universität wien

# MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

## The Securitization of Climate Change: A comparative analysis of climate change discourses in the US and EU security policy


verfasst von / submitted by

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angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien, 2023 / Vienna 2023

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| Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt / degree programme code as it appears on the student record sheet: | UA 066 824 |
| Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt / degree programme as it appears on the student record sheet: | Masterstudium Politikwissenschaft / Master´s degree programme Political Science |
| Betreut von / Supervisor: | Dr. Patrick Müller, Privatdoz. MA. |

Für meine Eltern Irena und Klaus.

Danke für eure immerwährende Unterstützung.
Durch eure Liebe und Taten wurde mir ein neuer Blick auf die Welt geschenkt.

**Abstract (English version)**

This thesis follows the premise that the framing of climate change in the security policy discourse varies significantly between countries regarding the construction of the threat and the respective policies they legitimize (Diez et al., 2016, p. 3). The aim of this work is to (i) exemplify the key similarities and differences between the US and EU conceptualizations of climate change discourses and (ii) analyse the particular frameworks through which the respective discourses are identified, conceptualized and addressed in security policy documents, additionally, (iii) potential explanations for the observed results are given and put into context through findings of relevant literature. Building on the theory of securitization (Buzan et al., 1998) and riskification (Corry, 2012; von Lucke et al., 2014; Diez et al., 2016) a theoretical framework is developed that guides the analysis of the empirical material, methodologically relying on qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2022) and an argumentative discourse analysis approach (Hajer, 1995). The results of the analysis show that the EU and the USA both experienced a securitization of climate change in the late 2010s. At the same time, differences in their respective political systems and unequal power relations, especially concerning the question of who can "speak" security, causes differences between the US and the EU. While the EU remains stable regarding the securitization of climate change throughout the examined period it shifts in the logic of securitization from 2016 on by classifying the issue not as a threat but more and more as a risk. The USA experience drastic changes mostly influenced by the presidential legislature at the time. In that the shift of securitization and threatification under the Obama administration, to de-securitization under the Trump administration, to re-securitization and again threatification under the Biden administration is evident. Additionally, and in line with other scholars the conclusion was made that the conception or framing of climate change in terms of threatification or riskification did not influence the proposed countermeasures causally. Nearly all countermeasures were long-term strategies, indirect actions, and measures to manage rather than eradicate the issue – defining them overwhelmingly as measures of riskification.

Keywords: Securitization, climate change, Copenhagen School/Paris School, threatification vs. riskification, US/EU security policy, transatlantic security politics

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## II. List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| **CAP** | Climate Action Plan |
| **CO2** | Carbon Dioxide |
| **COP** | Copenhagen Conference of Parties |
| **CS** | Copenhagen School |
| **DOD** | Department of Defense |
| **EDA** | European Defence Agency |
| **EEAS** | European Union External Action Service |
| **EGD** | European Green Deal |
| **ESS** | European Security Strategy |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **GHG** | Greenhouse Gases |
| **INDC** | Intended Nationally Determined Contribution |
| **IR** | Individual Riskification |
| **IR** | International Relations |
| **IT** | Individual Threatification |
| **NATO** | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| **NDS** | National Defense Strategy |
| **NSS** | National Security Strategy |
| **PR** | Planetary Riskification |
| **PT** | Planetary Threatification |
| **QDR** | Quadrennial Defense Review |
| **TR** | Territorial Riskification |
| **TT** | Territorial Threatification |
| **UNFCCC** | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| **UR** | Unspecified Riskification |
| **US** | United States |
| **USA** | United States of America |
| **UT** | Unspecified Threatification |

## 1. Introduction

In 2007, the first United Nations Security Council debate on the impact of climate change was held (United Nations, 2007). In the same year, former US Vice President Al Gore was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in raising awareness to the climate crisis at an international political level (The Nobel Prize, n.d). Nearly 15 years later in 2021, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres specified climate change as a "crisis multiplier" with "profound implications for international peace and stability" (United Nations, 2021). These events mark milestones as climate change reached more attention in the public and the academic field (Brzoska, 2009, p. 137) and can be regarded as a new modus operandi with respect to the securitization and the framing of non-traditional issues as security concerns i.e. transnational crime, the environment, human rights, and HIV/AIDS (Detraz & Betsill, 2009, p. 303). Since the end of the Cold War and increasingly since the new millennium many countries and organizations of countries like the European Union (EU) have identified climate change as a security threat and presented it as such in their security strategies and key policy documents (McDonald, 2013, p. 42). Both politically and academically climate change is gaining recognition as a concern to security, however, the significant variations in the reasoning behind this connection imply vastly divergent approaches to addressing climate change as a security issue (McDonald, 2013, p. 42).

Arguing that the framing of climate change in the security policy discourse varies significantly between countries regarding the construction of the threat and the respective policies they legitimize (Diez et al., 2016, p. 3; von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 876), the research of international and domestic policy approaches is an opportunity to analyse the respective political responses comparatively and longitudinal (Cass, 2006, p. 1; McDonald, 2013, p. 42). Accordingly, it is the aim of this thesis to identify key similarities and differences between the US and EU conceptualizations of climate change discourses and analyse the particular frameworks through which the respective discourses are identified, conceptualized and addressed in security policy documents. Building on the theory of securitization (Buzan et al., 1998) and riskification (Corry, 2012; von Lucke et al., 2014; Diez et al., 2016) a theoretical framework is developed that guides the analysis of the empirical material, which methodologically relies on qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2022) and an argumentative discourse analysis approach (Hajer, 1995).

The thesis is compiled of seven substantive chapters: The first chapter contains an introduction to the relevance of the topic and a brief overview of the subject and structure of this thesis. The second chapter comprises of a literature review of relevant research on the topic and proceeds to the concretized research questions along with the contribution to academic research. In the third chapter, the theoretical framework is explained, and an outline of the theories and approaches applied is presented. The fourth chapter provides the methods used and contextualizes them within the theoretical framework. In the fifth chapter, the empirical analysis is conducted. It contains a content analysis in the first part and is extended and supplemented by a discourse analysis. The sixth chapter critically discusses the research findings. And the seventh chapter provides a conclusion of the research findings and possible future areas of study in this context.

## 2. Research Approach

### 2.1. Literature Review

With its seminal publication (Buzan et al. 1998) the Copenhagen School securitization theory initiated three major developments in the academic discourse: (i) it widened the concept of security by expanding the lens of research beyond the military sector, namely to the environmental, economic, societal and political sector, (ii) with its constructivist approach it contributed to a linguistic and discursive turn in IR, making it a "central point of reference" (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 858) within the study of security, and (iii) it broadened the perspective to reference objects as the state unlike before, is not considered the only object that could potentially be threatened (Stępka, 2022, p. 18). Since its initial publication, numerous empirical studies have addressed the specific language used with regards to climate change (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017, p. 1) and researched securitization and threat framing using the Copenhagen School's securitization theory. The scientific publications not only differ significantly concerning the topic of analysis but the use of the conceptual framework, the guiding questions, and the choice of methods. The following is an attempt of providing a comprehensive overview of relevant literature in the academic discourse. This chapter focuses on key publications to issues related to the securitization of climate change and the relevant theoretical implications for this thesis.

*The issue of climate change in the academic debate*

The academic literature on environmental security expanded significantly after the end of the Cold War, as the traditional understanding of security changed and a new (security) era emerged (Barnett, 2001, p. 41). Multiple studies address climate change policy in the geographical context of the EU and the USA. Harris´ (2007) research focused on the causes of European climate change mitigation policies by evaluating initiating forces in the EU and its Member States´ climate change policies and actions through the lens of foreign policy analysis. Other scholars (Schreurs & Tiberghien, 2007) investigated the reasons behind the EU's strong commitment and leadership in tackling climate change despite significant opposition from the US and the incurred economic expenses. Under the hypernym of ´multi-level reinforcement´ the authors Jordan et al. (2012) identified specific features to the EU´s climate governance approach to assess the EU´s ability for leadership. With regards to the US, researchers like Bryner (2008) have investigated the crucial role of environmental groups in the political and institutional context. Another area of inquiry taken upon by Harrison & Sundstrom (2010) is the adoption of domestic implementations of policies countering climate change, in which the

authors have demonstrated the challenge political actors are facing regarding their electoral considerations when linking climate change to economic growth. On a subordinated level scholars have examined the role of regionalism in the U.S. (Below, 2007) and Northern American (Selin & VanDeveer, 2011) environmental security policy. Particularly focusing on the US and EU climate security discourse, Hayes & Knox-Hayes (2014) have identified key differences in the importance of scientific findings and emphasis on security in the discourse rooted in the divergence of cultural and political structures. And on a global level, Detraz & Betsill (2009) explored international environmental security politics by analysing the climate change discourse in the UN Security Council.

*The securitization of climate change in the academic debate*

Interestingly, the environmental sector including the issue of climate change has been described as an example of failed securitization by the authors of the original theory (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 858), arguing that environmental issues do generate *securitization moves* but because the threats are located too distantly in the future, they lead to *politicization* rather than *securitization* (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 82-83). Thereby, although climate change could be constructed as a security threat the authors´ understanding of security comprises a logic of urgency and exceptionalism, and their objective is rationally tied to the state, its defence, and the military (McDonald, 2013, p. 44). In contrast, other scholars (e.g. Trombetta, 2008; Floyd, 2010; Corry, 2012; McDonald, 2013) have urged for a revision of the theory. Following the data from several studies that have identified climate change as successfully securitized, i.e. for the fact that the issue has been and is being discussed on a global agenda, countermeasures are taken by international actors on multiple levels (von Lucke, 2014, p. 858), and that, conversely to the Copenhagen School theory, the meaning of security is not fixed but rather a reflexive process generating meaning and practices (Trombetta, 2008, p. 600). Successful securitization is here understood as the occurrence of discursive acts (or ´speech acts´) in the decisive policy documents resulting in the legitimization of actors, measures, tools and/or resources beyond the sphere of normal politics (Englund & Barquet, 2023, p. 3; Diez et al., 2016, p. 29). Scholars have also argued that "successful securitization does not produce a theoretically pre-defined outcome, but instead empowers political actors to breach the boundaries of normal politics." (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 36).

Climate Change and its securitization has been analysed regarding different objects of reference. Page & Redclift (2002), Patz et al., (2005), Campbell (2008), O'Brien & Barnett

(2013) focused their research on the relation between global environmental change and the concept of human security. The securitization of the health of the environment as the vulnerable object has been described by authors like Dalby (2013) and Hough (2021). Additionally, the state has been viewed as the affected entity by Jasparro & Taylor (2008), Podesta & Ogden (2008), and Salehyan (2008), who have studied how climate change influences transnational and non-state security threats while Le Billon (2001) has researched how the scarcity of natural resources can increase the potential for armed conflicts. Furthermore, an innovative approach to differentiate the logics of securitization was developed by Olaf Corry (2012) who identified first and second-order security politics by detecting a distinct logic of speech acts that transform issues into risks (´riskification´). Arguing that there are distinctions between threat-based issues namely, issues with direct causes of harm, and risk-based issues, which describe conditions with the possibility of harm resulting primarily in only precautionary governance. Building on the ´riskification´ approach of Corry (2012), von Lucke et al. (2014) examined the process of the securitization of climate change. In their empirical research, they used this approach to investigate regional distinctions of climate change by analysing climate security discourses in Germany and the US. This research was then further developed into a comparative and systematic analysis framework to examine four different countries, namely the USA, Germany, Turkey, and Mexico by Diez et al. (2016). In contrast to previous studies investigating either a single country as a case study or conducting a global level overview, the authors (Diez et al., 2016) distinguished between different referent objects and different forms of securitization, accomplishing thereby extensive insight of the dynamics of securitization and in consequently achieve to close an empirical research gap.

## 2.2. Research Questions

These observations build a bridge to what this thesis addresses. Therefore, the following research questions are formulated as:

**RQ1:** How do the EU and the USA conceptualize climate change in their security policy during the period of 2008 and 2022 regarding the concepts of threatification and riskification (Diez et al., 2016)?

**RQ2:** How do the respective conceptualizations impact the specific measures proposed in the analysed policies to counter climate change or the effects thereof with regards to the concepts of threatification and riskification?

Specifically, this thesis investigates (RQ1) whether climate change is conceptualized by either country more in the logic of threatification or of riskification (or if not found in the policy document at all it would be labelled as ´normal politics´, meaning not securitized) and which level of referent object it specifically addresses, namely, either the territorial, the individual or the planetary. It is then examined (RQ2) if the conception of climate change – meaning the categorization of the issue of climate change as riskification or threatification – leads to urgent, short-term, and potentially military action (indicating threat) or long-term, resilience-building, coping strategies (indicating risk). This thesis will focus (i) primarily on identifying key similarities and differences in the conception of climate change as a security issue and (ii) offer potential explanation for the observed results that emerge from the empirical material. The analysis will show that some obtained results from the empirical part of the paper cannot be explained through the theoretical implications presented. In addition, to the systematic comparison the analysis will also identify potential explanations through the observed results in the light of relevant literature. At the same time, it is pointed out that this thesis specifically deals with a novel topic and new theoretical approaches in security policy. Hence, the importance of future research to fill these theoretical gaps is stressed at this point.

The timeframe chosen for the analysis covers the years of 2008-2022. The 2008-2009 period is significant for two reasons: first, there was an important political transition in the United States from the Bush to the Obama Administration and secondly, it was a period of increasing awareness to climate change, highlighted through the "pivotal" Copenhagen Conference of Parties (COP) which was especially important for European climate policy in the end of 2009 (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014), hence the academic discourse around this time is more expansive and makes an adequate starting point for a manageable timeframe.

### 2.3. Contribution to the academic field

The importance of analysing and comparing security policies from different states or territorial regions derives from the fact that at its core security policy is dependent on the exterior environment, international events, and actions/countermeasures performed by other actors, in addition, the issue is becoming increasingly international and complex through the institutionalization of the security architecture, be it the EU, NATO, or other organizations (Eriksson, 2002, p. 88). A common perception of threats is necessary to ensure a willingness to cooperate in matters of security and defence (Andersson, 2015). By analysing the transatlantic relationship through written documents expressing the most vital interest, values, threats,

challenges, and obstacles of both security actors it can become more apparent in which areas they see common ground and by what means cooperation would seem more or less likely. With regards to that, climate change is an intriguing topic as it is a non-traditional and rather new topic on the security agenda (Detraz & Betsill, 2009, p. 303). The gap in the academic literature of systematic comparative analyses across countries has been pointed out whilst arguing that only by comparing it is possible to identify circumstances and consequences of securitization, and emphasize commonalities across national borders (Diez et al., 2016, p. 11). Furthermore, a theoretical approach was chosen that draws on a constructivist perspective of security. This work is based on numerous academic writings that have constructively criticized the Copenhagen School of securitization and called for adaptations of the theory. In this thesis, the attempt was made to build on the advances of these academic contributions and thus use revised theoretical frameworks of the theory of securitization (Buzan et al., 1998) as an adequate means to examine climate security discourses and threat frames in security policy.

In short, an analysis of cross-country climate security discourses is a potential step for understanding common and differing perceptions of threats, challenges, and problem-management. Thus, the examination can aid in predicting possible future areas of cooperation in the domain of environmental security of the transatlantic relationship and increase the understanding of the institutional/ideological setting that leads to diverging interpretations of climate change as a security issue. Building on new approaches in the academic literature such as riskification (Corry, 2012; von Lucke et al., 2014; Diez et al., 2016) to advance the theory of securitization (Buzan et al., 1998) this thesis represents an attempt to apply a new framework to the analysis of climate security discourses and threat frames in security politics and serves as an interesting contribution to the academic discourse.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

In the following I will present the theoretical framework used to answer my research questions. A theoretical framework is tailored to a particular study and can incorporate a multitude of theories or concepts constructed by the researcher to answer specific problems or questions (Vuori, 2017, p. 70). In accordance with that, the present thesis builds on the works of securitization theory (Buzan et al., 1998) and riskification (Corry, 2012, Diez et al. 2016) explained in detail in the following sections.

### 3.1. Theory of Securitization

Securitization theory was first comprehensively introduced by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde (1998) in their book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* and is based on previous works of Waever et al. (1993) and Waever (1995). Essentially, the so-called Copenhagen School of securitization (Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 24) or simply the Copenhagen School (CS) (Trombetta, 2008, p. 587) stands in contrast to realist theories, understanding the concept of security not as given or formed through objective realities but as constructed through social and linguistic interactions of influential actors who define potential threats and the audiences who accept these interpretations (Buzan et al., 1998, Stępka, 2022, p. 18). The rhetorical act of speaking security or the **´speech act´** is central to this constructivist approach, because in the words of the authors: "[..] it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done [..]" (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 26). Securitization theory seeks to explain how issues become defined and treated as matters of security while understanding security as a social construction created through language by securitizing actors, e.g. governments (Corry, 2012, p. 239). One of the basic premises of the theory is that whether there is a security issue or not is determined by the referent object – in most cases that is the state but also humankind, or a collective identity –, therefore, the question is not whether there exists a threat objectively but if and how the reference object presents it as such, which can vary considerably from actor to actor (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 22-24).

In a nutshell, the aim of securitization studies by the authors understanding is to understand who securitizes (actor), what issues (threats), for whom (referent object), for what reason (intention and purpose), with what results (outcome), and under what conditions (structure) (Buzan et al. 1998, p. 32). Additionally, it contrasts traditional theories, e.g. Realism by broadening the agenda. Instead of considering only the military component, the Copenhagen School looks at various sectors: military, political, economic, societal, and environmental

(Buzan et al., 1998, p. vii). Related to the concept of threats, securitization theory analyses perceived threats from all these sectors as opposed to merely the military (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 5) and defines securitization as "constituted by intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency sufficient to have substantial political effects" (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 25), or as Balzacq et al. put it "securitization combines the politics of threat design with that of threat management" (2016, p. 495). Hence, an issue is brought out of the ´normal´ political sphere in which it would be considered politicized (or non-politicized) and is then dramatically presented as an existential threat through a ´speech act´ that justifies acts beyond the scope of usual political procedure (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 23-24). However, the speech act of such an issue would only define a securitizing move, it is a case of securitization only if the specific audience has accepted it as such (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 25).

Although the Copenhagen School has been the recipient of praise in the academic literature (see McSweeney, 1996, p. 81; Trombetta, 2008, p. 587; Corry, 2012) it has also undergone strong conceptual critique (see Dunn Cavelty, 2007, pp. 25-28; Balzacq 2007, 2011, 2016; Floyd, 2010; Nyman, 2013, p. 61; Stritzel, 2014) regarding among other: (1) the insufficient elaboration on the empirical and methodological components (Corry, 2012, p. 240), (2) the lack of determining the specific ´audience´ that must provide the necessary resonance and (3) the objective distinction between ´normal´ and ´extraordinary measures´ that are taken, both critiques that have been admitted by Waever (2003, p. 26). The latter critique refers to the mostly subjective analysis of the researcher to determine if the taken measures are in fact ´extraordinary´ due to the lack of specification of the theory (Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 26). A further critique refers to (4) the singular focus on security as a ´speech act´ and the semantic articulation with a consequential disregard for non-discursive practices of security (Stritzel, 2007, p. 358), as well as the (5) unexplored variable of the ´why´ question, or in other words, the reasons for securitization (Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 28; Floyd, 2010, p. 188).

To overcome some of these critiques the Paris School (Bigo, 2000, 2002; Huysmans, 2002, 2006, Balzacq 2005, 2007, 2016) adopted a new approach looking at **security as a practice**. Now, the focus is no longer limited to rhetorical presentations or the ´speech acts´, but opens the research to governmental practices, whereby the challenge of the ´audience´ as presented in the CS theory can be overcome (Balzacq, 2016, p. 504). Balzacq argues in favour of changing perspectives from a purely discursive-oriented to a practice-oriented approach because policy tools and instruments utilized by security actors to address threats can reveal "how policy-makers translate intentions into concrete actions" (2007, p. 76). Additionally, it is then possible

to examine the processes and transformations of securitization in terms of their extent and magnitude (2007, pp. 92-93). These intentions of (securitizing) actors are based on specific identities, values, and beliefs – that can change or be influenced for example by the institutional setting, the exterior environment, or as a result of policy learning – and contribute to the question of why specific topics are framed as threats and make it onto the agenda (Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 36). On that matter Brauch (2011, p. 61) emphasizes:

> "From a social constructivist approach, security is achieved once the perception and fears of security ´threats´, ´challenges´, ´vulnerabilities´ and ´risks´ are allayed and overcome. While objective factors in the security perception are necessary, they are not sufficient. Subjective factors influence security perceptions. The perception of security dangers depends on the world views or traditions of the analyst (Bill 1977, Wight 1991) and on the mind-set of policy-makers (Booth 1979, 1987:39-66)"

### 3.2. Securitization as a spectrum

Arguing that the understanding of security through the lens of the Copenhagen School is insufficient if extended to the non-traditional sector like the environment (Diez et al., 2016, p. 13), the authors Diez, von Lucke and Wellmann developed a framework that differentiates between reference objects of securitization: territorial, individual, and planetary; and two distinct logics of constructing threats: security and risk (von Lucke, 2018, p. 418). This approach builds on the works of Bigo (2008b), Trombetta (2011), Corry (2012), von Lucke et al. (2014), and Oels & von Lucke (2015), who have argued in favour of regarding risk as an additional security category instead of the binary approach of the Copenhagen School. Consequently, the framework that will be presented enables the researcher to empirically study different variations of (climate) security in political constellations and fora, analyse their success or failure, and compare the distinctive consequences (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 875). This approach views securitization as a ´spectrum´ (Englund & Barquet, 2023, p. 2) consisting of a variety of forms of security. Diez et al., (2016) thereby advocate for a re-conceptualization of politics, security, and risk that views ´riskification´ as a subset of security. Consequently, the Copenhagen School notion of securitization is relabelled as ´threatification´ and its process summarized as ´danger´. Concretely, the authors propose to consider cases of risk and danger as variations of securitization whose definition depend on the degree of threat concretization. **Specifically, ´politics´, ´risk´ and ´danger´ are not considered distinct concepts but rather function as archetypes that represent the endpoints of three dimensions. Thus, the pole ´danger´ is inseparable of either ´risk´ or ´politics´, except for analytical reasoning.** In practice, political actors would move issues through the space by either politicization or securitization, whereby the latter could be distinguished in ´threatification´ or ´riskification´

(Diez et al., 2016, pp. 14-15). In accordance with the Copenhagen School, threats or risks can be understood as a product of social construction that can be altered (Corry, 2012, p. 243). **Threats,** understood as articulations of danger, are imminent and time sensitive (Diez et al., 2016, p. 15). **Risks**, by nature can only ever be controlled, but not eliminated. Hence, any threat or danger in terms of time is more distant, which leads to the adoption of a long-term and enduring political approach rather than a temporary one based on emergency and exceptional circumstances (Corry, 2012, p. 245, Diez et al., 2016, p. 15).

The triangle in the figure below is an illustration of the three archetypical forms: **politics, danger,** and **risk** along which threatification or riskification takes place.

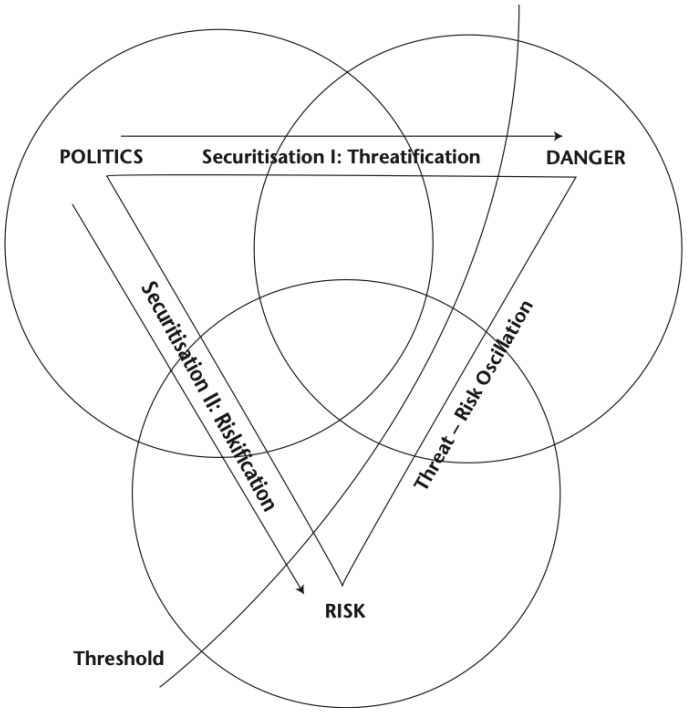


*Figure 1:'The space of politics and security' by Diez et al. (2016, p. 19)*

The process of **threatification** can be identified when issues are framed intentionally so that it moves them closer to the ´danger´ pole, while **riskification** takes place when issues are framed closer to the ´risk´ pole. Alternatively, their political significance can be heightened without invoking any threat (i.e. politicized), or their security invocation can be diminished (i.e. de-securitized). Furthermore, Diez et al. (2016, p. 17) distinguish between **two phases of securitization** (see also Dunn Cavelty (2007), and Balzacq (2011)). In the first phase, an issue is framed as a threat and placed on the political agenda (CS's definition of a ´securitizing move´). In doing so, securitization is understood as a tool, whereby the use of threat serves as an initiating factor to place an issue on the political agenda which otherwise may not be

discussed. Once the threat is on the agenda, the second phase examines the effects these threat frames generate in terms of the adoption of policies that may not have been considered legitimate otherwise, labelling them as ´extraordinary measures´ (Diez et al., 2016, p. 17). The legitimization of **extraordinary measures** using threatification and riskification results in different types of measures (Diez et al., 2016, p. 16). In the form of threatification countermeasures are designed to eliminate the threat or, if impossible to at least move it out of the sphere of ´danger´. Contrarily, riskification operates under the assumption that the threat will have some degree of impact regardless of the proposed actions, therefore, the aim of countermeasures is to reduce the impact of the threat to a manageable level that is not existential. The term ´extraordinary´ is not limited to military or undemocratic contexts, but rather it expands to any policy that prioritizes an issue with a sense of urgency that would not have been considered legitimate without the successful articulation of danger or risk through securitization (Diez et al., 2016, p. 16). Empirically, it is impossible to determine absolute and distinct boundaries between danger and risk as they are not fixed entities (Diez et al., 2016, p. 19). While the presence of policy measures suggests that specific securitizing moves must have been successful, the absence of such measures does not indicate that securitization has not been successful as the evaluation of success does not depend on the existence of policy measures (2016, p. 29; Trombetta, 2011, p. 136). Additionally, the authors insist that risk measures are not less extraordinary than threat measures, urging that policies aimed at mitigating the impact or consequences of climate change through surveillance and preparedness can be as radical in their justification as security measures such as constructing walls or war (Diez et al., 2016, p. 16).

In summary, the created framework (von Lucke et al., 2014; Diez et al., 2016) comprises six climate security discourses categorized in two dimensions: (I) three levels of referent objects, namely, the territorial, the individual, and the planetary, and (II) two logics of securitization: threatification and riskification (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 857). This framework enables "systematic empirical comparisons of climate-security discourses to distinguish different securitizations of climate change in political debates between and across countries, to trace these in political processes and to assess their policy implications." (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 864). For the sake of clarity and to facilitate the basic scheme of rationale, I will first explain the logic of securitization before presenting in depth the three levels of referent objects in relation to the two logics.

### 3.2.1. Logic of Securitization

The logic of securitization concerns the distinction between danger and risk which differ in the way a threat is constructed/framed and the countermeasure it responds to (von Lucke, 2018, p. 419). The following points out key features to distinguish between threatification and riskification.

**Threatification**

According to von Lucke et al (2014, p. 862) the key features of a threat are: existential, direct, and urgent. Hence, if there is a case of threatification, the threat would be framed with those attributes. Threats are independent of the referent object (Diez et al., 2016, p. 15). Security threats are clearly identifiable and must be removed, and/or produce a plan of defence, hence, it demands emergency measures to prevent the threat from emerging at all (von Lucke, 2018, p. 419). Von Lucke et al. (2014) also offer a list of vocabulary indicating threatification or riskification. The keywords in the logic of threatification are: *threat, security, short-term, immediately, urgent, existential, extraordinary, direct, certain, clear-cut, clear, inevitable, emergency, emergency-measures, survival, defence, destruction, eradicate* (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 863).

**Riskification**

The key features of a risk are characterized as: entailing long(er) timeframes and radical uncertainty (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 862). If there is a case of riskification, the threat would be framed as more diffuse and is often not clear about the actual harm, consequences, or the referent object. The threat and the referent object are not independent as the referent object in some cases is producing the threat itself (Diez et al., 2016, p. 15). Furthermore, the threat would be characterized as manageable and only potentially existential. Additionally, it is assumed that a risk cannot be eliminated. Within the risk-based securitization the time frame is broadened and produces rather long-term precautions, long-term strategies, and risk-reducing programs to counteract the causes and reduce the potential consequences of the threat (von Lucke, 2018, p. 419, Diez et al., 2016, p. 32). The keywords in the logic of riskification are: *risk, risk-management, long-term, resilience, probability, risk groups, risk areas, uncertainty, contingency, statistics, diffuse, unclear, indirect, scenario planning, precautionary principle, precaution, risk reduction, preparedness, manageable* (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 863).

### 3.2.2. Levels of Security

The following overview outlines the core assumptions of the framework regarding the levels of referent objects and the specific logic explained in the relevant literature by von Lucke et al. (2014, pp. 863-871), Diez et al. (2016, pp. 20-24) and von Lucke (2018, pp. 417-419). There are three levels of security, namely: territorial, individual, and planetary (von Lucke et al., 2014, p. 862). As they differ when applied to the distinct logic of securitization (see chapter 3.2.1), the description below serves as a clarification of the discourses:

**Territorial danger** at the diagnostic level views the state, geographical region, or a specific territorial order as the referent object. At this level, the threat does not stem from the direct impact of climate change, but from the indirect socio-economic consequences that may affect social structures, like migration movements or terrorism. At the prognostic level, it focuses on extraordinary short-term actions and immediate political or military countermeasures in the countries or regions that are affected by climate change and at risk of instability which potentially could result in conflicts making them a threat to other (industrialized) countries. Legitimized actors are states and their agents (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

**Territorial risk** from the diagnostic viewpoint centres the referent object as risk areas which are determined i.e. through statistical assessments and the focus in this discourse is on the probability of climate-induced conflicts or instability in these areas. At the prognostic level, it focuses on long(er)-term measures, such as the transformation of the referent object for a better preparedness as well as the increase of recoil or adaptation to the impact of climate change (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

**Individual danger** at the diagnostic level focuses on individuals or human communities as the threatened referent objects. The main threats are direct vulnerabilities to the changing environment, i.e. through reduced crop production, water scarcity, and natural disasters. In the prognostic dimension, countermeasures focus on strategies to minimize or completely remove the direct threats to the vulnerabilities that individuals may face due to climatic effects. These strategies include adaptation measures such as development aid, support operations in the aftermath of disasters, humanitarian support for the affected population. The legitimized actors comprise civil society actors, i.e. environmental, and human rights NGOs (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

**Individual risk** at the diagnostic level the referent object are not specific individuals or communities but again statistically assessed groups of people. The discourse focuses on the probability of various effects of climate change on those risk groups and is to a certain degree diffuse and uncertain about the possible impact of these effect. The prognostic dimension includes long-term measures and strategies with a focus on prevention and on building coping capacity and resilience of individuals and groups of people at risk. At the same time and characteristically to riskification the strategies intend to reduce the risk to a manageable level rather than aim to eliminate the threat completely (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

**Planetary danger** at the diagnostic level recognizes the interdependence of humans and the global ecosystem. Hence, the threatened referent object refers to the health of the environment and intact biodiversity. The main threats include the disruption of the ecological balance i.e. through high greenhouse emissions and increasing levels of CO2 in the atmosphere, as well as the destruction of ecosystems through human activities and practices. The prognostic level views as countermeasures immediate and radical measures to stop human activity that harms planetary security, i.e. through restricting greenhouse gas emissions, taxes, or implementing measures to preserve threatened ecosystems or species. The legitimized actors include the international community of states or coalitions thereof (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

**Planetary risk** recognizes statistically identified long-term risks to the global ecosystem as the referent object. The main threat in this category is the resource-intensive economic activity partly, given as a consequence of a growth-centred capitalist system. The prognostic level targets the management of the risk as opposed to the complete eradication of the threat thereby, suggested preventive actions could include the energy efficiency through sustainable energy sources or monetary incentives, i.e. through taxes (von Lucke et al. 2014, pp. 863-871; Diez et al. 2016, pp. 20-24; von Lucke 2018, pp. 417-419).

The logic of securitization (chapter 3.2.1) and the levels of security (chapter 3.2.2) cumulate in a typology of six climate security discourses. In the illustration below, I have created a visual representation of the research framework based on the works of von Lucke et al. (2014, p. 863) and Diez et al. (2016, pp. 21-24). It summarizes the key points of the theoretical framework laid out in the sections above and serves as an analytical template to be applied to the material

under investigation (policy papers, strategies, etc.) for a systematic and empirically replicable operationalization in the analytical part of the thesis. Hence, the presented table can be understood simultaneously as a coding guide for the qualitative content analysis - which is the first step of the analysis and will be further explained in the upcoming chapter as well as a representation of the relevant key elements to distinguish in the discourse analysis – which is the second step of the analysis. The respective levels of the reference objects and associated logics of securitization represent a total of **six deductively defined categories** of the content analysis (Mayring, 2022) as well as six predefined discourses (Hajer, 1995) along which the material will be analysed: Territorial Threatification, Territorial Riskification, Individual Threatification, Individual Riskification, Planetary Threatification, Planetary Riskification.

| Analytical Framework for Climate Security Discourses | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Dimension I: Level of referent object** | | **Dimension II: Logic of securitization** | |
| | | **Threatification** | **Riskification** |
| | | signal words: threat, security, short term, immediately, urgent, existential, extraordinary, danger, direct, certain, clear-cut, clear, inevitable, emergency, emergency measures, survival, defence, destruction, eradicate | signal words: risk, risk management, long term, resilience, probability, risk groups, risk areas, uncertainty, contingency, statistics, diffuse, unclear, indirect, scenario planning, precautionary principle, precaution, risk reduction, preparedness, manageable |
| **Territorial** | referent object | state, region, or territorial order | risk areas identified by statistical risk assessments/scenario planning schemes |
| | main threats | second-order socio-economic and political problems caused by climate-induced conflicts or instability | probability of second-order socio-economic and political problems caused by climate-induced conflicts or instability |
| | actors | states and their agents | states and their agents |
| | counter-measures | political and military interventions in regions affected by climate change | increasing preparedness, readiness of actors, enhance resilience to climate change effects |
| | speech act example | climate change as triggering and increasing violent conflict that endangers state security | climate change as long-term risk for states located in risk areas |
| **Individual** | referent object | individuals, or human communities | individuals, or human communities identified by risk assessments |
| | main threats | direct vulnerabilities to the changing environment, i.e. reduced crop production, water scarcity, and natural disasters | probability of a diverse set of climatic effects for particular risk groups with uncertainty regarding the scope and impact |
| | actors | civil society actors, i.e. environmental and human rights NGOs. | civil society actors, i.e. environmental and human rights NGOs |
| | counter-measures | development aid, disaster relief operations, technical support, or relocation of populations at risk | long-term preventive strategies to mitigate climate change, increasing coping capacity/resilience of communities to impacts |
| | speech act example | climate change as endangering daily food and water supplies | climate change as increasing the risk of periodic flooding |
| **Planetary** | referent object | health of environment/ intact biodiversity | health of the statistically identified ecosystems |
| | main threats | disruption of ecological balance i.e. through high greenhouse emissions, high levels of $CO_2$, destructive human activities/ practices | unsustainable economic activity, the growth-centered and (fossil) resource-based capitalist system |
| | actors | the international community of states or state coalitions | the international community of states or state coalitions |
| | counter-measures | restricting GHG/$CO_2$, increasing taxes, measures to preserve threatened ecosystems or species | modification of risk-creating activities i.e. energy efficiency/renewable energy sources, or tax-based incentives |
| | speech act example | climate change as destroying the ecosystem | climate change as creating ecological imbalances with unforeseeable consequences |

*Figure 2: Analytical Framework by Diez et al. (2016) and von Lucke et al. (2014), self-generated*

# 4. Methodology

## 4.1. Research Design

Methodology can be described as the seal of quality of scientific analysis, since it is only through the use of clear methods that a structured approach to the research process and thus intersubjective comprehensibility for gaining knowledge and the reproducibility of the results obtained in the process are made possible (Siedschlag, 2006, p. 11). The research design of this thesis builds theoretically on the works of Buzan et al. (1998), Corry (2012), von Lucke et al. (2014) and Diez et al. (2016). Methodologically it builds on McDonald (2013) who researched discourses of climate security using an argumentative discourse approach (Hajer, 1995). In short, in the first step building on von Lucke et al. (2014) and Diez et al. (2016) the material will be sorted and reduced using the qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2022) along the six predefined categories (deductively predefined through the theory – see chapter 3.2.2.). In a second step a discourse analysis following the understanding of Hajer (1995) will be performed to analyse different framings of climate change (through the six predefined discourses) and to lay out their specific conceptualization and contexts (see McDonald, 2013). In a third step the results will be interpreted with the theoretical implications laid out in the chapters above.

## 4.2. Qualitative Content Analysis

The qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2022) is a method to analyse materials of communication e.g. language, first introduced by the author in 1983 (Mayring, 2022, p. 7). It has the purpose of analysing communication and generating conclusions about certain aspects of communication, thereby adopting a systematic, rule-governed, and theory-driven approach (Mayring, 2022, p. 13). It is an instrument of empirical social research, while corresponding to the criteria of intersubjectivity and adherence to systematic analytical procedure, furthermore, it is particularly suitable for large amounts of material (Blatter et al., 2018, p. 115). Mayring additionally uses the term **'category-guided text analysis'** as a synonym for the meta term content analysis (2022, p. 13), while defining it as a: "´mixed methods approach´: assignment of categories to text as qualitative step, working through many text passages and analysis of frequencies of categories as quantitative step" (Mayring, 2014, p. 10). Qualitative content analysis is a method that must be tailored to and adapted in accordance with the specific material and the respective questions under investigation (Mayring, 2022, p. 50). Thereby, the author defines three basic technical procedures: summarizing, explication, and structuring of text material (Mayring 2022, p. 66). In this thesis, I will combine the techniques of **summarizing**, that is the reduction of the material to its essential content; and **structuring**, namely, to extract

parts of the material and to review these parts under previously defined ordering criteria (Mayring, 2022, p. 66). The category system is built on the foundations of the theory in a deductive procedure - this step is done before moving on to the coding of the text (Mayring, 2014, p. 97).

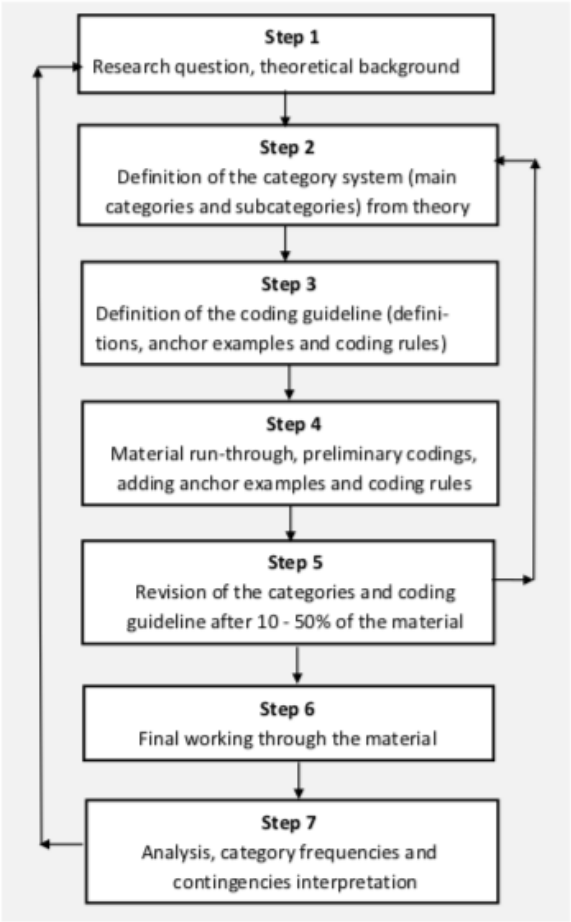


*Figure 3:'Steps of deductive category assignment' by Mayring (2014, p. 96)*

Applying this logic to my thesis, the first step of the category assignment is to formulate a research question (see figure 3). The research questions (see chapter 2.2.) are:

**RQ1:** How do the EU and the USA conceptualize climate change in their security policy during the period of 2008 and 2022 regarding the concepts of threatification and riskification (Diez et al., 2016)?

**RQ2:** How do the respective conceptualizations impact the specific measures proposed in the analysed policies to counter climate change or the effects thereof with regards to the concepts of threatification and riskification?

The theoretical background has been described (see chapter 3) and leads to the second step of Mayring´s deductive category assignment: the definition of the category system. Thereby, building on the theoretical framework of von Lucke et al. (2014) and Diez et al. (2016) the following formulates six deductively defined categories:

1. Territorial Threatification
2. Territorial Riskification
3. Individual Threatification
4. Individual Riskification
5. Planetary Threatification
6. Planetary Riskification

For the third step, figure 2 can be viewed as a coding guide for the qualitative content analysis. The respective levels of the reference objects and associated logics of securitization represent a total of six deductively defined categories and the speech act samples serve as the anchor examples.

To exemplify this step specifically, I demonstrate below the coding guideline for the first category, namely territorial threatification:

| **Category** | **Definition** | **Anchor Sample** | **Encoding Rule** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Territorial Threatification | There is a case of territorial threatification if the state, a region, or a territorial order is concerned (referent object) and threatened by second-order socio-economic and/or political problems caused by climate induced conflicts or instability (main threats). | "Climate change as triggering and intensifying conflict that endangers (state/territorial) security" (von Lucke et al., 2014) | All text passages pointing out cases of climate-induced conflicts or instability as territorial threats resulting in political problems or second-order socio-economic problems to the state, a region, or a territorial order |

*Figure 4: ´Coding guideline´ by Mayring (2022, p. 100), self-generated*

In the next steps, I examined the material and did a revision of the categories (steps 4, 5 and 6).

The final step 7, the evaluation, expands the methodological framework by including a discourse analysis which will be further explained in the upcoming chapter (4.3).

### 4.3. Argumentative Discourse Analysis

Discourse research is concerned on the one hand "with the relationship between speaking/writing as an activity or social practices and the (re)production of meaning systems/orders of knowledge. the social actors involved in this, the rules and resources underlying these processes, and their consequences in social collectives" (Keller, 2012, p. 2). **Discourse analysis is not a specific method** (Schwab-Trapp, 2010, p. 171; Keller, 2011, p. 9), but rather an umbrella term that describes various scientific methodologies to analyse the creation of meaning communicated through written, vocal and sign language (Cummings et al., 2020, p. 99). In that context language is attributed the power of shaping politics by creating meanings, signs, or symbols with the ability to impact institutions or policies (Hajer, 2006, p. 67). Political discourse mainly focuses on the analysis of how language is used in politics and with which methods or structures of language political actors present the world to the public. Based on the constructivist assumption that reality is not given but "mediated through different forms of language representation", the important areas of study for the analyst are: (i) the various modes of how certain events or actions are perceived by political actors, (ii) how they are then described to public, (iii) and the way positive or negative frames are used to emphasize these issues (Wilson, 2015, p. 776). In line with that, the study of policy documents is useful as they serve as ´unproblematic´ and ´unambiguous´ sources for identifying policy issues and proposing solutions (Münch, 2016, p. 59).

This thesis follows the argumentative discourse analysis approach introduced by Hajer (1995), who defines discourse as "a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices [and] through which meaning is given to physical and social realities." (p. 44). This approach assumes that environmental politics contains various actors with individual orientation, concerns, and modes of talking (Hajer, 1995, p. 46). It argues that discourse plays a crucial role in the mechanisms of political transformation, and language is seen as a practice with the power to influence the perception of interests and preferences, to create new meanings, new identities, and to create and alter cognitive patterns (Hajer, 1995, p. 59). As interests, preferences, meanings and so on are constituted through discourse, Hajer suggests that "the emergence of a new policy discourse may actually alter the individual perception of problems" (1995, p. 59). Within Hajar's understanding of discourse there is a struggle for hegemony in the political sphere where actors strive to obtain endorsement for their interpretation of what constitutes reality (1995, p. 59). The political sphere is constituted through existing institutional settings which are the

prerequisites of the development process of discourses. The analyses of discursive dominance and the specific conditions that further the former is integral (Hajer, 1995, p. 60). Furthermore, Hajer (1995, pp. 21-22) understands ´policy-making´:

> "not (..) as a matter of (..) defining a set of socially acceptable solutions for well-defined problems. It is, first and foremost, an interpretive activity in which different, and often contradictory claims as to what is the case are to be judged, compared, combined, and acted upon."

The argumentative discourse analysis holds the premise that whether an issue transforms into a political concern or not depends first and foremost on the narration of how the issue is discussed (Hajer, 2010, p. 273). In the analytical process the author not only interprets linguistic expressions, but also considers discourses holistically by additionally examining **the historical, cultural, and political context** (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005, p. 176).

Discourse analyses go beyond content analyses, as they aim to incorporate the practices that generate the discourse in question by providing a sociohistorical context for the analysis (Bormann, 2011, p. 216) In that sense, they are analyses of institutions and societies (Traue et al., 2022, p. 640). Type-specific questions of social science discourse research would be i.e. (Keller, 2011, p. 70):

- When does a specific discourse emerge or disappear again?
- How, where, with which practices and resources is a discourse (re-)produced?
- Which linguistic and symbolic means and strategies are used?
- Which areas of phenomena are thereby constituted and how?
- What are crucial events during a discourse and how does it change over time?
- What references does the discourse contain to other discourses?

Furthermore, the study of frames is helpful in this context and is an additional component of the analysis. Framing analysis is a type of discourse analysis (Gamson, 1992; Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 30). It is the dominantly used method for securitization (Balzacq, 2016, p. 519). Referring to the six climate security discourses (see figure 2) von Lucke et al. (2014, pp. 863-864) explain, that these discourses can be characterized as frames. Threat framing describes the political process in which policymakers construct issues as threats (Eriksson, 2001), the identification of the responsible and the countermeasure to manage the threat (Dunn Cavelty, 2007, pp. 29-30). The process of categorizing threats has practical implications because it leads key actors to view the world through this lens, at the same time it underscores the fundamental features of frames, namely that they (1) shape the behaviour of actors and (2) influence the

public's perception (Gamson, 1992, p. 110; Snow et al., 1986, p. 464; Dunn Cavelty, 2007, p. 30). Following that thought, a ´security policy´ threat is one of the most significant forms of ´threat framing´ (Eriksson & Noreen, 2002, p. 11). Frames are empirically observable e.g. by examining the material and analysing the therein contained threat frames with the functional characteristics of frames as developed by Snow & Benford (1988, pp. 199-202) including the **diagnostic framing** (= the identification of a problematic event/situation and the need for alteration), the **prognostic framing** (= the proposal of specific solutions to the identified problem), and the **motivational framing** (= a call to arms, engagement, or corrective action). Regarding the six climate security discourses (see figure 2) von Lucke et al. (2014, pp. 863-864) argue, that each of the discourses will have: a diagnostic framing and a prognostic framing. Consequently, so they argue, the various discourses are expected to result in different policies (von Lucke et al., 2014, pp. 863-864).

It is important to note that discourse analysis intentionally distinguishes itself from the positivist tradition that aims for maximum scientific precision and exactitude. Rather than claiming to accurately reflect reality, discourse analysis only proposes assumptions about it and prioritizes interpreting and comprehending socially constructed meanings within particular frameworks, rather than focusing on objectively measurable and verifiable causal connections (Dunn/Mauer, 2014, p. 2016). This is in line with the essential character of securitization, which cannot predict successful cases of securitization, but is ´a post-facto analysis´, nonetheless, discourse analysis can still produce meaningful insights for specific inquiries (Williams, 2011, p. 216).

To conclude the methodological framework and drawing a circle from the final step of the content analysis (see chapter above) I base my proceedings on Diez et al. (2016, p. 29) and will use the (i) frequency of articulations (understood as ratio between the articulations of threatification vs. riskification) and (ii) intensity of the articulation (neutral/ dramatic/alarmist vocabulary) to analyse the discourses in the material. At the same time, I follow the authors understanding that as far as policy measures / countermeasures are described in the documents, I conclude that the specific securitizing moves have been legitimized and therefore, must have been successful (Diez et al., 2016, p. 29). Consistent with other scholars who have operationalized the securitization of climate change (see e.g. McDonald, 2013, Englund & Barquet, 2023) the methodological approach of this thesis focuses specifically on the study of discursive acts by analysing the discourses that frame climate change and its adaption in policy documents over a period of time.

4.4. Material

The choice of material for the analysis of the proposed research question is based on the theoretical implications laid out in the beginning of this thesis (see chapter 3). It is connected to the fundamentals of securitization theory: The rhetorical act of speaking security or the **´speech act´.** It is central because in the words of the authors: "[..] it is the utterance itself that is the act. By saying the words, something is done [..]" (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 26). Strategic policy documents can be classified as ´speech acts´ as they "[..] aim to convince both the audience at home whose support must be maintained and regained, and the international audience that must be deterred, persuaded, and assured. Thus, these ´speech acts´ as reflected in the political notions associated with security threats, challenges, vulnerabilities, and risks perform multiple political functions beyond the effort to describe and assess aspects of political reality." (Brauch, 2011, p. 251). Generally, there are many documents and policies that address the importance of climate change, but the central element of this thesis relates to **whether climate change is associated with issues about security**. In the following I have compiled a list of **14 documents** that constitute the **corpus of the material** to be analysed. It consists of 7 documents each selected for both the USA and the EU. Each document is listed in bold letters starting with the year it was published. Below the source is provided.

| US Documents | EU Documents |
|---|---|
| **US1 2010 QDR**<br><br>Year: 2010<br><br>Title:<br>Quadrennial Defense Review Report<br><br>Source:<br>https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/defenseReviews/QDR/QDR_as_of_29JAN10_1600.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (US Department of Defense, 2010) | **EU1 2008 Climate Change and Int. Security**<br><br>Year: 2008<br><br>Title:<br>Climate Change and International Security<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30862/en_clim_change_low.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (EU, 2008) |

| US2 2010 NSS (Obama) | EU2 2008 ESS Report |
|---|---|
| Year: 2010<br><br>Title:<br>National Security Strategy<br><br>Source:<br>https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (The White House, 2010) | Year: 2008<br><br>Title:<br>Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy (2003)<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/reports/104630.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (Council of the EU, 2008) |
| **US3 2015 NSS (Obama)** | **EU3 2016 Global Strategy** |
| Year: 2015<br><br>Title:<br>National Security Strategy<br><br>Source:<br>https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2015_national_security_strategy_2.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (The White House, 2015) | Year: 2016<br><br>Title:<br>A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (EU, 2016) |
| **US4 2017 NSS (Trump)** | **EU4 2019 Global Strategy Report** |
| Year: 2017<br><br>Title:<br>National Security Strategy of the United States of America<br><br>Source:<br>https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (The White House, 2017) | Year: 2019<br><br>Title:<br>The European Union´s Global Strategy: three years on, looking forward<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eu_global_strategy_2019.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (EEAS, 2019) |

| US5 2018 NDS (Trump) | EU5 2019 Green Deal |
|---|---|
| Year: 2018<br><br>Title:<br>Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America<br><br>Source:<br>https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (US Department of Defense, 2018) | Year: 2019<br><br>Title:<br>The European Green Deal<br><br>Source:<br>https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF<br><br>Cited as: (EU, 2019) |
| **US6 2022 NDS (Biden)** | **EU6 2020 Climate Change and Defence Roadmap** |
| Year: 2022<br><br>Title:<br>2022 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America<br><br>Source:<br>https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF)<br><br>Cited as: (US Department of Defense, 2022) | Year: 2020<br><br>Title:<br>Climate Change and Defence Roadmap<br><br>Source:<br>https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-12741-2020-INIT/en/pdf<br><br>Cited as: (EEAS, 2020) |
| **US7 2022 NSS (Biden)** | **EU7 2022 Strategic Compass** |
| Year: 2022<br><br>Title:<br>National Security Strategy<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (The White House, 2022) | Year: 2022<br><br>Title:<br>A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence<br><br>Source:<br>https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/strategic_compass_en3_web.pdf<br><br>Cited as: (EU, 2022) |

## 5. Analysis

The analytical part of this thesis consists of two parts. First, the corpus of material will undergo a content analysis. In the second part these results will be further analysed, complemented, and contextualized by a discourse analysis.

For the first part, the content analysis of the documents, the same scheme of analysis will be performed for each of the 14 documents. First, a short introduction to the relevance of the document is given. Second, a histogram for that specific document illustrates the interpretation of the data by presenting the frequency of the observed categories:

territorial threatification = TT / territorial riskification = TR
individual threatification = IT / individual riskification = IR
planetary threatification = PT / planetary riskification = PR

As the analysis will show, some documents had instances where a differentiation only in the logic of securitization was possible but not in the level of referent object because the text passages were too vague regarding the context. The information whether climate change is conceptualized as a threat, or a risk is valuable even without the second dimension to answer the first research question. Hence, two additional categories in the histogram are defined as:

unspecified threatification = UT / unspecified riskification = UR

Third, the data from the analysis is described and particularly significant quotes are presented and put into context. Fourth, if available additional important observations of the document will be outlined shortly. For the interpretation of the data, it is important to note that only the ratio is considered relevant when performing the categorization. Interpreting the actual number of mentions would be misleading because the documents differ greatly both in length and in the institutions responsible for writing and publishing them, hence, it would produce false conclusions and misinterpretations. Furthermore, most documents are security policy papers that are not exclusively tied to the topic of environmental issues or climate change. Thus, I expect that generally less space will be dedicated to the issue of climate change and the overall number of mentions will be rather low.

## 5.1. Content analysis of the material

### 5.1.1. US1 2010 QDR

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) was a report by the US Secretary of Defense to describe the current conditions of security and possible future challenges for the nation. It was produced every four years from 1997 to 2014 and was replaced with the National Defense Strategy (US Government, n.d.). With the release of the QDR in 2010 under the Obama administration it became "the first comprehensive American security policy document to recognize climate change as a security threat" (Hauger, 2022).

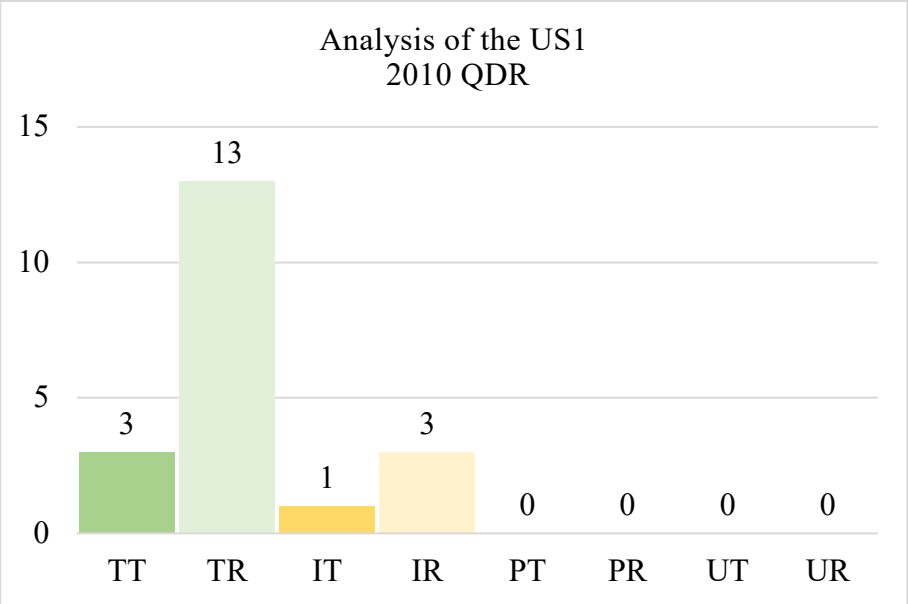


*Figure 5: Analysis US1 2010 QDR, self-generated*

Figure 5 visualizes the content analysis by the eight predefined categories. This document is described in more detail intentionally as to clarify how the analytical process was done in this thesis. In the following documents the results of the analysis are described in less detail as to save space.

The first document of the analysis indicates that when mentioned climate change was framed 16 times as a risk and 4 times as a threat, this corresponds to a ratio of 4:1 in favour of riskification. Three times it was described in the context of territorial threatification (TT), thirteen times as territorial riskification (TR) and once as individual threatification (IT). Additionally, I detected a hybrid variant of territorial riskification (TR) and individual riskification (IR), in three cases which will further be explained below. If a hybrid variant occurred, I opted to count it for all the categories applicable. In this case it was only the

categories of TR and IR, but it could involve also more than two categories which will become visible in other documents.

Cases of threatification:

> "[..] climate change **will shape** the operating environment, roles, and missions that we undertake." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 84)
>
> "The **effect of changing climate** on the Department's operating environment **is evident** in the maritime commons of the Arctic." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)
>
> "[..] DoD **will need to adjust** to the **impacts of climate change** on our facilities and **military capabilities**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

The first and second quotes contain a definitive character. It is *clear* and *certain* (signal words of threatification) that climate change exists and already has an effect. They can be characterized as *territorial* because they refer to the US military and defence agencies which are typical actors in the category of territorial threatification. In the third quote the adjustment of defence capabilities is mentioned which is defined as a typical countermeasure of territorial threatification (see figure 2).

> "Climate change **will contribute** to **food and water scarcity**, **will increase** the **spread of disease**, and may spur or exacerbate mass migration." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

This quote can be categorized as a case of individual threatification because it has a definite character (the word ´**will**´ is definite – there is no uncertainty or diffusion) and it refers to ´**water scarcity**´ which is a main threat identified for that category (see figure 2)

Cases of riskification:

Overall, most passages in the 2010 QDR regarding to the issue of climate change can be categorized as cases of territorial riskification.

> "[..] the **effects of climate change**, the emergence of new strains of disease, and profound cultural and demographic tensions in several regions are just some of the trends whose complex interplay **may spark or exacerbate future conflicts**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. iv)
>
> "The Department is developing policies and **plans to manage the effects of climate change** on its operating environment, [..]. We must continue incorporating geostrategic and operational energy considerations into force **planning,** requirements development, and acquisition processes" (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. xv)

The quotes above exhibit a sense of uncertainty (e.g. ´**may**´ instead of ´will´). Hence, the uncertainty about the effect of climate change and the signal word ´**planning**´ points to riskification. Furthermore, the threat described is ´**conflict**´, and the countermeasures refer to military capabilities, both which categorize these as cases of territorial threatification.

> "**Assessments** conducted by the intelligence community **indicate** that **climate change could have significant geopolitical impacts** around the world, contributing to **poverty**, environmental degradation, and the further **weakening of fragile governments**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

In this quote we see that the knowledge is based on an assessment scheme (typical for riskification). The words ´**indicate**´ and ´**could**´ express a diffused or unsure specification about the consequences. The dangers of ´**poverty**´ and the ´**weakening of fragile governments**´ can be described as typical risks for territorial riskification. Of course, one could make the argument that ´environmental degradation´ could be characterized as the planetary level instead of territorial. But reading through the passage it is my subjective judgement that the consequences of environmental degradation i.e. the increased potential for poverty, poor health, reduced crop production and intra-state conflict is the reason why it is mentioned here and that it rather refers to it as an additional factor for socio-economic and political problems as mentioned previously in the territorial level.

> "In this regard, DoD will work to foster efforts **to assess**, **adapt to**, and **mitigate** the **impacts of climate change**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)

> "In that effort, DoD must work with the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security to address gaps in Arctic communications, domain awareness, search and rescue, and **environmental observation** and **forecasting capabilities** to support both current and future **planning and operations**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)

> "As climate science advances, the Department will regularly **reevaluate climate change risks** and opportunities in order to develop policies and plans to **manage its effects** on the Department's operating environment, missions, and facilities." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86).

Again, we see cases of territorial riskification: the first quote points out **assessment**, **adaptation** to, and **mitigation** of the (diffused) impacts of climate change. Increasing the preparedness through consistent and regular **observation** to strengthen the ability to **manage** the effects of climate change are all characteristics of that specific type of riskification.

Hybrid variants:

> "While climate change alone does not cause conflict, it **may act** as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on **civilian institutions** and **militaries** around the world." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

> "In addition, extreme weather events **may lead** to increased demands for **defense support to civil authorities** for **humanitarian assistance** or **disaster response** both within the United States and overseas." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

In the two quotes above point out hybrid variants of territorial riskification and individual riskification. There is the probability of the problems caused by climate change effects (´**may**´) which defines the logic of security as riskification. But the actors involved refer to both the

levels of territorial (state and their agents/military) and individual (civil society actors/ environmental and humanitarian NGOs). In cases like that the text passage was counted for both categories applicable.

The timeframe with regards to activities to counter climate change related effects are of short and of long term, a clear distinction of threatification or riskification linked to the timeframe is therefore often not possible but rather a mixture of both:

> "The actions that the Department takes now can prepare us to respond effectively to these challenges in the **near term** and **in the future**." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 84)

Additional observations of the document:

In the 2010 QDR climate change is described as strongly interlinked with energy security and economic stability (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 84). The document mentions climate change as one of 4 issues where reform is ´imperative´. (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 73). Additionally, on multiple occasions throughout the 2010 QDR the relevance of science in connection to climate change is mentioned (see i.e. US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 84).

Countermeasures:

| Countermeasures of the US1 2010 QDR | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| | 8 | | | | | | |

Exclusively all countermeasures mentioned in connection to climate change can be sub summarized under measures of riskification. These include the development of assessment tools, the increasement of readiness of actors and the enhancement of resilience to the effects of climate change. Below there are specific examples as described in the 2010 QDR. By nature, the Department of Defense is a military agent, the level of referent object is territorial.

> **"**The Department is developing policies and plans **to manage the effects of climate change** on its operating environment, missions, and facilities." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. xv)

> "In some nations, the military is the only institution with the capacity to respond to a large-scale natural disaster. Proactive engagement with these countries can **help build their capability to respond** to such events." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 85)

> "In this regard, DoD will work to **foster efforts to assess, adapt to, and mitigate the impacts of climate change.**" (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)

> "Domestically, the Department will leverage the Strategic Environmental Research [..] to **develop climate change assessment tools**. (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)

> "As climate science advances, the Department will regularly **reevaluate climate change risks** and opportunities in order to develop policies and plans **to manage its effects** on the Department's operating environment, missions, and facilities." (US Department of Defense, 2010, p. 86)

In summary, looking at the data from the analysis the conception of climate change was in a ratio of 4:1 in favour of riskification. Accordingly, it was expected to produce countermeasures in line with riskification. The countermeasures in this document by the nature of a military agent refer exclusively to the territorial level of referent object and focus on assessing and building capabilities to adopt to the impacts of climate change.

### 5.1.2. US2 2010 NSS (Obama)

Released on May 27th, 2010 the National Security Strategy (NSS) is the first Security Strategy of the Obama administration (Henderson, 2010) and radically changed the former US foreign and security strategy (Brauch, 2011, p. 258). The US National Security Strategy is a ´keystone document´ outlining the most important issues of the current administration in office for the period of legislation. It provides guidance for the bureaucratic body of government (federal departments, agencies, governmental organizations etc.) on the issues of highest concern for the United States of America (Weaver, 2018).

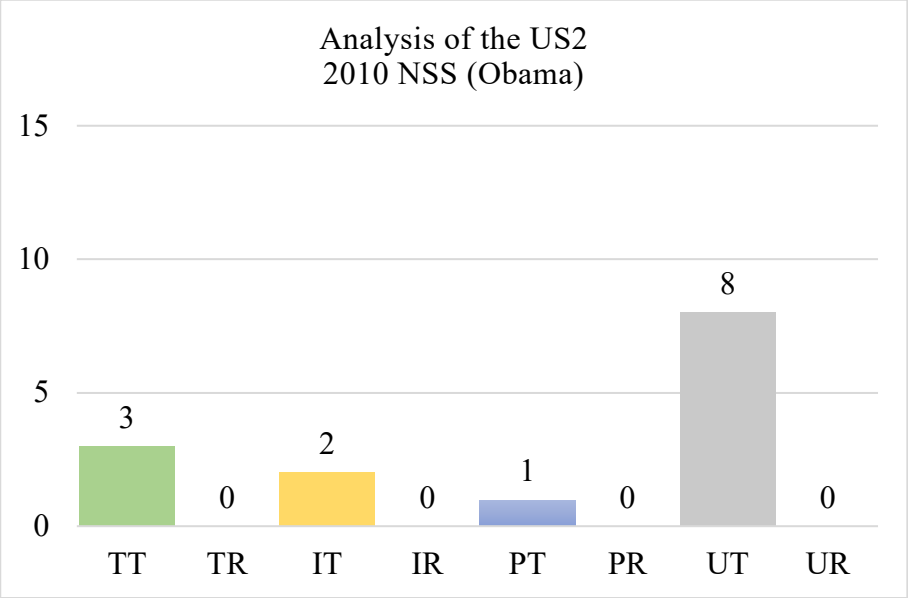


*Figure 6: Analysis US2 2010 NSS (Obama), self-generated*

From the above illustration, one can easily observe that a threatification of climate change has occurred under the Obama administration. The analysis shows that climate change was exclusively framed as a threat, and no single time conceptualized as a risk. It was possible to categorize climate change according to the level of referent objects in six cases. Three times climate change was described as a territorial threat. Twice as an individual threat and once as a planetary threat. In eight cases the urgency and the danger of climate change were clearly stated but the context regarding the specific level of object was not given or not stated clearly. Nevertheless, by providing another category that differentiates only between threatification and riskification, the initial assessment of a threatification of climate change under the Obama administration becomes even more prominent. There were no cases of riskification detectable emphasizing overall a high degree of threatification of climate change in the 2010 NSS.

Examples of cases of threatification:

There is one passage that was categorized for territorial, individual as well as planetary threatification.

> "The change wrought by a warming planet **will lead** to **new conflicts over refugees and resources**; new **suffering from drought and famine**; catastrophic **natural disasters**; and the **degradation of land across the globe**." (The White House, 2010, p. 47)

As climate change is described there is a sense of clarity and inevitability observable (through the words ´will lead´). Also, a case of territorial threatification as the consequence of ´conflicts over refugees and resources´ is mentioned. It is followed by individual threatification as the consequences of ´suffering from drought and famine´ and ´catastrophic natural disasters´ are indicated. And lastly, one can examine a case of planetary threatification as the ´degradation of land across the globe´ is described. In one sentence not only the **urgency** and the **danger** of climate change has been described (signal words for threatification) but also it has been put in the context of all three levels of referent objects.

Additionally, climate change has been described eight times as a threat, however, the referent object has not been concretized in the 2010 NSS. In the following a few examples are presented:

> "Climate Change: The **danger f**rom **climate change** is **real, urgent,** and **severe**." (The White House, 2010, p. 47)

> **„**Instead, we must focus American engagement on strengthening international institutions and galvanizing the collective action that can serve common interests [..] and forging cooperative solutions to the **threat of climate change**, armed conflict, and pandemic disease.“ (The White House, 2010, p. 3)

In these cases, the signal words, such as ´urgent´ and ´threat´, clearly indicate cases of threatification, but the referent object is not specified. Nevertheless, I find it useful to include these cases in the analysis because the main argument of whether threatification or riskification occurs can be made.

Additional observations of the document:

Just as in the 2010 QDR, the relevance of science in connection to climate change is mentioned on multiple occasions (see The White House, 2010, p. 30).

Countermeasures:

| Countermeasures of the US2 2010 NSS (Obama) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| | 7 | | | 2 | 6 | | 1 |

What becomes evident after taking the considered countermeasures of the 2010 NSS into account is that although climate change was conceptualized as a threat, the countermeasures are predominantly formulated in terms of riskification by a ratio of 7 to 1. In the two cases of countermeasures that are categorized as planetary threatification, actions referred to a reduction of emissions (The White House, 2010, p. 5) even specified as "in the range of 17 percent by 2020 and more than 80 percent by 2050" (The White House, 2010, p. 47). The importance of cooperation between the state and its agents as well as between the international community is the countermeasure that was most often described. Here, the distinction was possible between territorial riskification and planetary riskification.

In most of the other cases the distinction was hard to make as the countermeasures as well as the actors were more than often only vaguely described. One problem (deriving from the theoretical implications, explained in chapter 3) is that the actors in the territorial level of referent object seem to refer to a single state rather than state coalitions. But the analysis shows that when the countermeasure is not specific to enhancing i.e. energy efficiency or investing in renewable energy sources then the countermeasure rather fits in the territorial level. But then, one is confronted again with the problem that the actor seems to refer to a single state. I opted to circumvent the problem by doing the following distinction: If the countermeasure is clearly referring to the level of planetary, I opt for planetary. If, however, the countermeasure is vague and rather refers to a general preparedness or the strengthening of relations between states, then I ignore the singularity of the actor in the territorial level and opt for that. For comprehensibility there are a few examples below:

Countermeasures for territorial riskification:

"strengthening international institutions" (The White House, 2010, p. 3)
"diplomacy and development capabilities" (The White House, 2010, p. 11)
"working with the institutions" (The White House, 2010, p. 13)
"work with our global partners." (The White House, 2010, p. 34)
"advance constructive cooperation"(The White House, 2010, p. 47)

Countermeasures for planetary riskification:

> "we will build on efforts in Asia, the Americas, and Africa to forge new clean energy partnerships" (The White House, 2010, p. 47)
>
> "Globally, we will seek to implement and build on the Copenhagen Accord (The White House, 2010, p. 47)
>
> "invest in renewable energy (The White House, 2010, p. 47)

In summary, it can be said that from a language point of view, the conceptualization of climate change can clearly be described as threatification. Policy solutions, on the other hand, tend to offer long-term and less urgent solutions. The focus is on international cooperation and on the reduction of emissions.

### 5.1.3. US3 2015 NSS (Obama)

The second NSS document of the Obama Administration was published on February 6th, 2015 (Lucas & McInnis, 2015). The revised Security Strategy was ruled among scholars as proof of stronger awareness of the threat of climate change to the national security (Hauger, 2022).

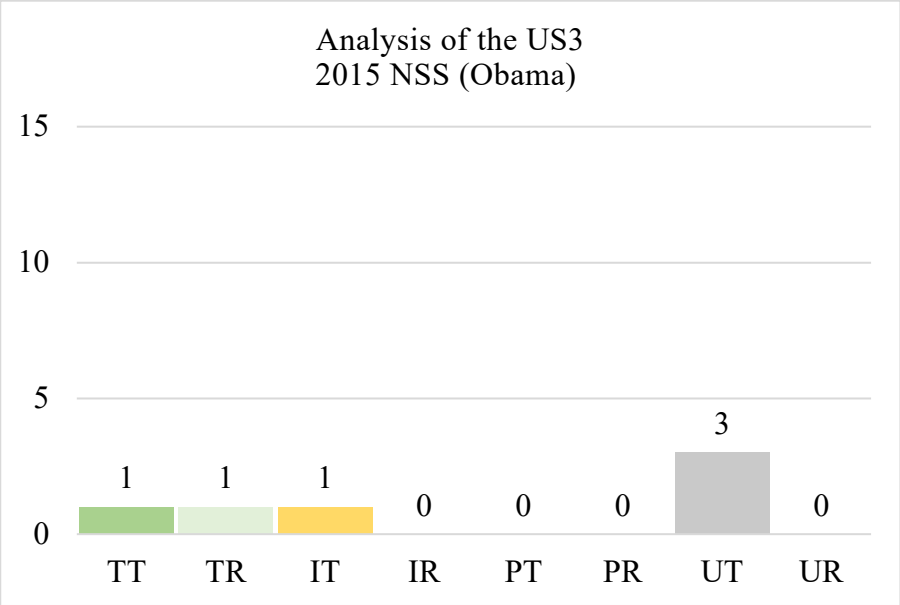


*Figure 7: Analysis US3 2015 NSS (Obama), self-generated*

Comparing figure 7 to figure 6, one might think that there has been a decrease in the threatification of climate change. However, this demonstrates perfectly why a quantitative analysis in this case would be unsuitable and ultimately pointless. The 2010 NSS with 60 pages, is almost twice the length of the 2015 NSS with 32 pages. Consequently, one can expect that the statements on the issues have shortened as well. It is more relevant to determine whether there has been an increase in mentions in additional categories. Here, it becomes apparent that there is indeed a change observable: the concept of climate change was mentioned in connection with riskification. Overall, the ratio is 5 to 1 in favour of threatification.

> "Especially in a changing global environment, these **national interests** will continue to guide all we do in the world. [..] In such instances, we will prioritize efforts that address the top strategic **risks** to our interests:
>
> • Catastrophic attack on the U.S. homeland or critical infrastructure;
> • Threats or attacks against U.S. citizens abroad and our allies;
> • Global economic crisis or widespread economic slowdown;
> • Proliferation and/or use of weapons of mass destruction;
> • Severe global infectious disease outbreaks;
> • **Climate change;**
> • Major energy market disruptions; and
> • Significant security consequences associated with weak or failing states (including mass atrocities, regional spillover, and transnational organized crime)." (The White House, 2015, p. 2)

In this passage, the level of referent object classifies as territorial as it is mentioned in the context of ´national interests´. It can be concluded that the logic of securitization refers to riskification as the signal word ´risk´ is mentioned. If one considers the position within the order, it becomes apparent that climate change is not a top priority, but rather placed in the lower third.

In the other examples within the 2015 NSS the threatification of climate change of the Obama administration is still tangible:

> "And at home and abroad, we are taking concerted action to confront the **dangers posed by climate change** and to strengthen our energy security." (The White House, 2015, p. 1)

Here the signal word ´danger´ clearly indicates a case of threatification, however the level of referent object is not strictly defined. It could be assumed that it would refer to either territorial or individual or both but because of the lack of certainty it is categorized as unspecified threatification in figure 7.

> "**Climate change** is an **urgent** and growing **threat** to our **national security**, contributing to increased **natural disasters**, **refugee flows**, and **conflicts** over **basic resources** like **food and water**." (The White House, 2015, p. 12)

In this example climate change is connected to the typical signal words for threatification ´urgent´ and ´threat´. The level of referent object refers to territorial (national security = state) and individual (natural disasters and basic resource scarcity).

Countermeasures:

| Countermeasures of the US3 2015 NSS (Obama) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| | 1 | | 1 | 4 | 3 | | 1 |

The analysis of the countermeasures of the 2015 NSS indicates a ratio 3:2 in favour of riskification. The countermeasures referred to every level of referent object, but in most cases to the planetary level. Concrete actions were the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the reduction of carbon pollution and the cooperation of states.

> "The substantial contribution we have pledged to the Green Climate Fund will help the most vulnerable developing nations **deal with climate change**, **reduce their carbon pollution**, and **invest in clean energy**." (The White House, 2015, p. 12)

“We are partnering with African entrepreneurs to **launch clean energy projects** and helping farmers **practice climate-smart agriculture and plant more durable crops**. We are also **driving collective action** to **reduce methane emissions** from pipelines [..].“ (The White House, 2015, p. 12)

“We are **partnering with states** and **local communities** to better **plan for, absorb, recover from,** and **adapt to** adverse events brought about by the compounding **effects of climate change.**“ (The White House, 2015, p. 9)

### 5.1.4. US4 2017 NSS (Trump)

The 2017 National Security Strategy was the first NSS under the Trump Presidency. Among scholars it was described as a de-securitization of climate change because the rhetoric and policy measures regarding the issue changed fundamentally in the highlighting of importance of economic interests and energy security over environmental issues (Hauger, 2022). Under the Trump administration security policy focused rather on "state-based threats" and omitted of the view that climate change posed a threat (Snider, 2022, p. 409). The content analysis below demonstrates this fact as climate change is not mentioned once in the security document.

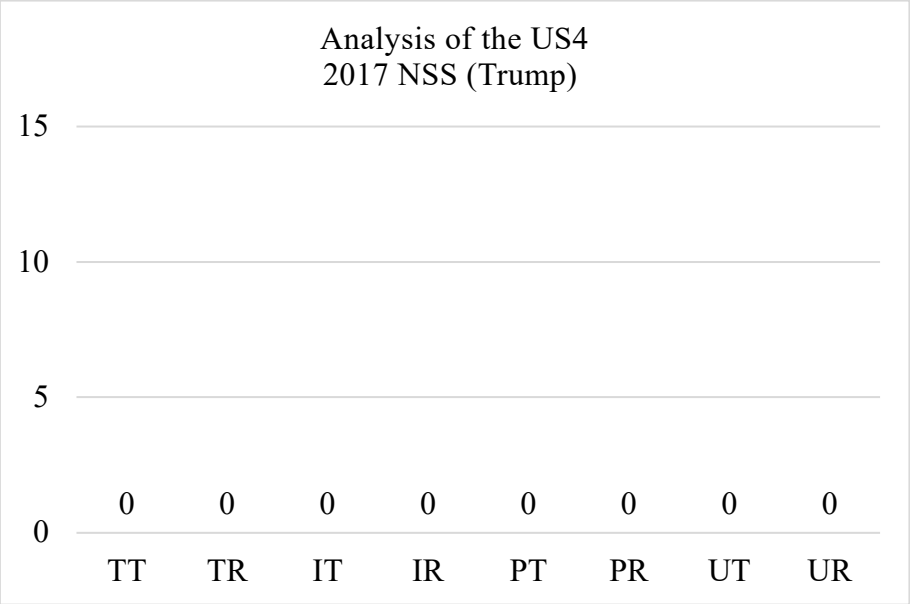


*Figure 8: Analysis US4 2017 NSS (Trump), self-generated*

Neither climate change nor other related wordings (like global warming) have been mentioned in the 2017 NSS and no single categorization was possible to make.

Countermeasures:

| Countermeasures of the US4 2017 NSS (Trump) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Interestingly, even though there is not a single mention of climate change or climate change related issues in the document, the Trump administration does mention environmental protection in connection to energy security issues.

> "The United States will continue to advance an approach that balances energy security, economic development, and **environmental protection**." (The White House, 2017, p. 22)

Another example is the following:

> "The United States will remain a global leader in **reducing traditional pollution**, as well as **greenhouse gases**, while expanding our economy." (The White House, 2017, p. 22)

However, in this quote the amount of the reduction stays vague while it was clearly stated in documents of the Obama administration.

### 5.1.5. US5 2018 NDS (Trump)

The summary of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) is the only version available because the original 2018 NDS is a classified document (US Department of Defense, 2018, p. 1). Also, the 2018 NDS replaced the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). Here, there were no mentions of the relevance of climate change nor countermeasures relating to environmental protection detectable (Hauger, 2022). Hence a de-securitization of climate change can be concluded.

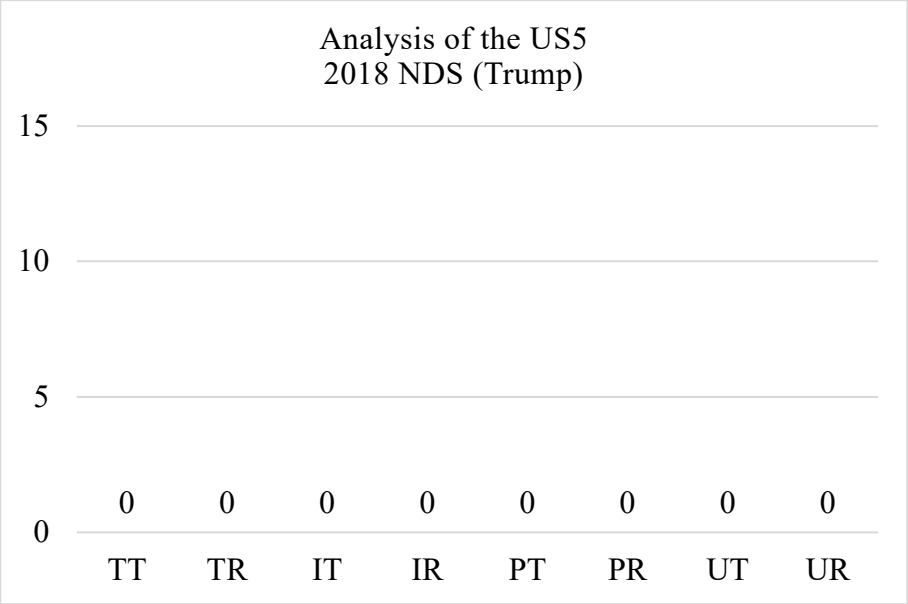


*Figure 9: Analysis US5 2018 NDS (Trump), self-generated*

Countermeasures:

| Countermeasures of the US5 2018 NDS (Trump) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

In the 2018 NDS under President Trump there is not a single policy action related to climate change or its effects. This is interesting as the preceding document, the 2010 QDR, was not only the first document in US security policy to acknowledge the threat of climate change but also mentioned multiple policy solutions to adapt to it. Eight years later, under the Trump administration the de-securitization of climate change is apparent and evident.

### 5.1.6. US6 2022 NDS (Biden)

Under a new presidency there is a reappearance of climate change in the security discourse. The National Defense Strategy (NDS) of 2022 under the Biden administration mentions the issue 15 times in the document. Five times it was possible to categorize climate change according to the predefined category scheme (see below).

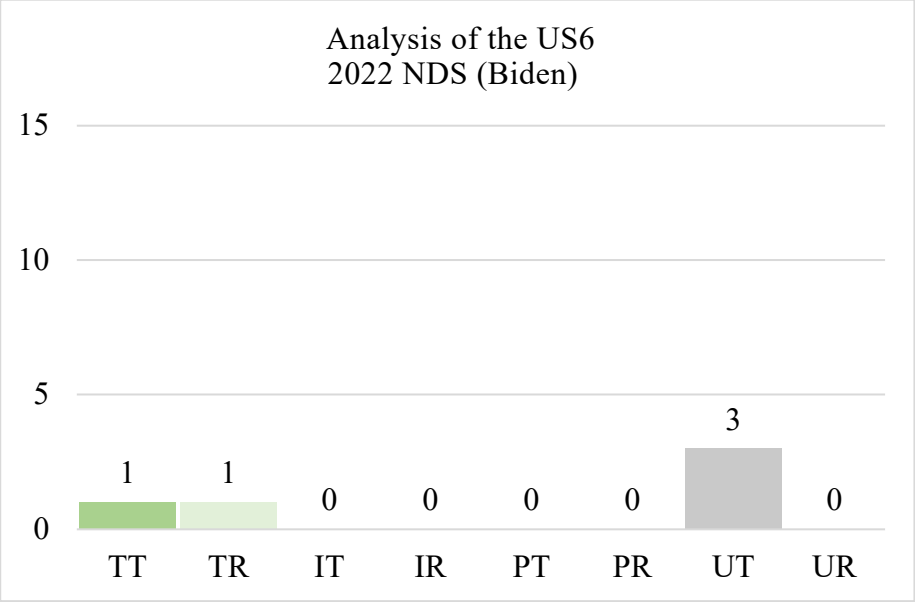


*Figure 10: Analysis US6 2022 NDS (Biden), self-generated*

In figure 10, the reappearance of climate change on the security agenda is evident. Even more so, there is a threatification of climate change in the ratio of 4 to 1. In three cases climate change was mentioned in the logic of threatification, however unspecific to the level of referent object. In two additional cases the level of referent object was determined as territorial, however, they differed in the logic of securitization to being one of threatification and one of riskification.

Under the Biden administration a **re-securitization of climate change** is apparent:

> "We will make our supporting systems more **resilient** and agile in the face of **threats** that range from competitors to **the effects** of **climate change**." (US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 2)
>
> "Beyond state and non-state actors, changes in global climate and other dangerous transboundary threats are already transforming the context in which the Department operates." **(**US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 6)
>
> "Insecurity and instability related to **climate change may tax governance capacity** in some countries while **heightening tensions** between others, **risking new armed conflicts** and **increasing demands for stabilization activites." (**US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 6)

Additional observations of the document:

The transboundary nature of climate change is repeatedly referred to in the document. The responsibility of the entire international community is also emphasized when climate change is described as a problem that cannot be tackled by one state alone (see US Department of Defense, 2022, p. iii, p. 2, p. 6)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the US6 2022 NDS (Biden) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

All mentioned countermeasures can be sub summarized under territorial riskification. The focus of the Department of Defense (DoD) is on international cooperation and on the enhancement of resilience of their military installations.

> "Building enduring advantages also means having the **elasticity** and **readiness** in the defense ecosystem **to adapt** to emerging **threats** such as **climate change**." (US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 2)

> "By **joining with Allies and partners** in efforts to **enhance resilience to climate change**, we will both **strengthen defense relationships** and **reduce the need for the force** to respond to **instability** and **humanitarian emergencies**. (US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 14)

> "We will **strengthen** the Departments´s **ability to withstand and recover** quickly from climate events." (US Department of Defense, 2022, p. 2)

### 5.1.7. US7 2022 NSS (Biden)

In the 2022 National Security Strategy (NSS) under the Biden administration climate change as a security issue has re-entered the discourse. It can be concluded that a re-securitization of climate change with the new president is evident.

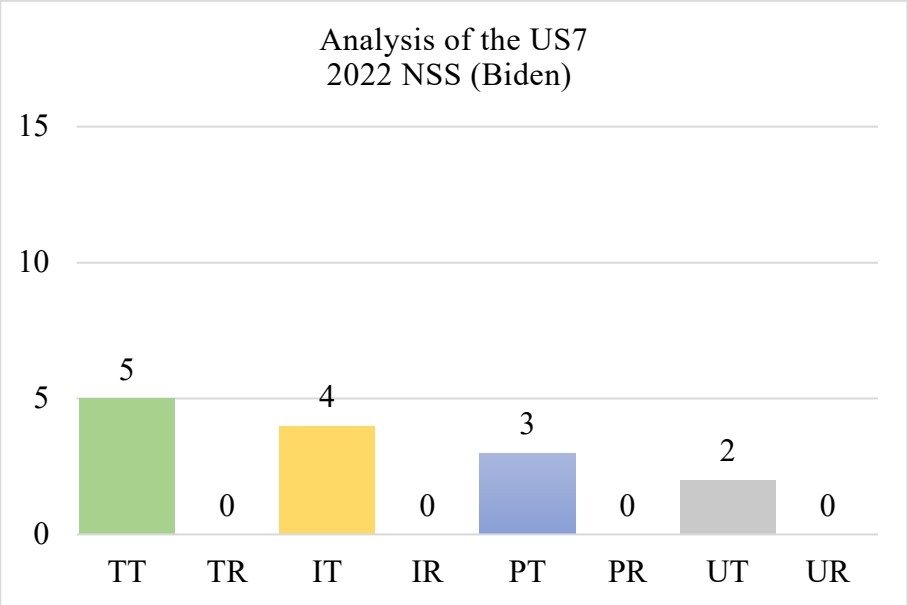


*Figure 11: Analysis US7 2022 NSS (Biden), self-generated*

In the NSS 2022, a threatification in the conceptualization of climate change is evident. All levels of referent objects are mentioned. The category of territorial threatification is mentioned most frequently. In two cases the level of referent object is not explicitly indicated but the logic of security is clearly stated.

> "Of all of the shared problems we face, **climate change is the greatest and potentially existential for all nations**." (The White House, 2022, p. 9)
>
> "Without **immediate global action** during this crucial decade, global temperatures will cross the critical warming threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius after which scientists have warned some of the most **catastrophic climate impacts** will be **irreversible**." (The White House, 2022, p. 9)
>
> "[..] **people all over the world** are struggling **to cope with the effects of shared challenges that cross borders**—whether it is **climate change**, food insecurity, communicable diseases, terrorism, energy shortages, or inflation." (The White House, 2022, p. 6)
>
> "These shared challenges are not marginal issues that are secondary to geopolitics. They are at the very core of **national and international security** and must be treated as such." (The White House, 2022, p. 6)

Additional observations of the document

Just as in the NDS document of the same year the transboundary nature of climate change and the need for international cooperation in the problem-solving measures is emphasized multiple times (see The White House, 2022, p. 6, p. 9, p. 27, p. 35)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the US7 2022 NSS (Biden) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 |

In contrast to the perception of climate change explained above the countermeasures are exclusively described in terms of riskification:

> "Global action begins at home, where we are making unprecedented generational **investments in the clean energy transition** through the IRA, simultaneously creating millions of good paying jobs and strengthening." (The White House, 2022, p. 27)

> "We're also using our economic heft to **drive decarbonization.** Our **steel agreement** with the EU, the first-ever arrangement on steel and aluminum **to address both carbon intensity and global overcapacity**, is a model for future **climate-focused trade mechanisms**." (The White House, 2022, p. 27)

In summary, again the discrepancy between the conception of climate change and the policy solutions to counter them stands out. Climate change is framed in the US 2022 National Security Strategy exclusively as a threat. Yet, all countermeasures are either risk-related countermeasures or long-term and vague commitments to reduce emissions.

### 5.1.8. EU1 2008 Climate Change and Int. Security

In the European Union climate change has been discussed as a security challenge as of 2008. The first official publication to address this issue was a joint 2008 paper from the High Representative Javier Solana and the EU Commission to the European Council, *Climate Change and International Security* followed by a review in the same year of the 2003 European Security Strategy, which determined climate change to be a threat to European security interests (Stang & Dimsdale, 2017, p. 2). In that document, the issue is described as follows: "The risks posed by climate change are real and its impacts are already taking place" (EU, 2008, p. 2)

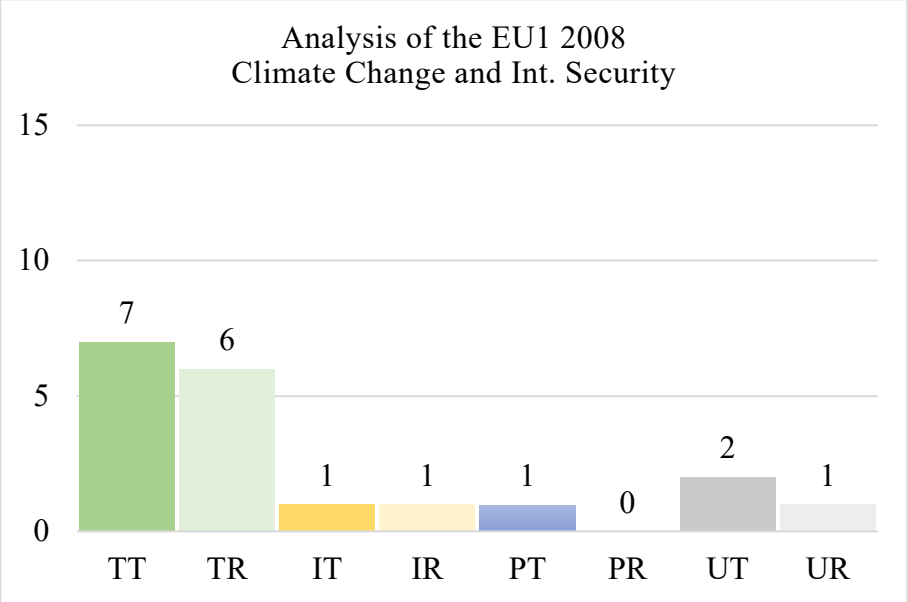


*Figure 12: Analysis EU1 2008 Climate Change and Int. Security, self-generated*

Figure 12 shows that in this document climate change was categorized on multiple occasions either as a risk or a threat, whereas the latter prevailed by a ratio of 11:8 in favour of threatification. Thereby, all levels of referent objects were addressed. Climate change was characterized as a threat eleven times throughout the documents, mostly regarding the territorial level. Respectively, it was framed once as a threat to the individual level and once to the planetary level. Twice climate change was framed as a threat generally, but the context of referent object was not addressed clearly. Another eight times climate change was framed as a risk. Again, most of the times the territorial level was addressed.

In the European understanding climate change is conceptualized as a ´threat multiplier´. This is a recurring terminology and reappears as a definition throughout the all the European documents addressing climate change.

„Climate change is best viewed as a **threat multiplier** which exacerbates existing trends, **tensions** and **instability.** The core challenge is that **climate change threatens** to **overburden states** and **regions** which are already fragile and conflict prone.“ (EU, 2008, p. 3)

Climate change is described as a threat to all levels of referent object:

“**Climate change will heavily affect** Europe’s **natural environment** and nearly all sections of **society** and **the economy**.“ (EU, 2008, p. 4)

The following are examples of the perceived threats that are described in connection to climate change:

“The overall effect is that **climate change will fuel existing conflicts over depleting resources**, especially where access to those resources is politicised.“ (EU, 2008, p. 5)

**“Climate change** will **alter rainfall patterns** and further **reduce available freshwater** by as much as 20 to 30% in certain regions. A **drop in agricultural productivity** will lead to, or worsen, **food-insecurity** in least developed countries and an **unsustainable increase in food prices** across the board. **Water shortage** in particular has the **potential to cause civil unrest** and to lead to **significant economic losses**, even in robust economies. The consequences will be even more intense in areas under strong demographic pressure.” (EU, 2008, p. 5)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU1 2008 Climate Change and Int. Security | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |

The countermeasures reflect the overall focus on the territorial level of referent object. Exclusively all policy solutions are defined in terms of riskification. Thereby, the main focus lies on international cooperation, the detection and monitoring of threats and the strengthening of preparedness, and response capabilities.

“**Enhance international cooperation** on the **detection and monitoring** of the **security threats** related to climate change, and on **prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response capacities.”** (EU, 2008, p. 15)

“Promote the development of **regional security scenarios** for different levels of climate change and their implications for international security.” (EU, 2008, p. 15)

“Further **build up EU and Member State planning** and **capabilities** including **civil protection** and the use of **crisis management** and **disaster response instruments** (civil and military) to contribute to the response to the security risks posed by climate change.“ (EU, 2008, p. 14)

### 5.1.9. EU2 2008 ESS Report

The 2008 Report is an update and progress report on the steps and measures of implementation of the 2003 European Security Strategy (Toje, 2010). While the 2003 ESS has not yet mentioned the term climate change or connected any countermeasures specifically to address the topic (see Council of the European Union, 2009) the 2008 Implementation Report emphasizes the importance of climate change as a security issue.

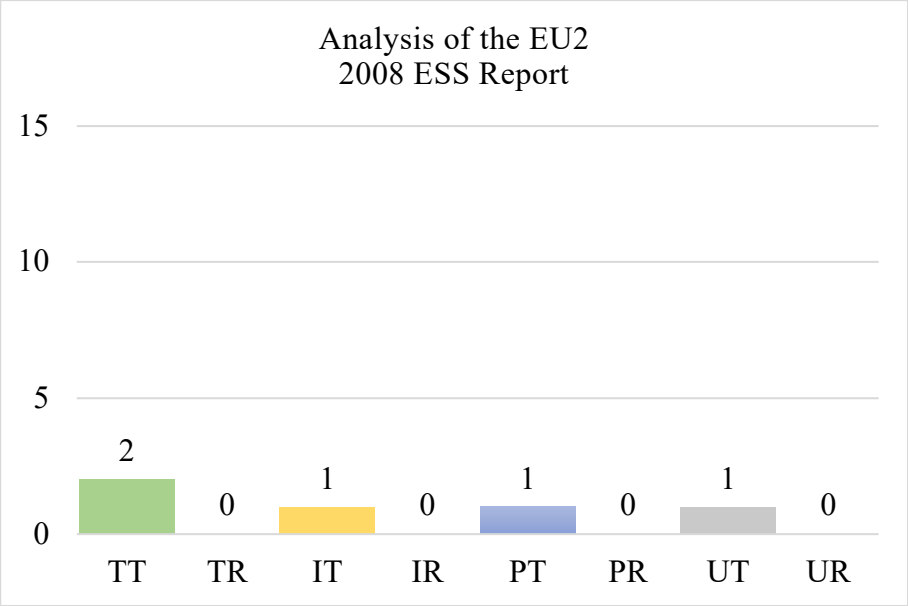


*Figure 13: Analysis EU2 2008 ESS Report, self-generated*

In the Report on the implementation of the 2003 European Security Strategy a threatification on all levels of referent object is observable

> "In 2003, the ESS already identified the security implications of climate change. Five years on, this has taken on a **new urgency**. In March 2008, the High Representative and Commission presented a report to the European Council which described **climate change** is a **"threat multiplier".** (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 5)
>
> "**Natural disasters, environmental degradation** and **competition for resources** exacerbate **conflict**, especially in situations of poverty and population growth, with **humanitarian**, **health**, **political** and **security consequences**, including **greater migration.**" (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 5)

<u>Countermeasures</u>

| Countermeasures of the EU2 2008 ESS Report | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Overall, there were not many mentions of countermeasures in the document. It was possible to categorize two mentions into territorial riskification. Therefore, riskification is dominating regarding policy solutions.

The policy solutions focus on international cooperation, crisis management as well as early detection and coping capacities:

> "We have enhanced our **conflict prevention** and **crisis management,** but need to improve **analysis and early warning capabilities**." (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 6)

> "The EU cannot do this alone. We must step up our work with countries most at risk by **strengthening their capacity to cope**." (Council of the EU, 2008, p. 6)

5.1.10. EU3 2016 Global Strategy

The financial crisis and institutional adaptations in the EU (Lisbon Treaty) led to climate change being rarely politicized during the years of 2009-2015 (Stang & Dimsdale, 2017, p. 2). The Global Strategy (2016) politicized the topic again as "European policymakers have focused more on the security, stability and migration challenges of its neighbourhood" (Stang & Dimsdale, 2017, p. 2).

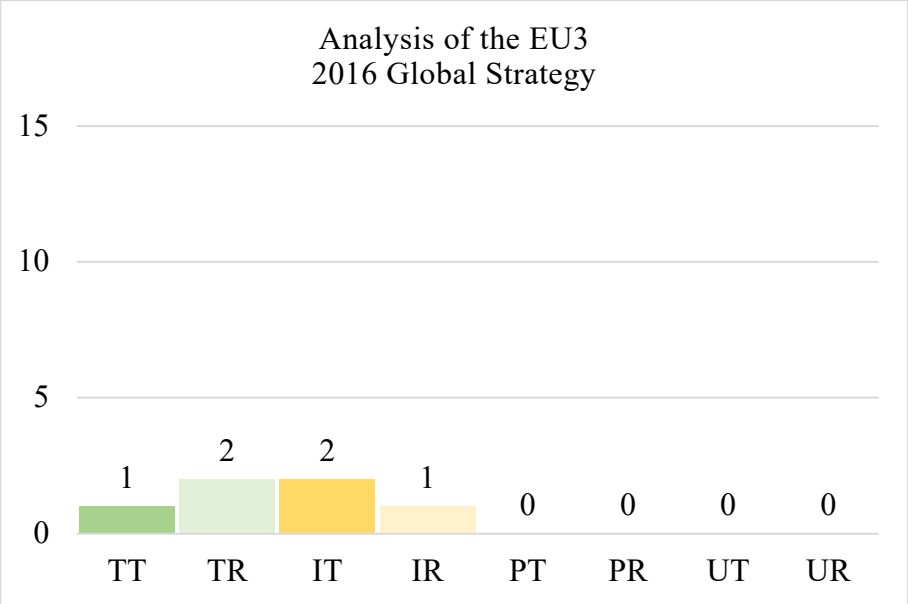


*Figure 14: Analysis EU3 2016 Global Strategy, self-generated*

In the Global Strategy of 2016 climate change is framed as a threat and a risk to the European territory and its people. The categorization was divided equally between riskification and threatification.

> „Our Union has enabled citizens to enjoy unprecedented security, democracy and prosperity. Yet today terrorism, hybrid threats, economic volatility, **climate change** and energy insecurity endanger **our people** and **territory.**" (EU, 2016, p. 9)
>
> **"Climate change** and **environmental degradation** exacerbate **potential conflict**, in light of their impact **on desertification**, **land degradation**, and **water and food scarcity**. (EU, 2016, 27)
>
> "[..] and **climate change** – which is a **threat multiplier** that catalyses **water and food scarcity**, **pandemics** and **displacement.**" (EU, 2016, p. 29)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU3 2016 Global Strategy | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |

The countermeasures are clearly articulated in terms of riskification on all levels of referent object.

> "We will therefore **redouble our efforts on prevention**, **monitoring** root causes such as human rights violations, inequality, resource stress, and **climate change** [..]." (EU, 2016, p. 29)
>
> „**On the broader security agenda, the US will continue to be our core partner**. The EU will deepen cooperation with the US and Canada on crisis management, counter-terrorism, cyber, migration, energy and **climate action**." (EU, 2016, p. 37)
>
> „The EU will lead by example **by implementing its commitments** on sustainable development and **climate change**. It will **increase climate financing**, drive climate mainstreaming in multilateral fora, **raise the ambition for review** foreseen in the Paris agreement, and **work for clean energy cost reductions**." (EU, 2016, p. 40)
>
> "Finally, the EU will seek to enhance energy and environmental resilience." (EU, 2016, p. 27)

While in the conception climate change is at a 1:1 ratio defined as a threat and as a risk. The countermeasures are formulated exclusively as policy solutions for risks, including longer timeframes and less urgent measures.

5.1.11. EU4 2019 Global Strategy Report

The 2019 document is a progress report on the initial 2016 Global Strategy (EEAS, 2019). It draws on the same conception of climate change and focuses rather on the countermeasures and policy solutions suggested. In this regard, the first research question is secondary as there are no new conclusions on how climate change is framed but the few passages that address the definition and danger of climate change are shortened passages taken from the initial document of 2016. The focus in this document will therefor lie on the second research question and investigate the countermeasures proposed.

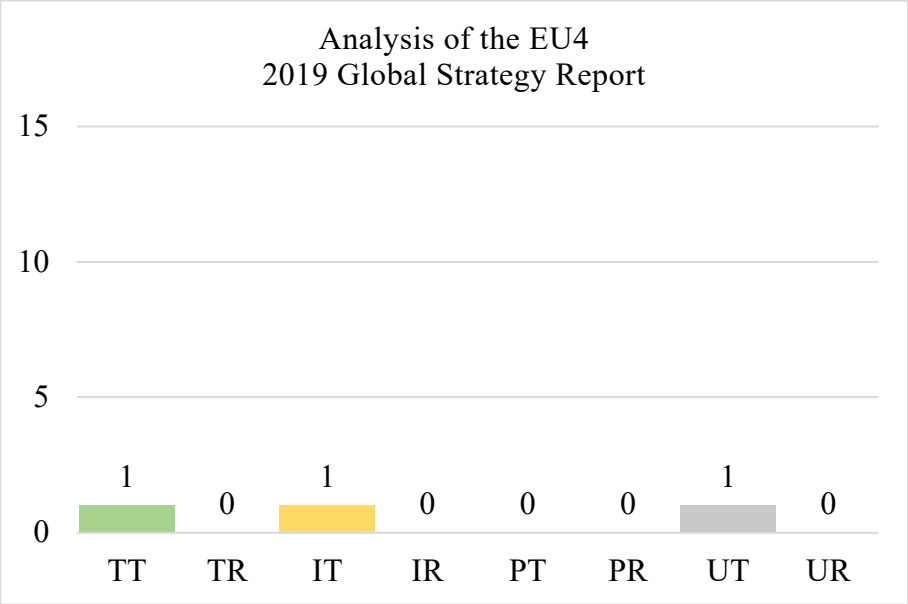


*Figure 15: Analysis EU4 2019 Global Strategy Report, self-generated*

Climate change is framed as a threat multiplier (EEAS, 2019, p. 26) that "endangers our people and territory." (EEAS, 2019, p. 37). Figure 15 makes the dominance of threatification regarding the conception of climate change in the security discourse evident.

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU4 2019 Global Strategy Report | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

Again, like in the initial 2016 Global Strategy, exclusively all countermeasures are defined as measures typically assorted to riskification. Once more bilateral and international cooperation are mentioned as vital in the mitigation of climate change. The following is an example of a

countermeasure categorized as territorial riskification with an emphasis on international cooperation:

> "The Integrated Approach is **a long-term investment**. Looking ahead, the EU can put ever more emphasis on **conflict prevention** as well as **long term peacebuilding**, and increasingly work in an integrated manner with Member States on the ground, as well **as with all relevant international, regional, state and non-state actors in any particular conflict setting**. In making full use of the EU toolbox, systematic work on the climate-security nexus is crucial, given the **threat multiplying effect of climate change**, environmental degradation and food and water insecurity." (EEAS, 2019, p. 26)

The actions stated have a strategic long-term time frame and refer to peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Here, the apparent threats refer to the potential of civil uprisings and intra-state or bilateral conflicts with a consequence of mass-migration.

The text passage below can be categorized as territorial riskification and planetary riskification:

> **"Climate resilience** is **now a priority of our foreign policy**: from our support to the "Great Green Wall" **against desertification** in the Sahara and Sahel, to **disaster risk reduction** in small islands; from **investment in clean energy** in developing countries, to our work with Arctic States and indigenous peoples. **Climate action has become integral part of our work on conflict prevention and sustainable security**." (EEAS, 2019, p. 40)

The specification of action as a priority in the foreign policy clearly indicates an actor of a state or territorial entity. And the countermeasures regarding desertification and clean energy investments could be addressed as protective planetary policy solutions.

5.1.12. EU5 2019 Green Deal

The European Green Deal is a policy initiative of the EU Commission targeting the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by implementing stricter economic regulations (Lee-Makiyama, 2021, p. 1). The strategy "[..] aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use" (EU, 2019). It was presented in late 2019 by the von der Leyen Commission and defines climate change as not only a threat multiplier but also as a cause for instability, and thereby defining it as a security problem (European Parliament, 2022). The document specifically focuses on the implications climate change and the respective countermeasures have on EU businesses (see EU, 2019). Hence, the definition and characteristics of climate change is not as elaborated as in other documents.

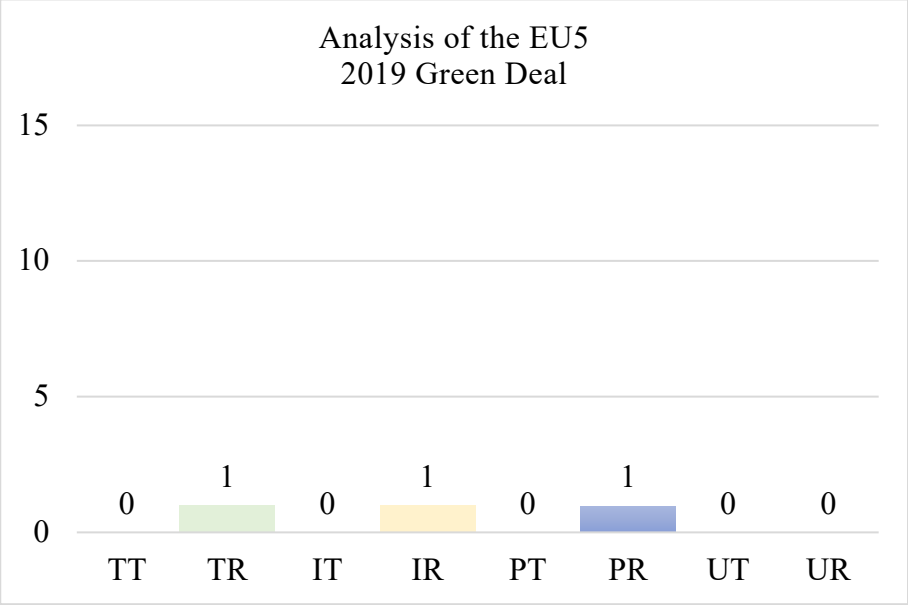


*Figure 16: Analysis EU5 2019 Green Deal, self-generated*

In the EU Green Deal climate change is framed on all levels of referent object exclusively in the logic of riskification:

> "[..] **climate change** will continue to **create significant stress** in Europe **in spite of the mitigation efforts**. Strengthening the efforts **on climateproofing**, **resilience building, prevention and preparedness** is crucial." (EU, 2019, p. 5)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU5 2019 Green Deal | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 |

The countermeasures are formulated in a 4:1 ratio in favour of riskification. The policy solutions include building relations to cooperate with other countries on climate action (EU, 2019, p. 20), to produce new strategies and legislature to commit to more effective policies (EU, 2019, pp. 12-13) and to invest monetarily to proposed countermeasures (EU, 2019, pp. 15-16). Another key feature is that the document suggests involving the public in climate action by educating and promoting debates on the issue of climate change (EU, 2019, pp. 19-22). Additionally, there are examples of countermeasures referring to more direct actions addressing the planetary level of referent object:

> **"The Commission will also take a zerotolerance approach to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing."** (EU, 2019, p. 14)
>
> "**At least 30% of the InvestEU Fund will contribute to fighting climate change.**" (EU, 2019, p. 15)

5.1.13. EU6 2020 Climate Change and Defence Roadmap

The Climate Change and Defence Roadmap marks an important document aiming to integrate implications of climate change into policy outputs of the EU (i.e. research, development, industry, as well as security and defence – it was developed by the EEAS in cooperation with the EU Commission and the EDA (EEAS, 2022).

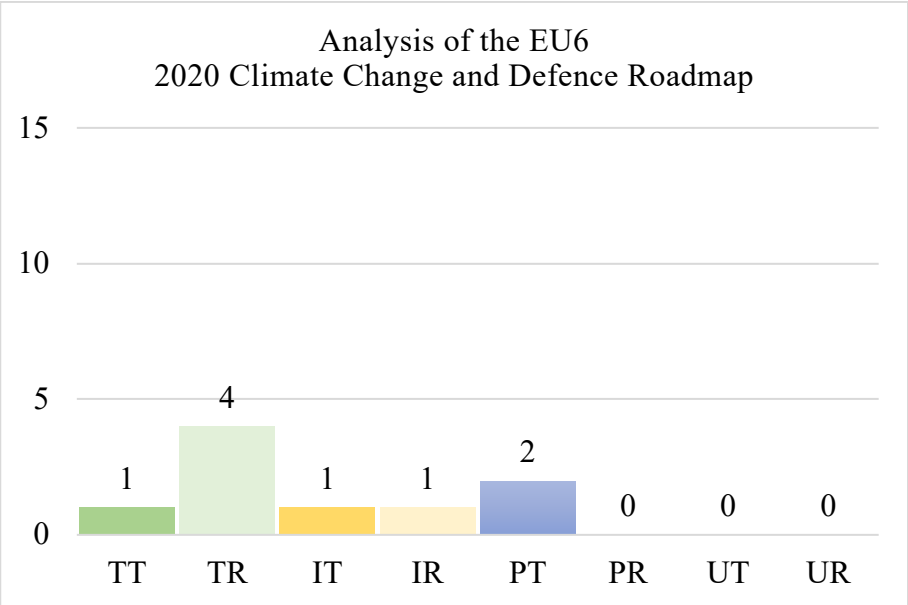


*Figure 17: Analysis EU6 2020 Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, self-generated*

In the 2020 document climate change is framed as both a threat and a risk on all levels of referent object. The ratio is 5:4 in favour of riskification, making the conception of climate change between threatification and riskification almost equal. The passage below illustrates that climate change is portrayed as a threat to all levels of referent object, the territorial, the individual and the planetary.

> "The EU has long recognised that **climate change** acts as a **threat multiplier** with **serious implications** for **peace** and **security across the globe**. It **will increase sea-level rise, drive up global temperatures** and **increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. These developments might have a geopolitical impact, including as regards global maritime security. They will limit the availability of food and water, undermine human health, cause people displacement and degrade infrastructure and economies, biodiversity and resources**." (EEAS, 2020, p. 4)

In most cases climate change is addressed in connection to the territorial level:

> "**Climate change** and environmental degradation **could exacerbate existing tensions** in **conflict settings,** ultimately **leading to increased violence** and **generating additional humanitarian needs,** which **may lead to a growing demand for military and civilian CSDP missions and operations**. In the same vein, large swaths of inhospitable territories may no longer be under an effective state control and become safe haven for adverse forces. (EEAS, 2020, p. 5)

In even more cases climate change is defined as a risk, with multiple consequential implications:

> "Climate change is not just a **conflict and security risk multiplier**. It introduces new operational challenges, including the need to provide missions and operations with equipment that is effective under **extreme weather conditions** and technology that is more **energy efficient**." (EEAS, 2020, p. 6)

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU6 2020 Climate Change and Defence Roadmap | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |

The policy solutions presented are exclusively addressed in terms of riskification and notes the importance of cooperation on the matter of climate change action:

> "With **climate change** being a **multidimensional issue**, an integrated approach among different EU actors is crucial in order to identify synergies and to maximise impact. Following such an approach, **mitigation of climate related risks** and **alleviation of environmental stress** could be addressed more effectively through **global cooperation** and **multilateral channels**." (EEAS, 2020, pp. 3-4)

> "The EEAS/EU Military Staff together with the Commission services **will assess ways to foster humanitarian civil-military cooperation**, including **preparedness** and **response to natural and humanitarian disasters** [..]. The EEAS will **examine the possibilities** under the future European Peace Facility (EPF) to **fund projects** necessary to support CSDP military missions and operations that **improve environmental/carbon footprint** and are financially sound." (EEAS, 2020, pp. 5-6)

> "The EEAS and EDA, and relevant Commission services, will work with the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and other training providers to **integrate climate change mitigation** and **adaptation and environmental protection** aspects into EU trainings and exercises." (EEAS, 2020, p. 7)

5.1.14. EU7 2022 Strategic Compass

The Strategic Compass presented in 2022 is at the time of writing the current EU strategic guideline in matters of foreign, security, and defence policy (BMVG, 2022).

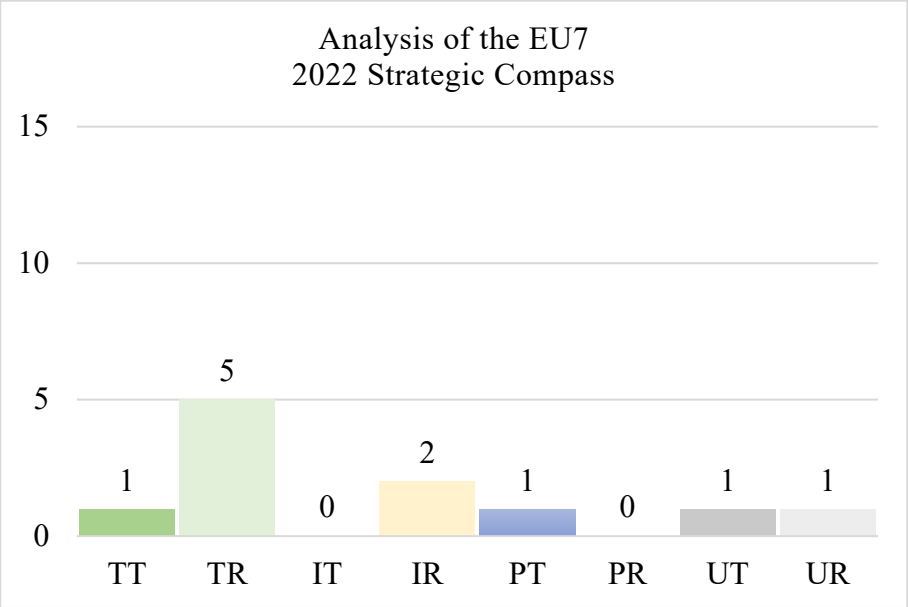


*Figure 18: Analysis EU7 2022 Strategic Compass, self-generated*

In the 2022 EU Strategic Compass, climate change is framed as a risk in most cases. Specifically, climate change was described 5 times as a territorial risk, twice as an individual risk and once as an unspecified risk. An example of riskification on the territorial level is given below:

> "Climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters will also **impact our security landscape** over the next decades and are proven **drivers for instability** and **conflict** around the globe – from the Sahel to the Amazon and the Arctic region. The **competition for natural resources** such as **farm land and water** and the **exploitation of energy resources for political purposes** are concrete examples in this regard." (EU, 2022, pp. 22-23)

Three times it was framed as a threat, thereby either on the territorial or the planetary level of referent object and once as an unspecified threat. As an example, the following addresses the framing of the climate change as a planetary threat:

> "**Global warming** leads to more frequent and extreme weather events and natural disasters as well as **degradation of eco-systems** across the globe that increase vulnerability and exposure." (EU, 2022, p. 38)

Overall, the ratio in the conceptualization of climate change is 8:3 in favour of riskification.

Countermeasures

| Countermeasures of the EU7 2022 Strategic Compass | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TT | TR | IT | IR | PT | PR | UT | UR |
| 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

The table above reflects a similar ratio regarding the countermeasures with a value of 7:2 in favour of riskification. Below are examples of both territorial and planetary riskification measures:

> "We will furthermore **strengthen** our **analysis capacities** and **early warning systems** as to the specific **security challenges** triggered by **climate change** [..]" (EU, 2022, p. 38)

> "[..] and the global transition towards a **climate-neutral, resource-efficient and circular economy**." (EU, 2022, p. 38)

Overall, the countermeasures not only mention specific actions with regards to countering the threat or risk of climate change but also highlight the importance of international cooperation:

> "If the EU and UN are to meet the challenges of the future, a more dynamic approach to early **warning, conflict prevention** and **mediation** is required. [..] This is important if we are to respond to new and emerging challenges such as **climate change**, pandemics, terrorism [..] (EU, 2022, p. 54)

**RQ1: Conception of Climate Change (2008 – 2022)**

| USA Conception of Climate Change | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| USA | Year | Riskification | Threatification |
| 1 | 2010 | X | |
| 2 | 2010 | | X |
| 3 | 2015 | | X |
| 4 | 2017 | - | - |
| 5 | 2018 | - | - |
| 6 | 2022 | | X |
| 7 | 2022 | | X |

| EU Conception of Climate Change | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| EU | Year | Riskification | Threatification |
| 1 | 2008 | | X |
| 2 | 2008 | | X |
| 3 | 2016 | X | X |
| 4 | 2019 | | X |
| 5 | 2019 | X | |
| 6 | 2020 | X | |
| 7 | 2022 | X | |

**RQ2: Countermeasures against Climate Change (2008 – 2022)**

| USA Countermeasures against Climate Change | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| USA | Year | Riskification | Threatification |
| 1 | 2010 | X | |
| 2 | 2010 | X | |
| 3 | 2015 | X | |
| 4 | 2017 | - | - |
| 5 | 2018 | - | - |
| 6 | 2022 | X | |
| 7 | 2022 | X | |

| EU Countermeasures against Climate Change | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| EU | Year | Riskification | Threatification |
| 1 | 2008 | X | |
| 2 | 2008 | X | |
| 3 | 2016 | X | |
| 4 | 2019 | X | |
| 5 | 2019 | X | |
| 6 | 2020 | X | |
| 7 | 2022 | X | |

*Figure 19: Visual summary of the content analysis, self-generated*

## 5.2. Argumentative Discourse Analysis of the material

How can the divergences between the different conceptions of climate change on the one hand and the proposed policy solutions on the other hand be explained? This is where argumentative discourse analysis can prove insightful. To follow Hajer´s approach to holistically analyse discourses, the following chapter will lay out the **historical, political, and cultural context** (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005, p. 176) in order to give context and a framework to the results of the content analysis.

### 5.2.1. Historical Context

The issue of climate change has globally been on the political agenda since the late 1980s (Cass, 2006, p. 1), and throughout the 1990s with the negotiations of the Kyoto Protocol leading the way (BMWK, n.d.). From 1996 onwards, the EU implemented a long-term strategy to limit the increase of the global temperature (Egenhofer & Schaik, 2005, p. 2). Traditionally, the EU has played a leadership role regarding multilateral diplomacy on environmental issues, which has become increasingly important when the US under the George W. Bush administration exited the Kyoto Protocol in 2001 (Egenhofer et al., 2011). With the US retreat the issue of climate change became "a symbol [..] of an underlying disunity in the transatlantic partnership" (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 36). Since the negotiations in the 1990s both the US and Europe have had diverging views on how to address climate change: "Broadly stated, the US has favoured non-binding targets, market mechanisms, and the inclusion of developing countries, while Europe has backed binding targets, more direct regulation, and supported the idea that mitigation should begin with the advanced, industrialized countries." (Busby & Ochs, 2005, pp. 36-37). For both the EU and the US the 2000s brought an increase in securitization moves (Dupont, 2019, p. 373). Especially for the EU the topic of energy security has gained priority because of Russia's use of energy supplies as political leverage from 2006 onwards, resulting in a climate-energy-security nexus of interconnected debates (Sonnsjö & Bremberg, 2016, p. 7). As of 2007 "[..] climate change has been added to the political and scientific agenda as an object of securitization and as a potential cause of international, national and human security as well as a trigger or force multiplier resulting in different forms of primarily small-scale conflict." (Brauch, 2011, p. 99).

In the United States new impetus for climate change came primarily with the inauguration of President Barack Obama, who campaigned for viewing climate change as an issue of national security and a threat thereof (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 88). With the new administration,

climate change has been interpreted as a security priority, thus integrating ´green´ economics as part of an overall effort to enhance economic recovery and growth (Dalby, 2015, p. 427). The automobile is of paramount importance in the context of American economic power because it was the key technology of the twentieth century resulting in the country being fundamentally built on a petroleum-based economy (Dalby, 2015, p. 429). In view of this, the orders of January 29th, 2009, to enforce a law to increase fuel-economy standards and implement firmer emission standards (Bullis, 2020) can be considered an even greater political success. Other actions to address climate change followed in upcoming years, i.e. regulations for vehicles to reduce emissions (Federal Register, 2010), the announcement of the Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2), greenhouse gases (GHG), and adapt to potential climate change (Leggett, 2014). On the international stage the Obama administration submitted in 2015 the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) the new climate action plan to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, n.d.), and reached a historic milestone by achieving an agreement between almost all nations to binding reductions of emissions and reliance on fossil fuels (Obama Foundation, n.d.). Also, the National Security Strategy is recognized by experts as a reflection of increased awareness of viewing climate as an issue of national and international security (Hauger, 2022). In 2016, the Paris Agreement was ratified and defined by President Obama as a "turning point" in actions countering climate change (Milman, 2021). During Obama´s legislative term, the US – as later other countries – were confronted with a financial crisis initiated by the US market for sub-prime housing loans in the first half of 2007 (Edey, 2009, p. 186). The Arab Spring from the beginning of 2010 to 2013 (Britannica, 2023), resulting among other in the escalation of the conflict and beginning of the Syrian Civil War, which would become one of the most controversial policies of the Obama presidency (Plett Usher, 2017). Additional achievements were amongst other the Iran nuclear agreement in July of 2015 (Robinson, 2023), as well as the normalization of the US-Cuba relations (The White House, 2016), culminating in Obama being the first US president to visit Cuba since 1928 (DeYoung et al., 2023). A major shift in the American approach to climate change was evoked by the change of the political leadership of the country. The 45th President of the United States Donald Trump had an openly sceptical approach to climate change, even denying its existence at times (De Pryck & Gemenne, 2017). During his presidency various orders, laws and (international) commitments from the Obama era were reversed, among others the dismantling of Obama´s Climate Action Plan (Davenport & Rubin, 2017) and the withdrawal from the Paris Agreement (Pompeo, 2019). Experts define these actions taken by

Trump as a de-securitization of climate change "[..] by treating it as less than an existential threat, and by explicitly undoing the securitizing moves of the Obama administration" (Hauger, 2022). Even though the new president dismissed climate change, it proved that not all political actors in Trumps administration had the same views on the issue. State agencies like the Department of Defense held on to the idea of climate change posing a threat, as described by Trumps Secretary of Defense James Mattis (Revkin, 2017). Hauger (2022) postulates that during the Trump era security policies were purposefully worded in a manner to avoid vocabulary connected to climate change and evade the topic altogether. Again, there is a drastic shift in the American view on climate change when President Joseph R. Biden takes office in 2020, advertising that combatting climate change would be a central priority of his legislative agenda (The White House, 2021). On the day of taking office President Biden re-joined the Paris Agreement (Blinken, 2021). Other major actions included the signing of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIIJA) which led to a multitude of economic incentives to invest in clean energy solutions (Lashof, 2023). Additionally, in August 2022, Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act, which included measures to tackle climate change (Wang, 2022), and was called by experts the ´most ambitious climate legislation in U.S. history´ (see Cartier, 2023).

For the EU 2008 was also a significant year regarding climate change, as the European Commission was among the first institutions globally to identify climate change as a security issue (Youngs, 2021). The debate gained new momentum and concrete policy papers such as "Climate Change and International Security" were presented and implemented (EU, 2008). At the same time the EU was faced with a ´Great Recession´ induced by the economic and financial crisis in the USA, which resulted in several EU Member States being confronted with individual debt crises (EPRS, 2019, p. 1). The events of 2008-2009 subsequently had significant impact and were followed by enormous economic challenges including a decrease in the GDP, employment rates and overall investments (Matei & Calapod, 2014, p. 844). Many scholars therefore have recognized the pressure on EU member states to lower environmental requirements as well as to weaken implemented environmental legislation to indirectly counteract the financial struggles that came with the 2008 economic crisis (see Melidis & Russel, 2020; Pollex & Lenschow, 2020; Gravey & Jordan, 2016, Burns & Tobin, 2016). In July of 2011, under the German presidency, the UN Security Council unanimously recognized the threat of a changing climate to worldwide peace and stability (Climate Diplomacy, n.d.). For the EU too, the Paris Agreement was viewed as an important and necessary step towards the securitization of climate change as it was "the first-ever universal, legally binding global

climate change agreement" with the aim of implementing national action plans to combat effects of climate change and prevent stark rising temperatures (European Commission, n.d.). With the migration crisis of 2015, climate change has been discussed more and more in the context of migration from 2016 onwards and with the release of the *Global Strategy* a linkage was detected and emphasized between the areas of security, migration, climate change and humanitarian action (EEAS, 2018). The importance of climate change as a trigger for global migration flows in the future is a recognized concern in the EU (European Union, 2022). The release of the *European Green Deal* in 2019 was described by some scholars as a ´paradigm shift´ (Schunz, 2022) and as transformative for the new decade as its aim was transformative not only to the EU´s economy but also to its society and a ground-breaking alteration of previous strategies because the focus was no longer on economic growth only but shifted to focusing on environmental protection and on the enhancement of human living conditions (Schunz, 2022, p. 18). Although it has been argued, that through a legal perspective the European Green Deal is to be categorized as policy instrument of soft-law (Sikora, 2021, p. 668), it can be argued that this is compensated by the legal effects that are binding through the implementation of the Member States (Vela Almeida et al., 2023, p. 2). In line with that, the Council adopted the European climate law in June 2021, with which EU countries are legally obliged to reach both the 2030 and 2050 climate goals (EU, 2023). However, just as important as the steps toward a more environmental-centred focus are, it becomes obvious that external political events can just as easily re-shift the focus. One drastic example is the global energy crisis caused by the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022 (Gaffen, 2022).

### 5.2.2. Political Context

Climate policy must be regarded as more than part of environmental policy, instead it influences greatly other core issues such as energy, economics, transportation and tax policy (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 36). Thereby, the core objective of climate and environmental policy is to find solutions for economies to adapt to the challenges of climate change, the scarcity of natural resources, human-induced emissions, unsustainable consumption, and unsustainable methods of production (Cifuentes-Faura, 2022, p. 1339). Academic research suggests that the diversities regarding the different conceptions of climate change are foremost a consequence of **different political systems and governance structures** of the US and the EU and only secondary because of cultural dissimilarities (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 35; Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 95).

In previous studies it has been demonstrated that the extent to which policymaking is dominated by either technocratic or political approaches influences both the utilization of security discourses as well as the capacity to produce efficient climate change policies (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014 p. 95). The US policy-making process is characterized by various interest groups trying to influence policies to their advantage, resulting potentially in ineffective political outcomes (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014 p. 95).

For the US the securitization of climate change fulfils additional functions specific to their political system:

> "[..] the suspension or limiting of normal political processes and the centralization of power enable political actors seeking action on climate change to by-pass problems associated with diffuse political power. If climate change is a matter of security, dithering in the Senate becomes unacceptable and political opposition becomes a liability. Thus, securitization is a mechanism for empowering proponents of action at the expense of opponents." (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014 p. 96)

For the EU the securitization of climate change is of different nature because of the **technocratic approach** in the policy-making process that advances political separation as well as the significant **political distance between the institutions of the EU and the public**. The latter reduces the capability of blocking policy initiations and outcomes which as a result diminishes the necessity for power centralization usually occurring with securitization (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014 p. 96). Regarding the **veto powers in the EU**, it can be stated that the multitude of Member States and the diversity of individual preferences does impede supranational policy consensus, however analyses have shown that though "[..] EU members effectively have veto power over policies they strongly dislike, European governments have fewer domestic constraints than US negotiators." (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 51). Moreover, policymakers at the EU level have a strong incentive to create unified and consistent climate change policy as it improves the leadership role of the EU in the international context but can also reinforce its authority in domestic policy-making (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014 p. 96). An additional element of EU policy regarding climate change is that the developed countermeasures have been connected to environmental and internal market competences, thereby, eradicating opposition from Member States i.e. the energy sector (Dupont, 2019, p. 370). Furthermore, **the role of the European Council** was strengthened due to its actions in the climate change discourse exceeding its formal role of giving impetus (Dupont, 2019, p. 371).

> "It has been a driver (or blocker) of internal policy developments; has agreed on policy measures, although that is the prerogative of the European Parliament [..] and the Council of the European Union [..]; and has provided very detailed guidance/instructions on the direction of future policy.

> The adoption of (often ambitious) policy measures in the EU shows the success of the collective securitisation of climate change.“ (Dupont, 2019, p. 371)

Youngs (2014, p. 137) points out that even though there are attempts of EU countries to create a new security governance mode on climate change with a less top-down approach from the EU Institutions, so far, the outcome has been limited. This is partly due to the strong influence the EU is exhibiting when it comes to countering commercial self-interest of the private sector.

In the US, policy decisions are subject to the influence of a multitude of actors with **veto power**. In practice this means that **bipartisan support** is a prerequisite for effective policymaking as otherwise proposed policies potentially standing in conflict with powerful interests will face great difficulties to being accepted and implemented (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 50). The Congress exhibits significant rights in co-determining policies, while the Senate can block international treaties (the latter being important regarding international commitments to climate change), and both chambers can block national policy implementations, i.e. carbon taxes, investments in green technology and energy efficiency (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 51). In addition to constitutional veto powers there are non-governmental entities in society with the ability to exert influence over legislators, mostly this refers to campaign financing which is especially imperative to US politicians because of their greater dependence on private funding in comparison to their EU counterparts (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 53). The authors conclude that this dependency is “hostile to climate change mitigation efforts. [..]” (Busby & Ochs, 2005, p. 53). The different ideological viewpoints between the US and the EU have been phrased as ‘carboniferous capitalism’ vs. ‘ecological modernisation’ (Dalby & Paterson, 2008; Paterson, 2009).

Another differentiating feature regarding securitization is the question of who can ´speak´ security – while the EU is not comprehended as an actor with that power, the US president is (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 85). This means that the US head of state has more influence over what a matter of security is and what not. This helps explaining why the EU has remained relatively stable in the assessment of climate change as a threat, while the US has experienced grave shifts from securitization to de-securitization back to re-securitization over the course of three elected political leaders and their opposing opinions and evaluations of the issue. Ladislaw substantiates this assessment by not only recognizing that the Democratic and Republican Party continue to be divided over the political cleavage of climate change (2017, p. 24) but also that the respective policies would be greatly different and lead to diverging policy responses (2017, p. 23). Another remark is made by Brauch (2011, p. 251) who argues that securitizing moves

in the USA must be viewed also in terms of economic self-interest as they have become instruments for not only the legitimisation of preferences but also for the allocation of substantial resources.

**State-level action** is an additional possibility of shaping climate policy (Ladislav, 2017, p. 25). This is especially evident regarding the Trump era when contrary to his policies, federal states such as California and even deeply Republican states, proved resistance from the respective state and local governments and even from courts, and instead increased individual efforts to combat climate change (Faber 2018, p. 95 & p. 106). Actions of those states include policies like the transformation of the electric energy structure in New York and the implementation of the Cap-and Trade Program in California, a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and exemplifying that states can direct to some extend independently (Ladislaw, 2017, pp. 25-26).

### 5.2.3. Cultural Context

There are many possible cultural differences between the US and the EU that could lead to a different understanding and evaluation of climate change. However, it is important to mention that the subsequent topics portray only a few of possible influential factors in society, with the understanding that the populations of each unit are diverse and not at all heterogenous. One factor might be a divergence in the **perception of urgency**. European citizens feel more urgency when it comes climate change than US citizens, this is the result of a survey by the European Investment Bank showing that nearly 80 % of citizens in the EU are concerned about the issue, while this number is slightly over 60 % for US citizens (EIB, 2018). Additionally, the differing acknowledgements of the **relevance of science** play a role. Hayes & Knox-Hayes (2014, p. 83) observed that the European discourses put more emphasis on scientific findings, while the US exhibit higher scepticism of scientific results on climate change. In the US this uncertainty regarding scientific evidence is used by opponents to advocate against climate change policy (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 90). In contrast, political leaders in the EU, like Commission President Barroso, have consistently stressed the significance of science and used it as the foundation for climate change policy (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 91). Moreover, in the EU the discourse of climate change highlights possibilities of economic opportunity and (international) leadership (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 90), the latter because climate change is regarded as a transboundary issue and finds regulation on the supranational level rather than on an individual member state level, thereby strengthening the EU as a ´policy-making authority´, while this mindset is missing in the U.S. discourse (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 83). In Europe, climate change is seen as an opportunity for the modernization of the economic

system and for the improvement of the standard of living (Hayes & Knox-Hayes, 2014, p. 91). Studies have shown that in the US the population´s fear of a potential loss of the current lifestyle *because* of taking actions against climate change is overriding the fear of a greater collective social problem. In European countries data has shown, that for individuals there is more of a balance between those fears (Lorenzoni & Pidgeon, 206, p. 87), which could be interpreted as a specific feature of the cultural importance for **collectivism** in Europe in contrast to the American focus on **individualism**. The authors Busby & Ochs observed that, along with the above-mentioned reasons, fundamental values differ between American and European citizens with regards to the policy approaches, the specific preferences for policies and the diverging forms for the use of force (2005, p. 45).

## 6. Discussion

*Findings of the research*

The first research question, specifically, **how do the EU and the USA conceptualize climate change in their security policy during the period of 2008 and 2022 regarding the concepts of threatification and riskification (Diez et al., 2016)** can be answered as follows: The EU and the US indeed show differences in the conceptualization of climate change. The issue of climate change has been securitized in the late 2010s for both the USA and the EU. In that I have been following the approach of Diez et al. (2016), Floyd (2016) and Dupond (2019) understanding that policy change can be regarded as evidence of securitization. With regards to the US, climate change was presented significantly more as a threat in the respective security policies in the period between 2008 and 2022. However, there was an interruption in this regard during the years 2017-2021, corresponding to Donald Trump's presidential legislature, in which climate change was not mentioned in the security papers analysed and accordingly cannot be assigned to the concept of threatification or riskification but must be regarded as a non-securitized issue. For the EU, it can be stated that in the analysed period climate change can be assigned to the concept of threatification, especially during the years 2008 to 2016. In the following years until 2022, the analysis shows that climate change is rather presented as a risk, which means that the conception corresponds to riskification. In more detail, starting from the year 2008 the EU is pioneering in framing climate change as a threat. The EU continues to do so until the year of 2016. There is a subtle change of language starting from 2016 where climate change is not framed exclusively as a threat anymore but increasingly defined as a risk. From 2019 onwards, this trend magnifies, and climate change is defined predominantly as a risk. For the USA the analysis starts a bit later in 2010 with significant interruptions in the ongoing years. While the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (US1 2010 QDR) was the first security policy document to include climate change in the list of potential threats to the nation it was still predominantly defining climate change as a risk. The first Security Strategy of the Obama administration was indeed the first US security document that defined climate change exclusively as a threat to the national security. The political power relations regarding the head of state seem to have a more drastic impact on the climate change discourse in the USA compared to the European Union. After the Obama Administration the climate change discourse shifts drastically from being securitized to being de-securitized under President Trump, with no mentions of the issue of climate change on the security agenda during the years of 2017 and 2021. With the election of President Biden, the issue gets re-securitized and is on

the US security agenda from 2022 onwards. Interestingly, the topic is not introduced in the logic of a risk but immediately defined again as a threat, exemplifying the extreme bi-partisan differences in the US politics. In comparison, the EU climate change discourse seems more stable with a gradual shift over the years towards riskification.

A shift in the levels of security is observable for both the EU and the USA. Starting with the EU, in 2008, climate change is defined as a risk and threat at all levels of security with a higher concentration on the territorial level. In 2016, there is a higher focus on the territorial and individual level, however the planetary level is not mentioned. From 2019 onwards, where the logic of security has shifted from threatification to riskification the levels are more equally emphasized again. Mostly, climate change is recognized as a risk to the territorial level. For the USA, in 2010 under the Obama Administration, climate change is mostly defined as a risk and threat to the territorial level and to the individual level. Next to that the category of unspecified threat is mentioned the most. This categorization is valid again for the Biden Administration. For the lack of securitization of climate change during the Trump Administration, naturally, there are no levels of security observable.

Reasons for these dissimilarities were presented in the discourse analysis. They relate primarily to differences between the political systems of the two countries. The US adopts a more political approach with various interest groups potentially profiting from securitizing climate change, while the EU is more technocratic advancing thereby political separation and reducing the risk of diminishing policy initiations. It was also shown that the EU Member States veto power is not an obstacle regarding the securitization of climate change and that unity and consistency in climate policy is a high priority for European policy-makers as it strengthens their ability to take a leadership role on the international stage while reinforcing authority in domestic politics. However, for the United States, the veto powers play a significant role - with a large number of actors that can influence policy decisions bipartisan support is essential in increasing the likelihood of acceptance and implementation of a specific policy. Furthermore, the EU and the US differ starkly in their authority over who can designate, or ´speak´ security. The President of the United States has significantly more influence in determining whether an issue is a security problem or not. This explains the radical changes in the US conception of climate policy (from securitization to de-securitization and to re-securitization), while there is a gradual more consistent change in the EU from threatification to riskification.

The second research question, namely, **how the respective conceptualizations impact the specific measures proposed in the analysed policies to counter climate change or the effects thereof with regards to the concepts of threatification and riskification,** can be summarized as follows: The most significant finding for the second research question was that the conceptions of climate change with the respective logic of securitization in terms of threatification and riskification did not provoke the same logic in the countermeasures. Almost all countermeasures were exclusively formulated as measures that can be assigned to the concept (logic of security) of riskification even if during that period the respective conception of climate change was categorized as threatification. There were a mere of 6 cases for the US and 4 cases for the EU where the vocabulary would refer more to a measure of threatification, but all examples were partly vague and not clearly concretized. In all cases, the measures of riskification significantly overweighed the measures of threatification. This, as well as the partly subjective categorization (which is discussed below) led to the conclusion, that the occasional change of vocabulary in the very few cases could not be interpreted as a general threatification for the countermeasures nor lead to a causal application of conception and respective countermeasures. Not in one case did the conception of threatification lead to imminent, urgent and direct countermeasures that could be defined as threatification-countermeasures and in consequence overweigh the proposed indirect, long-term and risk-management-focused countermeasures that would be labelled as riskification-countermeasures. I, therefore, dismissed the occasional sign of threatification in the countermeasures as it seemed neither consistent in the vocabulary nor the measure itself. This was an unexpected result, as one would anticipate that when climate change was viewed as a threat, the same logic would appear in the suggested countermeasures and more urgent responses would be proposed, but that was not the case in any of the material under investigation. This finding is in line with other scholars who have too found that: “This ‘selling’ of climate change through framing it as a security issue has, however, not yet resulted in exceptional measures that cross the boundaries of the normal.” (Warner & Boas, 2019, p. 1472). **This is the very point that divides opinion in the academic debate.** While some scholars argue that if extraordinary measures have not been implemented it must mean that "proper" securitization has not occurred, other experts (see Diez et al. (2016), Floyd (2016) and Dupond (2019)) argue that the very fact that there has been a policy change at all, and that the issue is not only on the political agenda but rather on a particularly sensitive agenda – the security agenda – indicates that securitization has indeed occurred.

*Limitations of the research*

Naturally, every research has its limitations. One of the most obvious ones is the limitation of material that was used for this thesis. Since it would not have been manageable otherwise, the analysis was limited to 14 documents, which accordingly reflect merely an impression of the given situation, but not by any means its entirety. Numerous other documents were written in the period spanning from 2008 to 2022 about climate change, including other papers that are of considerable importance for the security policy agenda. Therefore, the valid question remains if the results would be the same had there been included more documents.

Another important consideration is the objectivity of the results. While the framework of Diez et al. (2016) and von Lucke et al. (2014) proved to be a solid fundament, in some cases it was quite challenging to perform the categorizations according to the template of the framework (figure 2). Certain text passages of the research material could not indisputably be categorized into one of the predefined categories and therefore, to a certain extent it was left to the subjective assessment of the researcher as to which category was selected. I consider this a weakness, as the goal of scientific research should be to produce objective and intersubjectively comprehensible results (see chapter 4.1.). However, I also draw here on researchers of discourse analysis preceding me who have turned away from the positivist tradition that aims for maximum scientific exactitude and have adopted a school of thought that makes assumptions about the research and generates interpretations about socially constructed meanings rather than focusing solely on producing verifiable causal connections (see Dunn/Maurer 2014). Another argument that puts this problem into perspective was laid out in the theoretical part of this thesis, where the authors (Diez et al., 2016, pp. 14-15) have argued that the distinctive concepts of ´politics´, ´risk´, and ´danger´ rather function as archetypes that represent the endpoints of three dimensions. Thus, except for the purpose of analytical reasoning where this distinction will be made by the researcher the political reality shows that political actors would move issues through the space by politicization or securitization either closer to the pole of ´danger´ ergo threatification or ´risk´ ergo riskification. Hence, the absolute categorization as it was intended in this thesis is rather an analytical tool than a political practice which must be remembered when concluding the research.

Furthermore, the novelty of the topic in the academic research proved to be a challenge not only in the theoretical part of this thesis when developing the framework but also in the empirical part. Particularly the scarcity of relevant literature presented an obstacle while attempting to

explain the obtained findings in the empirical parts of this thesis. So far, the corpus of academic literature is not extensive enough in theorizing political and institutional factors that explain the (national) differences in the logics of securitization. The few articles that were available were used to interpret the results from the observed material in the discourse analysis. However, because of the scarcity of relevant literature some results were not explainable. For example, why the focus between the levels of security changed. If for example external events or internal structures influenced the choice of focus. The question of what had caused the increased focus on territorial security in the EU in 2008 or in the US in 2010, and why, for example, planetary security was generally mentioned less often. These are just a few examples of interesting results that due to the lack of literature at this point cannot be explained further and should be an appeal to conduct more research in the future.

*Recommendations for future research*

Further investigation into the field of climate change in security policy and especially in connection to the frameworks of riskification/threatification could be crucial in explaining if and how the definition of the issue influences new (security) policies. It is a relatively new and understudied field that so far has not yet produced a great variety of research. The framework developed by von Lucke et al. (2014) and Diez et al. (2016) provides a good reference point to conduct further in-depth studies. Interviews with the political elites would be particularly enriching to identify and explain the deep-seated structures in the decision-making process. The questions of how the issue of climate change enters the security agenda, who exactly the decision-makers are, and which influencing parties are involved in the process could contribute further insight into why the climate change discourse is the way it is and why the policy measures are articulated as such. It could explain why, despite the presentation of an acute threat to national security, the policy measures have failed to produce more acute countermeasures. Additionally, it could address how this issue, as a topic of the security agenda, compares to other issues such as terrorism or, for example, cyber-crime. In addition, it would be interesting to expand the corpus of analysis and examine other documents that fall into this period. Finally, and due to the transboundary nature of climate change, an expansion of the geographical regions to be compared would be of interest.

## 7. Conclusion

The objective of this thesis was to examine how the EU and the USA differed in framing the issue of climate change in their respective security policies between 2008 and 2022, and how the specific conception (either riskification/threatification or non-securitization) about the issue affected the formulated countermeasures. In order to answer these questions, the theoretical framework based on the works of von Lucke et al. (2014) and Diez et al. (2016) was established. A category system was formed which differentiates between the logics of security (threat and risk) on the one hand and the levels of security (territorial, individual and planetary) on the other hand. In the empirical part, the corpus of 14 security documents was examined using qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2022) and argumentative discourse analysis building on Hayer (1995), and the results were interpreted.

The result showed significant differences between the EU and the USA during this period. Both countries experience a securitization of climate change from the year 2008 onwards and categorize climate change as a threat to national security. Primarily, the different political systems and the unequal power relations cause differences between the examined geographical regions. The conception of climate change in the EU remains relatively stable and is considered more or less equal throughout all legislative periods. Here, climate change stays consistently on the security agenda and can be considered as securitized. The documents examined indicate a change in the logic of securitization from 2016 onwards, whereby from this period onwards climate change is defined predominantly as a risk and less as a threat. Conversely, in the USA, the President stands out as an important figure who can ´speak´ security. Here, it becomes visible that during the two democratic legislative periods of Obama and Biden, climate change is clearly defined as a threat. A radical break occurs with President Trump under whom climate change completely disappears from the security agenda and is classified as ´de-securitized´ during this period, indicating once more that the power relations vary drastically between the two regions of interest and that they have vast influence on what issues are (or are not) on the security agenda. Furthermore, it can be stated that the conception, i.e. the definition of climate change as a threat or a risk did not show significant effect on the manner of the proposed countermeasures. At no point in the material examined could extra-ordinary measures against climate change (those that go beyond the limits of normal policies) be identified, which is in line with other scholars who have made this conclusion in their respective studies (see i.e. Diez et al. (2016), Floyd (2016) and Dupond (2019). In addition, nearly all countermeasures were

formulated as actions of riskification, ergo long-term, indirect, and with the intention of preparing for the management of the issue rather than the eradication thereof.

In the final section of the paper, the results were critically discussed, and limitations of the study were pointed out. First and foremost, the divergent opinions in academia on the question of what constitutes securitization in its initial form were addressed. It was also admitted that the corpus of 14 documents cannot represent the entirety of policy documents or security policy discourse and that more in-depth studies could remedy this. Further limitations were the partially problematic sorting into categories in the course of the content analysis as well as the difficulties in evaluating and interpreting the results in the discourse analysis due to the lack of relevant contemporary literature. Especially the latter remark is of importance as the lack of research so far impacts the possibility of theorizing reasons for the differences in the conception, i.e. political, and institutional factors that may influence the preferred framing of a security issue. These are all supporting points for the necessity of further targeted academic research in the field of climate policy and especially on the issue of climate change in national and international security policy.

## 8. Literature


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# 9. Appendix

## Abstract (German version)

Diese Arbeit folgt der Prämisse, dass das "Framing" von Klimawandel im sicherheitspolitischen Diskurs länderübergreifend hinsichtlich der Konstruktion der Bedrohung und der jeweiligen politischen Maßnahmen, die dadurch legitimiert werden, erheblich variiert (Diez et al., 2016, S. 3). Ziel der vorliegenden Arbeit ist es, (i) die wichtigsten Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen den Klimawandeldiskursen in den USA und der EU aufzuzeigen und (ii) die spezifischen Rahmenbedingungen zu analysieren, durch die entsprechende Diskurse identifiziert, konzeptualisiert und in sicherheitspolitischen Dokumenten thematisiert werden; darüber hinaus werden (iii) mögliche Erklärungen für beobachtete Ergebnisse gegeben und durch Erkenntnisse aus der Fachliteratur in Kontext gesetzt. Aufbauend auf der Theorie von Versicherheitlichung (Securitization) (Buzan et al., 1998) und Risikobewertung (Riskification) (Corry, 2012; von Lucke et al., 2014; Diez et al., 2016) wird ein theoretischer Rahmen entwickelt, der die Analyse des empirischen Materials leitet, wobei methodisch auf die qualitative Inhaltsanalyse (Mayring, 2022) und einen argumentativen Diskursanalyseansatz (Hajer, 1995) zurückgegriffen wird. Die Ergebnisse der Analyse zeigen, dass sowohl die EU als auch die USA in den späten 2010er Jahren eine Versicherheitlichung des Klimawandels erfahren haben. Dabei führten Unterschiede in den jeweiligen politischen Systemen sowie ungleiche Machtverhältnisse, insbesondere hinsichtlich dessen, wer für Sicherheit "sprechen" kann, zu Diskrepanzen. Während die EU in Bezug auf die Versicherheitlichung des Klimawandels über den gesamten untersuchten Zeitraum stabil blieb, änderte sich die Logik der Versicherheitlichung ab 2016, indem das Thema nicht mehr als Bedrohung (threat), sondern zunehmend als Risiko (risk) eingestuft wurde. In den USA können die drastischen Veränderungen vor allem mit dem amtierenden Präsidenten erklärt werden. Der Wandel von einer erstmaligen Versicherheitlichung (securitization) von Klimawandel und dessen Einstufung als Bedrohung (threatification) unter der Obama-Regierung, über die Entsicherheitlichung (de-securitization) unter der Trump-Regierung, bis hin zur erneuten Versicherheitlichung (re-securitization) unter der Biden-Regierung ist evident. Unter Bezugnahme auf relevante Ergebnisse facheinschlägiger Literatur konnte demonstriert werden, dass die Konzeption oder das Framing des Klimawandels im Sinne einer Einstufung als Bedrohung oder Risiko keinen kausalen Einfluss auf die vorgeschlagenen Gegenmaßnahmen hatte. Bei nahezu allen Gegenmaßnahmen handelte es sich um langfristige Strategien oder indirekte Maßnahmen zur Bewältigung aber nicht zur Eliminierung der Problematik, was sie somit als Maßnahmen zur Risikominimierung definiert.