Master's Thesis for Environment and Society Studies Programme

Nijmegen School of Management
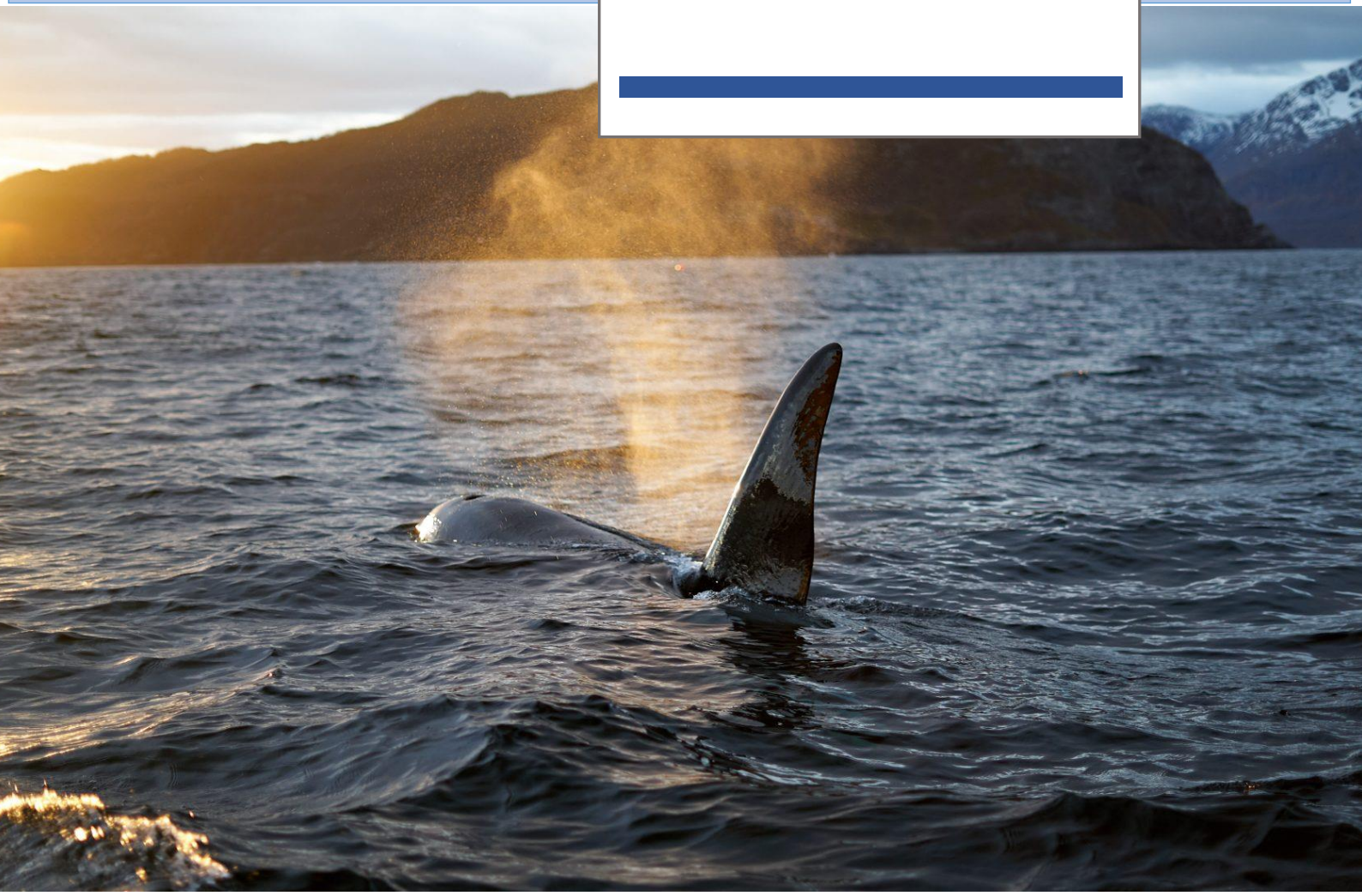
Radboud University

September 2020

Recreation, tourism and the protection of the North-East Atlantic

An explorative research on policy arrangements

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Colophon

Document	Master's Thesis
Programme	Environment & Society Studies
Specialisation	Corporate Sustainability
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Organisation	Radboud University Nijmegen

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Acknowledgements

This master thesis marks the end for me for the Environment and Society Studies programme, which I have been following the past year at Radboud University. The programme awakened a deeper interest and understanding of the interrelation of society with its natural environment. Sometimes this interrelation is still not so clearly understand, which is for example the case for tourism activities and its potential pressures and impacts on marine ecosystems. This lack of understanding motivated me to dive deeper into this topic, and therefore I decided to focus on this subject for my graduation assignment.

On this journey, I got support from various people, whom I would like to thank at this point. First of all, I would like to thank my university supervisor Mark Wiering for his support, valuable suggestions and his patience throughout my research process. His remarks helped me to maintain an academic structure and a coherent storyline for my research.

Furthermore, my thanks go out to Rob van der Veeren, my internship supervisor at Rijkswaterstaat, who formed a valuable counterpart next to my university supervisor. He provided me with guidance and positive feedback throughout the internship, which also gave me background information and input for my graduation assignment. Additionally, also thanks to the whole OSPAR team, whom I could contact for my research besides my internship task.

Next to that, I also want to thank my fellow students, who have been a big help during these fun, but also sometimes tough times, especially in the light of COVID-19. Also, thanks to Artic Adventure Tours, who have allowed me to use the image of an orca for the cover page of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my boyfriend and my mother. Their supportive words during this process I wouldn't have liked to miss.

Enjoy reading!

Pia Pachernegg

Nijmegen, 14th September 2020

Executive Summary

Marine ecosystems are under growing pressures and impacts from human activities. One of these activities is tourism on and along the sea. Tourism is an important economic activity for nation states along the North-East Atlantic Ocean. However, this activity at the same time can have potential negative effects on the coastal and marine environment. One group of stakeholders involved in marine environmental protection are Regional Sea Conventions. For the North-East Atlantic Ocean, the OSPAR Convention is the relevant Regional Sea Convention. To find synergies between tourism and marine environmental protection on a policy level, this paper aims to investigate the interlinkage of the policy domains of tourism and marine environment protection. Based on this information, OSPARs role for the future in creating these synergies is described.

First of all, the Policy Arrangement Approach, developed by Arts and Leroy (2000) will be applied. This will create the majority of the research, describing the *rules of the game*, *actors*, *resource* and *discourse* for both policy domains. Based on this information, similarities and differences within these dimensions will be identified, which in turn creates an understanding on where opportunities for synergies lie. To acknowledge top-down and bottom-up influences on these policy domains, concepts of transition theory will be introduced. These will be the concepts of the socio-technical regime, landscape changes and niches (Geels, 2011). This outside influences can explain changes within the policy domains, which are embedded within the current socio-technical regime. Throughout the research, a multi-level governance perspective (Hooghe & Marks, 2001) will be taken, to see relevant the dimensions of the policy domains at European-, OSPAR-, national- and to a certain extent also local level. The focus will lie on two OSPAR contracting parties, namely the Netherlands and Norway.

Overall, within both policy domains it is acknowledged that tourism does exert considerable pressures and impacts on the marine ecosystem. Still, currently marine environment protection policy is more focused on rather traditional sectors, like for example commercial fisheries or offshore-energy. Furthermore, the tourism domain does acknowledge environmental sustainability, but currently focuses on how to incorporate measures to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases to mitigate climate change, rather than its pressures on the marine ecosystem. Furthermore, the findings show that there are certain similarities between the two policy domains, creating an opportunity for OSPAR to act as an intermediary to build synergies. Also, some practices on the ground towards more sustainability within the tourism domain could be seen in the Netherlands and Norway, namely the *Green Deals Schone Stranden* to reduce marine litter on Dutch beaches and the ban of non-zero cruise ships in Norwegian Heritage Fjords.

What can be highlighted is that the interviews indicate a discourse change within the policy domains, namely a change from the credo of mass tourism towards the wish for more high-quality, small-scale and sustainable tourism. OSPAR internally, the need for more sustainable tourism is seen as well and OSPAR can see itself in supporting this transition.

To conclude, there lies potential within the policy domains to create synergies to make tourism more environmentally sustainable, and to mitigate pressures and impacts on the marine environment. OSPAR could play an important role in creating and sharing knowledge among its contracting parties, but also to the European Union or other Regional Sea Conventions. The chosen theories have been a practical tool to identify these possibilities and to understand the policy domains better.

However, the findings and conclusion should be seen as a first step towards the understanding of the interlinkage between these two policy domains, and therefore should be treated with caution. More research will be needed to make more generalisable conclusions.

1. Introduction

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic was opened for signature at the Ministerial Meeting of the former Oslo and Paris Commissions in Paris on 22 September 1992 (**OS**lo and **PAR**is: the "OSPAR Convention"). The Convention entered into force on 25 March 1998. It has been ratified by Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Spain and by the European Union.

The OSPAR Convention is dedicated to identifying potential threats to its marine environment and organises projects and measures to combat these threats on a national account. It assesses the status of the marine environment based on internationally set goals and commitments by the participating governments. The OSPAR Commission is a key organisation in helping governments to cooperate on a regional level.

The North-East Atlantic Ocean can be subdivided in six regional seas, which is visualised in Figure 1 and listed below:

- Region I: Arctic Waters
- Region II: Greater North Sea
- Region III: Celtic Seas
- Region IV: Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast
- Region V: Wider Atlantic

Figure 1: OSPAR Regional Seas; Source: OSPAR, 2020

OSPAR and tourism

The main issues OSPAR addresses are human activities that exert pressures on marine ecosystems. Next to fisheries, mariculture, dredging and dumping, shipping, marine litter, underwater noise, and offshore renewables, also the human activity of 'recreation and tourism' is relevant. It is especially relevant in Region II, III and IV, even though it is growing in the remaining ones as well (Archipelago Azores in Region V; Iceland and Svalbard for Region I). Whereas tourism can contribute to local development and the economy, it also puts various pressures on the coastal and marine environment (OSPAR, 2008).

In 2018, Europe accounted for a 51% global share in international tourist arrivals, making it the world's most popular destination for tourists (UNWTO, 2019). A big part of tourist activities is spatially located close to coastal areas. Furthermore, in coastal areas tourism and recreational activities are growing substantially faster than other human activities (ECORYS, 2013).

Maritime activities are important for the economies of the OSPAR Contracting Parties in terms of gross value added and employment. However, the consequences of these activities for the marine ecosystem can lead to direct costs for society (e.g. littered beaches which have to be cleaned). On the other hand, many activities directly depend on a good condition of marine waters. Understanding the linkage between the health of the marine environment and human wellbeing can help support effective management of human activities and the sustainable use of the sea. Under its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, OSPAR is developing and refining methodologies, including social and economic analysis of the uses of the OSPAR Maritime Area, to aid future evaluations of whether the North-East Atlantic is used sustainably. Their work also underpins a coordinated regional approach to economic and social analyses for the North-East Atlantic, which European Union Member States are required to deliver under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Recreation and tourist activities fall under the category of human activities relevant for coastal areas. Tourism, as defined by the World Tourism Organization (2020), is "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes (...)". According to International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics by the UN, a visitor "is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (…) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips. Tourism refers to the activity of visitors (UN, 2008, p. 10)". Furthermore, "[a] visitor (…) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor) if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise (UN, 2008, p. 10)."

Coastal tourism includes the full range of tourism that takes place in coastal zones and coastal waters, including the supporting infrastructure. When we consider ocean-based tourism like yacht cruising we can speak of maritime tourism, which is a closely related concept (Miller & Auyong, 1991). Another definition for coastal and maritime tourism, given by ECORYS, is as the following:

- *"Maritime tourism covers tourism that is largely water-based rather than land-based (...) but includes the operation of landside facilities, manufacturing of equipment, and services necessary for this segment of tourism.*
- *Coastal tourism covers beach-based recreation and tourism (...), and non-beach related land-based tourism in the coastal area (...), as well as the supplies and manufacturing industries associated to these activities. "* (ECORYS, 2013, p. 12)

Recreation is a closely related concept to tourism, which can be defined as "(a way of) enjoying yourself when you are not working", here in the sense of being in the natural outdoors (Cambridge University

Press, 2020). As the focus of the research will lie on marine and coastal habitats, recreational activities that are undertaken close to the sea or at sea are considered. To prevent confusion, for the rest of this paper tourism will be used as an umbrella term for both tourism and recreation at (or close) to the sea.

1.1 Research problem statement

OSPARs aim is to understand the linkages of human activities on the marine environment. As in the past OSPAR mostly did assessments on physical, biological, and chemical status of the OSPAR maritime environment, OSPAR now also want to understand socio-economical processes and how these are linked to key pressures. For each human activity - like tourism and recreation - they want information about intensity, distribution, economic values, trends, and measures taken to reduce potential impacts. This information is needed for the next OSPAR Quality Status Report which is due in 2023.

The Quality Status Report 2023 will be more or less a description of the current status of human activities and their marine environmental impacts. However, maritime activities are an important economic sector; many people are involved in maritime activities and the maritime economy supports employment for 5 million people, 3.1 million of them directly employed in the coastal tourism sector. As Europe's tourism industry is rising rapidly, there is an increased discussion about the sectors sustainability, especially for vulnerable islands and coasts. In 2018, more than half of all the tourist accommodations were located in coastal areas, showing concentration of tourism activities close to the sea. The growing dependence on marine resources is prone to increase conflicts between stakeholders and industries at sea, often visible in spatial problems (European Commision, 2020). Next to that, tourism is substantially contributing to negative pressures and impacts on the environment.

As OSPAR is dedicated to protect the environment of the North-East Atlantic Ocean, it is *in theory* of interest for them to play a role in mitigating or avoiding negative externalities of the tourism industry. Currently, OSPAR is not involved in the tourism policy *per se*, but in topics like marine litter or the establishment of Marine Protected Areas, which are indirectly linked to the tourism sector. OSPAR on one hand has relationships with nature protection organisations, other conventions (e.g. Arctic Council) and on the other hand has a link with the European Union and all Member States along the North-East Atlantic Ocean (both EU- and non-EU). This specific role of OSPAR could *theoretically* give them to potential to influence tourism policy to the extent that negative externalities could be mitigated or prevented. However, how this role is perceived among stakeholders and within OSPAR, is at this moment not so clear.

According to literature, marine environmental policy is more regulated from above, whereas tourism policy is decided more on a local and regional level. Therefore, it is expected that there are certain conflicts between the policy domains. However, as especially tourism on and along the sea is directly dependent on an attractive environment, some synergies are expected to be found as well. Tourism involves diverse activities – ranging from swimming in the sea to massive cruise ships - which makes it more complicated to describe environmental pressures and impacts in a uniform way. This also makes it difficult to put concrete policy measures in place. The current problem is that tourism developments does not get attention as much attention in terms of its negative effect on the environment as other sectors. Also, there are no specific policy measures in place that directly link tourism developments and environmental protection. Tourism numbers are rising globally, creating increasingly pressures and impacts on the natural environment. If no concrete measures come into place, there is a risk that coastal and marine ecosystems keep on degrading, which also means that international and European commitments will not be met. Therefore, there is a need to investigate this policy field in more detail. More specifically, it is important to understand how marine protection policy and tourism policy are

currently interwoven. Based on this information, more concrete steps towards environmental protection can be taken.

Therefore, this paper aims investigate the policy domains of tourism and marine environmental protection - spatially restricted to the North-East Atlantic Ocean – and explore especially OSPARs role within these domains. This exploration then will improve the understanding of the linkage between tourism policy and its effect on the marine environment. It especially will point out the differences and similarities between the policy domains in terms of their resources, actors, rules of the game and discourse. The new information created will give the base on how actors within the policy field and especially OSPAR can have an influence on mitigating the adverse effects of the tourism sector on the marine environment and in which dimensions synergies can be created. Furthermore, the research will give insights into how stabile the current policy domains are within the context of the current socio-technical regime, and how landscape changes and bottom-up niches may influence this regime. Based on this information, better articulated recommendations for the future can be given towards a better consideration of tourism pressures on the marine environment within policy, but also the other way around. Lastly, this research should help OSPAR to improve their policy directly in better integrating tourism pressures into their agenda and therefore better preserve the marine ecosystem of the North-East Atlantic Ocean.

1.2. Research Aim and Research Questions

As a first step, relevant actors and policies and different levels will be specified and mapped out. Based on this information, coupled with gathered empirical data, recommendation can be articulated. These recommendations will include OSPARs possible role for the future in influencing domestic and European policies in the tourism and marine environment domain.

To obtain the research aim, the main research question and sub-questions were created as a guide for the research:

> *What are the current differences and similarities between the marine environment protection and tourism policy domain and which role could OSPAR play in creating synergies between them by possibly influencing domestic and European policy to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism on the marine environment in the future?*

In order to answer the overarching research question, sub-questions were formulated:

1) *How does OSPAR in general influence domestic and European policy; what competences does it have?*

2) *Which policies are relevant for tourism and marine environment protection in the OSPAR Maritime Area; who are the relevant stakeholders and how are these interlinked in terms of the defined concepts of the Policy Arrangement Approach?*

3) *How are these policy arrangements, embedded in a dominant socio-technical regime, influenced by the transition theory concepts of landscape changes and niches?*

4) *What role could OSPAR play in the future to enhance the acknowledgement of marine environmental protection within the tourism sector?*

1.3. Scientific and Societal Relevance

Societal Relevance

Tourism in the OSPAR region is notably increasing and with it also the negative and positive implications that this activity has in the marine environment. At present, Europe is the world's largest holiday destination and it is still growing. Furthermore, according to ECORYS (2013), coastal and maritime tourism is the largest single maritime economic activity in Europe, employing 3.2 million people. However, coastal zones include fragile ecosystems that may suffer greatly from tourism-related impacts.

Most impacts of related tourism are to near-coast and coastal areas. Negative coastal environmental impacts result from the presence of a high number of people on fragile systems, pressure on limited local resources and increased invasion of natural areas. The most relevant problems associated with tourism are those related to the large number of tourists in summer months, which add up to the coastal population (Batista et al, 2018) (Eurostat, 2013). This greatly increases pressure on coastal and marine ecosystems and fosters infrastructure and urban development on the coast. Artificial surfaces spread as a result of residential expansion and the greater need for services, recreation, coastal defences and harbours (EEA, 2012). Other problems arise from increased demand for water resources (Gössling et al, 2012) and over-frequentation of natural sites (Lemauviel & Rozé, 2003).

However, tourism also has the potential to create benefits for the environment, for example through contributing by creating space for environmental protection and conservation. Furthermore, it can be a way to raise awareness about the importance of the environment, which could be financed via the tourism industry. In addition to that, tourism plays a key role for development, generating growth and employment for local economics (ECORYS, 2013). The need for a sustainable tourism development explains why "sustainable tourism management", "eco-tourism" and "green tourism" will be important in the future (OSPAR, 2008).

To both have the socio-economic benefits on one hand and environmental conservation on the other, there is a need to understand how these are interlinked and governed. This paper will try to contribute to this understanding and therefore also tries strengthen benefits for both sides in the future.

Scientific Relevance

In the European context, it is difficult to arrive at standardised data because the economic activity tourism has no separate NACE code (*Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne),* which is the framework for collecting and presenting statistical data (e.g. employment, national accounts) (Eurostat, 2016). OSPAR is dedicated to monitor and assess the North-East Atlantic. This leads to a better understanding and thus well-informed measures can be taken. They undertook a detailed assessment of environmental impacts of human activities; including noise (OSPAR, 2019), marine litter (OSPAR, 2018) and so forth. However, recently OSPAR conducts assessments on social and economic analysis, where they defined a knowledge gap on the human activity of recreation and tourism in OSPAR regions (OSPAR, 2018). Basic data on coastal tourism and its impact is poorly there. Even in places, which are highly dependent on coastal and marine tourism activities for its economy, there is hardly systematic data on the environmental impacts on the region (Hall & Page, 1996).

Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding on how marine environmental protection and tourism development are interlinked and governed. Even though there are studies on governance arrangements looking the coastal environment and tourism, they either used different theoretical approaches (Farmaki,

2014) or did not combine these two policy areas (van Leeuwen & van Tatenhove, 2010). Farmaki (2014) looked at regional network governance and sustainable tourism in Cyprus, where her theoretical approach was based on network governance literature, with a focus on public-private partnerships. However, Farmaki (2014) herself concluded that network governance cannot be considered separately from socio-cultural, economic, and environmental factors. Therefore, the network governance approach would have been too narrow for this study.

Van Leeuwen and van Tatenhove (2010) developed a triangle of marine governance, borrowing also concepts from policy arrangements, looking at the case of Dutch offshore platforms. The Dutch offshore platform industry was increasingly getting involved with OSPAR in the past, resulting in more public-private cooperation and regional-national interactions. However, if the same could be observed within the tourism domain is still unknown. Furthermore, there was a detailed study on governance structures and marine ecosystem management, also specifically talking about the North-East Atlantic and the OSPAR Commission (Raakjaer, Hadijmichael, van Leeuwen, & van Tatenhove, 2014), but the sector of tourism was not touched upon. However, in the same study they stress that the coastal tourism sector is currently not well organised as diverse activities interlink in this sector.

Therefore, this research will try to give new insights into the policy arrangements of tourism and its interlinkage with the marine environment in the geopolitical context of OSPAR and tries to give more clarification in how these domains are build up, where similarities and differences lie. Furthermore, it will be tried to identify opportunities for future synergies between both policy domains.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Marine Governance

Governance, in general is the development of governing styles, where the boundaries between public and private sectors became blurry and no formal control system can dictate the relationships between actors (Stoker, 1998) (Chhotray & Stoker, 2009). Governance can also "refer to a society-centred way of governing or steering, accentuating coordination and self-governance, manifested in different types of policy arrangements" (Tatenhove, 2011, S. 95). Marine governance can be defined as a continuous process of negotiations between general institutions, which are working on multiple levels, and actors from state, market and civil society organisations to influence activities occurring in and around the sea (van Leeuwen & van Tatenhove, 2010). Van Tatenhove (2013) bases his concept of marine governance arrangements, which is a closely related concept of policy arrangements (Arts & Leroy, 2006), elaborated further below.

Governance measures can take shape in various types of regulations, as described by Steurer (2013). He puts his focus on state, market, and civil society. Regarding environmental policy making, the government actors remain highly important. The state can impose hard governmental regulations through (e.g. laws, directives) or economic instruments (e.g. taxes, fees). Furthermore, there are the so-called soft laws, which are voluntary and have the aim to facilitate certain behaviour. For example, this can be done by providing access to knowledge, monitoring programmes or educational activities. An economical incentive falling under soft law could be fiscal means (e.g. subsidies) for desired behaviour. In addition to this, the state also could provide information through reports, guidelines, or brochures (Steurer, 2013). These types of governance measures can be used to influence policy issues.

Policies are temporarily arrangements, which are prone to change over time as they have to adapt to new situations. Also, policies are bound to specific geographical locations (van Tatenhoev & Arts, 2004), as for example the OSPAR maritime area. To understand the dynamics and relations between actors, but also policies and their background, one can use the Policy Arrangement Approach, developed by Arts & Leroy (2000). A policy arrangement is defined as the way in which a certain policy domain - such as tourism - is shaped in terms of organisation and substance (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006).

The PAA is suitable as it takes a broad departure and can distinguish between key variables, which are described more in detail below. Besides that, also the notion of time and space is recognized in this approach (van Tatenhoev & Arts, 2004).

To take a step further, policies are shaped on one hand by different actors from the state, market and civil society but on the other hand also on various authoritative and territorial levels. As Arts and Leroy (2000, p. 3) also describe environmental policies as having a 'multi-level character', one can apply the concept of multi-level governance. This concept was originally developed for the European Union (EU) integration by Hooghe and Marks (2001) and has a strong focus on traditional administrative layers and territorial units. It recognises the relations between several levels in the EU, like EU-institutions, European member states, regions, cities and so forth. In the context of marine policy, RSCs play a key role besides other players within the multiple authoritative levels.

Governance arrangements and policies are not only influenced by the 'current ways of doing' but also by a wider context 'above' and 'below'. Therefore, research will borrow concepts from transition theory. More concrete, the concepts of Geels multi-level perspective will be borrowed (Geels F. , 2002)

These concepts will namely be the regime, niches and landscape changes coming from the multi-level perspective (Geels & Schot, 2007) (Geels F. , The multi-level perspective on sustainability transitions: Responses to seven criticisms, 2011), which "understands transitions as outcomes of alignments between developments at multiple levels" Geels & Schot, 2007, p.1). This will be more elaborated in 2.3.3.

2.2. Regional Sea Conventions

Currently, there are four Regional Sea Conventions relevant for the European seas, namely the Barcelona Convention, the Helsinki Convention (HELCOM), the Bucharest Convention and the OSPAR Convention. These Regional Sea Conventions are important actors for the realisation of policies addressing the marine environment of the European sea basins, together with the EU and Member States themselves (de Grunt, Ng, & Calado, 2018). All Regional Sea Conventions apply the Ecosystem Approach, but with varying operationalisation and foci (Soma, van Tatenhove, & van Leeuwen, 2015).

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (short, OSPAR Commission or just OSPAR) is a multilateral environmental agreement and is one of the European Regional Seas Conventions. The OSPAR Convention emerged in 1992 out of two previous Conventions, namely the 1972 Oslo Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircrafts and the 1974 Paris Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-Based Resources. OSPAR has a unified framework dedicated to the prevention and reduction of pollution, safeguarding human health and the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems (OSPAR Convention, 1992). However, its efficiency still depends on the performance of its contracting parties.

In general, OSPAR works with two particular mechanisms, namely Decisions and Recommendations, written out in Article 13. If a Decision gets adopted by consensus, these are binding to all Contracting Parties. Recommendation, on the contrary, do not have a binding force. Decisions and Recommendations set out actions to be taken by the Contracting Parties and are complemented by other agreements. An example for Recommendation would be the Recommendation on the reduction of marine litter through the implementation of sustainability education programmes for fishers. Such a programme should address social, economic and ecological impacts of marine litter by educating fishers about sustainability. Within this programme OSPAR provides a course framework (course content, structure) which Member States can make use of. An example for a Decision would be the latest Decision made by OSPAR in 2012, deciding on the creation of the Charlie Gibbs North High Seas Marine Protected Area, a marine area beyond national jurisdiction ('the high seas'). Next to Decisions and Recommendations, OSPAR also has agreements labelled under 'Other Agreements', mostly referring to guidelines or criteria for assessment procedures (e.g. common indicators, reporting formatting, monitoring strategies). In general, OSPAR makes more often use of Recommendations than Decisions.

There are a number of international processes at the global level which are important to the structure and the function of regional multilateral environmental agreements. On the global level, the Convention on Biological Diversity provides the policy framework on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, including addressing biodiversity concerns. In 1974, the United Nations Environment Programme launched the Regional Seas Programme. This programme was aimed to address the accelerating degradation of the world's oceans and coastal areas through engaging neighbouring countries to act. The programme encourages nation states to cooperate, share knowledge and expertise, taking a geographical focus. In 2008, the European Commission launched the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. The directive aims to achieve good environmental status for the EU Member States' marine waters by 2020, applying the Ecosystem Approach. In Article 6, it is stated that:

"Member States shall (…) use the existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under Regional Sea Conventions, covering that marine region or subregion. (…) Member States shall (…) make every effort, using relevant international forums, including mechanism and structures or Regional Sea Conventions, to coordinate their actions with third countries having sovereignty or jurisdiction over waters in the same marine region or subregion. In that context, Member States shall, as far as possible, build upon relevant existing programmes and activities developed in the framework of structures stemming from international agreements such as Regional Sea Conventions" (European Commission, 2008).

Another crucial European framework is the Marine Spatial Planning Directive. This directive was simultaneously launched by the European Commission with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in 2008 under the idea of an integrated maritime policy. Both directives aim to "foster coordinated and coherent decision-making to maximise the sustainable development, economic growth and social cohesion of Member States as well as maritime sectors, through coherent maritime-related policies and relevant international cooperation" (European Commission, 2014).

At the European level, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive are both crucial frameworks for the marine environment and tourism. Whereas the first is focused on achieving Good Environmental Status for marine waters, the latter deals with improving maritime governance in marine waters and to promote sustainable development within the maritime space. As a response to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, OSPAR contracting parties agreed to use the OSPAR Commission as a main platform to implement the directive in the North-East Atlantic Ocean.

In the sense of Steurer (2013) described previously, these EU directives can be characterised as tools of hard governmental regulations. However, there is a strong focus on access to knowledge and monitoring data, representing elements of soft law. Furthermore, the Marine Strategy Framework directive is "silent" on sanctions and penalties if Member States fail to implement the directive properly and in-time, but promotes optional economic incentives instruments in form of subsidies (Steurer, 2013). Also, depending on the best available scientific knowledge and the status of the marine environment, strategies and programmes can change (European Commission, 2008). The Marine Strategy Framework Directive acknowledges that marine ecosystems or human activities - especially in the light of climate change – may evolve over time and therefore "establishes a science-driven and iterative process for environmental management" (Long, 2011, p. 11), being a characteristic of soft law.

In 2010, OSPAR launched its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, to facilitate the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; where they address the above-mentioned themes (OSPAR, 2020). Furthermore, OSPAR agrees a Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme (JAMP), which coordinates thematic initiatives and creates quality status reports every 10 years. In their latest report, they included an assessment on recreation and tourism, but concluded that OSPAR does not have to take further actions (OSPAR, 2008). In 2023, the upcoming quality status report will be published. Again, they will include a section on recreation and tourism and OSPARs role.

A small-scale study by de Grunt, Ng and Calado (2018) explored the role of Regional Seas Conventions under the Marine Spatial Planning Directive. Their study focused on the Regional Seas Conventions current involvement in regional Marine Spatial planning projects, which maritime activities they believe needed a regional approach, where and if Regional Seas Conventions involvement is desired and in which areas the Regional Seas Conventions could or should provide support. The survey results suggest that the majority of respondents believed a regional approach to Marine Spatial Planning is necessary to achieve sustainable development (de Grunt, Ng, & Calado, 2018).

In another study, the possible impact of OSPAR on marine protected area management beyond national jurisdiction was assessed. The authors concluded that OSPAR had generally a positive effect on regional cooperation and integration between contracting parties. The fact that OSPAR is embedded in the European Union increased this effect (Matz-Lück & Fuchs, 2014). However, it still has a lack of ecological data, and insufficient research on the socio-economic influences (e.g. tourism) on the marine environment (Fernberg, et al., 2012). By understanding the socio-economic influences better and its effect on the marine environment, OSPAR could stand up for more coordinated action among the contracting parties. Also, economically interested sectors, like the tourism sector, could even strengthen the conservation measures (Piwowarczyk, et al., 2019). As OSPAR and its contracting parties are 'closer to the problems' they thought to deal more effectively with the regional specificities, resources and perceived priorities (Grip, 2017), for instance regarding measures to reduce the impact of recreation and tourism on the coastal environment

Since the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the EU established a direct legal base for supporting competences in tourism. Also, the concept of sustainability is one of the cross-cutting priorities for the European Union, especially for European tourism. However, Anastasiadou and Panyik (2013) state that European Union failed in having the intermediate role of solving the conflict between economic growth, tourist satisfaction and cultural and environmental protection. They mention a lack of communication and wrong priorities in management processes as one of the obstacles. Still, tourism is a sector which both influences and is influenced by various environmental policies.

Taking together marine governance arrangements (van Tatenhove, 2013) on multiple levels (Hooghe & Marks, 2001), and the findings of previous studies, namely that the European Union failed to act as an intermediary (Anastasiadou & Panvik, Mapping the EU's Evolving Role in Tourism, 2013), Regional Seas Conventions do generally support a more regional approach (de Grunt, Ng, & Calado, 2018) and OSPAR has the potential basis (Matz-Lück & Fuchs, 2014) to influence recreation and tourism developments on behalf of the protection of the marine environment.

Inspired by the above-mentioned study and theories, this research will take a step further by exploring the current and future influential role of the OSPAR Commission. Furthermore, the research will be applied to the marine and coastal recreation and tourism sector in its contracting parties and also investigate how tourism and environmental policies are currently governed, where they align and where they conflict.

2.3. Policy Arrangements in a Multi-level Setting

In this section the relevant perspectives and theories, namely, the Policy Arrangement Approach, concepts of transition theory and Multi-level governance are elaborated, and a short argumentation is given why these are suitable for this research. Furthermore, the policy arrangement of tourism and the policy arrangement of marine environmental protection are shortly introduced.

2.3.1 Policy arrangement approach (PAA)

To understand the dynamics and relations in policy- and decision making at OSPARs seas by different public and private actors from different levels, one can use the Policy Arrangement Approach, firstly introduced by Arts & Leroy (2000). The approach emerged out of several, mainly sociological and institutional theories, which is described further by the writings of Arts, Van Tatenhove and Leroy (Arts, Leroy, & van Tatenhove, 2000) (Arts, Leroy, & van Tatenhove, 2006). One of the theories the PAA builds up is the structuration theory, developed by Giddens (1984). This is suitable, as through 'duality of structure and agency', both the interaction between actors, the existing policy and the

institutionalisation can be laid out. Furthermore, the approach acknowledges the interconnectedness of day-to-day practices and broader structural processes.

Policy arrangements are the "temporary stabilisation of the content and organization of a policy domain" (Arts, Leroy, & van Tatenhove, 2006, S. 96). They show how policy domains are organised and what they contain and have a dynamic multi-level character. However, they are not fixed and can change over time again as it is a continuous process of institutionalisation (Liefferink, 2006).

The approach is built up of four dimensions, namely (1) *resources*, (2) *actors*, (3) *discourse* and (4) *rules of the game*, visualised in Figure 3. These dimensions are intertwined, meaning that if one dimension is affected by change, consequently another dimension is also prone to change as well. Each dimension perspective can highlight different aspects of the policy arrangement (Liefferink, 2006). However, depending on which corner the researcher wants to highlight, one can start with any of the four dimensions
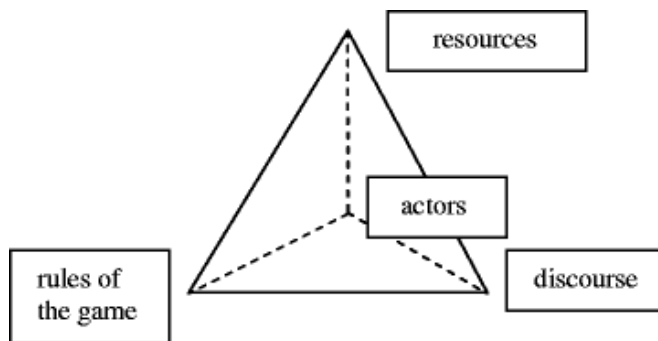

Figure 2: Visualisation of arrangements (Liefferink, 2006)

Resource

The *resource* dimension, also possibly defined as *power* dimension, describes the resource distribution between diverse actors. Resources, like authority, knowledge, or money, can be mobilised by certain actors to exercise power over other actors. Normally, the *resources* are not allocated evenly, which results in differentiated capacity. For instance, within OSPAR contracting parties there may be differences in how they mobilise money for specific actions. Furthermore, authority may be dispersed or centralised (Treib, Bähr, & Falkner, 2007). To identify *resources*, one can examine the resource availability (e.g. money, knowledge, technology,), and which *actors* are able to mobilize these (Buizer, 2008) (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006). In the context of policy integration, Meijers and Stead (2004), state that by working together with multiple parties, a certain degree of autonomy (level of authority) for an individual party is needed to make progress. Furthermore, the distribution of responsibilities is another indicator, which give an impression of how much power (resources) each actor involved in the policy domain has (Immink, 2005).

Regarding resources, this studies focus will lie on how resources are distributed in the policy domains of the marine environment and tourism, which actors can mobilize these, who is responsible for what and how autonomously they can use them. A specific focus will lie on the OSPAR Convention.

Actors

The second dimension, *actors*, describes the relevant players in the policy domain and their coalitions. These actors can be, for example, national governments, the EU, NGOs, businesses, or others. A coalition consists of more than one actor. A coalition can emerge when actors want to achieve (more or less) shared objectives, by allocating resources in a certain way and agreeing on *rules of the game* and may even by developing specific storylines. These coalitions, however, can be either supporting or opposing (van Tatenhove, Arts, & Leroy, 2000). To find out how these formed coalitions either support or oppose certain objectives, the study will focus on who is involved, why certain coalitions were formed, how they changed and what actors actually do to contribute to the common objective (Buizer, 2008) (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006). Furthermore, an actor might have a leading role. Such leaders can be important for setting broad objectives, providing policy direction or funding (e.g. national governments). Mintrom and Norman (2009) call such leaders 'policy entrepreneurs', but this study will use instead the word leadership.

Discourse

A *discourse*, as defined by Hajer and Versteeg (2005), are ideas, concepts and categories which do give meaning to a real phenomenon. This discourse is then reproduced through a set of practices. A relevant example of such a discourse could be sustainability, as it brings up sustainable ideas within ecology, society but also economy (Veenman, Liefferink, & Arts, 2009). A discourse can include problem definitions of social and political topics (van Tatenhove, 2017). Also, a discourse can refer generally to the mode of governance (state, market, civil society) or to a concrete policy problem, including the articulation of its cause, a possible solution (a policy programme or strategy) and a concrete goal (Liefferink, 2006). According to van Tatenhove, a dominant discourse can structure the rules and resources in the tourism or marine environment governance arrangement, even though alternative discourses can challenge the dominant one (van Tatenhove, 2017). However, if the alternative discourse eventually replaces the dominant one, "new coalitions, rules and resources, and thus institutionalization of an alternative [marine] governance arrangement" can emerge (van Tatenhove, 2017, S. 790). A discourse can be expressed through words and policy vocabulary. Since this study is about the interaction between multiple actors in the marine environmental and tourism policy domain, the study will look at how a problem or situation is perceived and constructed through words by different actors like OSPAR, the EU, national governments or others. For example, the researcher can pay attention to the way tourism is described (e.g. 'tourism for economic development', 'tourism for nature conservation').

Rules of the game

The last dimension describes the *rules of the game*. These can be regulations, legislations, but also certain procedures relevant to the specific policy domain; or informal. The term legislations refers to "the formalisation and transposition of policy discourses into binding law" (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006, S. 329), whereas a procedure are the decision-making processes that get summarised into a rule ((Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006). These rules set the legal context or the political culture, in which actors can (or cannot) have a say in policy making (Giddens, 1984) (Ostrom E. , 1999). The rules dimension is especially strongly linked to the actor dimension in the arrangement (Liefferink, 2006), as the rules set boundaries for some

actors, but can also be enabling for others (Giddens, 1984). Therefore, for this study will look how certain rules are affecting which actors and from where these rules come from (e.g. EU rule; national rule, etc.), and especially which role OSPAR has within these rules.

The advantage of this approach is that it makes one understand policy practices more clearly. Also, the political circumstances are acknowledged in the policy dynamics. Furthermore, activities taking place in maritime areas like tourism, shipping or fishing, are regulated by various governance arrangements (Gilek & Kern, 2015). As this study would like to explore OSPAR's role in the future regarding recreation and tourism developments, one should also take into account that policy arrangements are either 'structuring' or 'stabilised'. According to van Tatenhove (1993), the process of structuring is when activities are turned to each other, and therefore can be predictable to a certain extent. Structures are then not only produced, but also reproduced by social interaction (Giddens, 1984).

The concept of political modernisation does acknowledge structural changes and shifting relationships between governing bodies. However, it not fully clear how these affect policy arrangements and the other way around. Wider changes hardly can be influenced from the policy domain itself, like for instance climate change or the current COVID-19 pandemic. To however be able to acknowledge these wider changes in the research, one possibility is to include concepts of transition theory. One particular approach was described by Geels (2011), namely the multi-level perspective, which will be further elaborated in the next section.

Next to describing tourism and marine governance arrangements, the PAA can also provide the basis to analyse a domains potential to stay stable or change. Wiering, Liefferink & Crabbé (2017) described four mechanisms that could be placed within the four dimensions of a policy arrangement in the context of flood risk management. For example, forces of change could be new emerging counter-narratives, new problem definitions (discourse domain) or strong pressures by specific interests (actor dimension). On the other hand, forces of stability could include - for instance - fixed costs and increasing returns in infrastructure investments (resource dimension), a law with strong stabilising effects (rule dimensions) or strong historical narratives (discourse dimension). Furthermore, change can occur if there is *internal* or *external incongruence*, as described by Boonstra (2004). For example, if "discourses do not align with the rules of the game or major actor coalitions" (Wiering, Liefferink & Crabbe, 2017, p.236) there *is internal incongruence. External incongruence* could be present if for instance "the policy arrangement does not or no longer respond to broader political or societal demands" (Wiering, Liefferink & Crabbe, 2017, p. 236). In the course of this research, these stability and change factors will be taken into account.

2.3.3. Socio-technical Regime, Changing Landscapes and Niches

As tourism and marine environmental protection policy is influenced by the wider context (van Tatenhove, Arts, & Leroy, 2000), this research introduces helpful concepts from transition theory, namely the *landscape change* on a macro level and *niches* at the micro level. Furthermore, there is also the dominant *socio-technical regime,* which are located 'in between' landscape and niches.

As according to transition theories, the *landscape* (changes) can be seen as a wider context, which has influence on niche and regime dynamics (Rip & Kemp, 1998). The concept of *landscape* contains technical and material advancements, demographics, politics, societal values, and macro-economic patterns. Thus, they can be seen as an 'external' context, where actors can only have influence in the long-run (Geels F. , 2011). Some of the current relevant *landscape* changes which can be linked to tourism policy and marine environmental protection policy are sustainability in general (Geels F. , 2011), mobility (Banister, 2008), climate change and biodiversity loss (UN Environment, 2019). The

COVID-19 crisis, which broke out in Europe at the beginning of the year 2020, is expected to have considerable influence on the tourism and recreation sector. To what extent, however, still remains unknown (European Commision, 2020). In the wordings of transition theory, the COVID-crisis could be described as an avalanche shock, meaning that there is change of "high intensity, of high speed, and simultaneously affects multiple dimensions of the environment" (Geels & Schot, 2007, S. 404)

On the other hand, *niches* are "protected spaces' such as R&D laboratories, subsidised demonstration projects, or small market niches where users have special demands and are willing to support emerging innovations. Niche actors (such as entrepreneurs, start-ups, spinoffs) work on radical innovations that deviate from existing regimes" (Geels F. , 2011, S. 27). Actors operating at the niche-level aim to 'upload' their practices to the regime level, where it can replace the dominant one. The successful upload of niche-level practices is dependent on many factors, like for instance consumer practices, regulations or even infrastructure (Geels F. , 2011). However - according to niche-innovation literature - by providing education (learning and articulation processes), establishing networks and by adjusting expectations or visions of certain practices, niches play a crucial role for transitions (Kemp, Schot, & Hoogma, 1998) (Schot & Geels, 2008). In the context of marine environment protection and tourism, various sustainable tourism types can be described, like 'ecotourism', 'green tourism', 'soft tourism' or 'rural tourism', which are all opposing the traditional mass tourism practices (Juganaru, Juganaru, & Anghel, 2008).

The level in between niches and the landscape is the *socio-technical regime.* This level represents the deeper structures that stabilize the current system and shows, for instance, in institutional arrangements, competences or shared beliefs (Geels, 2004). Furthermore, socio-technical regimes can show up in regulations and standards (Unruh, 2000), lifestyles and infrastructure (Tushman & Anderson, 1986) – to name a few. Originally, this term was introduced by Nelson and Winter, - called technological regime - with a strong focus on engineering communities influence on technological development (Nelson & Winter, 1982). More than ten years later, this term was broadened by sociologists, as they claimed that also policy makers, scientists or other interest groups are influencing technology and its development throughout time (Bijker, 1995).Discursive practices are embedded in all structures and dynamics of the multi-level perspective, as they are both employed by actors on the niche or regime level. These actors either support (Smith & Raven, 2012) or resist (Geels, Tyfield, & Urry, 2014) change processes, as actors draw upon existing discourses or produce contrasting frames. In the case of the marine protection policy domain, the regime is revolving around nature policies concerned with biodiversity, climate change, cultural and natural heritage and intrinsic values. Contrary, the tourism policy domain is more concerned with spatial matters, infrastructure, mobility, job- and value creation on an EU and national level, but also cultural heritage.

The levels described by Geels are the socio-technical regime, landscape developments and niches, illustrated in Figure 3.

Increasing structuration
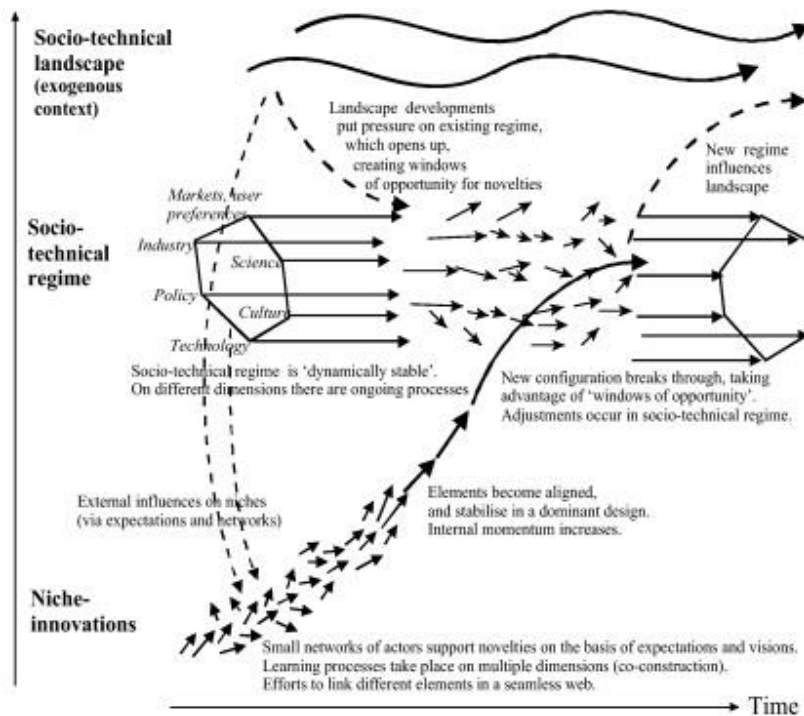of activities in local practices

Figure 3: Multi-level perspective on transitions; Geels, 2011

In the context of this research, the current policy arrangements can be seen as located at the socio-technical regime level. These arrangements, however, can be both influenced by niche initiatives (e.g. eco-tourism practices) or wider landscape developments (e.g. COVID-19 crisis).

Policy arrangements and a socio-technical regime are not the same, but it is helpful in this research to see them located at the same level. Whereas policy arrangements are focusing on policies and their dimensions (actors, rules, discourse, resources), a regime connects to the material side of the domain (technology, standards, infrastructure, etc.). However, the concept of regime includes similar elements, like "actors enact, instantiate and draw upon rules (…) [and] rules configure actors" (Geels, 2011, p.27), showing that this concept acknowledges the direct interrelation between actors and rules of the game, similar as in the PAA. Furthermore, as previously described in this chapter, policy arrangements are a "temporary stabilisation of the content and organization of a policy domain" (Arts, Leroy, & van Tatenhove, 2006, S. 96). In other words, these policy arrangements are currently dominant within the socio-technical regime. The emphasis still lies on temporary, as these arrangements are prone to be influenced from 'above' (landscape) or 'below'(niche).

As mentioned earlier, the marine tourism industry is a sector that can be highly affected by certain landscape changes. Climate change, which especially can pose a threat to coastal tourism through sea-level rise, is a long-term phenomenon. Thus, it is difficult to predict future scenarios and their direct or indirect impact on the tourism industry (Weaver, 2011).

Through the introduction of concepts of transition theory, various influences on the dominant way of doing can be acknowledged. However, these concepts still do not sufficiently cover the importance of various institutional and authoritative levels in a simple way. To include such a distinction is however helpful, as especially marine environments do not know borders in an authoritative sense. Therefore, one has to get a clear view on which authoritative or institutional organisations are involved.

2.3.1 Multi-Level-Governance

The concept of multi-level governance (MLG) was originally describing the European Union integration., where policy-making is "shared across multiple levels of government – subnational, national and supranational" (Hooghe & Marks, 2001, p. 2). This concept is opposed to the intergovernmentalist state-centric model, where national governments have the authority and decision making is nested within the state and there are no real autonomous supranational actors (Caporaso, 1996).

The concept of MLG does not exclude the importance of national governments, but they also do not have a monopoly in decision-making. The competence of decision making is shared among various actors on different levels, including supranational institutions like European Commission or the OSPAR Commission. Collective action can provide policy outcomes, like cleaner marine environment, which is not achievable by one national government alone (Hooghe & Marks, 2001).

However, there is still no clear consensus about the structure of MLG. Should there be jurisdictions for communities or problems; limited in number or proliferate; designed to last or fluid and so forth. Therefore, Hooghe and Marks (2003) split the concept into type 1 and type 2.

On the one hand, the first type describes MLG as having limited jurisdictions around defined levels of international, national, regional, and local and do have general purposes. Each level has clear boundaries, a number of policy responsibilities and their representing institutions. In addition to that, the institutions are designed to last for on the long-term, where the shift of policy making competencies is flexible. Power is shared among a limited number of government levels.

On the other hand, the second type of MLG has many specialised institutions. They are divided into their specific function, like for example handling a specific common source issue. These institutions only last as long as they are needed and then vanish again. Many public services industries make up the governance system, where "a wide range of public and private actors (…) collaborate and compete in shifting coalitions" (Hooghe & Marks, 2003, p. 238). This concept is has similarities with Ostrom concept of polycentricity (Ostrom, 2010), where multiple authorities exert governance, but also act independently of other jurisdictions.

Even though the two types are different in some respect, they are complementary. At the same time there exist some stable institutions which are aiming towards a general purpose next to a fluctuating number of self-contained institutions, which are divided into specific functions. For this research both types of MLG will be acknowledged in the analysis.

2.3.4. Connection of theory with tourism and marine environmental policy

Tourism can be seen as a mixture of non-reproducible resources on one hand, and goods and services on the other hand. The natural environment, beaches or heritage can be seen as non-reproducible resources, whereas transport, attractions or hospitality be categorised into goods and services. In an economical sense, tourism both generates costs and benefits for the tourism operators, but also for the local community (Manente, Minghetti, & Montaguti, 2013). In the sense of EU-integration, tourism was one of the preferred economic activities (CEC, 2003), as it is viewed as contributing to urban and rural regeneration and the strengthening of European identity (Richards, 1996, ed.). Despite the fact that the EU funded the tourism industry with the EU Structural Funds to reduce regional disparities within the industry and between member states, the main decisions still were made by local and regional authorities (Anastasiadou, 2008).

Maritime policy making takes place at various levels, which is often hampered by a lack of coordination (van Tatehove, 2013). Regarding regional seas, the European Union, Regional Seas Conventions (RSC) and EU Member States can influence marine governance arrangements to a certain extent. This might lead to uncertainty and confusion, but, however, it can also be an opportunity to re-negotiate and change existing rules of the game (van Tatenhove, 2013) (van Leeuwen, Van Hoof, & van Tatenhove, 2012). For the protection the marine environment - while also maintaining sea-dependent development of various human activities - appropriate governance measures by several parties have to be taken (Charles, 2012) (Costanza, et al., 1998) (van Tatehove, 2013).

Both tourism policy and marine environmental protection policy can be viewed as policy arrangements, where certain rules of the game, discourses, actors, and resources are involved. On first glance, they seem to be not closely related, as tourism policy is predominantly focused on economic development in a certain area, whereas marine environmental protection is mainly trying to protect the marine environment from mostly human activities. However, tourism is directly dependent on a healthy, and therefore attractive, environment. On the other hand, tourism has the potential to contribute to environmental conservation. Thus, there is a certain connection between the policy domains.

Both policy domains – located within the regime level - are influenced and transformed by landscape changes and niche innovations. The tourism domain is influenced by various exogenous trends. The European Commission highlighted changes in demand patterns throughout time, an ageing society, geopolitical threats and climate change and its consequences as some of the key trends influencing the sector (European Commission, 2016). At the niche level, one can observe growing interest in concepts like eco-tourism and sustainable tourism, where visitors are on the search for personal growth through travel experiences while trying avoiding negative externalities (European Commission, 2016) (Wolf, Ainsworth, & Crowley, 2017). According to Mihalic, however, the discourse shows that public stakeholders are accepting sustainability easier than compared to private stakeholders, like corporate businesses (Mihalic, Sustainable-responsible tourism discourse - Towards 'responsustable' tourism, 2016). The priority of economic performance also shows in empirical evidence in the case of the hospitality industry (Blackstock, White, McCrum, Hunter, & Scott, 2008) (Bohdanowicz, Simanic, & Martinac, 2005) (Mihalic, Zabkar, & Knezevic Cvelbar, 2012). In short, both niche concepts are gaining importance and are challenging the status quo, which additionally is influenced by wider changes. It is therefore expected that there are still conflicts between marine environmental protection and tourism development.

On the global level, treaties like the UN Convention on Biological Diversity or the UN Sustainable Development Goals are relevant agreements among states to protect the environment, while also ensure things like social and economic aspects. Within tourism policy in Europe, there was a gradual shift of focus from solely economic factors there to also incorporate topics like environmental and social sustainability next to competitiveness and job growth (Anastasiadou & Panyik, 2013). In general, the EU is a relevant actor regarding environmental policy and economic development. On one hand the EU launched both the MSFD and MSP, which are both focused on sustainability. Whereas the former aims to achieve Good Environmental Status for European seas, the latter has a stronger focus in an economic and social development (European Commission, 2008) (European Commission, 2014). Under its Blue growth strategy, the EU promotes sustainable economic development. Coastal tourism is one of the sectors identified as having a high potential in terms of economic growth and employment creation. In the same document they also stress the importance of addressing environmental pressures exerted through tourism activities and refer to the importance of the MSFD (European Commission, 2014).

By assessing the relationship between the two policy domains, it is aimed to find out where these two well interconnect and where there may be conflicting goals, with a specific focus on the OSPAR Commissions role within this context.

2.4. Conceptual Framework and Operationalisation

In this section of the paper the theoretical concepts are translated into measurable entities. For the first part of the research an adapted operationalisation for the PAA by Wiering and Arts (2006) is followed, as it sets out clear indicators for the four dimensions of discourse, actors, rules of the game and resources, presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Operationalisation of the PAA (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)

Concepts	Aspects	Dimensions	Indicator	Reference
Policy Arrangement	Substance	Discourse	Policy Programmes and Strategies	(van Tatenhove, 2013)
			Problem definition	(van Tatenhove, 2017) (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)
			Goals (end point)	
	Organisation	Actors	Constellation (central/peripheral)	(Liefferink, 2006); (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)
			Patterns of interaction	(van Tatenhove, 2017)
			Coalition/Opposition	(Buizer, 2008) (Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)
			Leaders	(Mintrom & Norman, 2009)
		Resources	Authority (central/dispersed); level of autonomy	(Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)
			Resource constellation (money, knowledge, technology, authority)	(Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006) (Treib, Bähr, & Falkner, 2007)
			Distribution of responsibility	(Immink, 2005)
		Rules of the Game	Legislation	(Wiering & Arts, Discursive shifts in Dutch river management: 'deep' institutional change or adaption strategy?, 2006)
			Procedures	(Treib, Bähr, & Falkner, 2007)

Transition	Multi-level perspective	Landscape	Megatrends and patterns	(Geels F. , 2011)
		Regime	Supporting/resisting actor	(Geels, Tyfield, & Urry, 2014) (Smith & Raven, 2012)
		Niche	Supporting/resisting actor	(Geels, Tyfield, & Urry, 2014) (Smith & Raven, 2012)

During the analysis of the policy arrangements the researcher takes a multi-level governance perspective. For instance, it can be looked at where financial resources for environment protection are located within the policy arrangements. This will be divided into national, EU and OSPAR level. Furthermore, the current *landscape* changes (e.g. climate change, COVID-19 crisis etc.) and *niches* (e.g. sustainable tourism) are taken into account.

By applying the PAA, the policy arrangement of environmental and tourism policy should be identified. Furthermore, it will give indication about the current role of the OSPAR Commission regarding recreation and tourism development. For both tourism and marine environmental protection, the policy arrangements will be explored. By exploring the prevalent discourses, actors, resources, and rules of the game for both tourism and marine environmental protection policy, possible similarities, and differences between the two can be identified. Through this identification, OSPARs competences will be known and its potential for having a facilitating role in recreation and tourism development while also promoting the protection of the Noth-East Atlantic can be articulated.
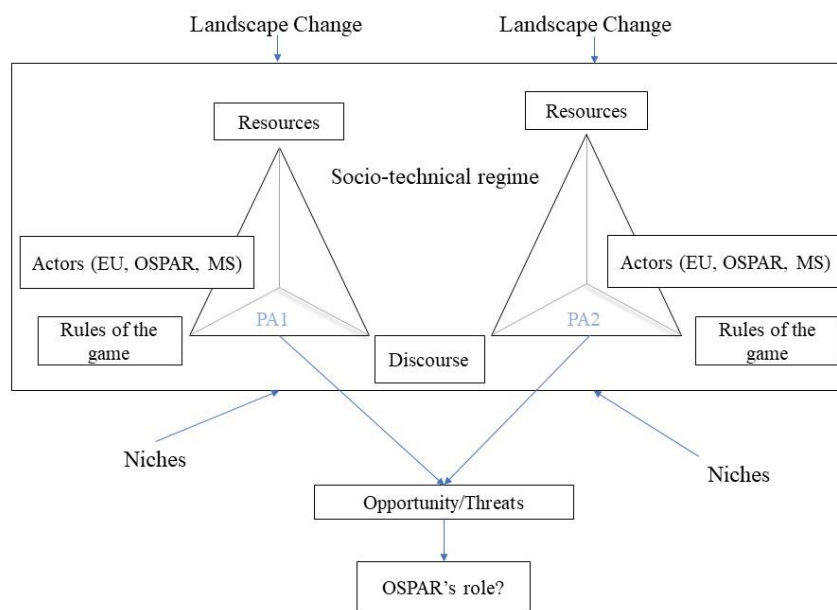

Figure 4: Conceptual Framework; MS = Member State; PA = Policy Arrangement

After the policy arrangement for each policy domain is known, one can compare them. For this research, there will be a specific focus on the discourse dimension, as it is expected that some overlap can be found there. If interlinkages between discourses or a change in discourse can be found, this could pose an opportunity for OSPAR to use its role as a Regional Sea Convention to find synergies between the two policy domains.

3. Methodology

This chapter elaborates on the methodology of the research. This includes the research strategy, the methods, data collection and the analysis of the data. In the end, there is a short elaboration on the validity and reliability of the planned research.

3.1. Research Philosophy and Strategy

To answer the research question, first one has to define its ontological, epistemological and methodological standpoints as this pre-defines already the outcome of a social research (Van Thiel, 2014). These philosophical questions can lead to one of the four major paradigms for social research, namely positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivism (for detailed information see Guba and Lincoln, 1994). However, though it is important to keep in mind one's philosophical standpoint, Van Thiel (2014, p. 36) states that "different philosophies of science often react to one another, and that distinction between the various approaches tends to be hazy rather than absolute".

Ontology. The ontological questions ask what reality is, and what is there that can be known about it: is reality 'real', or is it build-up of social constructions? As this research consists of a case-study that tries to outlay the interrelationship of policy arrangements in a geopolitical context, it is assumed that this interrelationship is something that can be observed. The research tries to outlay the linkage of tourism and marine environmental policy, concerning the OSPAR maritime region, and describe this relationship as closely as possible. This analysis is not necessarily representative within another geopolitical context (e.g. Black Sea or Mediterranean Sea), but the probable truth regarding the OSPAR maritime region. This ontology fits with the post-positivist paradigm, as it assumes that reality exists, but can never be perfectly apprehensible due to the flawed human intellect and the intractable nature of phenomena (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Epistemology. The epistemological question asks how we can get to know this realty, "the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known?" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). The researcher focuses on actors, resources, rules, and discourses which together build the policy arrangements. Within a post-positivist perspective, the researcher realises that it is never 100% possible to maintain distance from what is researched (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). However, potential influences, like background knowledge, are attempted to be controlled as far as possible. This approach could be described as modified objectivism, meaning that it is tried to grasp reality and articulate conclusions, while acknowledging that it is possible to only approximate reality – however one can never fully know it (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The relationship between the researcher and the researched (the interviewees and survey participants) will be distanced. The researcher will solely have contact with the researched via E-mail, telecommunication applications (e.g. Skype and Zoom) – also due to COVID-19 - and an online-survey. Therefore, there will not be any interpersonal relationship between the researcher and the researched which could influence the outcome.

As the two above points already laid out, this research's philosophy comes closest to the one of post-positivism, meaning that there is a real reality out there, but the researcher only can know this reality imperfectly. The researcher tries to be as objective as possible and findings will most probably be true (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). A post-positivist research aims to use science as a way to get close to reality, while being aware that the measurements will never be perfect (Mills, Harrison, Franklin, & Birks, 2017). Therefore, it is advisable to use multiple methods with triangulation. This strategy ensures to reduce errors and get to understand reality as close as possible (Lincoln, Lynham, Guba, & Egon, 2011). Also, within post-positivism the influence of the researcher's values are denied. To achieve this, the researcher will try to not build e.g. meaning together, as for example within the constructivist

perspective. Furthermore, internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity will be seeked (more elaborated in next section).

Triangulation. For the validation of data in social research, it is helpful to involve cross verification via two or more sources – referred to as triangulation. Through this, the researcher can double check on the data and research results. It can be applied to the operationalisation, the data sources, the researchers, or the research methods (Van Thiel, 2014). Within this research, triangulation is mainly applied to the research methods - namely interviews, survey and analysing documents – but also to the data sources: the data sources will come on one hand from people within OSPAR, people outside of OSPAR and from official documents surrounding marine environment and tourism policy.

As this research wants to explore the role of a Regional Seas Convention in environmental and tourism policy, the study will put its focus on the OSPAR Convention as a case, taking a post-positivist perspective. This suits the research as it will try to map out the "factual" policy arrangement of tourism and coastal environmental policy. Furthermore, the multiple levels of governance are expected to be found within clear authoritative, territorial, or sectoral boundaries. In addition to that, if environmental measures taken had an effect (or not) on tourism, this will show in tangible observations

The research will be guided by the main research question:

> *What are the current differences and similarities between the marine environment protection and tourism policy domain and which role could OSPAR play in creating synergies between them by possibly influencing domestic and European policy to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism on the marine environment in the future?*

To answer the main and sub-questions, two main theoretical approaches will be used to analyse the tourism and coastal environmental policy in OSPARs maritime region. Additionally, it is planned to use qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data. As the OSPAR Commission is made up of 15 contracting parties, and it would be not within the scope of this research to analyse all of them. Therefore, a case selection has to be made. To identify how OSPAR could contribute to the protection of the NEA, while also acknowledging tourism development, it is aimed to investigate two cases which differ from each other.

3.2.   Case Selection

OSPARs maritime region is subdivided into six sub-regions: Artic Waters, Greater North Sea, Celtic Seas, Bay of Biscay; Iberian Coast and the Wider Atlantic. The OSPAR Commission is build-up of 16 contracting parties, where one of them is the European Union, four non-EU member states (Iceland, Norway, UK, Switzerland) and 11 EU-member states (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden). Switzerland and Luxembourg are landlocked, thus do not have coasts. Finland has a coast but is not falling within the OSPAR maritime area. The European Union is built up of member states but is itself an institution and not a state. Therefore, these four contracting parties cannot be used as a case by default.

Ideally, the study would investigate at least one country per maritime region. However, to get deeper into the subject matter and due to time restrictions, the focus will lie on two countries, namely Norway (located along OSPAR Region I & II: Arctic Waters and Greater North Sea) and the Netherlands (located along OSPAR Region II: Greater North Sea). The researcher purposefully selected two cases, which are heterogeneous to a certain extent (Van Thiel, 2014). The two states are different in terms of their

geographical location and their tourism development. By selecting two heterogeneous cases, a first step towards generalisation for the whole OSPAR region can be made.

Norway. The Norwegian marine waters are both located along the Arctic Waters and the Greater North Sea. The coastline has a length of almost 30.000 km (without islands). The Arctic Waters is the most northerly OSPAR region, characterised by its harsh climate and ice coverage. However, ecosystems of this region are still rich. Furthermore, Norway is very low in population density (approx.. 15/km2), resulting in relatively small impacts of human activities. Most of its land (almost 85%) is covered by forest s or semi-natural areas, whereas artificial surfaces make up less than 1% (EEA, 2019).

The recreation and tourism industry in Norway is growing rapidly. Coastal Norway has undergone rapid growth in tourist arrivals between 2004-2014: a plus of 286%. Furthermore, the Norwegian Archipelago Svalbard experienced a plus of 116% (Atkisson, Arnbom, Tesar, & Christensen, 2018). Norway is not part of the EU, however, has various agreements with the EU and is for instance part of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Norway is popular for its pristine environment and their famous fjords; being home to three World Heritage Sites. The Norwegian environment is seen as a public right, meaning people can freely roam around outdoors (e.g. camping in the woods), which is outlined in the Norwegian Outdoor Recreation Act (Norwegian: allemansrett).

Norway has high environmental ambitions, as for instance it was trying to act as an international climate leader (Boasson & Lahn, 2017). This, however, may be contradicting with its rapid growth in oil and gas extractions and being the third largest exporter of natural gas and tenth largest exporter of oil (Boasson, National climate policy ambitiousness. CICERO Report, 2013) (Ministry of Petroleum and Energy, 2014). Furthermore, fisheries and aquaculture are main sectors of Norwegians economy, knowing to have the potential to harm marine ecosystems.

The **Netherlands**. The Dutch coast has a length of 1.275km and lays along the Greater North Sea. The Greater North Sea is surrounded by densely populated, highly industrialised countries and is one of the busiest maritime areas, where coastal zones are used intensively for recreation and tourism. Its countries are characterised by the concentration of population within coastal zones (Batista et al, 2018) and a growing imperviousness through soil sealing (EEA, 2012).

The Netherlands, with a population density of approximately 448/km2, is the most densely populated country of the European Union. Most of its land (more than half) is covered by agricultural areas, followed by artificial surfaces (almost 15%); whereas forests and semi-natural areas only account for around 11% of the Dutch land cover (EEA, 2019).

The coastal tourism industry is growing in most parts of the Netherlands (Kenniscentrum Kusttoerisme, 2018) (NCTA, 2016). In the Netherlands, actually the tourism sector is growing faster than any other economic sector (Heerschap, 2018). In 2015, the Dutch coast welcomed 2,3 million foreign tourists, meaning a 7% increase compared to 2014 (NRIT Media; Statistics Netherlands, 2016). The Netherlands is a full member of the EU, meaning that it has to implement various EU-policies, e.g. the MSFD. In contrast to Norway, people and visitors in the Netherlands have to follow strict rules regarding outdoor recreation. For example, the Netherlands does not have such a thing as the 'right to roam', and nature areas are not allowed to be visited between sunset and sunrise.

By investigating two particular cases and collecting the empirical information, a general conclusion can be drawn on how OSPAR future role could look like regarding tourism development and environmental protection. Furthermore, an OSPAR-internal survey will be conducted, where representatives from all contracting members will participate. The findings will make it possible to get a more holistic view on OSPARS role in the context of tourism, and the environment.

3.3.   Research Methods

This section describes the three research methods which will be used. First, official documents of the EU, OSPAR and two contracting parties will be analysed. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews will be held with various relevant stakeholders from this field to get a deeper understanding of the arrangements. To improve the data, also an OSPAR-internal survey will be conducted.

3.3.1 Document Analysis

As a first step, relevant policies context will be explored by conducting desk research. The advantage of this method is that it is suitable for exploring the policy context and background (Van Thiel, 2014).

It is planned to look at the main official policy documents, strategies, reports and so forth from the relevant institutions which are referring to marine environmental or tourism objectives. Furthermore, I would like to take into account international policy regimes, like the UN Convention on Biodiversity, which have a strong influence on EU environmental policies (see Marine Strategy Framework Directive) and then in turn also on EU member states, which are also OSPAR contracting parties. For the document analysis, it is expected to find information about the (formal) *rules of the game* and *resources*, but also the prevalent *discourses* in the documents and *actors* involved.

To be more concrete, as a first step official EU documents which are in some way connected to marine environment protection and recreation and tourism policy will be analysed. After that, OSPARs official documents will be explored to understand their competences within this field. Lastly, official national documents will be analysed to assess differences within OSPAR contracting parties. The document analysis should help to answer the first two sub-questions:

- *How does OSPAR in general influence domestic and European policy; what competences does it have?*

- *Which policies are relevant for recreation and tourism in the OSPAR Maritime Area; who are the relevant stakeholders and how are these interlinked in terms of the defined concepts of the Policy Arrangement Approach?*

Table 2: Analysed documents

Number	Document	Focus	Level
1	Marine Strategy Framework Directive	Marine Environment	EU
2	Marine Spatial Planning Directive	Maritime Economies	EU
3	European Strategy for more Growth and Jobs in Coastal and Maritime Tourism (Blue Growth Strategy)	Tourism	EU
4	North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy	Marine Environment	OSPAR
5	Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe	Tourism	EU
6	OSPAR Convention Text: Annex I & V	Marine Environment	OSPAR

7	Destination Norway: National strategy for the tourism industry	Tourism	Norway
8	Integrated Management of the Marine Environment of the Norwegian Sea	Marine Environment	Norway
9	2030 Perspective: Destination the Netherlands	Tourism	Netherlands
10	Marine Strategy for the Netherlands part of the North Sea 2012-2020	Marine Environment	Netherlands

3.3.2. Exploratory Interviews

Secondly, the researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews with expert people from various sectors. This is suitable to get a deep insight of people's knowledge and views in a specific context (Van Thiel, 2014). Therefore, the researcher will try to interview people from governmental organisations, policymakers, umbrella organisations who are in contact with coastal municipalities, representatives of the tourism sector and organisations which represent civil society. The condition for the interview participants is to be either involved in tourism, or marine environmental protection; or both.

The researcher will develop a general checklist of themes and associated questions as a guideline for the interviews. The interviews will be semi-structured, the depth and scope of the discussed themes vary to a certain extent, depending on the interviewees background and expertise (Weiss, Hamann, Kinney, & Marsh, 2012). The focus of the interviews will be to explore the multi-setting of actor coalitions, how resources are distributed, what are the rules of the game and which discourse is prevalent regarding the development and implementation of recreation and tourism strategies along with environmental protection. The interviews held will be focused on experts located in Norway and the Netherlands, to get a broader view of the policy domains within OSPAR contracting parties. In total, 11 interviews were conducted.

The exploratory interviews will be contributing to partly answer the second and third sub-question:

- *Which policies are relevant for recreation and tourism in the OSPAR Maritime Area; who are the relevant stakeholders and how are these interlinked in terms of the defined concepts of the Policy Arrangement Approach?*

- *How are these policy arrangements influenced by landscape changes and niche developments in the tourism and marine environment protection domain?*

3.3.3. Surveys

For the last step it is planned to conduct a survey about the wishes, expectations and concerns for environmental coastal protection and the tourism industry. Via the survey the researcher wants to find out the internal perceptions on how OSPAR could influence tourism development while safeguarding the marine environment. The findings coming from the survey should serve as an input for recommendations for the upcoming future. This is appropriate as through a survey it is easy to reach a large amount of people and get information about opinions and attitudes (Van Thiel, 2014). Not only can surveys be used to test hypothesis, but also to explore or describes people's attitudes towards a topic or an issue. Furthermore, through a surveys high level of standardisation can be achieved, the acquired data can be easily generalised, which thus leads higher level of external validity (Van Thiel, 2014).

The survey will consist mostly of close-ended questions. However, as it is an exploratory research, two open-ended questions will be included as well. Like this participant can describe their views in some

more detail. A big part of the questions will apply the Likert scale, where participants can choose to what extent they agree (or disagree) with certain statements surrounding tourism and the marine environment. The survey will be sent out to two committees within OSPAR, namely the Committee of Environmental Impact of Human Activities (EIHA) and the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Economic and Social Analysis (ICG-ESA). EIHA consists of 16 and ICG-ESA of 26 persons, making a total of possible 42 answers. In total, 11 persons participated in the survey.

The survey should mainly give an answer to the fourth sub- research question, but probably also partly to the second and third:

- *How are these policy arrangements influenced by landscape changes and niche developments in the tourism and marine environment protection domain?*

- *What role could OSPAR play in the future to enhance the acknowledgement of marine environmental protection within the tourism sector?*

3.4. Data analysis

For the analysis, an open approach - both deductive and inductive – is used. As the research aim is to explore this field, no concrete assumptions are made – meaning no hypothesis which can be tested is created. This inductive approach leaves room for emerging concepts, providing a more open framework (Van Thiel, 2014). To however be able to start the data collection in a more systematic way, suitable concepts and theories were necessary (deductive approach). A deductive approach is the most common way of specifying which theories will be applied and why (Van Thiel, 2014). The research will be written simultaneously with a status report on the tourism sector in the OSPAR maritime area in the context of an internship. This context provided the researcher with insights and perceptions prior theory-building and empirical data collection. Thus, a preliminary view and expectations were built already.

To do the empirical data collection in a more systematic manner, literature surrounding marine governance was explored, leading to the concepts described in the previous chapter (concepts of PAA, MLG and transition theory). These concepts then were adding up to the theoretical framework. In a deductive study, concepts have to be operationalised into measurable variables/indicators first (Van Thiel, 2014). By conducting semi-structured interviews, a room for new emerging information and concepts is build, which were not present in the literature. By applying partly an inductive approach, such new emerging concepts can be later on incorporated into the research findings (Van Thiel, 2014).

3.5. Validity and Reliability

Through triangulation the internal validity can be enhanced. By using multiple data sources and various methods, namely desk research, interviews and a survey, triangulation is ensured.

By comparing two cases for the research, some degree of external validity can be ensured. However, findings have to be treated with caution, as Norway and the Netherlands might differ from other contracting members. Still, findings will generally be applicable to the OSPAR maritime regions.

As the researcher will take notes of all steps, will record, and describe interviews, collects the literature from the desk research, describes the steps of the survey, reliability will be guaranteed and therefore will be consistent.

4. Findings

This chapter now turns to the results of this exploratory research project. The chapter starts off with the descriptive part, describing the policy arrangement and the transition concepts. In the second part, the analytical findings are presented.

4.1 Descriptive Findings

This section describes the policy arrangements for both marine protection and tourism policy. The section starts off with the rules of the game, to understand the legal base for both arrangements. Furthermore, the actors and resources are described, which are highly interlinked. As a last point, the overarching discourse for both marine and tourism policy is elaborated.

Both marine and tourism policy dimensions will be elaborated in the same sub-sections. A certain line will be followed, namely that marine protection policy will be elaborated first and followed by tourism policy. To a varying degree the survey-, interview-, and document findings are incorporated. For instance, rules of the games are mostly through official documents, whereas for the discourse section mainly interviewees perceptions were taken into account.

4.1.2 Rules of the game

Some documents were published before 2009 (Lisbon Treaty), when the EU was still referred to as the 'European Community' or just 'Community'. For practical reasons, I shall however use the term 'EU'.

Legislations and Procedures

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive, adopted in 2008, is a thematic strategy within the Sixth community Environment Action Programme and the environmental pillar of the organisation's maritime policy. The goal is to "reduce [the European Union's] impact on marine waters regardless of where their effects occur" (Document 1, Preamble 2). The document refers to international agreements, acknowledging its role to facilitate action under the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive provides a framework which requires Member States to take measures to achieve (or maintain) good environmental status by 2020. One key element in this approach is that each Member State has to design its own marine strategy, using an ecosystem-based approach. The implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is done step by step. The directive required each Member State to develop strategies by 2012, including an assessment of the state of the environment, definition of good environmental status and articulation of environmental targets and monitoring programmes. Latest by 2015, Member States had to develop programmes of measures, designed to achieve (or maintain) good environmental status. During this process Member States should make use of existing structures like Regional Sea Conventions where its 'practical and appropriate'. Article 17 states that after the initial establishment of the national marine strategies, Member States have to update them every six years. These updates have to be sent to the European Commission, Regional Sea Conventions and any other Member States concerned. The directive will be reviewed in 2023 by the Commission.

The role of the European Commission is to provide guidance if Member States' measures are not ensuring consistency of action across the marine region. If Member States are struggling to sufficiently achieve objectives under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and be better achieved at EU-level, then the EU is allowed to adopt further measures. However, the EU has to act in accordance with the 'principle of proportionality' and the 'principle of subsidiarity': the former meaning that the EU shall only take action as much as needed; the latter meaning that the EU should not take measures if it is more

effective on a national, regional or local level. Both principles are written out in the Treaty on European Union, Article 5. For Member States' strategies, the EU can be invited to support certain pilot projects.

According to the EU tourism strategy, the EU will try to increase competitiveness and sustainability within the tourism sector by "drawing in full on the Union's competence in the field of tourism as introduced by the Lisbon Treaty". Furthermore, it has the role to encourage Members States to cooperate, especially motivating them to share good practice. The EU aims to develop an integrated approach to tourism, meaning that the sector is acknowledged in other policies. In regard to the environment, the following is written in the strategy:

> "[S]tructural changes must be fully integrated into tourism policy. Thus, supply of tourism services must in future take into account constraints linked to climate change, the scarcity of water resources, pressure on biodiversity and the risk to the cultural heritage posed by mass tourism. Tourism businesses need to reduce their use of drinking water, where there is a risk of drought, and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and environmental footprint". (Document 5, p. 5)

In another paragraph, it is said that the action framework should encourage prosperity of tourism, but must at the same time think about "the protection of and capitalisation on natural and cultural heritage" and "mitigate the effects of possible structural changes caused by tourism".

These two paragraphs use the modal verb "must", thus meaning that it is obligatory to consider environmental pressures and structural changes exerted by the tourism industry and the other way around. The Commission developed some environmental management tools (e.g. EU Ecolabel, EMAS). These certifications can be used on a voluntary basis by tourism businesses. However, the number of businesses making use of these schemes is relatively low. Furthermore, Document 3 refers to new legislatives concerning recreational vessels. It is written that by using shore-side electricity, recreational watercrafts substantially could reduce fuel consumption, noise, and air pollution. However, not many European ports have invested in this kind of technology yet.

As mentioned above, within the context of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Member States have to design their own marine strategies to achieve good environmental status. The directive does not give specific management measures, but in the preamble of the directive it is stated their programmes of measures should be

> "devised on the basis of the precautionary principle and the principles that preventive action should be taken, that environmental damage should, as a priority, be rectified at source and that the polluter should pay." (Recital 27)

In Annex VI of the directive, eight different management types are listed (shorted):

1. Input controls: management measures that influence the amount of human activity that is permitted
2. Output controls: management measures that influence the degree of perturbation of an ecosystem component that is permitted
3. Spatial and temporal distribution controls: management measures that influence where and when an activity is allowed to occur
4. Management coordination measures: tools to ensure that management is coordination
5. Measures to improve the traceability; where feasible, of marine pollution
6. Economic incentives: management measures which make it in the economic interest of those using the marine ecosystem to act in ways which help to achieve good environmental status objective
7. Mitigation and remediation tools: management tools which guide human activities to restore damaged components of marine ecosystems
8. Communication, stakeholder involvement and raising public awareness

To give a practical example of measures taken by Member States under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and at the same time the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, would be the the establishment of marine protected areas under the together with the Birds and Habitats Directive (Natura 2000) as a contribution to achieve good environmental status. An example will be given both for the Netherlands and Norway:

Netherlands. According to the OSPAR Status Report on the Network on Marine Protected Areas, in 2009 the Netherlands nominated five Natura 2000 sites as components of the OSPAR network of Marine Protected Areas. These areas will be designated according to the Dutch Nature Conservation Act and the Flora and Fauna Act. Rijkswaterstaat published for each designated area management plans in 2015/2016. One of these Natura 2000 areas is the Vlakte van de Raan (a sandbank), which is at the same time a marine protected area as described by OSPAR Recommendation 2003/3 and 2010/2 The management plan is build-up of a landscape-ecological description, conservation objectives , policy, activities and management, the elaboration of conservation objectives, mitigation and conditions for current activities, target range after taking measures, monitoring and evaluation of conservation objectives and measures, surveillance and enforcement, socio-economic consequences and lastly the implementation and financing. The Natura 2000 management plans puts activities in four types of categories, namely ones that do not need requirements to continue their activity (not applicable in the Vlakte van de Raan), exempt ones with no specific conditions to continue (e.g. underwater replenishment), exempt ones with specific conditions to continue (e.g. shrimp fishing or speedboat events), activities requiring a permit, and activities that do not require a permit but require mitigation (not applicable in the Vlakte van de Raan). Bottom trawling is prohibited. Furthermore, shell extraction is forbidden in areas where there are 'living shell banks (Schelpenbanken)'. Furthermore, activities forbidden under the VIBEG agreement apply to all Natura 2000 sites. According to Annex I of the management plan, activities that can continue unchanged include among other things sport fishing and 'all forms of recreations with exception of events with powerboats and speedboats' (p.83), as fast boats may disturb harbour porpoises. Administrators and supervisors have to make sure that measures are compliant and should get into agreements with other users, like fishermen and recreation entrepreneurs. If the 'rules of the game' are not complied with, then supervisors or authorities can switch to 'compulsory action' based on the Nature Conservation Act 1998 (Rijkswaterstaat, 2016).

Norway. In 2009, Norway nominated three sites in the territorial waters around the Svalbard archipelago, most of them located within the Barents Sea. Svalbard itself and the sea territory (out to 12 nm) are protected by the Svalbard Environmental Act. The responsible authorities for implementing management measures, the management plan and taking regulatory decisions and measures is the Norwegian Environment Agency on a national level and the Governor of Svalbard on the regional/local level. Currently, there is no reported management plans. In 2010, Norway nominated the Ytre Havaler National Park as an OSPAR Marine Protected Area. It borders directly to a Swedish national park; they were established in close collaboration. Therefore, the management of these parks will be coordained between Norwegian and Swedish authorities (OSPAR, 2019).

In general, marine protected areas vary greatly in their level of protection. In multiple use marine protected areas many activities are still allowed and some forbidden, whereas in no-take marine protected areas all form of extraction is forbidden.

Furthermore, it is written that "Member States should cooperate to ensure (…) coordinated development of marine strategies (…)". The word 'should' indicates, however, that it is not obligatory, but rather an advice. In the same paragraph, the document advises Member States to make use of existing institutions and explicitly highlights Regional Sea Conventions. After assessments (either carried out by Member States themselves or Regional Sea Conventions), Member States *should* determine characteristics for

good environmental status; highlighting that these characteristics *should* be developed with other interested parties. Under Article 11(2a,b), it is stated Member States sharing the same marine region shall use consistent monitoring methods and make sure that transboundary impacts and features are considered. In 2012, the Netherlands published the Marine Strategy Part 1, including the characteristics of good environmental status for 2020, and also highlighting international collaboration via OSPAR (Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, 2012). As Norway is not part of the EU, it does not directly oblige to Marine Strategy Framework Directive, however, was and is in close contact with the EU.

Under the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, Member States are still the ones responsible for designing and determining their plans. Also, it is highlighted that the framework does not affect town- or country planning competences of a Member State. When making plans, Member States have to consider economic, social and environmental aspects, to ensure sustainable development in maritime sectors. Furthermore, Member States should make it possible for the public to participate and that interested stakeholders are involved within the planning process.

Within the European strategy for coastal and maritime tourism, is it highlighted that Member states have to take into account legislations like the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to ensure good environmental status, but also make use of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive and engage with government, public and private partners. Furthermore, the Commission invited Member States, but also regions, industry, and other stakeholders to create guidelines on minimising biodiversity loss and increase the benefits of recreation and tourism in protected areas. Furthermore, resource efficiency and pollution prevention should be improved and management tools like EMAS is promoted.

Furthermore, the Commission invites industry and other stakeholders to "develop and promote ecotourism and sustainable tourism products" and "actively participate in projects that reduce waste, emissions, marine litter, natural resource use and in water and waste recovery/recycling". Notably, the Commission does not invite the Member States to promote such measures.

To develop programmes for marine (sub-) regions, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive says that Member States can make use of existing assessments, which are for example carried out by Regional Sea Conventions. Furthermore, for means of cooperation, Member States shall make use of existing institutions, like the Regional Sea Conventions. In Article 6(2) it is further specified that Member States "shall (…) make every effort [in] using relevant international forums, including mechanisms and structures of Regional Sea Conventions (…)". Through Regional Sea Convention coordinated action should take place, also with third countries in the same marine region. For the North-East Atlantic Ocean area, it was agreed among Member States that OSPAR will be the platform used to achieve good environmental status. Therefore, OSPAR launched its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy in 2010 to facilitate the Directive. The strategy is divided into five sub-strategies: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy, Eutrophication Strategy, Hazardous Substances Strategy, Offshore Industry Strategy and Radioactive Substances Strategy.

Under its North East Atlantic Environment Strategy, OSPAR agreed in 2014 to the Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter, where various actions are taking place between 2014-2021. In total, the action plan contains 23 national actions and 32 collective actions. These include actions on reducing land- and sea-based litter sources, education and outreach programs, and clean-up actions. Next to specific actions, OSPAR also undertakes Litter Monitoring. This work supports on one hand the action plan, but also contributes to environmental reporting.

Under Annex 5 of the OSPAR Convention, OSPAR is dedicated to protect and conserve ecosystems and biological diversity of the OSPAR maritime area. On the basis of this Annex, OSPAR created a "Roadmap for the implementation of collective actions within the Recommendations for the protection

and conservation of OSPAR listed Species and Habitats". OSPAR created a list of the various species and habitat to fulfil this commitment. Within this framework, OSPAR is working on communication and awareness campaigns, monitoring and assessment actions, Marine Protected Areas actions legislation and legal protection, research and knowledge generation and it looks at pressures from various human activities.

Within the context of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive and sustainable growth of maritime economies, Regional Sea Conventions may be taken into consideration and help Member States to build up on existing knowledge. Furthermore, Member States are asked to cooperate with each other. Due to the marine waters' transnational nature, the Marine Spatial Planning Directive suggests Member States to make use of structures like Regional Sea Convention. In addition to that, within these structures they shall try to cooperate with third countries (outside of the EU).

Currently, OSPAR does not directly address the leisure industry, however, indirectly by addressing other human activities related to the recreation and tourism sector. For instance, OSPAR is addressing topics like habitat destruction, harmful discharges, or noise pollution, which can be linked to tourism and recreation as well. Next to these actions, OSPAR also addresses the issues of hazardous substances and eutrophication, which are both issues associated also with the recreation and tourism sector, even though to a lesser extent than other human activities at sea.

4.1.2 Actors

No single authority is responsible for problems at sea, as maritime activities are regulated at national, international, supranational and transnational levels, which own rules and policies.

The responsible European Commission department for marine environmental policy is DG Environment and DG MARE (Maritime Affairs and Fisheries). DG Environment tries to ensure that the European environment is protected, preserved, and improved by proposing and implementing policies. DG MARE is focused on ocean resources and tries to ensure that these are used in a sustainable way. Furthermore, it promotes maritime policies, stimulates the blue economy, and promotes ocean governance at an international level. Tourism policy on an EU level is handled at DG GROW (Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs). The regulation of marine spatial planning and tourism mostly takes place at the national level, where in each country different ministries are responsible for their maritime activities.

The Netherlands is a Member State of the European Union. In the Netherlands, Rijkswaterstaat is the executive agency of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, in general responsible for the Dutch the main road network, waterway network, water systems and the environment in which these are embedded. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy is responsible for tourism policy at the national level, whereas regional and local authorities are responsible for tourism policy at their respective levels. Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) is the organisation responsible for promoting the Netherlands nationally and internationally and is partially funded by the Dutch government, and it uses a Private Public Partnership model (OECD, 2016).

Norway is not part of the European Union but is a member state of the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Area Agreement, meaning that Norway shares equal rights and obligations within the Internal Market. In Norway, the Ministry of Climate and Environment is responsible to carry out climate and environmental policies of the Norwegian government. The Department for Marine Management and Pollution Control is responsible for the integrated management of the marine environment at national and international level. Furthermore, the Maritime Department at the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries follows EU maritime work and takes care of the follow-up of the Norwegian maritime strategy and policies for the environment. At the same ministry, the Economic Policy Department has the main responsibility for development and regulation regarding the Norwegian

tourism industry. In partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development cooperation with counties and municipalities is achieved. Innovation Norway is the state-owned tourism marketing company (OECD, 2016).

OSPAR is the Regional Sea Convention for the protection of the North-East Atlantic Ocean. The Netherlands, Norway and the European Commission have signed and ratified the original Oslo or Paris Conventions. As the Marine Strategy Framework obliges Member States to achieve good environmental status and develop marine strategies in cooperation with neighbouring Member States, it was agreed to cooperate via OSPAR. The directive does encourage Member States to cooperate, however, there is no specific legal framework or governing structure in place so that actual coordination and collaboration takes place. The same applies to the Marine Spatial Planning Directive. Both within the EU tourism strategy and the strategy for coastal and maritime tourism do not make any reference to Regional Sea Conventions, however, do promote regional cooperation and partnerships. The actors for each policy domain are visualised in Figure 5 and 6.
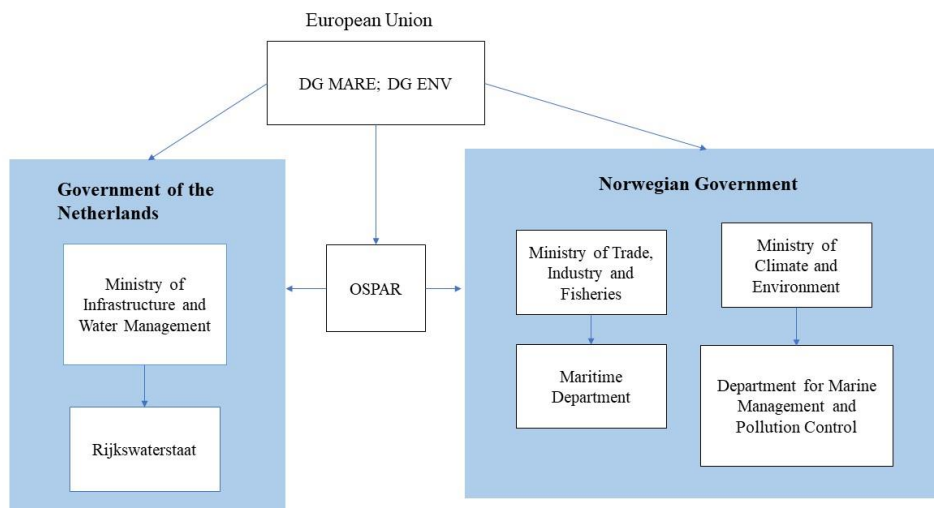

Figure 5: Governmental actors in marine environment protection policy domain: created by researcher
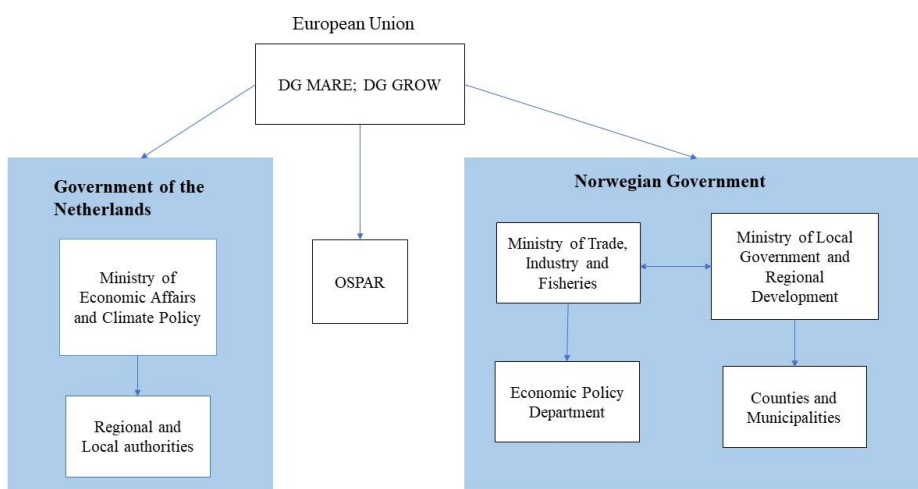

Figure 6: Governmental actors in tourism policy domain: created by researcher

4.1.3. Resources

As described in section X.X, there are various types of resources that can play a role within policy processes. The resources identified in the selected documents and interviews revolved around *authority*, *knowledge*, *money* and *organisation*.

Authority as a resource lies mostly within Member States, described on one hand by interviewees but also laid out in the documents assessed. For example, even though the Marine Strategy Framework Directive says that Member States have to contribute to reach good environmental status, it lies within the Member States power how to design their own strategy and determine set of characteristics to achieve it. The same applies for the Marine Spatial Planning Directive, highlighting that Member States remain the responsible in design and determination for their marine spatial plans. Within the Marine Spatial Planning Directive, it is even highlighted that "the directive does not interfere with the Member States' competence for town and country planning" (Document 2, Preamble 17). Within the EU tourism strategy, it is referred that the EU only has the competence to "support, coordinate and complement action by the Member States" (Document 5, p. 4), thus does not have authoritative power within tourism. However, the EU has the power to influence the tourism industry indirectly via other EU directives (e.g. Renewable energy Directive, Habitats Directive etc). This is elaborated further in the end of section 4.2.

For both EU marine strategies and the tourism strategy the EU's responsibility is mainly to ensure coordination among Member States, to support and provide guidance. In relation to coastal and marine tourism, the EU is dedicated to promote voluntary ecotourism practices, certificates (e.g. EMAS, EU Ecolabel) and encourage Member States to make use of strategies on waste prevention, management and marine litter 'to support sustainable coastal and maritime tourism'.

Another important resource is *knowledge*. Both the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Maritime Spatial Planning Directive are encouraging Member States to make use of existing knowledge and expertise, referring to Regional Sea Conventions. Furthermore, both the Norwegian and Dutch marine strategies refer to previous and ongoing work of OSPAR. OSPAR itself states within its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy that it will also make use of other conventions (e.g. Barcelona, Bucharest and Helsinki convention) to share best practices. Even though OSPAR does not have authority *per se*, a lot of responsibility is given to OSPAR in terms of knowledge creation and coordination among the Member States. Within its North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, OSPAR is describing its role as to harmonise policies and strategies across the Member States, to make assessments on the quality status of marine waters, and based on these assessments, identify priorities for marine protection.

In regard to the resource *money*, most part of the strategies is funded by the Member States themselves. However, the European Union is providing various support. OSPAR's secretariat is funded by Contracting Parties, whereas projects are mostly financed by the Contracting Parties themselves.

Formally, the EU will support the Marine Strategy Framework Directive by co-financing via 'Community financial instruments' (Document 1, Article 22). Within the Marine Spatial Planning Directive, it is described more concrete, stating that the EU will support this directive via its European Structural Investment Funds, including the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. Regarding coastal and marine tourism, the EU is providing support via the European Fisheries Fund. Sustainable tourism investments will be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, stating that 'infrastructure investments is limited to small-scale cultural and sustainable tourism' (Document 3, p.9). Furthermore, LIFE+ funding was created to fund environment and climate action and is said to have 'substantial scope to finance innovative projects affecting coastal and maritime tourism' (Document 3, p. 9). Within the interviews, no specific pattern was observed. However, both in the Norwegian and Dutch case interviewees were referring to the oil and gas industry as having high economic power and may be blocking sustainable practices. According to two interviewees, the oil industry has an especially big influence in Norway, in the Netherlands only partly:

"We pump up a lot of oil from the, from the North-Sea and that's actually what we live off on. And, also, intend to use in the future, I mean that's why our Corona crisis hasn't been such a crisis as everywhere else, because we have loads of, loads of oil. More than ever…" (Norwegian, interviewee 7);

"There are still some, ahm, oil and gas underneath the Wadden Sea and gas exploitation is still going on and having long term effects on the Wadden sea and therefore, you could also say the economy [has some sort of power]" (Dutch, interviewee 9)

In the case of Norway, this economic power can be seen when looking at the establishment of marine protected areas. Economic power expresses itself in the reluctance of establishing a wider network of marine protected areas in the favour of economic interests. One of the interviewees mentioned that within OSPAR it is known that Norway - sided by Denmark (Greenland) – is sometimes "blocking" things regarding marine protected areas within OSPAR as they are strongly depended on these economic sectors. Another interview recognises the issue connected to these sectors, however, highlights that it has been historically really important for Norway and it should be seen as 'black and white':

"Some Norwegians say without oil and gas [and the fisheries] we wouldn't be here, it has been so important for the economy [and the Norwegian community].. (…) So, it's to find this balance, to use some of the opportunities we have with this money to find other solutions, greener solutions, but I think it's difficult to say that we just should drop it today, because there is too much involved (…)" (Norwegian, interviewee 11)

Responsibilities

As already described to a certain extent in the *Authority* section, the biggest part of responsibility lies within the Member States. They are responsible to establish and implement programmes of measures and decide themselves what good environmental status means for their marine waters. Furthermore, they are responsible to seek cooperation with other Member States and third-countries.

As Member States along the North-East Atlantic Ocean decided to cooperate via OSPAR in the context of the marine environment, to a certain extent responsibility was given to OSPAR. OSPAR sees its role as to harmonise policies and strategies for the protection of the marine environment across Member States, undertake and publish assessments on its quality status and effectiveness of measures taken. On the basis of these assessments, OSPAR will identify new priorities for action to protect the marine environment. To facilitate the implementation of the Marine Strategy Directive OSPAR acknowledges individual needs of its Contracting Parties, but however tries 'to [ensure] maximum synergy wherever possible'(Document 4, Preamble 3) in a European context.

The EU's responsibility mainly lies within giving guidance, provide funding and encourage member States to cooperate. Next to that, the EU has to ensure that both tourism-, but also environmental policies are better integrated into other policy fields.

Within the OSPAR-internal survey it was asked who the participants think is responsible for sustainable tourism developments along the North-East Atlantic Ocean, visualised in Figure 7. The overall conception on who is responsible clearly lies within the tourism industry itself. However, national, regional, and especially local governments are as well thought to be responsible authorities. Regarding the EU and the OSPAR Commission responsibility was perceived to a lesser extent.

6. The actor ____ is responsible for sustainable recreation and tourism development on and along the North-East Atlantic
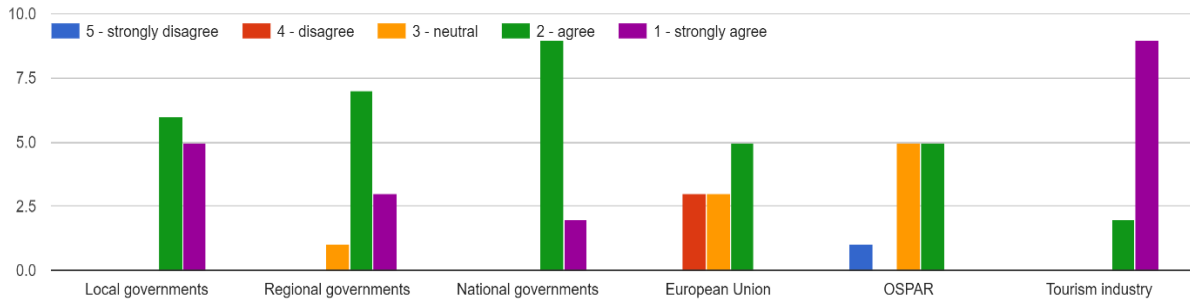

Figure 7: Responsibility sustainable tourism along the North-East Atlantic Ocean

4.1.4 Discourse

Goals and End point

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive, initiated by the EU, is having the "ultimate aim of maintaining biodiversity and providing diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy, and productive". Furthermore, good environmental status for the seas should be maintained. Good environmental status means in this context that the environmental status of the marine waters are providing ecological diverse and dynamic oceans and seas. Once good environmental status is reached, oceans and seas are clean, healthy, and productive "within their intrinsic conditions". The Marine Spatial Planning Directive, in contrast, aims to promote sustainable growth of the various maritime economies, sustainable development of the marine areas, and also highlights the sustainable use of marine resources. When comparing the articulated end goals of these directives, one can see that they indirectly refer to each other. As the Marine Strategy Framework Directive wants have 'productive' seas (economical term), the Marine Spatial Planning Directive aims for sustainable usage of marine resources, whereas the former has a focus on marine protection and the latter on growth.

The overall goal of OSPAR is to protect the environment of the North-East Atlantic Ocean, and is much in line with the goal defined by the European Marine Strategy Framework Directive:

> "to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health and, when practicable, restore marine areas which have been adversely affected in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution and by protecting the maritime area against the adverse effects of human activities" (Document 4, Part I, 2)

The goal defined within the EU tourism strategy (Document 5) is to "remain the world's No 1 destination, able to capitalise on its territorial wealth and diversity". Due to strong competition on a global level, Europe aims for "sustainable" and "high-quality tourism". What this in practice means, is not specified. In more focused strategy on coastal and maritime tourism (Document 3), the aim is to create a European framework 'to boost the sector and support the development of sustainable tourism in coastal destinations'. This goal definition is later on undermined by a sub-strategy to strengthen sustainability by addressing environmental pressures.

Problem Definitions

By using the software ATLAS.ti, the documents were checked for different problem definitions. The identified problem definitions in documents and interviews could be grouped into following key words:

- environment
- resistance/ignorance

- enforcement/management
- social
- lack of information
- economic

The problem defined by the MSFD, concerning all marine waters as defined in Article 3(1):

> "It is evident that pressure on natural marine resources and the demand for marine ecological services are often too high"

Analysis should include coastal, transitional, and territorial waters covered by especially Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive). In the Marine Spatial Planning Directive the identified issue is the increasing demand for maritime space. However, the document also refers to pressures on marine ecosystems and its resources, e.g. induced by human activities and climate change. OSPARs North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy, is concerned with the increasing human activities exerting pressures on the marine environment and contributing to biodiversity loss in "an unacceptable rate", linking directly to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Within EU tourism strategy, the defined problem is the difficult economic situation for the European industry and its vulnerability (the strategy was shortly published after the economic crisis of 2008 and the Eyjafjöll volcano eruption). Later on, the document also acknowledges that climate change poses a problem, highlighting tourism in coastal areas (more elaboration section 4.1.5).

Within EU Blue growth strategy (Document 3), coastal and maritime areas are said to have large potential for tourism growth. However, small- and medium sized enterprises are still facing challenges to use this potential adequately. In addition to that, the document states that SMEs have difficulties to access credits. Such credits are crucial for small- and medium sized enterprises, as coastal regions continuously have to invest in new infrastructure and preserve the environment. Furthermore, it is stated that tourism is directly dependent on a healthy environment, which is often in contradiction to pressures exerted by the tourism sector. Even though this is not directly included in the problem definition, it has to be taken into consideration when thinking about tourism growth.

When documents and interviews are taken into account, the most frequent problem definition was in connection with the *environment*. The tourism strategies of - both the Dutch and the Norwegian - do not refer to environmental issues per se, but highlight sustainability in their strategies (Norway: "Sustainability as a premise"; Netherlands: "Sustainability is a must"), both aiming to reduce emissions and pollution.

Within this problem definition, interviewees referred to different kinds of environmental damage on air, land, and water. For instance, one of the Norwegian interviewees was talking about air pollution caused by cruise tourism:

> "[Emissions are] a big problem, it's also visible some days in the narrow fjords that like in Geiranger, which is a famous visiting place, (…) you can see the smoke from [cruise ships] polluting the area and I also mentioned [the World Heritage Sites] and they have to do something to stop the pollution there." (Interviewee 5)

Interviewee 10 was referring to degradation in marine protected areas and in littoral zones:

> "if you bring too many people let's say in one [Marine Protected Area], you might basically ruin it and, and destroy what you are supposed to be protecting"; "I mean, urbanisation, (…) building up new hotels and on the littoral [zone] (…) can have quite an impact on the long term".

The Dutch interviewees also referred to environmental damages, while always making reference to certain social impacts, as for instance in these two examples:

> "The impact is really local. So, on the environment, on the community, but the benefit do not always go to the people in the same area but maybe to large corporations elsewhere" (Interviewee 1)

"There are environmental damages to precious resources, where the locals would suffer" (Interviewee 6)"

The second most mentioned problem was linked to *resistance/ignorance* between stakeholders or concerning certain regulations, both in the Norwegian and the Dutch case. If only considering the interviewees, this was the most prevalent problem defined:

"What I often saw in my data collection is often two separate camps – oh you're an entrepreneur you only care about making money – oh you're a conservists, you're only, you're a hippie who only cares about the environment. That's the extremes." (Dutch, interviewee 1)

"They don't talk to each other. They just think for each other. But they don't talk to each other" (Dutch, Interviewee 2). With 'they' he refers to stakeholders.

"You would hope that the tourists itself would take responsibility but I mean, time and time again it has been shown that at least a fraction of people involved don't give a rats ass, pardon my language, but you know, as long as they have their financial income or, you know, they have their tourism experience, they don't really care about the environment" (Norwegian, Interviewee 7)

"So, it's kind of, [Norway] wants to be seen as the 'great force for good' in the world, in terms of environment, but, (sarcastic) in our own backyard? Nah"; "Norway will do what they want to do anyways. (…) I've had colleagues sitting in OSPAR meetings where everyone else has agreed on things, and this is what we should do, and then on the last day, Norway sent a couple of lawyers, and says, 'No, we are not gonna do this" (Norwegian, interviewee 7)

"It's often said that nature is protected, or nature is prohibiting an economic development of the area. I think that's rubbish, but a lot of people say that. They say that because they have their plans and they fail to, to develop their plans in the right way. For instance, when they forget all about European nature protection legislation" (Dutch, interviewee 8)

The third most defined problem was concerning *enforcement/management*, with different reasons. Some interviewees said it is hard to manage the tourism flow into the region, both in Norway and the Netherlands, often in connection with infrastructure and mobility:

"What may happen is that the passengers are left at the mouth of the fjord, out on the coast, and transfer to busses and been driven in, and that's not really good either. So it will create great traffic chaos on some of these roads (…)"; "I don't really believe you can regulate the tourism, other than saying, closing the borders in a pandemic situation like we have this year" (Norwegian, Interviewee 5)

"[We want to] make the use of the car less attractive. Because nowadays it's not that difficult to use your car to go the coast. In fact, there are a lot of parking lots nearby the coast (…), you can't even blame them" (Dutch, interviewee 2)

Others make an indication that there is a lack of enforcement, seen in the following quotes:

Referring to MPAs: "We also believe that some stricter protection are needed because most of them the [Marine Protected Areas], I mean in Europe are basically on paper only. So, we call them paper parks."; "if you look at the quality of indicators (…) it's basically degrading, so I think one of the reason is that (…) mostly [Marine Protected Areas] are just non, non-functioning because they don't (…) protect what they are supposed to be protecting" (International, interviewee 10)

Other problems defined were linking to socioeconomics or lack of information. Within the socioeconomic context, interviewees were often referring to problems linked to mass tourism or that the locals have too less of the positive but more of the negative effects of tourism. With regards to information, some referred there is too less tourism data or that too less is known about the connection of tourism and its environmental impacts:

"we know all about the mud, the worms, the animals (…) but we hardly know anything about the people"; the socioeconomic part is lacking, and tourism is really difficult to grasp, but is a sector that is growing – worldwide" (Dutch, interviewee 1)

> "In the face of climate change where we don't have the full picture of how our anthropogenic input will affect the ecosystems in the long run"; "There is not enough speaking up about them, the consequences, at least not to a general public. I mean, we publish papers but that's not always enough, is it?" (Norwegian, interviewee 7)

Others mention that legislations, rules, or responsibilities can be unclear. For instance, one Norwegian interviewee talked about a new rule banning cruise ships in Norwegian fjords:

> "Ports like Bergen have now decided that they not allow more than 4 ships a day, or they have made restrictions on it that has been a long juridical process about it because ports (…) have to welcome every ship that want to come ports, that's according to what they call the 'port law'. So, it has been a juridical problem there: whether they can say no or not" (Norwegian, interviewee 5)

> "[The] international shipping industry is very underregulated (…) it's sort of a strange policy field (…), because when we are trying to investigate emissions from cruise ships it's difficult to obtain data from the industry and (…) [that is] what we call not very strict regulations compared to land-based transport systems" (Norwegian, interviewee 10)

Policy programmes and Strategies

The programme or strategy to reach a certain goal is part of the discourse. Identified through ATLAS.ti, the following strategies were proposed (descending order):

- knowledge creation
- stakeholder engagement
- rules and restrictions
- policy integration
- precaution/protection
- economic incentives

The most often mentioned strategy to reach the end goal was via *knowledge creation*, often linked with *stakeholder engagement*. The OSPAR and EU documents mostly are referring to knowledge creation via monitoring programmes, standards, and assessments. Both the Dutch and Norwegian marine and tourism strategies link to awareness campaigns, e.g. concerning marine litter and clean ups. On the other hand, interviewees referred to knowledge creation, often via stakeholder engagement, as for instance:

> "Just talk to each other and especially listen to each other, see what the other has to say and find ways you can help each other out" (Dutch, interviewee 1)

Others mentioned knowledge is important to make rules works:

> I think you need both [education and regulations]. (…) you can look up all the directives you want, but if people don't agree or you know, they don't know why they have all these directives, (…) you might meet more resistance" (Norwegian, interviewee 7)

A practical example of *knowledge creation* about the marine litter issue is shown in the natural museum in Bergen. In 2017, a goose-beaked whale was found on the Norwegian shoreline. While scientists dismembered the remains of the whale, they found as much as 30 plastic bags and many small pieces of plastic in the whale's stomach. The University Museum of Bergen decided to create an exhibition about the plastic whale, where one can see the actual plastic found within the whale's stomach, next to latest research on plastic pollution. As one of the interviewees said, the problem of plastic pollution was known already for long time among researchers, but through this event also the public got more aware. Thus, this demonstrates a way of *knowledge creation*, combining a marine environmental problem with a tourism experience. Another interviewee, who was representing a marine wildlife watching operator, also made use of this knowledge creation strategy. First of all, he mentioned that if people join on boat tours to see marine landscapes and may encounter a marine animal like an orca, people easily get

emotional. In such moments, guides highlight that people should not throw plastic in the ocean, as it is a hazard for marine species, which in turn gives the tourist a feeling of responsibility. Furthermore, he highlighted that it is important that these guides are well-educated, as they can further provide education to the tourists in a subtle way.

Stakeholder engagement was the second most strategy defined, both mentioned within documents, but also by interviewees. Interviewees state that if multiple stakeholders are engaged, together they can work on certain issues, considering multiple views. Also, if certain actions worked out in practice, best practices and knowledge can be shared among stakeholders. Furthermore, it was stated cooperation among stakeholders can create a sense of common responsibility. Various documents highlighted the need to have efficient cooperation structures, especially regarding marine cross border challenges (e.g. marine litter).

Another strategy described was labelled as *precaution/protection*, referring to protection and preservation of ecosystems. Within the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, measures established by Member States should be developed on the basis of the precautionary principle. Furthermore, preventive action should be taken meaning as a priority environmental damage should be resolved at source and that the polluter pays. These two principles are also the main principles of OSPAR, next to the use of best available techniques and best environmental practice. Both the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy are telling Member States to make use of an ecosystem approach within their national strategies.

Within the Dutch context, one of the concrete measures taken is concerned with marine litter, which can also be linked to tourism. In its national strategy, the Netherlands main focus is on prevention, but raising awareness, more efficient use of resources, reuse and waste collection is discussed as well. Next to monitoring programmes – in close collaboration with other countries via OSPAR – the Netherlands also developed its so called 'Green Deals'. Next to shipping- and fisheries waste, one sub-strategy was the *Green Deal Clean Beaches*, which was a project running from 2015-2020. The project was focused on cooperation and behavioural change, where forty-four partners were engaged, varying from governmental organisations, nature organisations, volunteers and also entrepreneurs. The positive outcomes described by an interviewee – who was strongly involved in the project - was that various stakeholders (including tourism businesses) were engaged. Thus, they could experience how to manage beach litter could be easily shared among the various coastal municipalities. This is especially important, as every municipality has different needs. The interviewee described that places like the Wadden Island ('visitors come for peaceful, quiet vacation') do not have the same need for facilities as compared to Scheveningen or Zandfoort ('people are not there to enjoy nature, but to have a great day at the beach [and] drink a beer'). Therefore, the former does not have any dustbins along the coast, whereas along the latter beaches one can find many bins, underground containers, beach cleaners and so forth. Concretely, for example due to this initiative municipalities put little paper bags on the beach for visitors to collect their litter, which started with an idea in The Hague and further spread along the Dutch coast. According to the same interviewee, he sees a change in interest, namely in sustainable destinations, where for instance entrepreneurs will invest in solar panels and sustainable materials. Whereas the past five years there was a specific focus on clean beaches, the next period might be concerned with such topics but also to keep people engaged in keeping Dutch beaches free from litter. Furthermore, the interviewee 4 highlighted the importance of having a concrete goal in mind, as

> "[Sustainability] is a container term. (…) You can use it for anything you like (..), but you need to be specific, so it helps to have a programme like a green deal clean beaches (…). Because then they really know where they are working towards" (Dutch, interviewee 4)

Such initiatives contribute to objectives on the OSPAR and European level in reducing marine litter. Within the European context, many of these initiatives may added to the discussion on implementing a regulation to counteract marine litter. In 2019, the Single Use Plastic Directive got approved, meaning that single-use plastic items will be banned by 2021.

In Norway, a rather radical decision was taken to counteract water and air pollution caused by cruise ships and ferries in Norwegian fjords in 2018. Due to the popularity of two UNESCO World Heritage Sites – Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord - traffic and air pollution increased, which considered to be a health hazard for the locals and the environment. Therefore, the Norwegian Parliament decided that cruise ships and ferries are required to have zero emissions if they visit world heritage fjords, no later than 2026. Furthermore, stricter requirements for discharges into the Norwegian waters and incineration of waste on board was introduced (Norwegian Maritime Authority, 2012). Interviewee 5 believes that cruise tourism will be out of the picture for a longer time in Norway due to this decision:

> "That is a relatively dramatic [decision] (…). Cruise ships after 2026 will not be allowed in the most important Norwegian fjords if they are not going on electrical power. In practice, (…) that's impossible to obtain I think, I think cruise ships will be away for a while then" (Norwegian, interviewee 5)

This ban in turn started a discussion in some other local communities of Norway, questioning why cruise-ships are not banned for all Norwegian fjords. This concern is expressed in following quote:

> I think it is really sad that one tourist ship was not allowed in my neighbour fjord was allowed in my village, because it was too dirty for the neighbour fjord, (…) and that is really strange." (Norwegian, interviewee 11)

Furthermore, there were some new regulations on the local level in some Norwegian communities, conflicting with the Norwegian right to roam (allemansrett). According to interviewee 11, some communities declared the right to roam as not valid within their community, as they noticed too much nature degradation and pollution by tourists. However, these communities and their visitors have had a rather positive experience:

> "At least some of these communities this summer had a really good experience, and also the people and tourists that came here (…), because its maybe more clean and more easy to [have access to sanitary facilities]" (Norwegian, interviewee 11)

To conclude the descriptive section, one can recall the second research question:

> *Which policies are relevant for recreation and tourism in the OSPAR Maritime Area; who are the relevant stakeholders and how are these interlinked in terms of the defined concepts of the Policy Arrangement Approach?*

Summed up, the EU does determine the rules of the game within the environmental policy domain, especially by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. However, Member States do still have on one hand authoritative power, as themselves they can decide on how to implement the directive, and what good environmental status means for them. Furthermore, Member States have to come up with financial resources, only partly supported by the EU. OSPARs role within this domain is on one hand to coordinate actions and achieve collaboration among Member States, but also to create knowledge about the interaction of human activities and ecosystems by monitoring assessments.

In this section the two policy domains, namely tourism policy and marine environment protection policy, was described by taking a multi-level governance perspective and applying the policy arrangement approach. The dimensions rules of the game, actors, resources, and discourse were described by taking into account official governmental documents and the conducted semi-structured interviews. The next step is to describe similarities and differences between these two domains, which will be elaborated further in section 4.2. Analytical Findings.

4.1.5 Landscape Change and Niches

Both in marine environment protection policy and tourism policy documents, climate change was a reoccurring theme, showing that climate change as a driving force for change is acknowledged in both domains.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive mentions climate change only twice, probably because its focus lies on reaching good environmental status with a strong link to biodiversity. On contrary, the Marine Spatial Planning Directive makes multiple links to climate change, highlighting that maritime space needs to take into account long-term changes and impacts due to climate change, e.g. rising sea levels. In the European, Dutch and Norwegian tourism strategy climate change is seen as a challenge for the tourism sector. Whereas the Dutch tourism strategy highlights multiple times that the Netherlands has an obligation to reach its "climate targets", the Norwegian document only mentioned it rather peripherally. However, Norway it is acknowledged that "stronger measure will be needed to reach the goal of a more sustainable tourism industry" (Document 6, p. 13).

Mobility is a topic reoccurring within the interviews. On one hand traffic is a pressure on the local community, on the other infrastructure for cars or boats takes up a lot of space. This mirrors the survey result, showing that OSPAR members believe that increased mobility and accessibility will have considerable influence on tourism developments. Furthermore, there is consensus among the survey participants that climate change will change the tourism landscape. Regarding the question if the COVID-19 crisis would have an influence, the majority agreed, however, some were neutral or disagreed.

Almost all the interviewees were referring to – what can be called – a change in discourse. Previously, the credo has been that the tourism sector should grow, to create revenue and jobs. This general orientation is also still supported in the EU tourism strategies (Document 3 & 5) and to a certain extend also in the marine directives ('productive seas', 'marine goods and services').

However, several interviewees expressed feelings that recently there might be a turning point within the industry, especially triggered by the COVID-19 crisis. But also before the COVID-outbreak there has been kind of a rethinking of coastal and maritime tourism, both in terms of more qualitative tourism and more stakeholder engagement. This is illustrated by the below quotations:

> "A lot of money is earned in tourism. (…) But it's not that, that when you talk about policy it should not be on top (…) anymore. When you now go back into time the local governments were always thinking (…) we need tourism because it creates money [and jobs]. And I don't disagree on that, I perfectly understand it. But I would say, okay, but then we also have the social impact of tourism. We have to combine those things. The economic impact and the social impact." (Dutch, interviewee 2)

> "[Maybe] the idea of having as many tourists as possible has changed maybe [the last two years] (…). Of course, then the pandemic situation has changed a lot. So, [maybe there is] a lot of rethinking about tourism in Norway (…) The government doesn't say very much, but [the] tourism industry has said that maybe we can earn quite a lot of money, or even more money by making Norway exclusive again (…) and ban the cruise traffic, etcetera." (Norwegian, interviewee 5)

These changes can give niches the opportunity to get uploaded into the regime level. In the case of Norway, there are actually ongoing projects to develop more sustainable tourism activities:

> "If you talk about prospects, we [are working on huge projects concerned with] nature-based tourism activities in Norway. (…) [T]here we have focused on the development of more active use of nature resources for tourism (…) in a sustainable context. And I think that to develop those kind of products (…) will on one hand bring more money into the regional economies" (Norwegian, interviewee 5)

Furthermore, one of the interviewees is working in a non-governmental organisation concerned with marine waters. He described that they are trying to engage with tourism operators (e.g. hotels) to trigger

small changes in order to get more sustainable. This includes things like reducing water consumption or switching from single-use plastic to alternatives. However, he highlights that the additional costs for the tourism operator have to bring an economic benefit in some way, also if its 'just visibility, reputation or marketing'. Still, this can be seen as a niche-level change, which may challenge more traditional tourism operators. As more and more tourists are interested in more sustainable tourism practices, it could pose a possibility that such bottom-up practices might influence the regime level and thus also the tourism policy domain. Other small local initiatives on the niche-level, which can be connected to both marine (coastal) environmental protection and tourism, were concerned with sanitary infrastructure and creating local trails for people to walk. Such initiatives should prevent the degradation and pollution of both terrestrial and coastal ecosystems.

How are these policy arrangements influenced by transition theory concepts landscape changes and niche developments in the tourism and marine environment protection domains?

Both policy domains are to a certain extent influenced by landscape changes. Especially climate change had considerable influence, acknowledged in both policy domains. All tourism strategies acknowledge that there is need to transform the tourism industry in a way that it produces less emissions and to adapt to inevitable changes in climate and its structural consequences (e.g. sea level rise). Next to climate change, the current COVID-19 crisis might have accelerated rethinking within the tourism policy domain. Niches seem to have a less important role, even though there are several projects going on towards more sustainable tourism. If changes on the landscape make the current regime vulnerable, there is the chance that more initiatives on the niche-level could successfully be uploaded, like more water-efficient hotels or alternatives for single-use plastics.

4.2 Analytical Findings

On first glance, the two policy domains are very different from each other, one focusing on marine environmental protection and the other one on tourism. However, some similarities could be found, which are described in the following paragraphs and listed up in Table 3.

First of all, within the *rules of the game* on the European level some directives are overlapping, like the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and Marine Spatial Planning Directive. On the Member State level, each state has different legislations or strategies for both PA1 and PA2, even though in the environmental strategies tourism is mentioned, and on the other hand tourism strategies acknowledge the need for climate change adaptation and mitigation, there is no real overlap.

Within the *actors* domain, on the European level, DG MARE of the European Commission is both located within PA1 and PA2, meaning that there may be potential to create synergies. IN the Dutch case, two different ministries and local departments are responsible for each of the policy area. In contrast, the Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries is located within both policy domains, however, for each there is a different department. However, this 'closeness' gives to potential for more integrated work/projects.

The *resources* within the two policy domains are relatively similar. In both cases, the EU has partial authority. When directives come into force, these are legally binding and set the legal context within Member States can act. Furthermore, the EU can provide financial support in both policy domains. Next to that the EU has the resources to guide, coordinate and initiate further policy integration. Especially evident in PA1, OSPAR is primarily an organisation responsible for knowledge creation, identifying priorities based on this knowledge and coordination among OSPAR-Member States. To a smaller extent, this is also the case within the PA2. Within both domains, Member States have the highest authority, having the power to design their own marine environment protection and tourism strategies.

Within the *discourse* dimensions the most overlaps could be identified. Whereas PA1 main aim is to conserve and protect the marine environment, PA2 wants sustainable growth and ensuring sustainable and high-quality tourism. Both see pressures on the environment exerted by the tourism industry as a problem, also by the growing demand for marine space. Furthermore, PA1 and PA2 see a the lack of information and the resistance/ignorance of various stakeholders as a problem within their policy domains. Next to that, PA1 also sees a lack of enforcement and management of environmental rules. As policy programmes they both propose more stakeholder engagement, knowledge creation and various precautionary or protection measures. Some interviewees articulated the need for concrete goals within both domains.

Table 3: Comparison PA1 and PA2 summarised

Dimension	Marine Environment Protection PA1	Tourism PA2
Rules of the game	EU level : Marine Strategy Framework Directive Birds & Habitats Directive Marine Spatial Planning Directive OSPAR level: North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter The Netherlands: Nature Conservation Act 1998 Marine Strategy for the Netherlands part of the North Sea 2012-2020 Norway: Nature Diversity Act	EU level: Marine Strategy Framework Directive Marine Spatial Planning Directive Blue Growth Strategy OSPAR: Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter The Netherlands: 2030 Perspective: Destination the Netherlands Norway: Outdoor Recreation Act Destination Norway: National strategy for the tourism industry

	Svalbard Environmental Act Integrated Management of the Marine Environment of the Norwegian Sea	
Actors	EU: European Commission: DG Mare, DG ENV OSPAR The Netherlands: Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management; Rijkswaterstaat Norway: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries; Maritime Department Ministry of Climate and Environment; Department for Marine Management and Pollution Control Research Institutes Non-governmental organisations (e.g. Oceana, KIMO International)	EU: European Commission : DG GROW, DG MARE The Netherlands: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy; Regional and Local authorities Netherlands Board of Tourism and Conventions (NBTC) Norway: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries; Economic Policy Department Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development; Counties and Municipalities Innovation Norway, Visit Norway Research Institutes Tourism Businesses
Resources	EU: Partial Authority (Directives) Guiding and coordination Money (Financial support) Policy integration OSPAR: Knowledge creation Identifying Priorities Coordination among Member States Member States: Authority Money	EU: Partial Authority (Directives) Guiding and coordination Money (Financial support) Policy integration OSPAR: Knowledge creation Coordination among Member States Member States: Authority Money Perception: most responsible for sustainable tourism next to tourism businesses
Discourse	Goal: good environmental status; protect and maintain marine ecosystems; clean, healthy, and productive seas and oceans Problem definition: pressures on marine environment ; biodiversity loss ; enforcement/management ; resistance/ignorance ; lack of information; Policy Programmes and Strategies: Knowledge creation Stakeholder engagement Precaution/protection	Goal: Sustainable growth; sustainable use of resources; "remaining No 1 tourism destination"; sustainable and high-quality tourism Problem definition: demand for marine space; vulnerability of tourism in Europe; climate change; soil, air and water pollution (e.g. cruise ships); pressure on local environment and local community; resistance/ignorance; lack of information Policy Programmes and Strategies: Knowledge creation Stakeholder engagement Concrete goals Precaution/protection

The general aim of OSPAR within the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy is as followed:

"Overall goal of the OSPAR Commission is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health (…) by preventing and eliminating pollution and by protecting the maritime area against the adverse effects of human activities" (Document 4, Part I, 2).

It is written 'adverse effects of human activities', which by definition also would include tourism activities. Currently OSPAR does not directly work on environmental issues related to tourism. However, the internal OSPAR survey results suggest that there is internal motivation to take action to a certain extent. In the course of the survey, OSPAR representatives were asked about how OSPAR could get involved into tourism developments to safeguard the protection and the marine environment. Overall, the representatives could see OSPAR get involved via creating guidelines for a number of activities – based on best practices. Examples of these are given bit later within this section.

Furthermore, OSPAR could be a platform to collect and share knowledge regarding the pressures and impacts of tourism on the environment and how to reduce these. This matches with the overall perception within the organisation; that OSPAR should promote 'providing knowledge, monitoring programmes or educational activities' as a policy measure. Furthermore, many participants were either positive or neutral towards promoting governmental regulations. Regarding that OSPAR could promote economic instruments as a governance measures (e.g. taxes and fees) the majority of participants was neutral. The least favoured governance measure we by the participants were subsidies for desired behaviour.

The next survey question was concerned with how OSPAR should assist Member States with more sustainable recreation and tourism. If OSPAR should assist with guidelines, all participants either agreed or strongly agreed. Participants liked the idea of organising workshops for Contracting Parties, also together with representatives from the industry and NGOs; organise exchange of best practices and create data sharing platforms. Regarding future investments in tourism and recreation related research, the results show a mixed picture (evenly agreeing and disagreeing). The results also infer that there is a rather strong consensus that OSPAR can and should assist Member States with sustainable recreation and tourism, even though two respondents had the opposite opinion.

Another question was referring to which activities should get attention in terms of environmental protection. First of all, there was consensus that cruise tourism does need special attention (participants agreed or strongly agreed). Furthermore, recreational boating and infrastructure expansion for tourism development were topics with mostly agreeing answers, or neutral.

To some extent, the OSPAR Member States Norway and the Netherlands acted in the name of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and/or the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy within the tourism sector. As described above, considerable action was taken regarding marine litter. Both Member States tried to achieve objectives set down by OSPAR to reduce and monitor marine litter in the North-East Atlantic. In the Dutch case, the so-called Green Deals were introduced. With regards to the cruise industry, Norway set some radical steps to reduce harmful discharges and emissions from cruise ships visiting the World Heritage fjords. However, this was more initiated by the Norwegian government itself and was less inspired by European or OSPAR regulations. Still, in both cases the Member State could lead as an example within the OSPAR community and share their experience with measures taken.

As mentioned in the descriptive section, the tourism strategies of Norway and the Netherlands refer to sustainability in the tourism sector as regards to climate issues. However, they do not refer to negative impacts of the tourism sector on the marine and coastal environment, even though tourism directly depends on an attractive and healthy environment. However, the Netherlands did have high ambitions to reduce beach litter the past five years, acting as a role-model for other OSPAR Member States. In the case of Norway, the government exerted its power resources to ban non-zero emission cruise ships and ferries from the World Heritage fjords by 2026. Even though there is also a focus on the harmful discharges of the ships, the main focus lies on the greenhouse gases and air pollution. Thus, one could

argue that such rules could also be established for other tourism activities having negative effects on the marine ecosystem.

Opportunity

The survey results show that OSPAR generally realises that tourism can be a potential threat to the coastal and marine ecosystem on and along the North-East Atlantic. Taken together the findings above, one can recall the last research question:

What role could OSPAR play in the future to enhance the acknowledgement of marine environmental protection within the tourism sector?

Let's recall OSPARs role as defined in the North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy. They define its role as to harmonise policies and strategies across contracting parties, undertake joint assessments on the quality status on the marine environment, and based on these assessments identify priorities for marine protection. For the upcoming Quality Status Report, due in 2023, this year a first step was taken to summarise and describe tourism activities and its environmental impact on and along the North-East Atlantic Ocean, concluding that not much information is available yet.

Therefore, as a start OSPAR could initiate meetings or events with Member States to share best practices, knowledge, and expertise on sustainable tourism. Furthermore, there could be discussions on how to best collect data on the interrelation of tourism activities and the impact on coastal and marine ecosystems. As tourism activities but also ecosystems vary to a certain extent between Member States, information could be gathered on a sub-regional level. Therefore, bi-or multilateral projects concerning data collection could be initiated. This also could happen via already existing actions plans. For instance, via its Regional Action Plan For Marine Litter there could be a specific focus on tourism-related litter.

Furthermore, both EU and OSPAR want to preserve the marine environment. Additionally, the EU wants to promote economic growth through the tourism sector. Therefore, the EU has to find a balance between economic development and environmental protection goals. In this case, OSPAR could have an intermediary role, providing knowledge and sharing expertise to find synergies between economic development and the preservation of ecosystems.

OSPAR does not have separate strategy on climate change, but it does consider its relevance in a wider context. In the assessed tourism strategies, climate change is a reoccurring topic. In practice this can especially be seen in the concrete example of cruise tourism in Norway, where hard regulations were set into place to reduce emissions. Also, the Netherlands described various sub-strategies to meet climate targets within its tourism sector. Therefore, to a certain extent the discourse of climate change is interwoven into both policy domains. Consequently, one could argue that the climate change discourse arrived within the tourism policy domain. This creates potential to find common measures and developments towards more climate-friendly tourism.

OSPAR is predominantly concerned with biodiversity issues, in line with some European policy goals (Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Birds and Habitat Directive, etc.). The EU tourism strategies peripherally mention biodiversity issues, whereas in the Norwegian and Dutch tourism strategies it is not considered at all. This infers that the discourse on the importance of biodiversity did not yet reach the tourism policy domain. Via OSPAR there could be potential to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity and its interlinkage to the tourisms sector. For instance, marine protected areas could be a meeting point for marine environment protection and tourism development. In the past ten years, OSPAR extended its marine protected area network considerably, currently counting more than 500 sites in the North-East Atlantic. Marine protected areas which are within the reach of people could serve as a place where both aims converge into each other. On one hand, biodiversity is conserved, as only 'gentle' tourism activities can take place and more destructive ones are banned, and on the other hand

simultaneously economic value and jobs can be created. For this particular case, OSPAR could develop guidelines on how to create such synergies between the two goals – for example in consultation with tourism businesses and NGOs.

> **Practical Exampels**. With regards to marine litter, initiatives like the Dutch *Green Deals Schone Stranden*, could be communicated within the OSPAR community. Together with experience of other Member States projects or initiatives concerning the same topic, OSPAR could create guidelines, based on such best practices. Another example of such a best practice concerning the cruise industry could be Norway by setting strict regulations. Such a regulation on one hand will reduce emission and discharges from cruise ships, but also will motivate the cruise ship industry to switch to more environmental-friendly alternatives, like electrical energy. At the same time, it would contribute to the Directive 2014/94/EU (Directive on Alternative Fuel Infrastructure), which among other things want to increase the share of shore-side electricity. In both Norway (Bergen) and the Netherlands (Rotterdam) big projects on onshore power supply are on the way. Furthermore, OSPAR Member States have been designating Natura 2000 sites under the Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/42/EEC) and the OSPAR North-East Atlantic Environment Strategy. Currently, OSPAR counts in total 550 MPAs (852,159.6 km2; 6.2% of OSPAR maritime area); 5 located in the Netherlands and 21 in Norway. Note that Norway has 100.000 km2 coastal waters (territorial sea) and 2 million km^2 marine waters (EEZ) whereas the Netherlands has in total 58,000 km^2 (both territorial and EEZ). Percentagewise, the Netherlands designated 13.0 % and Norway 4.2%. In section *4.1.2*, the management of marine protected areas in both the Netherlands and Norway was shortly introduced as an example. In the case of Norway, no management plan for any marine protected area could be found, whereas the Netherlands published for each marine protected area a management plan in 2015/16.

> These experiences - here demonstrated by the Netherlands and Norway - all could feed into OSPAR guidelines and recommendations, based on the created knowledge, expertise, and best practices. If certain measures show to be successful in reducing environmental pressures and impacts, OSPAR may could convince other Member States to go into a similar direction. Furthermore, OSPAR could inform the European Commission. If the European Commission is convinced about OSAR measures taken, it may be possible that OSPAR measures partly get translated into EU policies. This may could create an advantage in the future. In the case of marine protected areas, OSPAR may promote that areas close to the shore may restrict some maritime activities, but allow gentle forms of tourism, thus allowing economic development. This would be especially important for small communities.

As described in the previous section, there is some indication for a change in discourse as described by Wiering, Liefferink & Crabbé (2017). The new emerging counter-narrative to mass tourism could be described as more 'quality tourism'. Many of the interviewees mentioned that there is a need for a change within the tourism industry and that it cannot continue like it did in the past, both because of its environmental, but also social pressures on the local level. Also, the OSPAR survey results show that there is a general perception that more sustainable tourism is needed to better preserve the environment, while also acknowledging the importance of economic development for Member States. In the light of the current crisis, this emerging counter-discourse could be an opportunity for OSPAR to highlight the importance for more sustainable tourism. As OSPAR is focused on environmental issues, its focus will lie on the environmental sustainability. Within its role as a Regional Sea Convention, OSPAR could follow up on the new emerging narrative and oppose the traditional mass-tourism narrative still supported by other actors' programmes of measures. Once this counter-narrative reaches other actors - either Member States or the EU - there is the chance that this new discourse will change the prevalent rules of the game. If the new emerging narrative took hold in the marine protection policy domain and swaps over to the tourism policy domain there is the chance that it gets established on the (socio-technical) regime level. Furthermore, since June 2020 the second cycle of the Marine Strategy

Framework Directive implementation is in 'full gear'. Thus, there is now the chance that OSPAR makes sure that more emphasis will be put on tourism developments and its environmental impact on a European level. Furthermore, OSPARs own North-East Atlantic Strategy is now in a reflection phase, meaning that it now could get to the conclusion that tourism as a threat to the environment could be more incorporated in future programmes.

At this point, one can recall the fact that OSPAR, but also the EU, has no direct competence to influence tourism policy. However, it could initiative change within other policy sectors, which then might indirectly have an effect on the tourism policy domain as well. One example to illustrate this would be the Single Use Plastic Directive, which got approved by the European Parliament in 2019, meaning that by 2021 single-use plastic items will be banned. This directive will most probably also will have an effect on tourism businesses and OSPAR may be a platform to share best practices among each other. Another directive which could be linked to tourism is the Urban Waste Water Directive (Council Directive 91/271/ECC) to prevent urban waste discharges. As the directive soon has to be updated – due to emerging issues like microplastic and pharmaceuticals in water – OSPAR may could use the opportunity to highlight other tourism-related discharges. A practical example could be the promotion of coral friendly sun protection for the skin, or in other words, the ban of harmful chemicals in skin protection creams. A similar ban will go into effect in 2021 in Hawaii (Raffa, Pergolizzi, Taylor, & Kitzen, 2018). Furthermore, the tourism industry could be better integrated into the objectives of the Renewable Energy Directive, which would reduce on one hand emissions to the air but also discharges into the water. On an environmental protection level, OSPAR may could further highlight the importance of marine habitats and birds within the Birds and Habitats Directives and that tourism activities have to be taken more into account as a potential threat to species in coastal and marine ecosystems.

An identified relevant landscape change is climate change, mentioned in both policy domains. Thus, one can argue that climate change as an important issue penetrated into the logic of both marine environmental protection policy and tourism policy. Notably, the theme is re-occurring in the *rules of the game* and the *discourse* dimension, creating a crucial fundament for change within both policy domains. This could create an opportunity to find synergies between the two policy domains, where OSPAR may could highlight various tourism developments on the niche-level (e.g. beach clean-ups, electrical recreational vessels). Furthermore, this created the opportunity that noteworthy changes could be achievable within the socio-technical regime. An example of such a change could be OSPAR-wide ban of non-zero cruise ships in major ports. The data showed that in Norway projects concerning sustainable tourism are on the rise, but also in the Netherlands there seems to be a growing interest. OSPAR could create a platform to communicate the development of such projects.

Threats

The survey results show that there is the perception that tourism businesses are held responsible for sustainable tourism practices. Tourism is a fragmented activity, often performed by small and medium-sized enterprises. As described by the EU tourism strategy, small and medium-sized enterprises often do not have the financial capacity to switch to more environmental-friendly practices. Therefore, it could be difficult to reach tourism businesses and convince them to switch to sustainable tourism practices.

One solution described by some of the interviewees is to make tourism destinations more 'exclusive' again. This would probably be beneficial for the natural environment, however, brings some ethical dilemmas. If destinations get more exclusive - thus more expensive - only a certain group of people would be able to visit these places.

Even though the EU can help such businesses by providing funding, the EU has not the competence to interfere with local and marine spatial planning. Thus, the EU currently cannot decide how tourism

develops in a spatial sense and lies within the responsibility of Member States themselves. In general, the message the EU sends is twofold. On one hand, the EU wants to protect coastal and marine ecosystems, also to fulfil its commitments undertaken at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and in the Convention on Biological Diversity. On the other hand, the EU wants to stimulate growth of coastal and maritime tourism in its Member States. Even though economic growth is promoted, the EU makes various links to sustainable growth and highlights the importance of environmental EU legislations like the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Furthermore, good environmental status , is described as the "pre-requisite for tourism to prosper", acknowledging that a healthy environment is highly interlinked with tourism. However, there is the chance that the environmental protection goals are outweighed by economic interests. This could especially be the case due to the current COVID-19 crisis, which especially was and still is a burden for tourism businesses, resulting also major economic losses and rising unemployment. Furthermore, if the public interests outweigh certain negative impacts on the environment, is it possible for Member States to make provision. Furthermore, environmental measures taken under the Marine Strategy Framework have to be "cost-effective and technically feasible" (Document 1, Article 13, 3), indicating an economic perspective. Therefore, there is a possibility that measures will be taken in favour of economic considerations rather than environmental.

In addition to that, unclarity about responsibility could pose a problem. If one looks at the case of the Netherlands and Norway, but also at EU-level, there is no single authority responsible for tourism developments. Therefore, there is a chance that tourism will – again – not get as much attention as more traditional sectors.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Due to the growing pressures exerted by various maritime activities, including tourism, it has become clear that there is a need to structurally weight the potential negative consequences of tourism development on the marine environment in policy development.

Although the pressures exerted by tourism developments on the marine environment are vaguely known, it was not yet clear how much marine environmental policy is acknowledging these, and the other way around. Therefore, a research was carried out to examine the extent to which these two policy domains show similarities and differences.

In the previous chapter, answers were already given to several sub-questions of this research. Based on these, this chapter can lastly provide an answer to the final research question:

> *What are the current differences and similarities between the marine environment protection and tourism policy domain and which role could OSPAR play in creating synergies between them by possibly influencing domestic and European policy to mitigate the adverse effects of tourism on the marine environment in the future?*

In addition to this, a reflection on the used theories are given, followed by the limitations of this study and an indication for further research on this topic. Finally, recommendations are provided to OSPAR.

5.1 Research Questions Revisited

In order to determine the similarities and differences within both the marine environment protection and tourism policy domain in the geopolitical context of OSPAR, a conceptual framework was developed to investigate the multi-level constellation of the dimensions *rules of the game*, *actors*, *resources* and *discourse*. Furthermore, concepts of transition theory were introduced to be able to describe the influences on the socio-technical regime, thus the context within the policy domains are embedded.

Within all dimensions both similarities and differences could be found. When looking at the multi-level governance construct, it is evident that Member States do have the most power within both policy domains. Even though the EU can agree on various directives, which are mandatory to implement for Member States, it lies within the Member States' competence on how to design strategies to achieve the goals articulated within these directives.

Within all dimensions both similarities and differences could be found. When looking at the multi-level governance construct, one can see that on the European level some *rules of the game* are overlapping, like the Marine Strategy Framework Directive or Marine Spatial Planning Directive. These overlaps are indicating that at least to some extent they are working in a similar way and towards similar objectives, with comparable actors, resources, and so forth.

For the case of these two directives they lay down an overall policy framework, within which Member States have room to act. Furthermore, when looking at marine environmental protection policy, mandatory instruments are used, whereas within the tourism policy domain its preferably strategies, thus not mandatory. If Member States want, they can go a step further within the given policy frameworks given by the EU.

The relevant *actors* in both policy domains do show some overlap as well. On the European level, DG MARE and DG ENV are responsible for marine environment protection. DG MARE is also partly responsible for maritime and coastal tourism, together with DG GROW. If one zooms into the Netherlands, two different ministries are responsible for each of the policy domain. Norway, on the other hand, both policy domains share one ministry, but with two separate department. OSPAR is coordinating body to maintain and preserve marine ecosystems among its contracting parties. Both Norway and the Netherlands have a state-owned tourism marketing company. Furthermore, tourism

businesses, non-governmental organisations and nature organisations play an important role within the policy domains.

Resources within these two policy domain could be described as rather similar. For both policy domains, the EU has partial authority, as it has the competence to set down the legal overarching framework for both policy domains. However, most authoritative power still lies within the Member States themselves, as they have the competence to design their own strategies and set, for instance, their own characteristics for good environmental status. When looking at financial resources, most lies within the Member State as well, as they have to finance their own projects. The EU however can provide some financial support within both policy domains. OSPARs main resource is knowledge, it also is seen as to body for knowledge creation concerning the marine environment. Furthermore, OSPAR was chosen to be a platform to coordinate the achievement of good environmental status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; also launching its own North-East Atlantic Ocean Environment Strategy.

The *discourse* dimensions showed the most overlaps. Whereas it is evident for marine environment protection policy, also tourism policy does acknowledge the need to consider environmental considerations. Furthermore, the goal within the tourism domain is to create more sustainable tourism and high-quality tourism, where various connections are made to problems like climate change and air pollution. In Norway, this can be nicely seen on the example of cruise-ship ban from World Heritage Fjords, as long as they do not operate on zero-emissions. Furthermore, both domains describe the current problem that there is in general a lack of information, also on the interrelation between tourism and its environmental effects in a holistic manner. Next to his, there is also the feeling that there is sort of resistance or ignorance between various stakeholders. Within both policy domains, proposed strategies include things like stakeholder engagement, knowledge creation and various precautionary or protection measures. Such similarities could pose a synergy for the two policy domains, for instance by creating shared objectives.

Notably, the data indicates a *discourse change* within the tourism domain, as various interviewees were highlighting that there is a general wish for more sustainable, quality-tourism, mentioning that this form of tourism would both benefit local communities, but also would put less pressure on the local environment. Furthermore, there also is the perception that an increasing part of tourists are looking for more special experiences, rather than doing a traditional mass-tourism holiday. This general discourse change could pose an opportunity to transform the tourism industry to be more sustainable – in a social, environmental but also economic way. OSPAR could use the opportunity and highlight this trend, also within the context of important landscape changes like climate change and COVID-19. As OSPAR is mainly an organisation focused on the environment, it could put emphasis on specific pressures from the tourism industry on the marine ecosystem and propose guidelines and recommendations – based on experiences and knowledge – how to minimise these pressures.

In general, there are various differences when comparing both policy domains in terms of rules of the game, actors, resources, and discourse. However, there were also

5.2 Limitations

This research attempted to contribute to scientific knowledge about policy arrangements in a multi-level governance setting. Although new insights have been developed on the basis of this research, in particular about the two policy arrangements and its dimensions, the findings of this study also have some limitations.

The first limitation concern the sample drawn for the survey within OSPAR, choosing for only two committees most closely connected to marine protection policy linked tourism. This may create an incomplete overview of all OSPAR members on this issue. Consequently, the sample might not represent the general or appropriate population concerned (namely OSPAR) and can, therefore, be

regarded as a limitation for this study – also known as sample bias or selection bias. Furthermore, only 11 of a total sample of 43 participated in the survey and thus the results should be treated very carefully. The results can give already an indication, but however is does not possible provide the base for generalisation.

Secondly, for the selection of interviewees it was aimed to reach people from the market, state, and civil society sphere. However, this posed to be a challenge. As a result, most interviewees were from research institutes, most of them also in close collaboration with businesses and governmental actors. This may could create a bias as well. Especially more interviewees from the market sphere could have been interviewed, but only one company replied to an interview request. This maybe have been due to the COVID-19 crisis, putting a lot of new regulations on the tourism industry and leaving representatives with less available time.

To sum up, the results of the research are to be interpreted as a preliminary exploration into the opinions of various stakeholders involved into tourism and/or marine environmental protection and the opinions within OSPAR on the current tourism-marine environment situation. Further research will need to be carried out in order to explore in more depth the interrelation of tourism, marine environment protection and OSPAR as an actor. Still, this research took the first step towards the understanding of this interlinkage.

5.3 Theoretical Reflection

To analyse the current interrelation of tourism policy and marine environmental policy in the geopolitical context of the North-East Atlantic Ocean, three theoretical perspectives were applied. These perspectives included the Policy Arrangement Approach (Arts & Leroy, 2000), aspects of transition theory (multi-level perspective) (Geels, 2011) and a multi-level governance perspective (Hooghe & Marks, 2001.
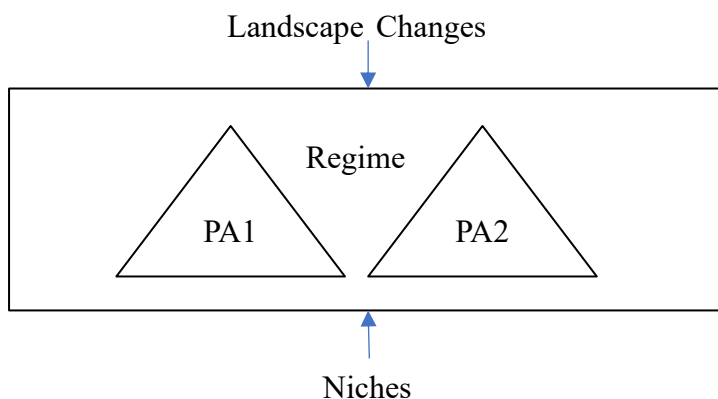

Figure 8: Simplified Conceptual Framework

In general, the Policy Arrangement Approach did serve as a handy tool to identify the various dimensions for both policy domains. By applying one could step-by-step describe the rules of the game, actors, resources, and discourse, even though sometimes these dimensions were overlapping (e.g. resources and rules of the game). By its application, many differences and similarities could be spotted between the two policy domains, showing possible dimensions on where to create synergies between these two in the future. By simultaneously taking a multi-level governance perspective, these dimensions could be described on various levels, in this case on EU-, Member State- and OSPAR level and also on the local level to a certain extent. Next to these governmental layers, actors within the market sphere (e.g. tourism businesses) and civil society actors (e.g. NGOs) play a role within these domains. By borrowing concepts of transition theory, the influence of wider changes and niche initiatives on the current socio-technical regime, where the policy domains are embedded in, could be acknowledged as

well. Such landscapes changes can give an incentive for the regime to change. Within this research, there is evidence for a discourse change within the two domains, which may has been triggered by various landscape changes like climate change, the wish for more environmental, social and economic sustainability, also induced by growing tourism pressures (e.g. cruise tourism). On the other hand, however, the marine protection domain does also acknowledge the need for tourism, as it is an important activity in terms of value and job creation, especially for local communities and various documents highlight the importance for sustainable tourism practices.

If one takes the conceptual framework, visualised in Figure 8, one can say that landscape changes penetrated from top-down into the regime level, which for example can be seen within the cruise tourism sector in Norway, where growing climate change and environmental sustainability concern triggered the Norwegian government to ban non-zero emission cruise ships from World Heritage Fjords. This in turn triggered a discussion in other parts of Norway on a community-level on whether to extent this ban. Furthermore, these landscape changes may induce the previous described discourse change regarding tourism and its sustainability. Therefore, one could argue that this creates a state of instability within the regime level, as the discourse of the policy domains are changing. This instability could trigger change in other policy dimensions, as these are directly linked. Thus, this instability could create an opportunity for OSPAR or other leaders to create change within both policy domains towards a more environmental-friendly and sustainable tourism landscape on and along the North-East Atlantic Ocean. At the same time, this instability creates the opportunity for niche-level initiatives to further influence the regime level from bottom-up. If one recalls the multi-level perspective and OSPAR can exert influence both on EU and Member State level and may support local level initiatives. Even though the marine environment protection policy domain does acknowledge sustainable tourism, this domain still seems to be busier with other, more traditional maritime sectors and thus might be more stable. Therefore, it might be more difficult to change this domain a way that tourism as a potential threat to marine ecosystems is integrated in marine protection strategies. However, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which is one of the overall frameworks for marine protection for the North-East Atlantic Ocean, published its first implementation cycle in June 2020, concluding that good environmental status was not sufficiently reached. It was concluded though that there is more understanding for pressures and impacts of human activities on the sea and was also one of the driving forces to adopt the Single Use Plastic Directive. Starting in 2020, the Marine Strategy Framework will be reviewed, thus creating a possibility to get tourism as having potential negative impacts on the European agenda and therefore be part of the *rules of the game*.

These three underlying theoretical considerations were helpful, as they provided a good foundation for this research. However, it posed difficult sometimes to use them together; especially when trying to combine both policy domains and finding overlaps between them. Still, by using the Policy Arrangement Approach and transition theory concepts and taking a multi-level perspective did make these two policy domains in a geopolitical context more easily understandable. Then, the conceptual framework helped to analyse various indicators for each dimension easily in the data. It especially made apparent where similarities and differences lie, which directly lays out the base to find out where the most potential lies to find synergies between two policy domains. In the case of this research, within the discourse domain a lot of potential was identified, as both domains are in fact aiming at the same goal, even though articulated with slightly different words.

However, by trying to identify the dimensions of these two policy domains on multiple governance levels, the researcher had to stay rather superficial, as it otherwise may would have gotten too complex in the context of a master thesis. For further research, it may be more beneficial to concentrate either on only one policy domain on one specific governance level. For example, one could look at tourism policy in the Netherlands or Norway and then further look to which extent environmental considerations are included and finally dive deeper on best practices on the local level. Furthermore, based on the findings of this research, a discourse analysis on the topic of sustainable tourism and environmental protection could be interesting and would make one understand underlying issues and motivations even more.

5.4 Practical Recommendation

Tourism is a diverse a activity taking place along the North-East Atlantic Ocean, and exerts various different pressures and impacts on the marine ecosystem. At this point, OSPAR does not directly address the tourism sector per se, but more indirectly via other action plans. If OSPAR would like to get stronger involved into tourism, and therefore reduce its pressures and impacts on the marine ecosystem, there are various things OSPAR can do.

First of all, OSPAR could target more tourism-related issues in their already existing strategies and action plans. For example, within their Regional Action Plan for Marine Litter they can put one focus on explicitly litter created within the tourism sector. Best practices regarding stakeholder engagement and knowledge creation for the issue of marine litter, like in the case *the Green Deals Schone Stranden*, can serve as an example for other OSPAR contracting parties. Furthermore, OSPAR could start a discussion about the European cruise tourism industry, showing Norway's new regulation as an example.

Also, OSPAR could strengthen the quality of its current network of marine protected areas, and promote tourism as an alternative way of economically using these sites, while also ensuring its protection. These sites would be suitable to meet the interests in both economic terms but also environmental protection. Additionally, OSPAR could encourage Member States to promote initiatives to share their knowledge about marine protected areas, educating and awakening interest of tourists for the marine environment and thus encourage increased environmental awareness among tourists. Such things could also be communicated to other Regional Sea Conventions or on an European level.

Furthermore, OSPAR could organise workshops specifically targeted at sharing knowledge and expertise surrounding sustainable tourism practices, in order to protect the marine environment. OSPAR could invite other interest groups like non-governmental organisations, but also representatives of the tourism industry. This would enable actors on both sides to see where possibilities lie to achieve the objective of sustainable tourism and ensure to meet the interests of both sides.

Lastly, OSPAR could try to encourage the European Commission to amend directives in a way that the tourism industry indirectly has to adapt as well. For example, energy or waste related directives could be more targeted at the tourism industry as well, which could trigger a change within it. Also, as the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is currently under review, OSPAR could take the chance to inform on an European level about the relevant environmental pressures exerted by current tourism developments, and pledge for a need for more sustainable tourism industry. Especially in the light of COVID-19, rapid biodiversity loss, climate change and the fast growing tourism global industry, sustainable tourism is needed to ensure clean, healthy and productive seas in the future.

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