

A Bewildering Message

*A case study of the political influence on the climate change narrative
within BBC nature documentaries*



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Abstract

This master thesis focussed on the correlation between the narrative on climate change within British diplomacy and BBC programming, based on the research question: ‘to what extent has the narrative on climate change within BBC programming been part of British nation branding since the 1997 Kyoto protocol until 2021?’ This research has firstly analysed the current academic literature pertaining the role of climate change within British diplomacy. The findings of previous research were subsequently complimented with an analysis of speeches by representatives of the United Kingdom at the General Assembly of the United Nations. The conclusions regarding this analysis were that climate change steadily became a more important part of British diplomacy, whenever there were no other major crises. Secondly, this master thesis analysed the changing narrative on climate change within nature documentaries of the NHU, as part of BBC programming. This resulted in the conclusion that both climate change specifically and the impact of humans on the environment in general steadily became a more prevalent part of the NHU documentaries over time. When both analyses are compared, the narrative in British climate diplomacy generally matches the narrative within the NHU documentaries. Besides, the correlation between the narrative on climate change within British foreign policy and the NHU documentaries matches the link between British politics and the BBC governance structure. In contrast, the continuity within the production teams of the different nature documentaries does not match their changing narrative, making this factor seem less relevant to its narrative. This implies that the answer to the research question is that BBC programming is part of British nation branding. The existence of the BBC’s missions “representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities” and “bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK” since 2007 explicitly support this conclusion.

Abbreviations

UK: United Kingdom

US: United States

UN: United Nations

COP: Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

BBC: British Broadcasting Company

NHU: National History Unit of the BBC

Introduction

“We must rethink the future of our environment and tackle climate change and environmental degradation with ambition and urgency. Only then can we protect the health, livelihoods, food security and nutrition of all people.”¹

This quote of the British diplomat Tom Woodroffe at the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in 2020 shows how the environment, and specifically the impact of climate change on the environment, has become a major topic in international politics. Since the ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1994, twenty-six climate change conferences (COP's) have been organized. This has led to international treaties on climate change, such as the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the Paris Agreement in 2015.

The increased importance of climate change within international diplomacy enables states, like the United Kingdom (UK) in the quote above, to appropriate tackling this issue as part of their reputation. The reputation and aspirations of a country with regard to the environment could then be used as a way to build up goodwill with other states. *Nation branding*, as this is called within the current academic debate, could therefore improve the British soft power within international diplomacy.²

This appropriation of a certain topic as part of a national identity is not necessarily limited to international politics. States can also try to represent, for instance, sustainability as part of the image of their country to the international public as a whole. Media play an essential role in nation branding aimed at a general public.³ However, the way politics, media and the public interact are still up to scientific debate. Which of these three have the biggest impact on what topics are prevalent in the political debate? How does one influence the other? And what are the differences in interaction between politics, media and the public in different states and contexts?

The complicated interaction between (inter)national politics and media is embodied in the UK's British Broadcasting Company (BBC). As a public broadcaster, the BBC is largely dependent on state contribution. Besides, the consecutive governing bodies of the BBC have

¹ Woodroffe, Tom; Summary record of the 7th meeting: 2nd Committee, held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 25 November 2020, General Assembly, 75th session; p. 3.

² Dinnie, K. (2011). *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Butterworth-Heinemann.

³ Bolin, G., & Stahlberg, P. (2015). Mediating the Nation-State: Agency and the Media in Nation-Branding Campaigns. *International Journal of Communication*, 9, pp. 3065–3083.

always been directly or indirectly appointed by the UK government.⁴ This has led to academic discussions on the extent to which the BBC programming is influenced by British politics. This master thesis will try to expand on the existing historiography on this topic.

More specifically, this research will analyse nature documentaries produced by the Natural History Unit (NHU) of the BBC. These documentary series are of interest to this research for two reasons. Firstly, they focus on nature, which is mayorly impacted by climate change. Secondly, the NHU documentaries are not solely for a domestic public but are aimed at an international audience. Therefore, these documentary series are a perfect case to study the interaction between media and politics, when analysing the emergence of the narrative on climate change on the international level.

This leads to a couple of questions: to what extent is BBC broadcasting influenced by British politics; has the message in these documentaries with regard to climate change changed since the Kyoto protocol, one of the major international treaties on the topic, in 1997; and does this message fit the narrative of the UK government? This master thesis will try to contribute to answering these questions by analysing the influence of politics on media with regard to climate change, using the UK as a case-study. Understanding the interaction between politics and media is key to understanding past and future developments within political and public discourse, making this research both academically and socially relevant.

Research Question, sub questions and structure

This master thesis will be based on the following research question:

'To what extent has the narrative on climate change within BBC programming been part of British nation branding since the 1997 Kyoto protocol until 2021.'

To answer the research question, this thesis will start by describing the historiography on the interaction between politics and media, the concept nation branding, and the influence of British politics on the BBC. This first chapter will include a discussion on the key analytical concepts and the methodology used in this master thesis. Based on the current academic debate, multiple hypotheses are formulated to predict the extent to which the narrative within

⁴ McNair, B. (2003). *News and Journalism in the UK*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge; Barr, T. (2016). The BBC Charter Review. *Journal of Telecommunications and the Digital Economy*, 4(1), 54–64; Gibbons, T. (2017). Restraining the BBC: the 2016 Charter settlement. *Journal of Media Law*, 9(1), 28–44.

BBC programming fits the climate diplomacy of the UK, and can therefore be seen as part of the British nation branding.

The second chapter will focus on the first sub question of this master thesis: ‘How has the narrative on climate change developed in British diplomacy since 1997?’ This question will be answered by an analysis of both secondary and primary literature. Firstly, chapter two will discuss the previous academic findings on British climate diplomacy. Secondly, the narrative on climate change within the British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations will be analysed to add to the existing knowledge on this topic.

In chapter three, the last two sub questions will be answered by looking at the case of NHU documentaries as part of BBC programming. Firstly, a representative sample of NHU documentary series will be analysed using the same methodology as used in the analysis of the British speeches in chapter two. This will provide an answer to the following sub question: ‘how has the narrative on climate change developed within NHU documentaries between 1997 and 2021?’ Based on both analyses, the third chapter will also try to answer the last sub question: ‘To what extent does this narrative fit the narrative that the UK government propagates within its international climate diplomacy during this period?’ Lastly, the conclusion will discuss how these results relate to the research question and hypotheses of this master thesis.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework and Historiography

Key Analytical Concepts

The main topic of this research is climate change. Without going into the elaborate academic discussions on what contributes to climate change and what are its present and future effects, it is necessary to begin this chapter with clarifying how the term is used in this master thesis. Based on the Oxford English Dictionary this research sees *climate change* as “the change in global climate patterns increasingly apparent from the mid to the late 20th century onwards and linked largely with increased emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases caused by human activity.”⁵ Key elements in this terminology are therefore 'changes in the global climate', including temperatures and weather patterns, 'emissions and greenhouse gasses' that contribute to these changes, and the role of 'human activity' causing the changes.

To ensure a more holistic analysis, this thesis will also look into the human impact on *the environment* in general. This research uses the concept solely as a synonym of ‘the natural world’ and thus specifically ‘the natural environment’. This is still a broad concept, but using such a term ensures that the analysis in this master thesis can cover both the human impact on specifically climate change and its impact on the natural environment in general.⁶ Therefore, when the term climate change is used within this research it concerns a specific part of how humanity impacts nature. In contrast, when changes to the environment are described, this covers other ways humans affect the natural world. In the methodological part of this chapter, a more extensive description of how these concepts are used in the analysis will be provided. Note, however, that this only covers these terms as used in writing this master thesis. When one of both terms is used in citations the meaning could be slightly different.

Besides these terminological clarifications, this research is based on the academic concept of *nation branding*. This concept is part of the broader scholarly debate on the role of a country’s image in international diplomacy.⁷ Alexander Buhmann, who has written extensively on the topic, defines this area of research as: “the subjective attitudes towards a country among foreign publics.”⁸ A positive country image can contribute to a state’s soft power and has become increasingly important over the past few decades, according to

⁵ Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.). *Climate*. Retrieved, 22 April 2022.

⁶ Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.). *Environment*. Retrieved, 22 April 2022.

⁷ See for instance: Roth, K. P., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2009). Advancing the country image construct. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(7), 726–740; Stock, F. (2009). Identity, image and brand: A conceptual framework. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 5(2), 118–125; Buhmann, A. (2016). Introduction. In: *Measuring Country Image*. Springer Publishing.

⁸ Buhmann, A. (2016). Introduction. In: *Measuring Country Image*. Springer Publishing, p. 38.

Buhmann. Most scholars point to globalisation and mediatization as the main causes for this increased importance. Mediatization, the growing influence of mass media on society, has caused more publicity of the foreign affairs of states. Globalisation, on the other hand, has increased the interconnectedness of economies and cultures.⁹ These factors cause countries with a positive image to potentially increase their diplomatic position internationally, therefore contributing to their soft power. For instance, a company or a state would prefer to have economic ties to a state that has a good reputation on labour rights, that a country that is publicly associated with forced labour.

Within this broader area of research, there has been some discussion on what nation branding entails.¹⁰ This research, however, will follow most recent academic publications and sees nation branding as the use of corporate branding techniques to improve the image of a country. This includes creating certain symbols or slogans to represent the country, but also using media to reach an international audience.¹¹ Most researchers argue that all activities related to creating a certain image as a country are part of nation branding. This does not necessarily have to be a fully coordinated process, but could also rely on indirect transmission of a country's image.¹² Examples of the images created by nation branding are how 'the Land of the Free' is part of the image of the United States, or how the polders and 'fighting the sea' are often associated with the Dutch. Note that nation branding can concern both clearly defined symbols, as well as concepts or attitudes that people associate with a country. When looking at the example of Dutch nation branding the polders are a clear symbolic concept, while 'fighting the sea' is more of an attitude associated to the Dutch. Similarly, emphasizing the efforts a country has made in tackling climate change could improve that country's image. In fact, some research has already been done in this area.¹³ However, little to no attention has been paid within the scholarly debate to British nation branding in general, nor the role of climate change within British image building specifically. This research will therefore analyse whether the United Kingdom has, over the past twenty-five years, tried to make tackling climate change central to its image and therefore part of its nation branding.

⁹ Buhmann, A. (2016). Introduction. In: *Measuring Country Image*. Springer Publishing, pp. 17-19; Stock, F. (2009), "Identity, image and brand: a conceptual framework", *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 118-125.

¹⁰ Gudjonsson, H. (2005). Nation branding. *Place Branding*, 1(3), 283-298.

¹¹ Dinnie, K. (2011). *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Butterworth-Heinemann; Fan, Y. (2006). Branding the nation: What is being branded? *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(1), 5-14.

¹² Melewar, T.C., Nguyen, B. & Abimbola, T. (2013), Corporate branding, identity, image and reputation; Fan, Y. (2006). Branding the nation: What is being branded? *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(1), 5-14.

¹³ For a case study on Chinese climate diplomacy, see: Kopra, S. (2012). Is China a Responsible Developing Country? Climate Change Diplomacy and National Image Building. *Global Asia Journal* 13, 1-28.

Introduction to Media and Politics

The topic of nation branding touches upon another elaborate academic debate: the interaction between media and politics. Gadi Wolfsfeld introduces this field in his book *Making Sense of Media and Politics* with the following quote:

“The news media are an extremely important part of almost every political contest; they provide an audience of thousands, tens of thousands, or even millions of people. [...] All political actors want to have their messages sent to as large an audience as possible in order to mobilize supporters to their cause. It is only a slight exaggeration to say that if you don’t exist in the media, you don’t exist politically.”¹⁴

On the one hand, the media influences political contests by providing information to the public about the different sides of the contest. By addressing certain contests and leaving others out, or by focussing on specific perspectives within a political contest, the media are able to influence which messages get more attention and become part of political debate. On the other hand, politicians and political systems influence the media by providing information, by regulation and even by funding. This influence can go from small scale influence, such as politicians that solely keep contacts with journalists to try to ensure their message is addressed, up to media that are fully regulated and financed by politicians, political parties or governments.¹⁵

Wolfsfeld is one of the many scholars that has researched media and politics to gain insight into the dynamics between both parts of society. The topic has been studied for decades, developing along with changing media landscapes due to new technologies or changing political situations.¹⁶ Within research on media and politics a rough division can be made between studies focussed on specific media systems and comparing these systems on the one hand, and research focussing on providing generalisable conclusions that are not bound to certain systems or periods.¹⁷

¹⁴ Wolfsfeld, G. (2011). *Making Sense of Media and Politics*. New York: Routledge, p. 1)

¹⁵ Wolfsfeld (2011). *Media and Politics*.

¹⁶ See for instance: Geoffrey, C. (2004). *The Media, Politics and Public Life*. Allen & Unwin; Strömberg, D. (2015). Media and Politics. *Annual Review of Economics*, 7(1), 173–205; Oates, S. (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*. Thousand Oaks, Canada: SAGE Publications.

¹⁷ Oates, S. (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*. Thousand Oaks, Canada: SAGE Publications, pp. 1-21.

One of the first influential academic publications elaborating on the interaction between media and politics was written by Fred Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm in 1963. In their *Four Theories of the Press*, they focussed on media systems from across the world. As the title suggests, they distinguish between four different media systems: the *libertarian system*, the *social responsibility system*, the *soviet communist system*, and the *authoritarian system*. They differentiate between these systems based on three factors: the amount of influence politics has on the media system, the freedom the media have to publish, and the implicit goal the media serve culturally. In libertarian systems, for instance, the media are free to publish what they want and are able to criticize the government to ensure different perspectives, while in authoritarian systems the media are fully controlled and censored by the state to ensure the government's interests.¹⁸

Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini have since expanded upon the ideas of Siebert et al. by introducing their own three media models for the 'Western world': the *liberal system*, the *democratic corporatist system*, and the *polarized pluralist system*.¹⁹ These models further elaborate on the media systems of Europe and North America to add extra differentiation of economic, social and cultural influences within societies that Siebert et al. would consider having libertarian and social responsible media systems.²⁰ These studies on media systems have had a major influence on research about media and politics, as they offer a clear framework to study the often indirect interactions between both. This has led to the majority of studies on the topic being focused on one country or media system, especially the American, British and Russian systems. Although comparing media systems gives some information about the similarities and differences between different media systems and their assigned models, this does not lead to generalisable statements on the interaction of media and politics.

¹⁸ Siebert, F., Theodore Peterson, T. & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility, and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the Press Should Be and Do*. University of Illinois.

¹⁹ Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*. Cambridge. UK: Cambridge University Press.

²⁰ Hallin and Mancini published a follow up to their ideas in 2011, focussing on media systems outside of the West, see: Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2011). *Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World*. Cambridge University Press.

Therefore, other scholars have tried fill this hiatus in the academic literature.²¹ One of these contributions comes from the previously mentioned Wolfsfeld and his *Making Sense of Media and Politics*. In his book, Wolfsfeld describes five principles of political communication, of which two will be focused on for this master thesis: 1. political power can usually be translated into power over the news media; and 2. when authorities lose control over the political environment, they also lose control over the news. In other words, those who have power over the media usually have political power, and those who lose their political power also lose their power over the media.²² Although these principles can be used as guidelines on how media and politics interact in general, they remain somewhat vague by using unclear terms like ‘usually’ and ‘the political environment’.

This has led some researchers to combine both approaches. In her *Introduction to Media and Politics*, Sarah Oates elaborates on the difficulties when studying media and politics. She argues that the main challenge when researching the topic is to go from a descriptive study to an analytical one.²³ To be able to show

a clear influence of the one or the other and analyse why this influence is present, she introduces her *News Production Model*.²⁴ This model is based on five filters, that influence media content as it passes along these progressively narrower filters. The broadest filters that influence news according to Oates are the political environment, followed by media norms and media regulation. To analyse these filters, she uses the media systems that Siebert et al. and Hallin and Mancini have introduced. Oates does, however, argue that messages are also influenced by those who own the medium it is produced for, as well as by the personal interests of the journalist(s) who worked on the news message. Therefore, the News Production Model incorporates both the influence of media systems on news, as well as the influence of those that have power over the media and those working in this sector.

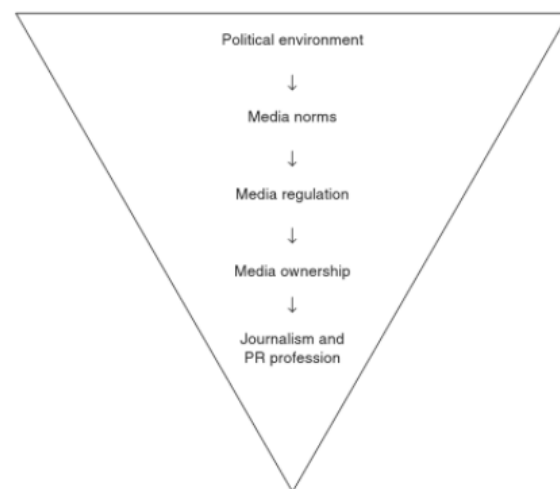


Figure 2: News Production Model

²¹ For an elaborate meta study of literature on media and politics based on quantitative and economic research, and the conclusions they present, see: Strömberg, D. (2015). Media and Politics. *Annual Review of Economics*, 7(1), 173–205.

²² Wolfsfeld (2011). *Media and Politics*, pp. 7-44.

²³ Oates (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*, pp. 1-4.

²⁴ Oates (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*, pp. 22-48.

Media and Politics in the UK

As mentioned above, the media system in the UK has been elaborately studied.²⁵ Both Siebert et al. and Hallin and Mancini discuss the media in the UK as examples of their models.²⁶

Siebert argues that the UK media system has historically been a libertarian one, in which the press has been under relatively little influence of the government. He even argues that the UK has been an example for other countries in the world that transitioned to a democracy, “as the concept of freedom of speech and press followed as an integral part of the libertarian doctrine.”²⁷ Hallin and Mancini place the media system in the UK in a similar category, within their liberal model. They argue that the UK has a liberal tradition of which the freedom of press is an inseparable part. With regard to the BBC specifically, Hallin and Mancini argue that it developed into an institution that has largely been unaffected by political forces. Instead, they argue that the BBC programming is based upon their broadcasting professionals. Although the scholars acknowledge that there are some political and economic effects at work as well, they state that informal norms within the UK media system prevent these effects from being a major influence on BBC broadcasting.²⁸

Not all scholars share this point of view, however. In his recently published book *The BBC: Myth of a Public Service*, Tom Mills argues that the BBC has always been influenced by those in power. Especially since the BBC has become integrated in the market mechanisms of the UK media over the past decades, its independence from both the government and business have declined according to Mills.²⁹ Others, like Philip Schlesinger, go even further in their statements. Schlesinger has written numerous publications on the BBC and the media system of the UK. He states that the perceived neutral credibility of the BBC and its position within British society allows it an influential position within the UK media system. In practise, however, the BBC is influenced heavily by politics. Schlesinger even goes as far to describe it as a propaganda arm of the government. He argues that only those that already have some political power get access to news production, which influences the BBC to only cover certain parts of and views within British society.³⁰ Especially the governing period of Margaret Thatcher (1979-1990) is mentioned as a period in which the UK government

²⁵ See for a comprehensive overview of British media in the twentieth century: McNair, B. (2003). *News and Journalism in the UK*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge; Barr, T. (2016).

²⁶ Siebert, et al. (1956). *Four Theories of the Press*, pp. 39-72; Hallin & Mancini (2004). *Comparing Media Systems*, pp. 198-250.

²⁷ Siebert, et al. (1956). *Four Theories of the Press*, p. 67.

²⁸ Hallin & Mancini (2004). *Comparing Media Systems*, pp. 21-45, 228-250.

²⁹ Mills, T. (2020). *The BBC: Myth of a Public Service* (Reprint ed.). London, United Kingdom: Verso.

³⁰ Schlesinger, P. (1975). *The social organisation of news production: a case study of BBC radio and television news*. PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science.

actively tried to influence BBC broadcasting. However, the political influence on the BBC has remained a topic within British politics up until today, leading to changes in its management structure in 2007 and 2017.³¹ These perspectives therefore argue that those with political power are also able to influence the BBC, comparable with the principles of Wolfsfeld.

Sarah Oates' News Production Model combines aspects of both sides based on five filters. Her evaluation of the broadest filter, the political environment, is an example of this middle of the road position: "freedom of speech is one of the central tenets of the country's democratic tradition. However, the British government takes a more active role in regulation of free speech and the media."³² Oates agrees with Hallin and Mancini that the media norms within the BBC adhere a tradition of independence, although she argues that the UK media system is more like the social responsibility model that Siebert et al. describe. Taking the more specific filters into account as well, Oates' model also implies that the BBC programming is somewhat influenced by those producing it. On the other hand, she states that the government has multiple institutions regulating news production and the BBC directory is appointed by the ruling political party.³³ Therefore, Oates argues that the BBC is under pressure to broadcast topics that are in line with the government's focus, although there still remains a strong tradition of freedom of speech making for "balanced" news production.

Hypotheses and conclusions

Based on the historiography of research on media and politics, this thesis formulates three hypotheses that provide an answer to the research question. Firstly, those scholars that see the media system in the UK as liberal, like Hallin and Mancini, would argue that the depiction of climate change has developed within NHU documentaries as a result of independent journalism based on broadcasting professionals. There should not be any major link between British politics and the programming of the BBC. Therefore, a difference between the narrative on climate change in the nature documentaries and the narrative of the British climate diplomacy would indicate that this hypothesis should be accepted. Instead, this hypothesis states that the narrative in the NHU documentaries would depend on the background of those involved in its production. If this hypothesis is confirmed by the analysis

³¹ Barr, T. (2016). The BBC Charter Review. *Journal of Telecommunications and the Digital Economy*, 4(1), 54–64; Gibbons, T. (2017). Restraining the BBC: the 2016 Charter settlement. *Journal of Media Law*, 9(1), 28–44; House of Commons (2015). *Future of the BBC: Governance, regulation and accountability*. Retrieved on 22 April 2021 via <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmcomeds/315/31510.htm#a48>.

³² Oates (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*, p. 35.

³³ Oates (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*, pp. 25-40.

of this research, this would imply that the BBC programming would not be part of British nation branding.

Wolfsfeld, Mills and Schlesinger would, however, support a different hypothesis. Based on Wolfsfeld's principles and the research of Mills and Schlesinger, the second hypothesis states that the message on climate change in BBC programming would be influenced by the British government and its positions on climate change. The narrative of the NHU documentaries should therefore fit the British narrative on climate change within the UN. The background of those involved in the production of the NHU's documentaries does not impact whether this hypothesis can be confirmed. Instead, the hypothesis is accepted when the topic of climate change, addressed in the nature documentaries of the BBC, completely matches the message that the UK propagates internationally. This means that the message in the NHU documentaries should change depending on a change in those who have political power or a change in the message of those in power. If the results of the analyses seem to support this hypothesis, this would imply that the BBC programming is an explicit part of the nation branding by the UK.

Lastly, Sarah Oates' News Production Model would imply a third hypothesis. She would argue that the message in NHU documentaries is influenced by both the broader political environment, media culture and media regulations, as well as those in power at the BBC and those working on the nature documentaries themselves. Therefore, the narrative on climate change should develop in NHU's documentaries in a similar fashion as how it develops within the British international diplomacy. However, it does not have to be exactly the same, as the message in the nature documentaries would also have been influenced by those involved in their production. If this hypothesis is confirmed by the results of the analysis in this research, BBC programming seems to be influenced by British nation branding but not necessarily part of it. Table 1 below shows these hypotheses in a concise overview:

	<i>International position UK on climate change</i>	<i>Background of those involved in production of NHU nature documentaries</i>	<i>Implications for BBC programming as part of British nation branding</i>
<i>Hypothesis one</i> <i>(Hallin and Mancini)</i>	Does not need to correspond with the message in the NHU documentaries	Has to correspond with the message in the NHU documentaries	BBC programming would not be part of British nation branding
<i>Hypothesis two</i> <i>(Wolfsfeld)</i>	Has to correspond with the message in the NHU documentaries	Does not need to correspond with the message in the NHU documentaries	BBC programming would be part of British nation branding
<i>Hypothesis three</i> <i>(Oates)</i>	Should be comparable with the message in the NHU documentaries	Should be comparable with the message in the NHU documentaries	BBC programming would be influenced by British nation branding

Table 1: Overview of Hypotheses

Method and sources

UK position on climate change

To evaluate these hypotheses, this research will start with an analysis of the British discourse on climate change within the UN. This analysis will be twofold. Firstly, previous academic findings will be discussed to provide an insight in the existing knowledge on British climate diplomacy. Although climate change has been part of politics within the UK for some decades, most scholars agree that the Kyoto Protocol, which was a result of COP3 in 1997, had a major influence on the emergence of climate change in British political discourse.³⁴ Therefore, December 1997 marks the start of the period that will be analysed in this master thesis. Although this research aims to provide an overview of the development of the narrative on climate change British diplomacy and BBC programming from this date up until the present, no sources from 2022 have been analysed as these sources would be too recent and thus possibly incomplete to come to any definitive conclusions.

To analyse the British narrative on climate change within the UN, this thesis will use a content analysis. Specifically, this research will focus on speeches by the UK delegation to the General Assembly of the UN. These sources are representative of the British climate diplomacy as the UN currently is the main international political institution. The speeches in

³⁴ Massey, E., & Huitema, D. (2012). The emergence of climate change adaptation as a policy field: the case of England. *Regional Environmental Change*, 13(2), 341–352; Cass, Loren R. (2007). The indispensable awkward partner: the UK in European climate policy'. In Paul G. Harris (Ed.), *Europe and Global Climate Change: Politics, Foreign Policy and Regional Policy*.

the General Assembly are therefore direct sources of what a nation wants to address to the international community. Besides, previous research has shown how speeches can contribute to the knowledge on British climate diplomacy. Most notably, Helene Ledouble and Olivier Gouirand have analysed the speeches of British prime ministers Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and David Cameron to research the attitude of their government towards climate change.³⁵ Using the British speeches at the General Assembly between December 1997 and December 2021 also provides an extensive corpus of sources to analyse. In total, the UK held 1163 speeches during this period in the General Assembly or one of its committees. These are relatively fairly distributed over the whole period that is analysed in this research, although Table 3 and 4 (page 72) show that there is a slight increase over the years.³⁶ When taking this into account, the speeches of the UK at the General Assembly make for a useful source to analyse the narrative on climate change within British climate diplomacy. Further clarification on the content analysis that is used in this research will be provided at the end of this chapter.

NHU documentaries

This master thesis will use nature documentaries of the NHU as case study of how climate change is portrayed within BBC programming. The choice for BBC documentaries is based on three factors. First and foremost, the BBC is an exemplary case as one of the major broadcasters worldwide, especially concerning the production of nature documentaries. As discussed in the theoretical framework, the BBC is influential and has a broad audience both nationally and internationally. To put it in their own words: “The BBC is the world’s leading public service broadcaster. We’re impartial and independent, and every day we create distinctive, world-class programmes and content which inform, educate and entertain millions of people in the UK and around the world.”³⁷ This emphasis on independence is remarkable when looking at the second reason to focus on the BBC: as a public service broadcaster it is partially dependent on subsidies from the state. Besides, the different governing bodies of the public service broadcaster over the past 25 years all were to some extent appointed by the

³⁵ Ledouble, H., & Gouirand, O. (2013). *Environmental Issues in political speech: discourse analysis of three British Prime Ministers*. In G. Leydier & A. Martin (Eds.), *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland* (pp. 83-104). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher.

³⁶ This table does not show the amount of results of 1997 as only the month December of this year falls within the period of this research. For an overview of all British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations, see:

https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Speeches&p=&f=&rm=&ln=en&sf=&so=d&rg=50&c=Speeches&c=&of=hb&fti=0&fct__2=General%20Assembly&fct__7=United%20Kingdom&fti=0&fct__2=General%20Assembly&fct__7=United%20Kingdom.

³⁷ BBC (n.d.). *About the BBC*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/>.

British government.³⁸ The BBC might therefore be influenced more heavily by British politics than it would want to propagate. Lastly, as mentioned in the theoretical framework, the extensive body of research on the BBC provides a strong theoretical basis for this thesis. There are even some publications on the BBC's policy towards climate change.³⁹ Especially Pierre-Francois Peirano's *How's the environment?* is of interest to this master thesis, as he analyses the BBC program *Yes, Minister* on its coverage of climate change between 1980 and 1984.⁴⁰ These studies, however, assume it's the BBC's role or even duty to provide adequate or 'objective' information towards the general public. Thus, they focus on how to improve the BBC's message on climate change, instead of analysing why climate change is or is not part of BBC programming and why certain messages are portrayed within their programming.

Within BBC programming, this research will focus on the nature documentaries that are produced by the NHU. There are multiple reasons for this decision. Firstly, these documentaries are focused on nature, making them relevant to the topic of this thesis: climate change. Secondly, the NHU documentaries are meant not only for domestic television, but are one of the main export products of the BBC.⁴¹ Therefore, these documentaries of the NHU propagate a certain message internationally, which is essential when analysing potential nation branding. Besides, as previous research has shown that nature documentaries have effects on the political behaviour of their viewers, these documentaries could be a perfect way of portraying a certain image internationally.⁴² Lastly, the NHU has produced multiple nature documentary series during the period that is analysed in this research. This provides a large amount of sources to analyse. Because the NHU did not produce multiple series every year and this master thesis only has limited time and resources, a total of five nature documentary

³⁸ For an overview of the changes in governance structure and the financial situation regarding the BBC, see for instance the BBC Annual Report and Accounts from the past twenty years: BBC (n.d.). *Annual report and accounts*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/reports/annualreport>.

³⁹ See for instance: Smith, J. (2005). Dangerous News: Media Decision Making about Climate Change Risk. *Risk Analysis*, 25(6), 1471–1482; Parratt, S. (2014). Public media and climate change: Ethical standards and codes in the BBC treatment of environmental information. *Interactions: Studies in Communication & Culture*, 5(1), 127–140.

⁴⁰ Peirano, P.F. (2013). How's the environment? The representation of the environmental debate in the television series *Yes, Minister*. In G. Leydier & A. Martin (Eds.), *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland* (pp. 52–64). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher.

⁴¹ See for instance the BBC Annual Report and Accounts from the past twenty years: BBC (n.d.). *Annual report and accounts*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/reports/annualreport>.

⁴² See for instance: Barbas, T.A., Paraskevopoulos, S., & Stamou, A.G. (2009). The effect of nature documentaries on students' environmental sensitivity: a case study. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 34, 61 - 69; Arendt, F., & Matthes, J. (2016). Nature Documentaries, Connectedness to Nature, and Pro-environmental Behavior. *Environmental Communication*, 10(4), 453-472.

series have been analysed for this research.⁴³ These five series were chosen, first and foremost, because they were one of the major productions of their time. Besides, these documentary series were all produced five years apart, making sure that the analysis of the development within their narrative has regular intervals. In total, this amounts to 2370 minutes (39,5 hours) of material, which were analysed with the same method of content analysis as the British speeches at the General Assembly. The following list shows the NHU documentary series that have been analysed and the year in which they were produced:

- 2001: The Blue Planet
- 2006: Planet Earth
- 2011: Human Planet
- 2016: Planet Earth II
- 2021: A Perfect Planet

Besides the NHU documentaries, this thesis will analyse the background of their production team. Based on reports and articles published on these producers, this research will analyse whether they have an interest in climate change themselves. This will show whether the personal background of those producing the nature documentary series could be the reason for a possible change in their narrative on climate change. Lastly, BBC documentation will be analysed to provide insight on the possible influence of British politics on their management. This analysis will be centred around the BBC Annual Reports and Accounts, which discuss the main policy decisions, productions and changes within the BBC yearly.⁴⁴ As such, this method will not only be able to analyse whether there has been a development within the narrative on climate change in these documentaries. It also provides an insight in whether this narrative could have been influenced by the personal background of those involved in producing the documentary series or by the political context of the time.

⁴³ This list is a selection of the filmography of the BBC's Natural History Unit. For an overview of this filmography, see: Wikipedia (2022, April 13). *BBC Studios Natural History Unit filmography*. Wikipedia. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BBC_Natural_History_Unit_filmography.

⁴⁴ For an overview of all Annual Reports and Accounts, see: BBC (n.d.). *Annual report and accounts*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/reports/annualreport>.

Content Analysis

A content analysis can be the perfect way to research sources from both a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Not only does it allow for counting certain terms or phrases within sources, which can then be used for statistical analysis. These terms and phrases can then also be studied more in depth, to contextualise and clarify why they were used in a given context.⁴⁵ This master thesis will use a qualitative content analysis based on the methods Ledouble and Gouirand use in their article *Environmental Issues in Political Speech*.⁴⁶ Both the NHU nature documentaries and the UK speeches at the General Assembly of the UN that are mentioned above will be analysed based on the same method of content analysis.

Specifically, this research will look for terms related to climate change within these sources. Instead of looking only for direct mentions of climate change itself, this research will use four categories that describe any human impact on nature in a broad sense. This will provide a more elaborate depiction of how different aspects of the human interference on the environment is depicted in the sources, as well as the role that climate change plays in this narrative. The four categories used in the content analysis of this master thesis are: *climate change*, *environmental degradation*, *impact on wildlife* and *pollution*. These categories are influenced by those used by Ledouble and Gouirand.

This thesis will not completely adopt their method, as it contains categories that would be redundant when analysing nature documentaries and would not necessarily be related to climate change in this context. Examples are their category *water*, which contains terms like ‘sea’, or their category *earth*, containing terms like ‘planet’. Besides, some terms can refer to climate change but do not necessarily have to. An example of this, especially in the context of the UN, is ‘sustainability’. This term is used extensively to describe, for instance, the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. These ‘sustainable’ goals, however, do not only cover tackling climate change, but also for instance reducing inequality or improving education. Therefore, a solely quantitative analysis would provide results that do not fully fit the aim of this research. Instead, a qualitative analysis of all results is needed to differentiate between terminology that does cover the human impact on nature and statements that do not.

The first category used in the analysis of this research focusses on climate change. This category includes any direct uses of the term climate change, or phrases that imply climate change, global warming or changing temperatures. This category is the most

⁴⁵ Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis* (4th Revised edition). SAGE Publications; Drisko, J., & Maschi, T. (2015). *Content Analysis* (Illustrated ed.). Oxford University Press; Harwood, T. G., & Garry, T. (2003). An Overview of Content Analysis. *The Marketing Review*, 3(4), 479–498.

⁴⁶ Ledouble and Gouirand (2013). *Environmental Issues in Political Speech*.

important in defining what kind of message on climate change the sources portray. The second category is called environmental degradation and includes changes to the environment that are caused by human activity and linked to climate change, although not mentioned as such. This mostly covers changes to ecosystems, such as deforestation, desertification or the decline in (sea)ice coverage. Both the first and second categories therefore only include topics that are linked to climate change. Category three covers the human impact on wildlife. Similar to the second category, the decline of species is often related to climate change. However, this does not always have to be the case. When relevant, this research will go more into depth on the results of this category during the analysis to show whether these results fit with climate change directly or just describe human impact on nature in a broader sense. The fourth category will include all other human impact on the environment that is not directly linked to climate change. The category is called pollution, to cover a wide range of ways that humanity has polluted nature, for instance by littering, (oil)spills, etc. This category ensures that all kinds of human impact on nature are taken into account in the analysis and thus acts as a kind of 'other' category.

To enhance the possibility to show developments in the narrative on climate change, this research differentiates between two ways these categories are touched upon. Firstly, the categories can be used in an informative manner. This includes statements that solely describe a topic from one of the categories. Secondly, this research discerns activating messages that try to engage to audience to take action on a certain topic. This includes statements that use normative terminology, such as 'should', 'need/have to' or 'necessity'. Besides, any approval of current or future actions taken to counter the human impact on nature are counted as activating content. Table 2 (page 71) shows an overview of the categories used in this master thesis and examples of terms counted as part of the informative and activating content. Therefore, this research will be able to show how certain categories are covered more extensively, or in a different tone, during certain periods in both the British speeches at the General Assembly and the NHU documentaries. Besides, all results will be analysed qualitatively by contextualising them, and for the nature documentaries by analysing the audio and video that accompanies these messages. Based on this analysis, the conclusion will cover how this research compares to current academic findings, which hypothesis can be confirmed, and what would be the most probable answer to the research question.

Chapter 2: British climate diplomacy

Analysis academic literature

Climate change has been a part of British policy for some decades now. Gilles Leydier and Alexia Martin state that climate change emerged as a topic in UK politics in the 1970s. They argue that, although the British Green Party has remained largely a bystander in UK politics, the main parties like the Labour Party, the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democratic Party all to some extent ‘turned green’ in the 1990s to attract voters concerned with the climate and environment.⁴⁷ Especially the establishment of the United Nations’ Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its annual conferences, the COP’s, put climate change on the British agenda. More specifically, the Kyoto protocol, a result of COP3 in 1997, marks a turn in British climate policy. The UK government established its own climate research institutions, and increasingly incorporated climate change in its policies.⁴⁸ Since 1997, the United Kingdom has had ten ministries, formed by five prime ministers. This can be roughly divided in a period of Labour governments from 1997 to 2010, and a period in which a Conservative prime minister was in power from 2010 to the present.⁴⁹ The next section will give a brief overview of the literature on climate policies under Labour and Conservative governments in the UK from 1997 to the 2021.

Labour Governments (1997-2010)

The British Labour Party came to power in 1997 under prime minister Tony Blair after almost two decades of Conservative rule. Blair won three consecutive elections in 1997, 2001 and 2005 and incited a foreign policy agenda focused on improving relations with the EU and the US. To achieve this, Blair put emerging international issues like climate change more prominently on the British agenda.⁵⁰ Even though the Kyoto Protocol was signed in December 1997, half a year after Blairs first electoral victory, the first years of the Labour government were not so different from previous British governments with regard to climate

⁴⁷ Leydier, G., & Martin, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher.

⁴⁸ Massey, E., & Huitema, D. (2012). The emergence of climate change adaptation as a policy field: the case of England. *Regional Environmental Change*, 13(2), 341–352; Cass, Loren R. (2007). The indispensable awkward partner: the UK in European climate policy’. In Paul G. Harris (Ed.), *Europe and Global Climate Change: Politics, Foreign Policy and Regional Policy*.

⁴⁹ Denver, D., & Garnett, M. (2014). *British General Elections Since 1964: Diversity, Dealignment, and Disillusion; Comparative European Party Systems: An Analysis of Parliamentary Elections Since 1945*. Oxford, United States: Oxford University Press.

⁵⁰ Seldon, A. (2007). *Blair’s Britain, 1997–2007*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-6.

change. Their foreign policy mostly focused on emerging conflicts during this period, including the Kosovo War in 1999, the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Centre in 2001 and the war in Iraq in 2003.⁵¹ Only during Blair's third period as prime minister, climate change became more important in his foreign policy. This is evident in the G8 Summit of 2005, when climate change was one of the main topics under the presidency of the UK, and in the publication of the Stern Review that was commissioned by the government in 2006 to detail how to tackle climate change.⁵²

However, climate change policy was often only successfully implemented by the Labour governments when it coincided with economic and social aims. Gordon Brown, who succeeded Blair after his recognition as prime minister in June 2007, did not have a specific interest in tackling climate change during his period in Blair's ministries. Although Brown continued the UK's increased emphasis on climate change policy while he was prime minister, the UK still lagged behind compared to other countries in Europe and North America. This remained to be the case during the rest of Brown's Labour government, as the economic crisis of 2008 became the main topic in his foreign policy until the end of his term in 2010.⁵³ Still, Neil Carter argues in his analysis of party politicization of climate change in the UK that Blair, and Brown after him, made climate policy part of their priorities.⁵⁴ British historian Anthony Seldon even argues that the Labour governments tried to make climate change a priority internationally:

*"Blair's governments have not only signalled their dedication to the climate change agenda domestically, but also managed to drag other countries and institutions into binding commitments and targets."*⁵⁵

⁵¹ Dyson, B.D. (2009). *The Blair Identity: Leadership and Foreign Policy*. Manchester Scholarship Online, pp. 576-578.

⁵² Seldon, A., & Kavanagh, D. (2005). *The Blair Effect 2001–5* (Illustrated ed.). Cambridge University Press, p. 65; Seldon, A. (2007). *Blair's Britain, 1997–2007*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pp. 576-587. For more information about the Stern Review, see: Sowels, N. (2013). The Stern Review (2006): Place in Britain's and the World's Assessment of the Economic Costs of Global Warming and the Costs of Combating Climate Change. In G. Leydier & A. Martin (Eds.), *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland*.

⁵³ Breckenridge, G. (2011). The New Labour Experiment: Change and Reform Under Blair and Brown by Florence Faucher-King and Patrick Le Gales. *Political Science Quarterly*, 126(1), 141–142.

⁵⁴ Carter, N. (2013). *The Party Politicization of Climate Change and Energy Policy in Britain*. In G. Leydier & A. Martin (Eds.), *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland* (pp. 68-73). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher.

⁵⁵ Seldon, A. (2007). *Blair's Britain, 1997–2007*, p. 580.

As most sources agree that the actual climate policy of these governments remained very limited, both Carter and Seldon seem to exaggerate the importance of climate policy during the Labour governments between 1997 and 2010. Yet, it is clear that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown tried to signal their dedication towards fighting climate change during their time as prime minister. In their extensive discourse analysis of speeches of the prime ministers during this period, Helene Ledouble and Olivier Gouirand portray a similar picture.⁵⁶ Their research analyses many of the speeches given by these prime ministers on how they describe issues related to climate change and the environment. They not only confirm the statements made by Carter, but they also identify changes in topics and rhetorical style between the prime ministers. For instance, Ledouble and Gouirand argue that Blair extensively used both scientific evidence and a more alarming kind of speech, while focussing on the solutions to solve climate change. Brown, on the other hand, gave more attention to the issue of energy, while embracing a narrative of a shared planet Earth we all need to preserve. Therefore, from the perspective of nation branding, the Labour governments increasingly tried to create an image of an United Kingdom with tackling climate change as one of its priorities. This resulted in the UK taking a leading role in climate change diplomacy internationally. Thus, an increase in the number of times that climate change is mentioned in the British foreign policy between 1997 and 2010 should be expected based on current literature, especially starting from 2006.

Conservative governments (2010-2021)

The 2010 British elections marked one of the most exceptional results in British parliamentary history. Not only did Labour lose its majority for the first time since 1997, but these elections were also the first time since the Second World War that no party won enough seats in parliament to form a government by itself. Therefore, a coalition government was formed by the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democratic Party under the Conservative prime minister David Cameron.⁵⁷ Neil Carter marks the period leading up to the 2010 elections as the main period in which climate change became a topic within British political debate. More specifically, the emergence of David Cameron within the Conservative Party made them focus more on climate policy. As a result, the climate and the environment became key issues

⁵⁶ Ledouble and Gouirand (2013). *Environmental Issues in Political Speech*.

⁵⁷ Denver, D., & Garnett, M. (2014). *British General Elections Since 1964: Diversity, Dealignment, and Disillusion; Comparative European Party Systems: An Analysis of Parliamentary Elections Since 1945*, pp. 147-180.

on which both Labour and the Conservatives tried to show their ambitions, while the Liberal Democrats were already claiming the issue themselves since the nineties.⁵⁸

This would imply that the coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats after the 2010 elections increased the British efforts to combat climate change. This is affirmed by the coalition agreement between both parties, which did include more extensive climate policies. Some researchers attribute this to the influence of the Liberal Democrats on the coalition government, as many of the coalition agreements on climate policy match the Liberal Democratic views on the topic.⁵⁹ Others, however, argue that this was facilitated by David Cameron's 'modernization agenda'. He tried to portray the Conservative Party positively by showing their dedication to global issues like climate change, while keeping with the neoliberal ideological position of his party.⁶⁰ This is affirmed by Ledouble and Gouirand's analysis of Cameron's speeches in 2010 and 2011. They argue that the conservative prime minister repeatedly mentioned the environment, but kept to a vague or simplified description of climate change. Moreover, he highlighted signs of uncertainty within climate models, to argue that the UK should rely on expert opinions when trying to tackle climate change.⁶¹

The lack of tangible results in the struggle against climate change under Cameron also affected the climate policies of the coalition government. Although some objectives of the coalition agreement were achieved, some already existing climate policies were reverted during Cameron's period as prime minister.⁶² Besides, multiple members of the Conservative Party increasingly opposed climate policies. Perhaps because of this, Cameron reduced the importance of environmental issues during his 2015 election campaign. He even questioned some of the policies of his previous government during this period. When the Conservatives won the election and Cameron got his second term, they revoked multiple measures that were enacted to tackle climate change.⁶³ Still, contrary to the national context, some scholars argue

⁵⁸ Carter (2013). *Party Politicization*, pp. 66-68, 76-82; Carter, N., & Jacobs, M. (2013). Explaining Radical Policy Change: The Case of Climate Change and Energy Policy Under the British Labour Government 2006–10. *Public Administration*, 92(1), 125–141.

⁵⁹ Heppell, T., & Seawright, D. (Eds.). (2012). *Cameron and the Conservatives The Transition to Coalition Government*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 65-66.

⁶⁰ Peele, G. (2021). Post Brexit and Post-Covid : Reflections on the Contemporary Conservative Party. In: Peele, G., & Francis, J. (Eds.). (2016). *David Cameron and Conservative renewal: The limits of modernisation?* Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, pp. 32-34, 45.

⁶¹ Ledouble and Gouirand (2013). *Environmental Issues in Political Speech*, pp. 83-104.

⁶² Nulman, E. (2015). *Climate Change and Social Movements: Civil Society and the Development of National Climate Change Policy*. London, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 24-57; Carter, N., & Little, C. (2020). Party competition on climate policy: The roles of interest groups, ideology and challenger parties in the UK and Ireland. *International Political Science Review*, 42(1), pp. 7-9.

⁶³ Carter & Little (2020). Party competition on climate policy, pp. 7-9.

that the UK remained a leading nation in international climate diplomacy. They argue that climate change stayed central to British foreign policy itself, while the UK also pushed its climate agenda via the European Union. Therefore, these scholars state that the UK retained a leading role, at least until the influential Paris Agreements (also known as COP21) in 2015. These Agreements saw almost all countries worldwide sign extensive, although not legally binding, policy ambitions to combat climate change.⁶⁴

In 2016, the focus of the British foreign policy changed dramatically, after the Brexit referendum led the UK government to decide to leave the European Union. As a direct result, David Cameron resigned as prime minister and was succeeded by fellow Conservative Theresa May. The following year, May wrote out new elections but failed to gain a majority and was forced to form a coalition government with a minor political party from Northern Ireland. Climate change had a negligible role in the Conservative elections campaign and May's period as minister. Foreign and domestic policies were dominated by the Brexit and its effects on international politics, leaving climate diplomacy as less important.⁶⁵ This does not seem to have changed after Mays resignation in 2019, her succession by Boris Johnson and his major electoral victory for the Conservatives during the elections later that year. In fact, as the UK eventually left the EU in January 2020, the British government also lost its influence on the climate agenda of the European Union. Besides, the Covid pandemic became the main item on the agenda of Johnson's ministries from 2020 onwards.⁶⁶

All in all, Cameron's first government continued to address climate change publicly, although the implemented climate policies were limited. Still, most researchers state that the UK was a leader in international climate diplomacy during this period. After Cameron resigned in 2016, the Conservative governments of Theresa May and Boris Johnson clearly decreased the British dedication to the topic. Therefore, the expected increase in attention for climate change in the British speeches at the UN that started under the Labour governments should proceed during the first Cameron government between 2010 and 2015. From 2015 onwards, however, we should expect to see a decrease in the amount of times climate change is addressed. This decrease should continue over the course of the subsequent Conservative

⁶⁴ Ladrech, R. (2018). Party Politics and EU climate policy. In S. Minas & V. Ntousas (Eds.), *EU Climate Policy: Politics, Laws and Negotiations* (pp. 13-21). Routledge, New York; Sweet, W. (2016). *Climate Diplomacy from Rio to Paris: The Effort to Contain Global Warming*. Yale University Press, pp. 61-65.

⁶⁵ Carter & Little (2020). Party competition on climate policy, pp. 7-9; Allen, N. (2017). 'Brexit means Brexit': Theresa May and post-referendum British politics. *British Politics*, 13(1), 105-120; Cowley, P., & Kavanagh, D. (2018). *The British General Election of 2017*. London, UK: Palgrave MacMillan.

⁶⁶ Carter & Little (2020). Party competition on climate policy, pp. 7-9; Peele, G. (2021). Post Brexit and Post-Covid, pp. 404-411.

governments, especially since May came into power in 2016. Due to the recency of these events, however, only little research has been done on the British climate agenda internationally over the past few years. Events such as the COP26, which was held in Glasgow in 2021, could have had an impact on the climate policy of the UK internationally that is not yet apparent in the current academic debate. This makes it challenging to come to a clear conclusion for this period. Yet, a continuation of the declining attention towards climate change under Conservative governments could be expected.

Analysis British speeches

The second part of this chapter will address multiple issues. Firstly, an analysis of all speeches of the United Kingdom at the General Assembly of the United Nations between 1997 and 2021 will provide an overview of British international climate diplomacy. By applying the same method as is used for the NHU nature documentaries, this overview can be compared with the message in these documentaries. Simultaneously, this analysis will add to the previous academic findings on the British climate diplomacy over the past two decades which have been addressed above. This will especially provide new insights into the most recent couple of years, which have not yet been thoroughly researched. Lastly, the end of this chapter will provide conclusions on this chapter's sub question: how the British climate diplomacy has developed between 1997 and 2021.

To shortly recap, the analysis that has been conducted in this master thesis differentiates four categories: climate change, environmental degradation, impact on wildlife and pollution. Graph 1 (page 74) shows the number of times per year that one of the categories was addressed during one of the 1163 speeches of the UK in the General Assembly of the United Nations or one of its committees. The first thing that stands out from this graph, is that the forty-nine total speeches that covered any of the categories do not show a clear trend at first glance. Some years, most notably 1999, 2006 and 2020, stand out compared to previous and following years regarding the amount of times that the different categories were mentioned during the British speeches. On the other hand, in some years none of the topics from the different categories are addressed. In contrast, most sources between 1997 and 2021 focus on territorial disputes, most notably the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and other British Overseas Territories. Another topic that is repeatedly discussed is sustainable development. Yet, this term is mostly used in context of the emancipation of women or local communities.

Important to note is that when one of the four categories is addressed within the speeches of the UK, these messages are often activating messages. These mostly include calls

to other states, the UN, or other (environmental) institutions to ramp up their efforts to address climate change, pollution or the poaching of wildlife. This is not unexpected, seeing the political character of these sources. Still, this does show that the United Kingdom oftentimes wanted to display their commitment to these issues.

Labour governments (1997-2010)

Looking more closely at the sources, this research will once again divide the analysis in two periods, the first being the period of Labour governments (1997-2010) and the second being the period which saw the Conservatives in power (2010-2021). The first source analysed in this master thesis is from September 1st 1997, and is the only speech from that period that addresses human impact on nature.⁶⁷ The speech describes the first general debate in the General Assembly after Tony Blair won the British elections of 1997. Remarkably, the source repeatedly states that climate change, together with poverty, is one of the challenges of the time. By doing so, the newly elected government immediately tries to show its dedication to tackling climate change and already addresses the importance of COP3, which would be held later that year in Kyoto:

*“The new Labour Government has set itself the ambitious target of reducing Britain’s emissions of greenhouse gases by 20 per cent by the year 2010. At the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Kyoto, the nations of the world must sign up to binding targets and then they must keep to them.”*⁶⁸

Despite the climate ambitions of the Labour government, none of the speeches in the following two years addresses one of the categories again. Besides, the Kyoto Protocol, which was a result of COP3 in 1997, had just been signed. The first British speeches that address the human impact on nature after the Kyoto Protocol date back to 1999.⁶⁹ Although these three sources elaborately discuss all categories that are analysed in this thesis, climate change is

⁶⁷ Cook, Robin; General Assembly official records, 52nd session : 7th plenary meeting, Monday, 22 September 1997, New York; pp. 15-17.

⁶⁸ Cook, Robin; General Assembly official records, 52nd session : 7th plenary meeting, Monday, 22 September 1997, New York; p. 17.

⁶⁹ Smith, Katherine; Summary record of the 5th meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (5th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 6 October 1999, General Assembly, 54th session; pp. 11; Cook, Robin; General Assembly official records, 54th session : 5th plenary meeting, Monday, 20 September 1999, New York; p. 35; Richardson, Mike; General Assembly official records, 54th session : 1st Committee, 28th meeting, Monday, 11 November 1999, New York; pp. 4-6

only directly addressed once. The increasing attention for the human impact on nature during 1999 can be explained by the multiple environmental treaties signed around this period, for example on the protection of the nature surrounding Antarctica. However, the Kyoto Protocol itself is not mentioned at all. The cause of this limited attention for climate change specifically remains unclear. As rising temperatures have a direct impact on Antarctica, one would expect more attention for climate change in the speeches regarding this region. The lack of attention towards climate change implies that the British government, contrary to their speech in 1997, did not increase its ambitions on climate change within international diplomacy during its first years.

The rest of Blair's first and second ministries, up until 2005, show only little attention towards the different categories. Besides, the lack of attention towards climate change specifically remains. Climate change is only mentioned as a part of other, seemingly more urging political problems. For example, most sources that address one of the analysed categories focus on the British Overseas Territories.⁷⁰ These describe the British efforts to help its Territories extend and implement their environmental policies. Moreover, multiple sources from this period pay attention to the impact of natural disasters, in particular flooding, on the British Territories. However, these problems are not linked to the larger issues of climate change, rising temperatures and changing weather, even though these factors increase the quantity and intensity of most natural disasters.⁷¹ Still, one document from 2004 does address climate change directly. This speech states that climate change is "perhaps the greatest long-term threat to our world". During the speech, the UK government also emphasizes the need to implement the Kyoto protocol.⁷² However, this seems to be an exception as other documents within this period actually describe poverty as the biggest international problem. The hiatus of attention for climate change in the British international

⁷⁰ Howe-Johnson, Vanessa; Summary record of the 3rd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2001, General Assembly, 56th session; p. 8; Falzarano, Assuntina; Summary record of the 3rd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 1 October 2002, General Assembly, 57th session; pp. 2; Pisa, Adrian; Summary record of the 2nd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 6 October 2003, General Assembly, 58th session; pp. 8

⁷¹ Smith, Katherine; Summary record of the 4th meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 26 September 2000, General Assembly, 55th session; p. 2; Williams, Simon; Summary record of the 3rd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 5 October 2004, General Assembly, 59th session; p. 2.

⁷² Straw, Jack; General Assembly official records, 59th session : 8th plenary meeting, Thursday, 23 September 2004, New York; pp. 33-34.

diplomacy between roughly 2000 and 2005 corresponds with the literature, as the UK was preoccupied with the different international conflicts during this period. Therefore, these findings match the expected results based on previous academic research.

However, after Blair's re-election in 2005 and the G8 of 2006 that was hosted by the UK, Labour's third consecutive government increased its focus on climate diplomacy hugely. The British speeches at the UN General Assembly in 2006 and 2008 stand out due to the amount of times climate change is addressed. Similarly to the 1997 speech, a large part of the results of 2006 was from the first British speech since the elections, this time from the newly appointed secretary Margaret Beckett.⁷³ During her speech, she states that climate change is an eminent threat to humanity. Therefore, Beckett argues, the UK is putting climate change at the centre of its foreign policy agenda. She directly cites the G8 of 2006 as a defining moment in this decision. Content wise, these speeches emphasize a theme that had not yet been used in previous years: the direct impact of climate change on humanity. Possibly, this was Beckett's strategy to urge others to put climate change high on their agenda as well. She even speaks directly to those present during the meeting in her attempt to evoke them to increase their commitment to climate change, while implying the UK has done so as well:

“To put it starkly, if we all try to freeride, we will all end up in free fall, with accelerating climate change the result of our collective failure to respond in time to that shared threat that faces us all. Look just at the danger posed by rising sea levels. Potentially, that could cause massive damage to some of the key urban centres of our global civilization. London, Shanghai, Dhaka, Singapore, Amsterdam, Cairo and, yes, Manhattan are all at risk. That is why we must all — as foreign ministers, heads of Government and heads of State — be ready to do more, and do it more quickly.”⁷⁴

This emphasis on the direct impact that climate change has, and will have, on humanity is a major part of the British narrative on the issue between 2006 and 2008.⁷⁵ In fact, one in every

⁷³ Beckett, Margaret; General Assembly official records, 61st session : 16th plenary meeting, Friday, 22 September 2006, New York; pp. 20-21

⁷⁴ Beckett, Margaret; General Assembly official records, 61st session : 16th plenary meeting, Friday, 22 September 2006, New York; pp. 20

⁷⁵ Beckett, Margaret; General Assembly official records, 61st session : 16th plenary meeting, Friday, 22 September 2006, New York; pp. 20-21; Alam, Sakeena; Summary record of the 3rd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday 3 October 2006, General Assembly, 61st session; p. 2; Pierce, Karen; Summary record of the 5th meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 11 October 2007,

four times climate change is mentioned, it is in a context of the impact it will have on humankind. Moreover, almost half of all messages during this period have an activating element. While this clearly shows an increasing focus on climate change within the British climate policy, no clear explanation for this changing narrative is found in the sources. Perhaps this was an attempt by the UK to portray itself as a leader in climate diplomacy by urging other states to increase their efforts, by using activating rhetoric and emphasizing the impact of climate change on humanity.

It is therefore even more interesting that during the last one and a half years of Labour government, from October 2008 to May 2010, not a single speech addresses one of the categories. This does not seem to be linked to Gordon Brown taking over the role of Prime Minister from Tony Blair. The change of leadership took place in June 2007, while the decrease in British climate diplomacy only started at the end of 2008. Perhaps, the decline of attention for climate change can be attributed to the Financial Crisis of 2008. Still, such a dramatic shift shows the volatility of the role of climate change within British foreign policy. This also does not match the expectations based on the scholarly debate on British climate diplomacy. Most academic literature states that climate change became an increasingly important part of British foreign policy under the Labour governments, especially after 2006, which does align with the results between 2006 and 2008. However, the lack of results after 2008 does not match previous academic findings, nor Neil Carter's claim that climate change became a central issue in British politics in the run up to the 2010 election.

Therefore, during the Labour governments between 1997 and 2010 the position of climate change within their foreign policy repeatedly fluctuates. Although the UK frequently stated its dedication to tackle the issue, the trend seems to be that climate change fades to the background when other problems arise, such as the Global War on Terrorism and the Financial Crisis. Still, generally speaking, climate diplomacy seemed to become increasingly important to British foreign policy. After Blair came into power in 1997, the UK already stated its ambition to counter the human impact on nature in a broader sense. The British speeches contained references to all categories used in this analysis, although climate change

General Assembly, 62nd session; p. 7; am, Baroness Shriti; General Assembly official records, 62nd session : 32nd plenary meeting, Tuesday, 23 October 2007, New York; p. 25; Sawers, John; General Assembly official records, 62nd session : 63rd plenary meeting, Thursday, 6 December 2007, New York; p. 12; Pierce, Karen; Summary record of the 5th meeting : 2nd Committee, held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 7 October 2008, General Assembly, 63rd session; p. 2; Hill, Alexandra; Summary record of the 2nd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 6 October 2008, General Assembly, 63rd session; p. 6; Sawers, John; General Assembly official records, 62nd session : 82nd plenary meeting, Wednesday, 13 February 2008, New York; pp. 28-29.

itself is mentioned less extensively. Especially between 2006 and 2008, however, climate change becomes a major issue in the British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations. The lack of results from 2009 onwards does not match previous academic findings on this topic. However, the steady increase in importance of the impact of humans on nature within British diplomacy during this period of British Labour governments in general does align with the results of previous research.

Conservative governments (2010-2021)

According to the scholarly literature on British climate diplomacy, the coalition government between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats that ruled the UK under David Cameron from 2010 to 2015 had climate change as a major focus in its foreign policy. Most secondary sources argue that Cameron himself addressed the issue in his speeches repeatedly and Neil Carter even described the 2010 elections as the main period in which climate change became a political issue.⁷⁶ This is a stark contrast with the results of this thesis. As we can see in graph 1 (page 74), the results of the analysis of British speeches at the UN strongly deviates from the academic literature. The lack of attention regarding climate change at the end of the Labour governments remains during Cameron's first ministry, possibly because of the continuing Financial Crisis. Only one source in 2010 touches shortly upon climate change: a speech from Queen Elizabeth II. However, this speech is not included in the analysis, as it is not a direct representation of the discourse of the British government.

The only official speeches that discuss the human impact on nature during the coalition government are from 2012.⁷⁷ These two sources seem to be mainly a response to ongoing efforts in addressing climate change, wildlife trafficking, biodiversity decrease and the protection of the marine environment. The speeches touch upon all categories, although not elaborately. Instead, they mainly consist of the UK stating that they welcome these current

⁷⁶ Neil Carter (2013). *The Party Politicization of Climate Change and Energy Policy in Britain*. In: Gilles Leydier, and Alexia Martin, *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, pp. 66-68, 76-82; Neil Carter and Michael Jacobs (2014) *Explaining Radical Policy Change: The case of climate change and energy policy under the British Labour government 2006–10*. *Public Administration* 92(1): 125–141; Cameron and the Conservatives *The Transition to Coalition Government*, Edited By Timothy Heppell and David Seawright, pp. 65-66; David Cameron and *Conservative Renewal*, pp. 32-34, 45; Helene Ledouble & Olivier Gouirand (2013). *Environmental Issues in political speech: discourse analysis of three British Prime Ministers*. In: Gilles Leydier, and Alexia Martin, *Environmental Issues in Political Discourse in Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, pp. 83-104.

⁷⁷ Davison, Alexandra; Summary record of the 25th meeting : 2nd Committee, held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 8 November 2012, General Assembly, 67th session; p. 2; Clare, Jesse; General Assembly official records, 67th session : 51st plenary meeting, Tuesday, 11 December 2012, New York; p. 9.

efforts and that this has “renewed political commitment.”⁷⁸ The speeches portray the UK as supportive of the measures taken to tackle climate change, although they do not show the UK taking a leading role in addressing the issue. This image is confirmed by other sources during the period, which discuss issues that touch upon the human impact on nature while noticeably keeping quiet about climate change. For instance, the importance of fisheries and the hydrocarbon industry on the Falklands are mentioned repeatedly.⁷⁹ However, not once do they address the impact these sectors have on nature, nor the efforts to contain this impact. Accordingly, the speeches during the first Cameron ministry show a passive British narrative on climate change which is strikingly different with expectations from academic literature. The sources do not provide a straightforward explanation for this change in the British climate diplomacy. Perhaps, the 2011 Arab Spring affected international diplomacy temporarily. However, this issue did not feature significantly in the sources and cannot explain the lack of attention towards climate change over a period of five years. This might imply that the foreign policy of the first Cameron government needs to be studied more extensively to provide alternative explanations. Otherwise, a coincidental lack of results in the analysis of the British speeches during this period might have skewed the results of this research.

The lack of attention for climate change in British diplomacy seems to have changed after the conservative electoral victory of 2015. Between the elections in May and the adoption of the Paris Agreement in December, multiple British speeches touch upon climate change.⁸⁰ Not only do these speeches address three of the categories used in this analysis, but the narrative also changes significantly compared to the first Cameron ministry. For instance, the speeches address new British policies to combat climate change, emphasize the UK has sponsored a new resolution on wildlife trafficking and consequently urge other states to commit themselves to tackling rising temperatures as well. These three speeches, therefore, contain a more activating message that is similar to the rhetoric used during the last Labour government. However, this change in the British climate diplomacy did not last long. During 2016 and 2017, only one of the British speeches addresses the human impact on nature, a

⁷⁸ Davison, Alexandra; Summary record of the 25th meeting : 2nd Committee, held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 8 November 2012, General Assembly, 67th session; p. 2

⁷⁹ Parham, Philip John; Summary record of the 2nd meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 3 October 2011, General Assembly, 66th session; p. 8; Allum, Catherine; Summary record of the 5th meeting : Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee), held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 6 October 2011, General Assembly, 66th session; p. 12.

⁸⁰ Shearman, Martin; General Assembly official records, 70th session : 80th plenary meeting, Thursday, 17 December 2015, New York; p. 9; Hammond, Philip; General Assembly official records, 70th session : 18th plenary meeting, Tuesday, 29 September 2015, New York; p. 20; Wilson; General Assembly official records, 69th session : 100th plenary meeting, Thursday, 30 July 2015, New York; p. 7.

source from September 2016.⁸¹ This might be explained by the impact of the Brexit referendum in 2016. As the first part of this chapter suggested, the Brexit seems to have become the focus of British foreign policies in the following years. Besides, the limited interest in climate change by Theresa May, who took over as prime minister from David Cameron after the Brexit referendum, also matches the expectations based on the existing academic literature.

Still, from 2018 onwards, the British speeches at the General Assembly of the UN increasingly discuss the human impact on nature, even though the Brexit was still a central theme in British domestic and foreign policy. Again, it is difficult to find an explanation in the sources, and the political context offers only limited information. May had announced elections in June 2017, in which the Labour opposition gained some seats in parliament with a campaign that did include climate change as one of its main topics. However, this took place more than a year before British climate diplomacy received a new impulse. The governing Conservative Party might therefore have thought to increase its efforts in climate diplomacy in order to show its dedication to tackling climate change, making them gain access to a new voter base. However, this might also just have been due to the steady increase in sources since 2015, making it more likely to find results on the topic of climate change.

The steady increase in results from 2018 onwards depict a similar climate diplomacy as the sources from 2015. The sources in 2020 even provide the highest amount of results of all years analysed within this research. Once again, this spike in attention regarding climate change does not correlate with changes in British domestic politics. After two years in office, Theresa May resigned as prime minister and was replaced by Boris Johnson in June 2019. The election that followed in December of that year saw the Conservatives win in a landslide. Central to their campaign was finishing the Brexit process, not climate change. Besides, the 2020 sources all date from October that year or later, making a connection between the elections and the increasing attention for climate change unlikely. The Brexit itself was eventually concluded in January 2020, making this unlikely to have had an effect as well.

Instead, a new issue became central to international diplomacy during 2020, the Covid pandemic. Interestingly, contrary to previous crises, this issue did not have a decreasing effect on the amount of times the impact of humans on nature was discussed within the UN. In fact, the Covid pandemic and the economic decline it caused are repeatedly mentioned in relation

⁸¹ Shearman, Martin; General Assembly official records, 70th session : 116th plenary meeting, Friday, 9 September 2016, New York; p. 4.

to climate change. The pandemic is portrayed as an opportunity that should be seized to change the international economic system to the benefit of the climate:

*“The world has a chance to build back better from the impact of COVID-19 and create a fairer, greener and more resilient global economy. At the heart of those efforts must be ambitious commitments to drive progress towards global net zero emissions, strengthen resilience and enhance adaptive capacity and reduce vulnerability to climate change.”*⁸²

Content wise, the speeches from 2018 onwards devote relatively more attention to the topic of biodiversity. One in every five results during this period discuss this issue. In contrast, only few speeches devote attention towards the impact that climate change has on humanity. However, this nature-based focus does not always comply with the terminology used during these speeches. A speech from 2020, for instance, uses the term “living resources” to describe animals, implying that nature should be seen as a resource to be used by humanity.⁸³ Therefore, these sources show a UK that is devoted to countering the human impact on nature, although this is at least partly done to the benefit of humanity and the economy.

The peak of results during 2020 is followed by comparatively limited attention to climate change in 2021. This is remarkable, as COP26 would be held in November 2021 in the UK, more specifically in Glasgow. Previously, just before major climate conferences, such as Kyoto in 1997, the G8 in 2006 and Paris in 2015, the British speeches would address the different categories more extensively than other years. This seems to imply that the Glasgow COP was not as central to British climate diplomacy as these previous events. The sudden lack in attention for climate change during this year might indicate a new policy change within British climate diplomacy, although it is difficult to come to any clear conclusions due to how recent these sources are.

All in all, British international diplomacy noticeably lacked a focus on the human impact on nature during the first Cameron ministry between 2010 and 2015. This does not fit the results of previous research as the UK is often portrayed as a leader in climate diplomacy during this period. At the start of Cameron’s second ministry, just before the Paris Agreement,

⁸² Woodroffe, Tom; Summary record of the 7th meeting : 2nd Committee, held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 25 November 2020, General Assembly, 75th session; p. 8

⁸³ Townsend, Amy Lois; General Assembly official records, 75th session : 38th plenary meeting, Tuesday, 8 December 2020, New York; p. 16

climate change seems to have started to play a bigger role in British nation branding. However, this was overshadowed by the 2016 Brexit referendum and its aftermath. Still, from 2018 until 2020 the British speeches at the General Assembly of the UN elaborately covered all categories analysed in this research. More recently, this increased importance of climate change within British nation branding seems to have halted, as 2021 saw little attention towards the topic despite the upcoming British COP26. These results provide an interesting addition to the lack of research on recent British climate diplomacy.

Conclusions

The analysis of the role of climate change within British foreign policy between 1997 and 2021 in this chapter portrays a similar picture during both the Labour governments and the Conservative governments. Overall, climate change steadily receives more attention in British diplomacy, but this is restricted by other issues that take priority: conflicts such as the Global War on Terrorism at the beginning of the 21st century, the Financial Crisis from 2008 onwards and the Brexit referendum in 2016. The notable exception to this, however, is the Covid pandemic in 2020. Content wise, the UK paid only limited attention towards climate change between 1997 to 2005 and no attention to any of the categories between 2009 to 2014. In contrast, during the period 2006-2008 climate change became a major part of British nation branding, while between 2018 and 2020 all categories were touched upon in the speeches of the UK.

These results of the analysis of British speeches broadly align with previous academic findings, which was analysed in the first half of this chapter. In particular, the fact that during Labour governments there was generally an increasing focus on climate change, but that this was limited by crises, is in line with the expectations. However, the lack of climate change being part of British climate diplomacy between 2010 and 2015 does not seem to be explained by current knowledge. The increase in climate change as part of British nation branding from 2018 is also an unexpected result and may contribute to the knowledge of British climate diplomacy in recent years. Therefore, it will be interesting to see whether the results of the analysis of the content of the BBC nature documentaries, which will be discussed in the next chapter, is in line with current academic research or with the analysis of the British speeches at the UN in this research.

Chapter 3: NHU documentaries

Introduction

Nature documentaries have been a part of BBC programming for decades. Its Natural History Unit was founded in 1957, having since become one of the main producers of nature documentaries worldwide with renowned producers like David Attenborough. This chapter analyses five of their major series since 1997, to research the development of the message on climate change in these documentaries. The analysis used is based on the same method as the analysis in the previous chapter. The results of both chapters will be compared and complemented with an analysis of changes in BBC governance between 1997 and 2021. This will provide an insight into possible political influence on the content of the NHU documentaries. Moreover, this chapter will research the background of those involved in the production of the BBC nature documentaries, to analyse to what extent personal interests could shape the NHU's content.

When comparing all five nature documentaries analysed in this chapter, as is done in graph 2 (page 74), there is a clear increase visible in the amount of times any human impact on the environment was mentioned in the NHU documentaries, with the notable exception of Planet Earth II in 2016. Graph 2 also provides some insights into the differences in the focus of these messages. Where most series discuss the impact of humans on nature without focussing much on climate change, *A Perfect Planet* shows a spike in its coverage of climate change itself. These results are mostly categorized as informative content, although the relative amount of activating messages increases over time as well. To provide a more in-depth analysis, this chapter will proceed to discuss the differences and nuances per series and time period.

The Blue Planet - 2001

When the BBC aired *The Blue Planet* in 2001, it was seen as one of the most comprehensive nature documentaries ever made, and the most comprehensive one focused on the world's oceans. It received multiple awards, both nationally and internationally. An estimated ten to twelve million people watched its eight episodes in the UK, though many more from around the world would as it became the most watched series the BBC sold internationally that year.⁸⁴ *The Blue Planet* shows scenes of oceanic life all over the world. It covers “feeding frenzies” of dolphins, birds, sharks and even whales attacking shoals of fish, while being

⁸⁴ BBC (2002). Annual Report and Accounts 2001/2002.

complimented by thrilling music. It shows polar bears and penguins struggling to survive on both of Earth's poles. Even animals that live on land but depend on the oceans, like grizzly bears and polar foxes, are portrayed to give a full picture of the diverse animal life supported by the seas.

As stunning as these scenes might be, for someone watching *The Blue Planet* two decades later it is clear that the topic of climate change and its effects on the environment are notably absent. Table 5 (page 72) shows how during all eight episodes of *The Blue Planet* changing temperatures are only touched upon once. This first episode introduces the ecosystems in the oceans, mentioning the importance of for example the sun, weather and ocean currents. Though all these aspects are directly related to climate change, this topic is not covered once. The one time that this episode does mention changing temperatures is in a scene on hammerhead sharks.⁸⁵ Specifically, narrator David Attenborough describes how changing ocean temperatures have influenced their declining numbers. However, he ascribes these changing temperatures to El Niño, a natural event that changes ocean currents once in a decade or so. Even the fourth episode, *Frozen Oceans*, which portrays all kinds of scenes on the icy polar regions, does not feature any aspects of climate change. It shows one of the most infamous animals affected by the rising global temperatures, the polar bear, without addressing this issue, even though the effects were already visible at the time.⁸⁶

The other categories covered by this analysis also get limited attention in *The Blue Planet*. The documentary series shows one case of pollution and mentions the impact of humans on wildlife six times.⁸⁷ The previously mentioned impact of El Niño on the hammerhead sharks is one such result, but another scene discusses, for instance, the extinction of the great auk.⁸⁸ However, the human influence in their decline is not mentioned once. It is striking that the extra episode of the series, *The Making Of*, contains the most scenes addressing some of the categories analysed within this research. For example, this episode covers how the footage of salmon sharks was taken in cooperation with local fishermen. Instead of speaking of the rarity of the species or how it could be preserved by studying it, the scene focusses on its potential for human entertainment:

⁸⁵ Alastair Fothergail (September 2001). *The Blue Planet: Introduction* [Film]. BBC, min. 11-12.

⁸⁶ Alastair Fothergail (October 2001). *The Blue Planet: Frozen Seas* [Film]. BBC.

⁸⁷ Alastair Fothergail (September 2001). *The Blue Planet: The Deep* [Film]. BBC, min. 16; Alastair Fothergail (September 2001). *The Blue Planet: Open Ocean* [Film]. BBC, min. 19-20

⁸⁸ Alastair Fothergail (September 2001). *The Blue Planet: Introduction* [Film]. BBC, min. 11-12; Alastair Fothergail (October 2001). *The Blue Planet: Coasts* [Film]. BBC, min. 16; Alastair Fothergail (November 2001). *The Blue Planet: Making Waves* [Film]. BBC, min. 3.

“These sharks have become of interest in Alaska, because of their potential for sport fishing. Local governments are especially interested in this species before it begins to decline, because of the fisheries.”⁸⁹

The eventual decline or even extinction of the species is not portrayed as something that could be prevented by studying and protecting the environment. Instead, it is almost taken for granted because human interests are seen as more important. This is not only exemplary for the limited attention towards environmental issues in *The Blue Planet*. It also shows how the role of humanity in these issues is not addressed.

These results show similarities with the content of the British speeches at the UN during this period. The episodes of *The Blue Planet* were broadcasted in September and October of 2001, the first episode actually airing the day after the 9/11 Terrorist Attack. The aftermath of this event and other conflicts during this period seem to have influenced British foreign policy to such an extent that climate change became a less prevalent issue. Therefore, when looking at the results of the analyses of the British speeches and the NHU documentary during this period, they provide similarly limited results. However, the limited results found within the speeches from 2000 did specifically cover climate change, while this topic was not prevalent at all within *The Blue Planet*. Still, with such a small sample size, no clear conclusions can be drawn on the possible difference in narrative between both sources.

When looking at the governing structure of the BBC around 2001, the public broadcaster was still directed by its Board of Governors. Their members were directly appointed by the British government. However, only a part of the Board was appointed by Labour at the time of the publication of *The Blue Planet*. Some Board members were still sitting out the term they got appointed to by the Conservative government before Labour came into power in 1997. Still, the BBC management at the time did seem to increase its efforts regarding climate change, as they stated that environmental responsibility was an essential part of its public service role in its 2001 annual report.⁹⁰ Besides this comment, however, the report remains silent about climate change. Therefore, the limited attention towards the human impact on nature in *The Blue Planet* is in line with the political message of both the UK internationally and the Board of Governors.

However, the lack of focus on climate change in *The Blue Planet* could also be influenced by the personal interests of its producers. First of all, the nature documentary series

⁸⁹ Alastair Fothergail (November 2001). *The Blue Planet: Making Waves* [Film]. BBC, min. 34-35.

⁹⁰ BBC (2001). Annual Report and Accounts 2000/2001, p. 48.

was produced by Alastair Fothergill. The British producer was previously head of the NHU from 1992 until 1998, until he decided to focus on the production of *The Blue Planet*. Fothergill had been an experienced producer before he started directing the documentary series, having produced multiple documentaries and radio programmes after his study of zoology. His co-producers, Andy Byatt and Martha Holmes, had a similar background. Both had a clear affinity with nature, with Byatt calling it his “lifetime’s fascination” and Holmes being active for conservationist efforts after her study of marine biology. Besides, the documentary series was narrated by the previously mentioned David Attenborough, an experienced environmentalist having studied natural sciences who had been active in conservationism and filming wildlife for decades.⁹¹ The crew’s background in natural sciences, environmentalism and nature contrast with the limited attention for climate change in *The Blue Planet*. Therefore, the personal background of the producers seems to have limited influence on the documentaries’ contents. Instead, the political situation in 2001 fits the narrative in the nature documentaries better.

Planet Earth - 2006

While published only five years later, the first sentences of the BBC’s next major nature documentary series, *Planet Earth*, contrasts clearly with the limited attention for the human impact on the environment in *The Blue Planet*:

“One hundred years ago, there were one and a halve billion people on earth. Now over six billion crowd our fragile planet. But still there are places barely touched by humanity. This series will take you to the last wildernesses.”

These first lines do not only address the urgency of the decline of wildlife on our planet. The quote also emphasizes that humanity is the cause of this decline, specifically highlighting overpopulation.

When *Planet Earth* was broadcasted in 2006, the documentary series was the most elaborate and most expensive initiative of its kind up until that moment. This was partly due to the success of *The Blue Planet*, which made the BBC interested in a sequel. Still, it did

⁹¹ Wikipedia. (2021, February 9). *Martha Holmes (broadcaster)*. Wikipedia. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martha_Holmes_\(broadcaster\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martha_Holmes_(broadcaster)); Wikipedia. (2022a, January 22). *Alastair Fothergill*. Wikipedia. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alastair_Fothergill; Amberjack Films. (n.d.). *Andy Byatt*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.amberjackfilms.com/andy-byatt>; Gouyon, J. B. (2019). *BBC Wildlife Documentaries in the Age of Attenborough*. Springer Publishing.

meet its expectations. Most episodes reached around 9 million viewers within the UK, while the series became the most important international production to the BBC.⁹² During its eleven episodes, *Planet Earth* uses a similar concept as *The Blue Planet*, with all episodes focussing on different environments. This could partly be the case because most of the producers also took part in the production of *The Blue Planet*. However, this time the NHU documentary focussed not only on wildlife in the oceans but on the planet as a whole. Therefore, the series provides scenes on very diverse species of flora and fauna. Each episode is accompanied by a separate short episode, which focusses on how a specific part of that episode was filmed. Besides, the production of the *Planet Earth* nature documentaries was accompanied by another series called *Planet Earth: The Future*. This three-episode series focusses specifically on some of the political questions related to the environment, such as how to preserve wildlife or how to make sure humans and nature can benefit from each other. However, these series were not broadcasted together, so the political side of nature conservation did not reach as broad an audience as it might have if they were combined.

As table 6 (page 72) shows, both series do portray more cases of human influence on the environment during its episodes than *The Blue Planet* did. Climate change is directly mentioned twice during the main series, specifically during the episode *Ice World*.⁹³ Here the series shortly touched upon rising temperatures causing the ice to melt faster in spring, leaving polar bears without a habitat. Most notable, however, is how David Attenborough describes a marine feast for birds, fish and whales during a plankton bloom in Alaska. With dramatic music on the background, he comments on how these scenes might not be around forever:

*“Such gargantuan harvests depend on the continuing fertility of the oceans. But global changes now threaten the blooms of plankton, on which the whales depend. Once and not so long ago 300.000 blue whales roamed the oceans. Now less than 3% of that number remains. Our planet is still full of wonders. As we explore them so we gain not only understanding, but power. It’s not just the future of the whale that today lies in our hands, it’s the survival of the natural world in all parts of the living planet. We can now destroy or we can cherish. The choice is ours.”*⁹⁴

⁹² BBC (2006). Annual Report and Accounts 2006/2007.

⁹³ Alastair Fothergail (November 2006). *Planet Earth: Ice Worlds*[Film]. BBC, min. 25-26, 39.

⁹⁴ Alastair Fothergail (December 2006). *Planet Earth: Ocean Deep* [Film]. BBC, min. 46-47.

Statements like these mark how *Planet Earth* covers the human impact on the environment more extensively than *The Blue Planet*. This is also evident in how the human impact on wildlife is mentioned twenty times during the regular episodes, while environmental degradation is addressed almost ten times. Yet, the series also complies with its statement in the opening sentences, in that it will focus on the remaining wildernesses and the natural scenes it provides. Overall, the amount of messages regarding environmental issues caused by humans remains minimal when spread over its eleven episodes. Besides, even when changes to the environment are mentioned, the human cause is rarely addressed. For instance in episode five, *Deserts*, when the decline of Bactrian camels is addressed, the human cause of this decline is left aside.⁹⁵ This episode even features an environmental change of a desert, Death Valley in the United States, but instead of focussing on increasing drought or rising temperatures it depicts a rare moment in which the desert blooms for the first time in a hundred years.⁹⁶ The fact that climate change is not mentioned in an episode that focusses on the increasingly expanding deserts, also shows how moments in which this issue could be addressed are left untouched.

Planet Earth: The Future contains more content related to climate change in its three episodes: *Saving Species*, *Into the Wild*, and *Living Together*. If these episodes are taken into account, the political message in the series as a whole is much more extensive. Especially the amount of activating messages compared to informative messages is high, which implies that the series takes more effort to convince the audience of the importance to take action against human interference in the environment. These statements are often accompanied by scenes focussed on current actions which address the human impact on nature:

“This is a time when our planet is under assault, like never before. And we are only beginning to realise how severe the consequences may be for the quality of our own lives, and for the quality of our children’s lives. And for me the only good news of this picture is that we can also see glimmers of a solution.”

Once again, this message shows some similarities with the content of the British speeches at the UN during this period. Both sources show an increasing number of results from 2006 onwards. Moreover, they both have a relatively large amount of activating messages.

⁹⁵ Alastair Fothergail (April 2006). *Planet Earth: Deserts* [Film]. BBC, min. 3-4.

⁹⁶ Alastair Fothergail (April 2006). *Planet Earth: Deserts* [Film]. BBC, min. 43-44.

Yet, looking closer at the content of these messages, there are many differences. For instance, the UK touched upon climate change in its UN speeches between 2006 to 2008 more often than in any other period between 1997 and 2021. *Planet Earth*, however, focusses mainly on the human impact on wildlife and to a lesser extent on environmental degradation. When looking at the years leading up to 2006, British climate diplomacy was slowly becoming more important. However, it remained very limited, which does not explain the increasing attention to the human impact on nature between *The Blue Planet* and *Planet Earth*. The BBC Board of Governors was at the time that *Planet Earth* was broadcasted, in early 2006, completely appointed by Labour governments.⁹⁷ This could cause the similarities between the message in the nature documentaries and the British speeches, although differences still remain.

The changing message on climate change in *Planet Earth* is even harder to explain when looking at the personal background of its producers. Like *The Blue Planet*, *Planet Earth* was produced by Alastair Fothergill and narrated by David Attenborough. Therefore, the changes in content do not seem to comply with changes in those producing. The episode *Saving Species*, part of the *Planet Earth: The Future* series, provides some insight into the views of main producer Alastair Fothergill. During this episode he describes how hard it can be to shoot footage of species that are threatened or even on the brink of extinction. On the other hand he highlights those who are working to save these species and even states that he thinks there still is a lot of wilderness left.⁹⁸ This does fit the narrative of the series, especially the *Planet Earth: The Future* episodes. However, this does not explain why this was not the message in *The Blue Planet* back in 2001. Instead, the signs of concern about the human impact on nature match the political narrative of the UK internationally better. Especially, the three episodes in the *Planet Earth: The Future* series take on more of these political issues.

Frozen Planet - 2011

2011 was a productive year for the NHU, releasing two major productions: *Human Planet* in the spring and *Frozen Planet* in the fall. Both reached considerable audiences, though the latter was watched by more people within the UK and broadcasted more often internationally.⁹⁹ These productions show how the NHU started focussing more on the interaction between humans and nature. This is immediately clear from the title of *Human*

⁹⁷ BBC (2006). Annual Report and Accounts 2006/2007.

⁹⁸ Alastair Fothergill (November 2006). *Planet Earth: The Future; Saving Species* [Film]. BBC, min. 1-5.

⁹⁹ BBC (2011). Annual Report and Accounts 2011/2012; BBC (2012). Annual Report and Accounts 2012/2013.

Planet, but the same is true for *Frozen Planet*. The seven episode series focusses specifically on the polar regions of our planet, taking the viewer to both the Arctic and the Antarctic. As the regions covered by the series are fixed, most episodes focus on a specific season. Every episode starts, for instance, with a scene about a polar bear family, showing the audience how their life is influenced by the seasons. These scenes range from polar bears fighting for a mate, to their cubs being born and raised, but also to images of how their polar habitat is deteriorating by climate change. This shows the producers tried to engage viewers with the fate of these animals and how climate change is causing harm to their environment.

Though this already is an example of how the human impact on nature is portrayed more emphatically in the series, there are more direct images of this growing focus as well. Especially in the first and sixth episode, *Frozen Planet* describes its narrative based on polar travels in the early twentieth century. Specifically, the series focusses on the British explorer Robert Scott, who reached the South Pole just five weeks after the first man set foot there, the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. Choosing to focus on this ill-fated journey, instead of on that of Amundsen, seems to show how the BBC tries to bring the story of this possibly lesser known British hero to a broader audience.

Therefore, *Frozen Planet* marks a clear increase in the number of scenes dedicated to the human impact on nature. Table 7 (page 73) shows that climate change is mentioned in fifteen scenes, while environmental changes are discussed over fifty times. Most of these mentions are, however, accompanied by some degree of uncertainty about the exact cause and impact of these changes. This is for instance evident in the last episode, *On Thin Ice*:

“But something significant is likely to happen here at the North Pole soon. Chances are that sometime within the next few decades, perhaps even as soon as 2020, there will be open water here for the first time in human recorded history. The Arctic and Antarctic are changing. Enormous masses of ice that have been frozen for thousands of years are breaking apart and melting away. [...] However it’s hard to predict exactly what impact these changes will have”¹⁰⁰

In this scene with vast, untouched polar landscapes, accompanied by dramatic and dramatic music, David Attenborough directly addresses the viewer on the issue of climate change. However, this is the only activating message in the whole series.

¹⁰⁰ Alastair Fothergail (December 2011). *On thin Ice* [Film]. BBC, min. 1-2, 47.

On the other hand, *Frozen Planet* marks a clear increase in the total number of times that the human impact on the environment is discussed. Changes to the wildlife are discussed 25 times, most of which are related to humans. Besides, human pollution is shown another four times. The clearest change in how the relation between humans and nature is addressed in the series, however, is in the amount of times that the impact of climate change on humans is shown. This topic was not even addressed once in *The Blue Planet*, nor in *Planet Earth*. During all episodes of *Frozen Planet*, however, a total of eighteen times such issues are discussed. Thus, taken as a whole, the 2011 series shows a clear increase in the attention for the human impact on environment.

Although the first episode does contribute somewhat to this amount, the four seasonal episodes do not once address one of the categories taken into account by this analysis. Almost all results are from the last two episode of the series. The sixth episode, *The Last Frontier*, focusses on how mankind lives in the polar regions. Therefore, this episode makes up all of the results in the fourth category, on pollution, mining and other ways of how humans directly influence nature. These scenes are centred around how these people exploit the resources of the polar regions, showing for instance how people are hunting walruses. Still, most of the scenes are later rationalised by stating that this is part of their culture or necessary to survive, while mining for resources is seen as inevitable.¹⁰¹

The last episode *On Thin Ice*, however, provides even more results. As shown in table 7 (page 73), almost three-quarters of the total amount of results are from this episode alone. *On Thin Ice* provides a clearer picture of how climate change has affected the polar regions, by showing melting icecaps or glaciers falling apart. Most notably, it portrays how the polar bears, who have been followed throughout the series, are unable to adapt to the melting of their habitat. Moreover, this episode focusses especially on how these changes will affect humanity itself. The change in tone is evident in the last sentence of the series:

*“The Poles, north and south, may seem very remote, but what is happening here is likely to have a greater effect upon us than any other aspect of global warming. If the Arctic sea-ice continues to disappear, it will drive up the planet's temperature more quickly and the melting ice sheets could contribute to a sea level rise of a meter, enough to threaten the homes of millions of people around the world's coasts by the end of the century.”*¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Alastair Fothergill (November 2011). *The Last Frontier* [Film]. BBC, min. 22, 30-32, 46.

¹⁰² Alastair Fothergill (December 2011). *On thin Ice* [Film]. BBC, min. 47-48.

Interestingly, exactly this last episode created discussion both within the UK and abroad. Not only did some conservative voices within the country declare the episode was based on ‘speculation’, internationally *On Thin Ice* was not always received well too. In multiple countries, including for instance China, the episode was not aired. Even in the US the episode was originally not included in the broadcasting schedule, though this was eventually revised.¹⁰³ This could mean that most international audiences only got to see the first six episodes, that included only a limited amount of scenes on climate change.

The British political situation during this period is interesting for this analysis as well. The BBC management structure had been up to discussion for decades. The system changed in 2007, under the previous Labour government, in which the BBC Trust was put in place of the Board of Governors. Although this did not change much in the selection procedure of those in power, two of its new ‘public purposes’ would be “representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities” and “bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK”.¹⁰⁴ From this moment onwards, the BBC therefore was almost explicitly part of British nation branding.

Since the coalition government between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats had been in power for about a year when *Frozen Planet* was broadcasted in 2011, they could now choose who became part of the BBC Trust and thus influence how the BBC would represent the UK. However, some of those involved in the Trust were appointed during the previous Labour government.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the BBC’s representation of the UK internationally cannot be linked completely to the government’s views of the time. When looking at the results of the analysis in the previous chapter, the increase in attention towards climate change within the BBC documentaries does not fit the lack of speeches on the issue during this period. When compared to what the current academical literature describes as the British climate policy at the time, however, both do fit almost perfectly. Besides the fact that an increase in the total amount of results does comply with the literature’s assumption that climate change was part of the narrative of the coalition government between in 2011, content wise there are similarities as well. Especially the way in which climate change is described within a frame of uncertainty fits prime minister Cameron’s narrative, as described by

¹⁰³ Rajesh, M. (2021, August 25). *David Attenborough: Frozen Planet was not alarmist about climate change*. The Guardian. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2012/jan/03/david-attenborough-frozen-planet-climate-change>.

¹⁰⁴ BBC (2006). Annual Report and Accounts 2006/2007, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵ BBC (2011). Annual Report and Accounts 2011/2012.

Ledouble and Gouirand. This seems to imply two things at once. Firstly, the analysis of the British speeches on climate change during this period might not reflect the British climate diplomacy well. Secondly, the message on climate change in *Frozen Planet* matches the narrative of the UK government as described by current academic literature and might therefore be part of British nation branding.

Still, the personal background of those producing *Frozen Planet* might also have influenced its narrative. Again, the production team consisted of people that were part of the previous documentaries, such as Alastair Fothergill and David Attenborough. Even Vanessa Berlowitz, the producer responsible for the last episode, which saw most of the results of the analysis of *Frozen Planet*, was already part of the *Planet Earth* team. The two episodes from the 2006 series she directed, *Mountains* and *Icy Worlds*, did not stand out in their message on climate change. Besides, in footage on her experiences shooting *Frozen Planet* she only described the encounters with those humans living at the poles and the history of the Scott expedition. Leaving out climate change or its impact on that ecosystem seems to indicate that this aspect was less important to her, which does not match the number of results in her episode *On Thin Ice*.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, the clear increase in the amount of times that the impact of humans on nature is depicted in *Frozen Planet* seems to match most with the British discourse as described by the academical literature. Especially the narrative on climate change, how its effects are nuanced or taken with some uncertainty, matches previous research. Especially when also taking into account that since 2007 the BBC Trust sees representing the UK internationally as part of its missions, *Frozen Planet* seems to at least to some extent part of British nation branding.

Planet Earth II - 2016

With the release of *Planet Earth II* in 2016, the NHU made a sequel exactly ten years after the BBC aired one of its most successful documentaries, *Planet Earth*. This time, the series became an even bigger success. Drawing between eleven and fourteen million viewers in the UK and airing internationally on multiple broadcasting networks, including BBC's own international channels, *Planet Earth II* amassed a major audience worldwide. The nature documentary series won multiple awards and received high rates from reviews and critics.¹⁰⁷ Its six episodes focused, similarly to its predecessor *Planet Earth*, on the different biomes

¹⁰⁶ BBC (n.d.). *BBC One - Frozen Planet - Vanessa Berlowitz*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/profiles/4fW7rC68PynVvKsDxPcM7XH/vanessa-berlowitz>

¹⁰⁷ BBC (2017). Annual Report and Accounts 2016/2017.

present on this planet. Therefore, all kinds of animals are documented in the series, ranging from scenes showing see-through frogs fighting wasps, birds jumping ten feet in the air to be visible in the tallest grass on earth and new-born lizards trying to escape a horde of chasing snakes.

Table 8 (page 73) shows that, different from previous series, almost all episodes of *Planet Earth II* discuss the effects of humans on the environment. This guarantees that even those who have only watched one episode will have seen some of these messages. However, in total, the human impact on nature is discussed less than in *Frozen Planet*. Especially climate change itself is rarely cited during *Planet Earth II*. Only three times does Sir David Attenborough discuss climate change directly, instead focussing mostly on the environmental changes caused by it. Contrary to *Frozen Planet*, this series does not mention the impact of climate change on humans once. Instead, *Planet Earth II* focusses solely on how this issue affects flora and fauna, while trying to propagate the bond we as humans have to these animals or habitats. A scene showing Indri lemurs in Madagascar, accompanied with saddening music, sums up the image that the series wants to portray with regard to climate change:

“Indri are so closely adapted to living here that now they can live nowhere else. For them and the billions of animals with whom they share their home, the jungle is a sanctuary. But this is changing. Even in the ten years since the head of this family was born, one million hectares of the rainforest have been destroyed in Madagascar alone, and, with it, half the indri families that once lived there. The local people say the indris are our brothers and their song is a call to remind us that we, too, once depended on the jungle. This Eden is still a place of wonder and magic. Something, surely, worth protecting.”¹⁰⁸

One episode particularly stands out. The sixth and last episode called ‘Cities’ continues a trend in these nature documentary series, in which the last episode focusses on the interaction between humans and nature. This episode on its own makes up the plurality of the times that the impact of humans on nature is mentioned, especially the impact of humans on other species. However, these scenes do not necessarily show a negative human impact. The episode includes, for instance, scenes on how monkeys, leopards and hyenas are able to live

¹⁰⁸ Vanessa Berlowitz (November 2016). *Jungles* [Film]. BBC, min. 48-49.

in relative harmony with humans. On the other hand, most of these scenes still show a negative human influence on nature, such as the impact of invasive species or turtle hatchlings that are run over because they are confused by artificial lighting. Showing these overrun hatchlings laying on the road and other turtles trying desperately to escape sewage, the episode concludes:

“This turtle is one of the countless species that have been unable to adapt to the change brought about by the urban environment. Only a small number of animals have managed to find ways of living alongside us. And every ten years, an area the size of Britain disappears under a jungle of concrete. But it doesn't have to be like this. Could it not be possible to build cities more in harmony with nature?”¹⁰⁹

The episode then again proceeds on a positive note, however, showing some of the possible solutions to tackle the human impact on nature. As a whole, the opening lines of *Planet Earth II* sum up its message regarding climate change: “It’s been 10 years since we explored these wonders, in the first series of *Planet Earth*. And since then, much has changed.”¹¹⁰ The focus of the series has changed as well, increasingly relating every episode and every scene to the human impact on nature. However, most of these scenes do not speak of climate change directly, nor do they show the human influence as negative. Instead, *Planet Earth II* has a relatively high amount of activating messages, trying to engage the audience in how it is still possible to change humanity towards becoming a positive impact on our environment.

When looking at the political context of this series, a new Conservative government came into power in the UK during 2015. This year saw a spike in results on climate change within the British speeches at the UN, while academical research suggests the UK profiled itself as leader within climate diplomacy leading up to the Paris Agreement in the same year. The UK taking a leading role in climate diplomacy seems to line up with the fact that all episodes of *Planet Earth II* at least pay some attention to the human impact on nature, which was not the case in the previous series. Besides, the positive message that was part of especially the episode *Cities* matches the focus of the 2015 speeches on what is already done to combat climate change. 2016, however, saw almost no attention towards the human impact on nature within the British speeches. As all members of the BBC Trust were now chosen in a period in which the Conservative Party held at least partial power, this might explain why the

¹⁰⁹ Vanessa Berlowitz (December 2016). *Cities* [Film]. BBC, min. 44-45

¹¹⁰ Vanessa Berlowitz (November 2016). *Islands* [Film]. BBC, min. 1

decline in the *Planet Earth II* results compared to *Frozen Planet* is in line with the lack of results in the British speeches of 2016. As the analysis of the nature documentaries only shows a development per five years, however, this correlation cannot be affirmed completely.

The difference between the messages on climate change in *Planet Earth II* and the BBC's previous documentaries, could also have been caused by its producers. The series is the first in this analysis which was not directed by Alastair Fothergill. However, with Vanessa Berlowitz as executive producer and David Attenborough remaining as narrator, there still is continuity with previous NHU series. Of the remaining *Planet Earth II* team, almost all have a background in biology or zoology, lining up with the respective episode they worked for.¹¹¹ For instance, the main producer of the last episode 'Cities', Fredi Devas, has a background in the interaction between humans and nature in Africa. That the episode, which featured most scenes concerning this interaction, was directed by him might therefore not come as a surprise. The personal background of the *Planet Earth II* producers thus does line up with its message. As there is still a lot of continuity with the production teams of previous nature documentary series, it is again hard to describe the differences in the content of these series to the personality of the producers. Instead, the political background of the period seems to match up better with these changes in the narrative on climate change. However, the remarkable dip in the total amount of results compared to the previous and following documentary series analysed in this thesis is difficult to explain by both the political and the personal background hypotheses.

A Perfect Planet - 2021

The last documentary that is analysed in this chapter, *A Perfect Planet*, was broadcasted by the BBC in early 2021. Although it did not reach out to as broad an audience as *Planet Earth II*, the series was one of the most viewed programmes of the BBC, both within the UK and on its international platforms.¹¹² Its five episodes focus on different natural forces, that shape our planet and the life upon it. This ranges from scenes of erupting volcanoes, to the heat of the sun scorching deserts, to the interaction between weather and ocean currents. The last episode, however, focusses on a natural force that is more interesting for this thesis: humans.

Therefore, once again, the NHU documentary series has a final episode focussing specifically on the impact of humans on nature. Despite this fact, the series never touches

¹¹¹ BBC Media Centre (n.d.). *Biographies*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/mediapacks/planet-earth-ii/biogs>.

¹¹² BBC (2021). Annual Report and Accounts 2020/2021.

upon the category pollution. As was the case with *Planet Earth II*, however, all episodes discuss the other three categories used in this analysis. For the first time, however, these episodes always include mentions of climate change specifically. This results in the highest amount of results per hour of programming of all analysed nature documentary series, as is shown in table 9 (page 73). In total, climate change itself is addressed 60 times, while environmental changes are discussed another 46 times. Where *Frozen Planet* focussed on the impact of climate change on humans and *Planet Earth II* only on the impact of humans on the nature, *A Perfect Planet* is a combination of both. The impact of humans on animals is described a total amount of 56 times. This includes, for instance, images of koalas on fire during mayor bushfires caused by rising temperatures. At the same time, the documentary series discusses how rising temperatures will impact humanity. For instance, it describes how rising sea levels and droughts will cause “the greatest migration in human history”.

This is especially the case in the last episode *Humans*. As is shown in table 9 (page 73), more than twice the amount of results in every category stem from this episode, including a notable increase in activating messages compared to the previous documentaries. These scenes show, for instance, how increased carbon emissions cause more extreme weather, or how elephants are affected by drought or the impact of overfishing. However, after every scene of negative human impact on nature, the episode provides possible solutions. It shows, for instance, reforestation projects, a nursery for orphaned elephants and patrols at sea that protect marine wildlife.¹¹³ The change in atmosphere created between these opposite scenes is worth mentioning, as most scenes of negative human impact are accompanied with slow and dramatic music. On the other hand, when possible solutions are discussed, the music becomes more uplifting and optimistic. *Humans* also includes scenes of people affected by climate change or helping to counter it. These people then describe what they think about the human impact on nature. The scenes focus mostly on younger people, but include quotes that try to emphasize the importance to stop humanity’s negative impact for older people. They for instance mention that we need to act for “our children and grandchildren.”¹¹⁴ The essence of this episode and *A Perfect Planet* as a whole is nicely summed up in David Attenborough’s last sentence:

*“Right now, we have the capacity and knowledge to stop the damage we are doing.
But what we don't have is time. The next generation are a source of inspiration and*

¹¹³ Alastair Fothergail (January 2021). *Humans* [Film]. BBC, min. 7-10, 28-29.

¹¹⁴ Alastair Fothergail (January 2021). *Humans* [Film]. BBC, min. 15, 47-48.

hope. But we all have a responsibility to reduce our carbon footprints, harness the forces of nature for our energy and protect the natural world. The survival of humanity and our fellow creatures on Earth depends upon it."¹¹⁵

Due to how recent *A Perfect Planet* was broadcasted, it is more difficult to place the series within its political context than the previously analysed nature documentaries. The current academical literature lacks information on the last couple of years of British climate diplomacy. Therefore, *A Perfect Planet* can only be compared to the analysis of the UK speeches at the UN from the previous chapter. First of all, the peak of results in the UN speeches during 2020 matches perfectly with the peak of results in this nature documentary from early 2021. The subsequent decrease in attention for climate change within the British speeches in 2021 remains striking when looking at the results of the analysis of *A Perfect Planet*. However, this documentary series was aired in January of that year, making the 2021 results seem to be unrelated. Content wise, the similarities between the British speeches and the NHU series remain. *A Perfect Planet* touches upon biodiversity multiple times, where previous nature documentaries did not. This matches the attention that this issue got in the UK speeches in 2019 and 2020. Besides, these speeches focussed on the same categories as *A Perfect Planet* did: climate change, environmental degradation and impact on wildlife. This makes for a strong correlation between British climate diplomacy and the BBC's programming during this period.

Interestingly, in 2017 the BBC once again got a different management structure. After ten years of being governed by the BBC Trust, the Conservative government replaced this institution by the BBC Board. This new structure partially limits the political influence on its composition, as only five members are directly appointed by the government. Besides, an external, though government-approved, regulation authority called Ofcom was appointed to keep oversight. However, the remaining members of the BBC Board are chosen by those appointed by the government, therefore maintaining some political influence.¹¹⁶ Another important continuity is the fact that the 'public purposes' of "representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities" and "bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK" remained in this new management structure. Seeing the similarities in how the human impact of nature is discussed in both the British climate diplomacy and in the NHU documentaries,

¹¹⁵ Alastair Fothergill (January 2021). *Humans* [Film]. BBC, min. 48-49.

¹¹⁶ BBC (n.d.). *BBC Board*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/howweare/bbcboard>; BBC (2021). Annual Report and Accounts 2020/2021.

this implies that the political influence on the BBC remained to some extent even within this BBC Board.

When looking at the personal background of the production team of *A Perfect Planet*, Alastair Fothergill makes an interesting comeback as the executive producer. Together with narrator David Attenborough, he provides a long lasting continuity in the production team of the analysed nature documentaries that has only been interrupted somewhat by *Planet Earth II*. Besides, two of the remaining three episode directors have been part of the production teams of one of the other analysed documentary series.¹¹⁷ The notable exception is Nick Shoolingin-Jordan, who produced the episode *Humans* that saw the most results of all episodes in *A Perfect Planet*. He does have a long history in producing documentary series on nature or geography. Remarkably, Shoolingin-Jordan does not describe himself as specifically passionate about nature and the impact of humanity on it. Instead, he seems to focus on humans and the challenges they face.¹¹⁸ Although it is therefore not strange that he directed the episode *Humans*, his personal background does not necessarily fit the narrative of this episode that focusses mostly on the human impact on the environment.

All in all, *A Perfect Planet* shows the most extensive content on climate change of all analysed documentaries. It provides both a perspective on how this issue impacts nature, the animals living within it and humanity as a whole. By ensuring that this message is to some extent present in all episodes, it is clear that this narrative is a main part of what the documentary series is meant to show to its audience. This is amplified by its last episode, clearly showing how humans have become one of the main factors of impact on nature. This perspective fits the narrative of the British speeches at the UN of the time, implying that the BBC still can be seen as part of the British nation branding despite its new governing structure. At the same time the personal background of the producers of *A Perfect Planet* does not seem to be able to explain its narrative on climate change. Not only is the increase in attention to the human impact on nature difficult to explain by the continuity in the production team of *A Perfect Planet* compared to the previously analysed documentary series. The personal background of the producer of the episode with the most results, *Humans*, does not necessarily fit its content as well. Therefore, the political context of the time does seem to explain this series narrative better than the personal context of its producers.

¹¹⁷ IMDb (n.d.). *Ed Charles*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3482115/>; IMDb (n.d.). *Huw Cordey*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm2142682/>.

¹¹⁸ IMDb (n.d.). *Nick Shoolingin-Jordan*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm2085757/>; Directors UK (n.d.). *Nick Shoolingin-Jordan*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://directors.uk.com/users/1655>.

Conclusions

This chapter shows that the narrative with regard to the human impact on nature has changed within NHU documentaries. *The Blue Planet* did not cover climate change once in 2001 and only discussed the other three categories sparingly. In contrast, *A Perfect Planet* from 2021 saw by far the most results, including elaborate discussion of climate change itself. Overall, a steady increase in attention for the human impact on nature is visible in the BBC nature documentaries. The only exception is a slight dip in the results of *Planet Earth II* in 2016. When compared to the result of the analysis of the British speeches at the General Assembly, the changing content within the NHU documentaries fits the narrative in these speeches regularly. Especially the limited attention for the human impact on nature in 2001, the increase of results in 2006 and the clear overlap between their message in 2020 show a correlation between both narratives. Besides, the documentary series with the most activating messages, *Planet Earth* (2006), *Planet Earth II* (2016) and *A Perfect Planet* (2021) were made in a period which saw a sudden increase in attention for climate change within British climate diplomacy.

Still, the narrative in the NHU documentaries did not always fit the narrative within the British speeches. This is mainly the case in the 2011 *Frozen Planet* and the 2016 *Planet Earth II*. However, both do match the description of the British climate diplomacy in current academical literature. This is especially the case with the results of *Frozen Planet*, which line up with the increase in climate policy during the coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats that is described in previous research. Therefore, most documentaries seem to fit their political context to some extent. Besides, since 2007, nation branding is implicitly part of the BBC's missions by "representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities" and "bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK".

On the other hand, when looking at the personal background of the producers of the nature documentaries, the main conclusion is that there is a lot of continuity between their production teams. Both Alastair Fothergill, executive producer of four of the documentary series, as well as narrator David Attenborough, who participated in all of them, are an example of this. Therefore, it is difficult to relate a changing narrative within the NHU documentaries to a rarely changing production team. Still, the personal interests of these producers could have changed over time and all had at least some affinity with the natural world. However, this change in personal interests is hard to analyse due to limited sources. Besides, when there is information available, such as with Shoolingin-Jordan, the personal background of those producing the documentaries does not always fit their message on

climate change. The following chapter will conclude on how these results relate to the research question and hypotheses of this master thesis.

Conclusion

This master thesis focussed on the correlation between the narrative on climate change within British diplomacy and BBC programming. Specifically, the research question that has been central to this research reads: ‘to what extent has the narrative on climate change within BBC programming been part of British nation branding since the 1997 Kyoto protocol until 2021?’ To be able to answer the research question, the first part of this research focussed on the sub question: ‘How has the narrative on climate change developed in British diplomacy between 1997 and 2021?’. To answer the first sub question, this research has analysed the current academic literature pertaining the role of climate change within British diplomacy. The findings of previous research were subsequently complimented with an analysis of speeches by representatives of the United Kingdom at the General Assembly of the United Nations. Both sources generally depicted similar developments in the narrative on climate change within British climate diplomacy. Most notably, the steady increase in attention to climate change during the Labour governments between 1997 and 2010 was evident in both sources. However, the leading role of the UK within international climate diplomacy during the Blair’s coalition government between 2010 and 2015 that is depicted in the academic literature was not apparent within the analysis of the British speeches. Still, based on both kinds of sources, the answer to the first sub question is that climate change steadily became a more important part of British diplomacy, whenever there were no other major crises. The notable exception to this conclusion is the increase in attention for climate change during the Covid Pandemic, which provides a new insight in contemporary British climate diplomacy.

The second part of this master thesis focussed on the two other sub questions: the second sub question ‘how has the narrative on climate change developed within NHU documentaries between 1997 and 2021?’; and the third sub question ‘to what extent does the narrative of climate change within British speeches at the UN fit the narrative that the UK government propagates within its international climate diplomacy between 1997 and 2021?’ Both questions were answered by an analysis of the changing narrative on climate change within nature documentaries of the NHU, as part of BBC programming. Regarding the second sub question, both climate change specifically and the impact of humans on the environment in general steadily became a more prevalent part of the NHU documentaries. This means that the answer to the third sub question would be that the narrative in British climate diplomacy generally matches the narrative within the NHU documentaries. Especially during the Labour governments, as well as the more recent years of the Conservative governments both narratives mostly line up. Still there are some differences between the analysis of the British

speeches and the NHU documentaries. Especially the limited number of results during Cameron's first government does not match the high amount of results within *Frozen Planet* from 2011. In this case, the results from the 2011 documentary series do line up with the description of the UK as leader in international climate diplomacy that is prevalent within the academic literature. Besides, the correlation between the narrative on climate change within British foreign policy and the NHU documentaries matches the link between British politics and the BBC governance structure. Another possible factor which could explain the attention towards climate change within the nature documentary series is the personal background of those involved in their production. Yet, the continuity within the production teams of the different documentaries does not match their changing narrative, making this factor seem less relevant.

Based on these results, we can answer the main research question of this thesis. The narrative on climate change within the NHU documentaries mostly matches the narrative on the topic within British diplomacy. This seems to confirm the second hypothesis that was composed based on literature of Gadi Wolfsfeld in the first chapter, which states that the message on climate change in BBC programming would be influenced by the British government and its positions on climate change. This implies that the answer to the research question is that BBC programming is part of British nation branding. The existence of the BBC's missions "representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities" and "bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK" since 2007 explicitly support this conclusion. Still, some influence of the personality of the producers of BBC programming cannot fully be excluded by this research, making the hypothesis based on Sarah Oates' News Production Model still potentially valid.

This conclusion provides an interesting new insight into the role of British media within the nation branding by the UK. The BBC seems to, at least partially, present a narrative that suits the image that the British government wants to propagate. This might be generalizable to other public broadcasters with an international audience, which could currently or in the future be implicitly or explicitly part of their state's nation branding. Although the BBC does have an exceptional position as possibly the public broadcaster with the biggest international audience, the conclusions of this research are not limited to the major public broadcasters. The bigger the international audience of a public broadcaster is, however, the bigger would probably be its contribution to the nation branding of that country. With regard to the analysis of British climate diplomacy, this research has especially contributed to the existing academic knowledge on the topic by analysing the importance of climate change

within British diplomacy over the past few years. Besides, the results of the analysis of the British speeches at the UN might indicate an incorrect assumption within current academic literature that the UK had a leading role in climate diplomacy between 2010 and 2015.

Regarding the scholarly debate on the British media system, this master thesis has also confirmed that, even after multiple changes in the BBC's governance structure, it still seems to be influenced by those in power within the UK. This supports the finding of authors like Tom Mills and Philip Schlesinger on the position of the BBC within the British media system, as well as the theories of Wolfsfeld on media in general.

Multiple choices had to be made during this research due to the limited time and resources of a master thesis. For instance, the impact of the personality of those involved in the production of the NHU documentaries was difficult to take into account. While this research has looked at multiple kinds of sources to get an insight into the personality of the main producers of the different series, personalities are hard to quantify and are also changeable. Therefore, this master thesis will not make any definitive conclusions on the role of a producer's personality on the narrative the programming they are involved in. Another limitation to this research was the amount of sources that could be analysed. This master thesis has tried to analyse a representative sample of sources of both the British speeches and the NHU documentaries. Using speeches by representatives of the UK to the UN has ensured that these sources portray the British narrative on an international level. Notwithstanding, additional source material on British climate diplomacy might have provided more nuanced conclusions, as this might have meant less years without any results. The limited results in the analysis of the British speeches between 2010 and 2015 might, for instance, have been caused by a coincidental lack of sources on this topic within the sample of that period. Similarly, this research has taken into account the limited amount of nature documentaries that could be analysed, by making sure that those which were analysed had similar time intervals between their production. This ensures that the analysis of these documentary series provides an overview of the narrative on climate change that leaves as little gaps as possible with the amount of sources available to this research. Still, an analysis of more nature documentaries to spread these samples even better would have resulted in a better depiction of the development of the narrative on climate change within the NHU documentaries.

Therefore, future research could build on this master thesis by analysing more and perhaps different sources, different media or, to provide more insights in the role of British media on British nation branding, which could enhance our knowledge on the relations between media and nation branding in general. Besides, studies on how effective public media

are in their contribution to nation branding would be an interesting addition to this research from the perspective of the public. With regard to this research, for instance, an analysis of the perception of the UK by the international audience of the NHU documentaries would provide an insight into the impact of the nation branding within such medium. Therefore, there is still a lot of potential to find new and different ‘bewildering’ narratives within nature documentaries and other programmes aimed at an international audience.

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Appendix

List of Tables

Category	<i>Style of content</i>	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change		Description of issues related to climate change Examples: ‘climate change’, ‘global warming’, ‘greenhouse gas emissions’	Normative description of issues related to climate change and approval of current or future actions to counter issues related to climate change Examples: ‘renewable energy’, ‘green transport’
Environmental degradation		Description of issues related to changes to the natural environment Examples: ‘desertification’, ‘deforestation’, ‘melting glaciers’	Normative description of issues related to changes to the natural environment and approval of current or future actions to counter changes to the natural environment Examples: ‘regreening’, ‘reforestation’, ‘environmental protection’
Impact on wildlife		Description of the human impact on wildlife Examples: ‘extinction’, ‘overfishing’, ‘hunting’, ‘invasive species’	Normative description of the human impact on wildlife and approval of current or future actions to counter the human impact on wildlife Examples: ‘saving animals’, ‘wildlife area’s, ‘protected species’
Pollution		Description of the human impact on nature that is not directly linked to climate change Examples: ‘litter’, ‘plastic soup’, ‘(oil)spill’	Normative description of the human impact on nature that is not directly linked to climate change And approval of current or future actions to counter this human impact on nature Examples: ‘recycling’, ‘cleaning the oceans’

Table 2: Overview of the terms covered by the four categories used in the analysis of the British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations and the NHU nature documentaries between 1997 and 2021

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Sources	35	23	30	23	19	29	24	44	34	46	45	38

Table 3: Overview of the amount of British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations per year between 1998 and 2009

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Sources	50	48	41	40	44	61	67	69	83	88	71	75

Table 4: Overview of the amount of British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations per year between 2010 and 2021

Category	<i>Style of content</i>	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change		0	0
Environmental degradation		0	0
Impact on wildlife		6	0
Pollution		1	0

Table 5: Results of the analysis of *The Blue Planet*

Category	<i>Style of content</i>	Planet Earth: Regular Series		Planet Earth: The Future	
		<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change		2	0	1	1
Environmental degradation		8	1	3	6
Impact on wildlife		20	4	6	2
Pollution		1	0	0	0

Table 6: Results of the analysis of *Planet Earth II*

<i>Style of content</i> Category	Frozen Planet Episode 1-6		Frozen Planet Episode 7	
	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change	2	0	13	0
Environmental degradation	8	0	45	1
Impact on wildlife	7	0	18	0
Pollution	3	0	1	0

Table 7: Results of the analysis of *Frozen Planet*

<i>Style of content</i> Category	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change	3	0
Environmental degradation	16	3
Impact on wildlife	25	5
Pollution	3	1

Table 8: Results of the analysis of *Planet Earth II*

<i>Style of content</i> Category	A Perfect Planet: Episode 1-4		A Perfect Planet: Episode 5	
	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>	<i>Informative content</i>	<i>Activating content</i>
Climate change	22	1	31	6
Environmental degradation	12	2	25	7
Impact on wildlife	20	2	24	9
Pollution	0	0	0	0

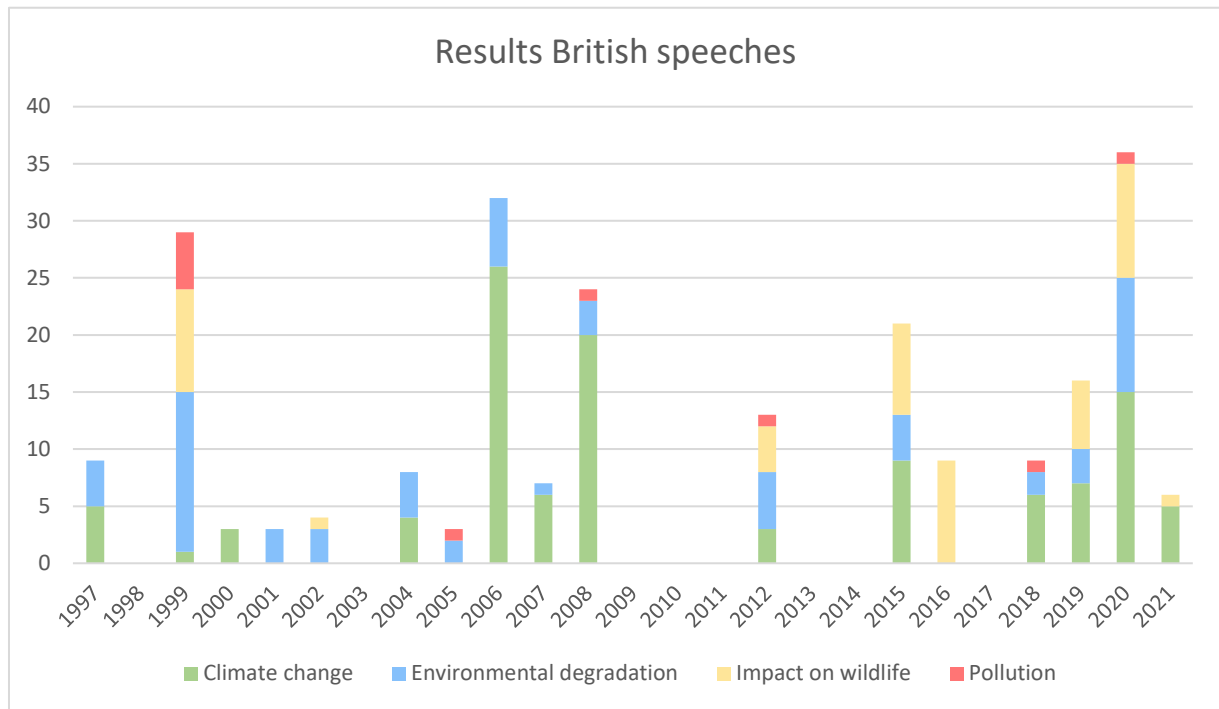
Table 9: Results of the analysis of *A Perfect Planet*

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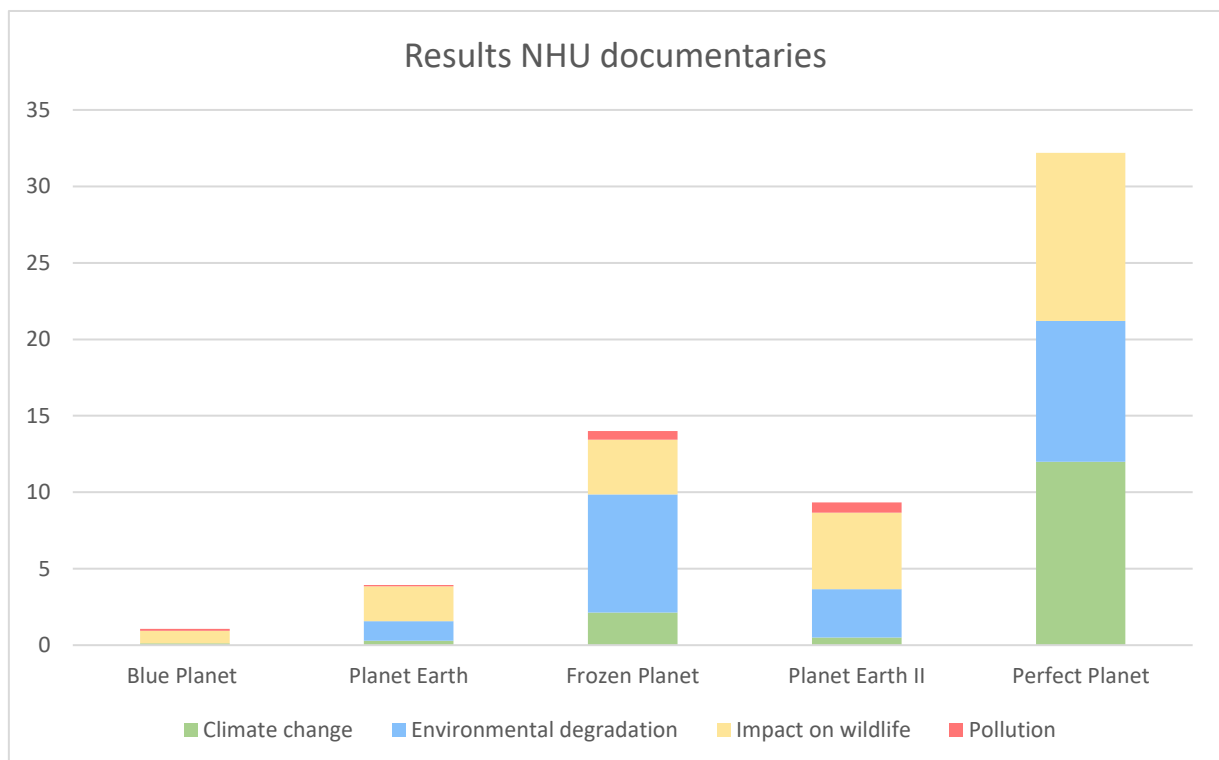
Picture 1, cover page: Map United Kingdom. (z.d.). *WorldMap1*. Retrieved 22 April 2022, from <https://www.worldmap1.com/map-united-kingdom.asp>.

Picture 2, page 13: Oates, S. (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*. Thousand Oaks, Canada: SAGE Publications, p. 26.

List of Graphs



Graph 1: Amount of times that one of the four categories used in the analysis of the British speeches at the General Assembly of the United Nations were discussed per year.



Graph 2: Amount of times that one of the four categories used in the analysis of the NHU nature documentaries were discussed per hour.