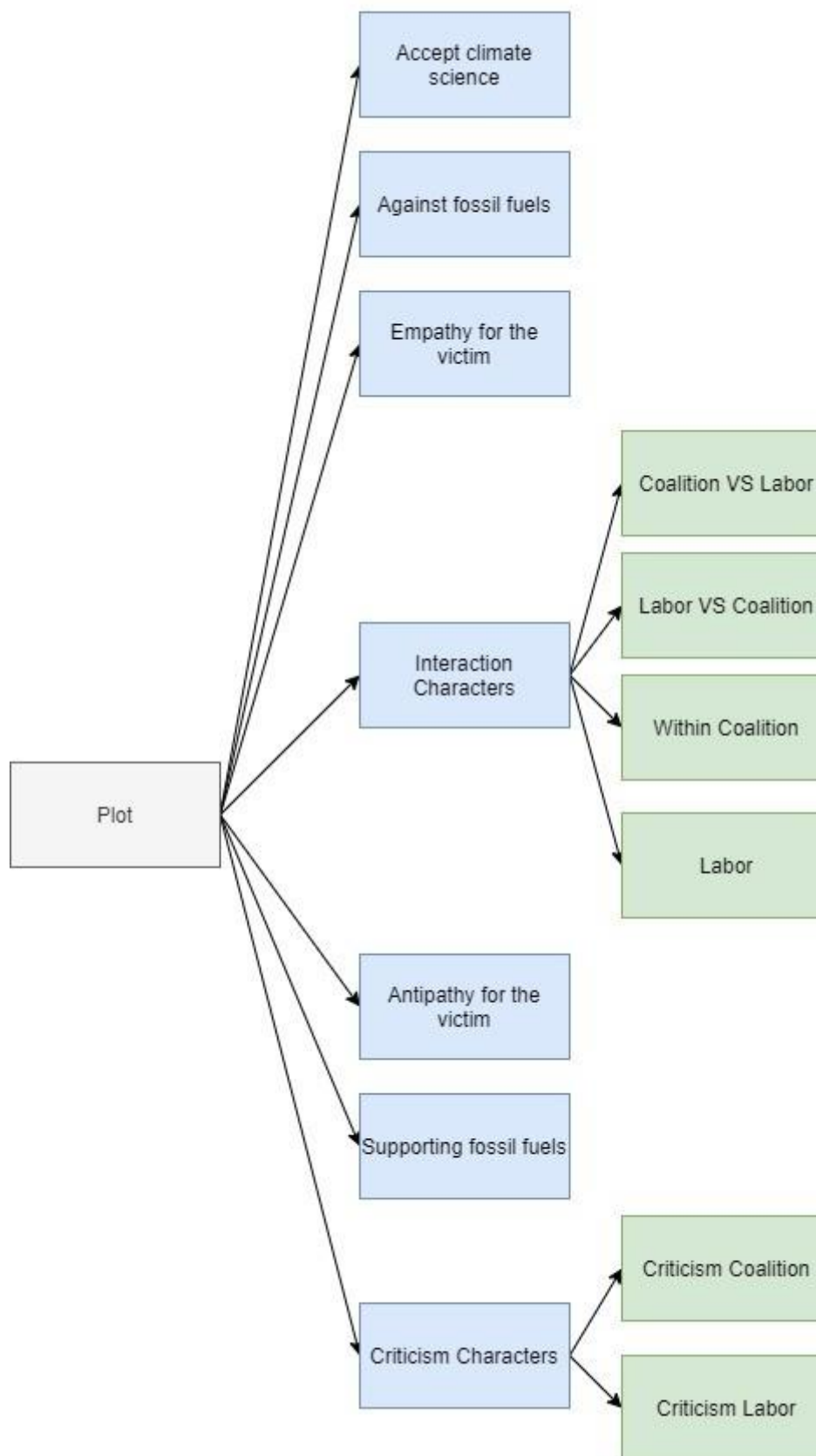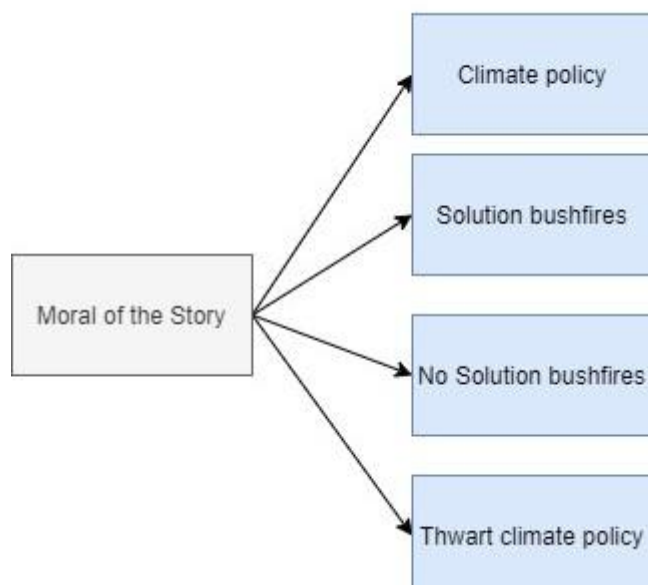
Figure 4 Coding Tree

Table 18. Description codes.

Code	Description
Future-oriented worldview	Refers to characters that are more future/oriented because they worry about the consequences of human/induced climate change, such as future victims
Economic worldview	Refers to characters that prioritise a neo-Liberal economy and act protective towards the economy
Climate denialism worldview	Refers to characters that deny human-induced climate change and think in an isolation bubble
Accept climate science	Refers to characters that accept the reality of climate science and recognise the linkage between climate change and the bushfires
Against fossil fuels	Refers to characters that are against fossil fuels because it is a cause of climate change and results in climate disasters
Empathy for the victim	Refers to characters that have emphatic for the victim as a consequence of the complication and stand up for the victim in solving the complication
Interaction Characters	Refers on how different characters interact with each other and what the characters state about each other
Antipathy for the victim	Refers to characters that have antipathy for the victim and do not stand up for the victim as a result of the complication
Supporting fossil fuels	Refers to characters that support fossil fuels since it is a significant part of the economy and receive support from the fossil fuel industry
Criticism Characters	Refers on criticism on the statement made by characters and whether the statements made by the characters are true

Climate policy	Refers to how characters frame and transform climate policy to mitigate the effects of anthropocentric climate change
Solution bushfires	Refers to the reaction of the complication (bushfires) by the characters and how the characters frame ideas to prevent future bushfires
No Solution bushfires	Refers to the reaction on the complication (bushfires) by the characters and why the characters do not want to prevent future bushfires
Thwart climate policy	Refers to characters that prevent any change in climate policy

Table 19. Example coding text.

Scott Morrison to take proposal for bushfire royal commission to Cabinet

ABC Premium News (Australia)

January 12, 2020 Sunday 8:52 AM AEST

ABC

Length: 652 words

Byline: By political reporter Matthew Doran

Body

Prime Minister Scott Morrison says he will take a proposal to establish a royal commission into the **bushfire** disaster to Cabinet, while foreshadowing for the first time a potential change to the Coalition's **climate policy**.

More than 20 people have died and more than 2,000 homes have been destroyed by fires across much of the country.

Concerns have been raised about the preparedness of states and territories to deal with the threat of **bushfires**, and whether the Commonwealth was too slow to act in ways such as offering the support of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

"I think that is what would be necessary, and I will be taking a proposal through Cabinet to that end," the Prime Minister told Insiders host David Speers.

"But it must be done in consultation with the states and territories."

Mr Morrison said there would also need to be discussion about greater flexibility for the Federal Government to step in and assist states during times of disaster, _as highlighted by the call out of ADF reservists_.

"This has created, I think, an environment where the people for the first time, I think arguably, have wanted to see a more direct involvement of the Federal Government in responding to these national disasters," he said.

The Prime Minister noted the current crisis had "pushed the constitutional authorities" for the Commonwealth to act "to its very edge".

"This should be one of the important steps going forward," Mr Morrison said.

"This is the first time where I think the Federal Government has ever been in a position where we had to take this action.

Coding Density · Criticism Coalition · Labor · Labor VS Coalition · Climate policy · Coalition · Solution bushfires

"And to ensure that in the future it can be done in a way that is more pre-emptive posturing, that we can do that, I think, more seamlessly."

The Federal Opposition welcomed the discussion of an inquiry, but warned it should not it absolve the Coalition from responsibility for its actions now.

"What we don't want is to hear, in coming weeks and months, is, 'I can't answer that, because it's being dealt with by the royal commission,'" Labor leader Anthony Albanese said.

"So, we want scrutiny of the Government's performance, and the inadequacies, and the need to act now."

Potential shift in _climate policy_ after _bushfire_ emergency

Mr Morrison was pressed on whether the _bushfire_ crisis would prompt a rethink of the Coalition's _climate policies_, and specifically whether the Government would increase its 2030 emissions reduction target.

The current policy involves Australia cutting carbon emissions by 26 to 28 per cent below 2005 levels by the year 2030.

"The Cabinet and the Government will continue to evolve our policies to meet our targets and to beat them," he answered.

"We want to reduceÂ emissions and do the best job weÂ possibly can and get better andÂ better and better at it.

"I want to doÂ that with a balanced policy whichÂ recognises Australia's broaderÂ national economic interests andÂ social interest."

Australia has _faced criticism from other countries for using so-called "carry-over credits"_, or counting emission reduction that went beyond the previous Kyoto climate deal, in meeting the targets under the Paris climate pact.

"It's not a matter of tweaking [_climate policy_], there's a need for them to get one," Mr Albanese said of Mr Morrison's comments.

"At the moment what they have is an accounting policy of having accounting tricks, rather than actually reducing emissions."

The Prime Minister also noted there were some moments during his response to the fires which could have been handled better, including visits alongside his wife to fire-ravaged communities, _where he was heckled by locals._

"Prime ministers are flesh and blood too, in how they engage with people," Mr Morrison said.

"When I went into these places, I went there in good faith, and with Jenny on occasions, to provide what comfort and consolation I could.

"They're very strained environments and I think we need to think a little harder about how we do those."

Coding Density

Solution bushfires

Coalition

Labor VS Coalition

Labor

Climate policy

Criticism Coalition