

**FRAMING CLIMATE ACTIVIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS:
UNITING VOICES, IGNITING CHANGE**

**A comparative case study of environmental organizations adopting different
activistic strategies through the analytical lens of framing.**

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Abstract

With the release of the IPCC special report in 2018, an increase in international climate activism occurred. In the Netherlands as well an increase in activism has been observed in this period. There is a great number of environmental organizations active in the Netherlands, with each their own strategy to mobilize citizens into collective action against the problem of climate change. Actions by themselves are however not always successful in engaging the public and in achieving change in policies. In addition, the great variety in organizations can create difficulties in developing a collective identity for action. This study explores the different climate action strategies in the Netherlands, and how these strategies are framed to be successful or unsuccessful by different environmental organizations. Based on the research question; *'How do different environmental organizations frame different forms of climate activism in the Netherlands?'*, a recommendation for environmental organizations is made. By means of a comparative case study with a maximum variation sample, the cases of Extinction Rebellion, Fossilvrij NL, Greenpeace, Klimaatcoalitie, Natuurmonumenten, Scientists for Future, Scientist Rebellion, and Urgenda are compared. Data was collected by means of in-depth semi-structured interviews with each of the organizations and a complementary document analysis. By using the concept of framing as an analytical lens to analyse the collected data, the choices behind the strategies that they adopt are uncovered.

The study Reveals that organizations make choices for adopting certain climate actions into their strategy depending on their problem statement, their organizational capacity, and the image that they want to create. The forms of activism are categorized into 3 different categories: protest and persuasive actions, intervening actions, and civil disobeying actions. The strategy which has been experienced to be the most effective is combining multiple forms of action, a finding which confirms existing literature. However, this research reveals by specifically studying the backgrounds of environmental organizations with divergent characteristics, that there are limiting factors in pursuing this strategy. It also shows that these limiting factors can be overcome by collaborating with other organizations. By looking at the problem statements of environmental organizations, similarities between target groups and goals can be uncovered. These similarities can form the ground for strategic collaborations. Collaborations have shown promising results when it comes to the effectiveness of a climate action strategy. This is because of increases in media attention and increasing in citizen participation in collective action, which increases social pressure on targeted authority systems.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Context

“That’s fuel on the fire!” (Klimaatrebellie, n.d.). Soup thrown over artworks in the National Gallery in London, the occupation of the lignite village Lützerath in Germany, and the roadblock of a highway in The Hague. All activist actions have the common goal of raising awareness for the impacts of a changing climate. Countries have since the Paris Agreement in 2015 set Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) that reflect their ambitions to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The agreed upon target of the Paris Agreement is to limit the global average temperature increase to well below 2 degrees Celsius, and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius relative to pre-industrial levels (IPCC, 2022). However, during the last Conferences of the Parties (COP27) in Egypt, it appeared during the revision of the set targets that progress on adaptation was less than hoped for (Alayza, n.d.). Many, if not all countries, will miss their targets and the same goes for the Netherlands. With their given and proposed policy, the 2030 target will not be achieved (Concept Klimaatnota 2021, n.d.). Even if the NDCs would be realized by all countries, there still appears to be an emission gap according to the latest UNEP Emissions Gap Report. This means that there is a gap between the promised emission reductions, meaning the countries’ NDCs, and the needed emission reductions to limit the global average temperature increase (United Nations Environment Programme, 2022).

Exceeding the temperature limits has drastic consequences for all countries. Impacts to people, settlements, and infrastructure due to increases in the frequency and intensity of climate and weather extremes such as hot extremes on land and heavy precipitation events have already been observed in the Netherlands and are expected to become more common (IPCC, 2022). In their article, Ogunbode and their colleagues explain that “the release of the IPCC special report coincided with a wave of extreme weather events occurring around the world and a surge in international climate activism” (2019, p. 363). Exposure to the IPCC special report on global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius is therefore associated with greater perceived threat from climate change and increased climate change concern. In the Netherlands as well an increase in activism has been observed in this period. The number of requested demonstrations in Amsterdam from 2014 to 2018 has risen from 200 to 1081 (Van Stekelenbrug and Gaidyte, 2019). In the research of Martinez-Allier et al. (2016), they claim that on a global scale there is an environmental justice movement that shares common goals, frames, and forms of mobilization to defend the environmental rights, even though there is not a single united organization for it. However, there are many environmental organizations that regularly organize actions such as the mentioned demonstrations to demand action against the impact of the changing climate. Some of these were established a long time ago when the first concerns about human impact on the environment were expressed, such as Greenpeace. The emergence of others coincided with the release of the IPCC report, such as Extinction Rebellion and Fridays for Future (Ogunbode, 2019).

These activist environmental organizations are committed to demanding action against the impact of irreversible climate change on the lives of citizens. Often action is taken during periods when for example the COPs are held, since there is already a lot of global media attention towards climate change in these times. According to Wozniak (2021), such non-governmental organizations namely struggle with receiving attention in written news reports, compared to official government sources. Receiving media attention is however for climate activism of great importance to encourage people into collective action against the problem of climate change (Furlong & Vignoles, 2020). The

organizations use varying strategies to gain media coverage and to draw attention to the underlying arguments that they aim to represent.

The fact that certain actions attract attention can be due to many aspects. For example, actions involving famous people often receive a lot of attention due to their wide reach. So did dutch actor Sieger Sloot chaining himself to a private jet which made the headlines from the widely read news site, the interview with actress Katja Herbers made the papers, and so did representative Jelle de Graaf of Extinction Rebellion get the chance to perform a remarkable action on live tv, namely stick himself to a table. Other organizations focus more on mass mobilization by organizing actions such as school strikes, roadblocks, and protests to express their dissatisfaction with government policies. Or some organizations are now following the example set by Urgenda by acting through the courtroom. Urgenda decided to act through climate litigation, challenging the state for their non-compliance with certain climate policies. In 2019 the actual verdict came for the Dutch State to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 25% before the end of 2020 (De Rechtspraak, 2015). The verdict made it to many headlines, even outside of the Netherlands and Urgenda has thereby proven climate litigation to be successful (Wewerinke-Singh & McCoach, 2021).

However diverse the actions are, it appears that there are different ways to achieve results and media attention. This research will look at how different environmental organizations arrive at their strategies, and how they all interact with each other within the small territory of the Netherlands.

1.2 Research problem, objectives, and questions

Problem

There is a great number of environmental organizations in the Netherlands, with each their own strategy to mobilize citizens into collective action against the problem of climate change. However, not all forms of activism have proven to be successful in engaging the public. So did Allum and colleagues (2008) perform a study on the correlation between knowledge and attitudes, where was found that merely presenting scientific facts on a problem does not necessarily motivate public engagement. Other strategies where actions represent visual metaphors to attract attention may be misinterpreted by the target group, which as well can lead to low engagement (Šorm & Steen, 2013).

Actions in themselves are therefore not always successful in engaging the public and in achieving change in policies (Scheutjens, 2022). In addition, the different organizations differ in geographic, organizational, and political characteristics, which can cause a mismatch in the organization of mass mobilizing actions. This creates difficulties in developing a collective identity for action, which is the goal for many organizations (Reitan, 2007).

Objective

This research aims to provide a better understanding of the different strategies in climate activism in the Netherlands, and how these strategies are framed by different environmental organizations. The study explores how different environmental organizations come to their certain action strategy and how they provide an account for citizens to engage in that strategy. It also aims to gain an insight into the similarities and differences between the organizations and their strategies, and how each organization contributes to the overall climate movement in the Netherlands.

Research questions

To fill the gap in the existing literature regarding the analysis of the differences between the framing of different climate action strategies, and to bring a new perspective to the subject of climate-related activism, the following research question is formulated:

How do different environmental organizations frame different forms of climate activism in the Netherlands?

To answer this research question, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

- **How do different environmental organizations frame the problem of climate change?**
- **How do activists frame different forms of climate activism?**
- **How do activists expect different strategies to mobilize citizens to participate in collective action?**

1.3 Societal relevance

The climate change debate is one closely related to the safety of human lives. Climate change is already having noticeable consequences for health and safety in the Netherlands, such as rising sea levels and more extreme cases of heat waves often affecting the citizens in cities (Hall, 2021). Environmental organizations are trying to raise awareness to these problems and threats of the changing climate, but their actions by themselves are not always successful in engaging the public and in achieving systematic changes. A closer analysis of how different strategies are framed by activists will help understand how environmental organizations can overcome the difficulties in developing a collective identity for action against the problem of climate change. This study will also provide an overview of the differences and similarities between organizations and their strategies, which can help them in organizing collective actions to increase media coverage and citizen participation.

1.4 Scientific relevance

Limitations to the existing literature on the framing of climate-related activism are the lack of comparative case studies amongst a wider range of different environmental identities. The study of Furlong & Vignoles (2021) investigates the predictors of collective climate activism that could help promote necessary collective action, by looking at the strategy of activist group Extinction Rebellion. XR however only represents one of many environmental groups that dedicates themselves to climate action. Much of the existing literature also covers the participation of young activists in the climate movement. So does the study of Bowman (2019) provide an analysis of the complex, liminal nature of young political agency and the diverse, intersecting motives that lead young people to participate in the Fridays for Future demonstrations. The mentioned examples are cases of more radical activist groups, whereas the climate movement also includes less radical groups with different strategies. This study will contribute to the existing literature by providing a comparative analysis of the choices of a wider range of environmental organizations with different environmental identities specific to the Netherlands.

Adding to that, according to Fisher and Nasrin (2020) there is a gap in the literature regarding the analysis of the differences between different types of actions and their impacts on civic engagement. To assess the effects of the different types of activism more systematically, different types of civic engagement in climate-related activism will be studied in this research. This way it can be

determined how individuals or group members are participating in the numerous tactics employed by climate activists.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Literature review

This review on the existing literature provides an overview of the current state of climate activism in the Netherlands, as well as an overview of the concept of framing to provide an analytical lens through which activism can be viewed. By analysing the framing processes of organizations, similarities and differences between strategies and organizations will be revealed.

Defining climate activism

The ideas on what 'activism' constitutes of have changed over time. In 1988, the description of an activist was "someone who takes militant action in the service of a party or doctrine", according to the Webster's Dictionary. Nowadays, activism is described as "the activity of working to achieve political or social change, especially as a member of an organization with particular aims", according to the Oxford Dictionary.

Climate activism is conducted by, as the UN Environmental Programme states, "environmental human rights defenders". This can be anyone who is "defending environmental rights, including constitutional rights to a clean and healthy environment, when the exercise of those rights is being threatened" (Scheidel et al., 2020). Activists can act by themselves, or as part of an organized movement. Organizations matter a lot in the global environmental movement and have significantly expanded the protesting population beyond local citizens according to Fisher et al. (2005). Such organization can be anything from a social movement in which collective behaviour continuously promotes change in society, to a more professionally organized partnership.

History of the climate movement

To better understand the climate movement as it is today the day, a review on the history behind it is needed. This paragraph will provide an overview of some of the important developments in the activism world over time.

In a case study on the history of Greenpeace in Canada, Harter (2004) writes about the 70s as the beginning of the era of new social movements for the environment. At the first World Climate Conference in 1979 the problem of climate change was discussed globally for the first time. From that time on, many warning reports about the warming climate were issued and environmental non-governmental organizations were beginning to be active (Gupta, 2010). Greenpeace was in this time already actively campaigning with spectacular actions such as sailing with the Phyllis Cormack boat into restricted areas to halt nuclear tests, or the campaign against seal hunting. The actions received extensive media coverage, which Greenpeace labelled as success (Harter, 2004).

Since then, summits have played a more and more important role for the climate movement according to De Moor (2017). From the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 on, the climate movement focussed on strategies to influence the negotiations towards an ambitious climate agreement. Environmental organizations started uniting themselves in the Climate action Network to lobby negotiators, and individual activists were actively organizing public demonstrations. The great number of organizations and activists acting collectively seemed as the way to create momentum against such global problems as climate change. However, it seemed at the COP15 in Copenhagen that global cooperation with so many actors was more difficult than expected. "Since the disappointing Copenhagen summit (COP15), the diagnosis of 'weak multilateralism' has become widely shared within the climate movement. While COPs may have continued to present events around which to coalesce, they also gave rise to a growing rupturist faction within the climate movement that questioned whether anything substantive could be gained from the COP" (De Moor,

2017, p. 1082). Many organizations seemed to be focussing on scientific urgency, rather than climate justice.

With the COP21 in 2015, trust in the COP itself had diminished, and the focus of the movement seemed to have shifted from the official negotiations towards other plans of actions. Here, the need to address the scientific urgency in changing existing policy was for most organizations replaced by a need to address the need for climate justice and systematic changes (De Moor, 2017). The movement was bigger than ever before, with a great number of diverse organizations from all over the world that each had to communicate their preferences for action to one another to come up with an action plan. Organizations united in coalitions such as Coalition Climate 21 and Climate Justice Action to tackle the broadly shared problem of the UNFCCC not being able to deliver a sufficient answer to the climate crisis. While the organizations had a shared understanding of the problem, they could not agree upon a strategy (Hadden, 2015). Some organizers aimed for lobbying activities inside the COP, others rather focussed on organizing supportive demonstrations, and some key organizers even opted for a civil disobedience action. However, many agreed that the main goal of the mobilization at the time of this COP was to build a climate movement beyond Paris (De Moor, 2017).

In 2018, the IPCC published a special report on the state of global warming and the predictions for the coming years. The release of the report resulted in a greater perceived threat from climate change and increased climate change concern amongst society (Ogunbode et al, 2019). This increase in climate concern was reflected in the amount of grassroots activism, which has grown rapidly over the past years (Fotaki & Foroughi, 2022). A key actor in mobilizing citizens to activism was Swedish pupil Greta Thunberg, who started protesting in the form of strikes and inspired many others to do the same. Thunberg became the public face of organization Fridays for Future, a movement which tries to put the topic of climate change on both the local as well as the global political agenda with the focus on voicing the needs of the younger generation (Brünker et al., 2019). Another even more radical group that emerged around this time, is Extinction Rebellion (XR). XR focusses specifically on taking non-violent civil disobedience action in a decentralized manner. Decentralized movements like the two examples above have become possible by technology. Participating in online activism has reframed people's agency and provided alternative routes for oppositional activism (Fotaki & Foroughi, 2022). It breaks the boundaries of physical participation in social movements and enables people to still act by using social media to fuel the participation and popularity of a certain social movement which they support (Brünker et al., 2019).

Focus in the literature

In the existing literature, a lot of focus seems to be on the effectivity of climate activism. Fisher and Nasrin describe how the effectivity of activism can be divided into direct effects and indirect effects (2020). So did the research of Vestergren et al. (2018) measure the direct effect of intergroup interaction in environmental campaigns on psychological changes such as consumer behaviour and consumption attitudes. The research of Schofer en Hironaka (2005) studied more the indirect relationship between the structure and persistence of the so-called environmental regime - which consists amongst others of inter-governmental organizations, "epistemic communities" of environmental and scientific professionals, and large numbers of international associations and social movement organizations – and lower levels of environmental degradation. In their research they found that a greater quantity and persistence of this environmental regime was indeed associated with reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

The research of Scheidel et al. (2020) studied the relation between project cancellations and forms of activism. The results showed that the most successful way to mobilize this project cancellation was

to not rely on a single strategy, but to combine several at once. They argue that activists should therefore promote strategies that enable them to pursue litigation, protest, and more diverse mobilizations together.

A more recent development in the academic literature on climate change is the increasing amount of literature on online climate activism. With the spread of the Coronavirus the amount of online activism has grown even more (Fisher and Nasrin, 2020). It seems therefore that a lot of the more recent academic literature on climate activism has been focussing on this relative new form of activism. So does the research of Hautea et al. (2021) for example study how messages on the global issue of climate change are constructed on the social media platform TikTok, and what the recurring themes on the app are.

2.2 Framing

This study will analyse how multiple environmental organizations in the Netherlands have arrived at their current climate action strategies, using Benford and Snow their concept of framing. Framing signifies an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction (Benford & Snow, 2000). The issue of climate change and the need for action can be viewed from a variety of perspectives. So do activists address a particular problem that calls for action, which refers to the task of diagnostic framing. They then formulate a particular strategy as to be the solution to that identified problem, a task that is called prognostic framing. Lastly, to get people to get involved in their strategy, they provide a certain motive for action. This last framing task is motivational framing. According to Chong & Druckman, this is the ground of framing theory. It refers to “the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue” (2007, p. 104).

2.2.1 Diagnostic framing

The first core framing task that Benford and Snow (2000) refer to is that of diagnostic framing. Diagnostic framing is the identification of a problematic situation in need of improvement. It usually involves the construction of an injustice frame whereby an authority system is culpable of the violation of the shared moral principles of the participants (Gamson et al., 1982). The resultant products of this framing activity are referred to as “collective action frames”. They are action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of organisations (Benford & Snow, 2000). They thus have a shared meaning and negotiate a shared understanding of a problematic situation, the current climate, that they define as in need of change, and articulate an alternative set of measures, and urge others to act in concert to affect change.

Defining a problematic situation regarding the case of climate change is however challenging due to various reasons, according to Gough & Shackley (2001). The causes for climate change are namely highly distributed across society and across geographical locations. It is therefore difficult to identify a single guilty party who can ultimately be blamed. So can the blame be put onto the citizens in industrialized countries themselves, for their lifestyles and the consequences of them. Another cause that environmental organizations could focus on, are “a small number of powerful forces that can be portrayed as acting out of selfish motivation, such as large multinational firms or politically corrupt administrations” (Gough & Shackley, 2001, p. 330). Organizations distinguish themselves in the specific identification of a problematic situation.

2.2.2 Prognostic framing

According to Benford and Snow (2000), the articulation of how the problems that a social movement identifies should be solved by means of a certain strategy, is another core framing task referred to as 'prognostic framing'. In studying different demonstrations by social movements, Wahlström et al. (2013) found significant variation in the prognostic framings of demonstrators. They proposed a wide diversity in formulating solutions to climate problems. In this research, the forms of action that can occur in an activist strategy are based on the Environmental Justice Atlas of Scheidel et al. (2020). A distinction is being made between non-violent and potentially violent actions. In this research, only actions that do not cause violence against people are included.

Within these actions, there are protest and persuasive actions, intervening actions, and civil disobedience. This research focusses on environmental human rights defenders that have organised themselves in the form of environmental organizations in the Netherlands. By grouping the actions of these organizations according to the distinctions of characteristics made by Scheidel et al., an analysis will be made.

Protest and persuasive actions

Non-violent action to promote or resist change in a society can occur through the method of protest and persuasion. These methods can take form in, among others, protests, campaigns, media-based activism, and artistic actions (Sharp, 1974).

Protests are often carried out by social movements. These are broadly organized efforts coming from an individual or a group of people by making a group effort to achieve a common goal. There are multiple environmental organizations in the Netherlands that organize protests in which people can freely participate. This type of activism involves forms of civic engagement that specifically aim to pressure governments to take action that addresses the issue of climate change. They put pressure on economic and political actors to change the current policies and behaviours that result in high emissions. These forms of engagement target nodes of power—policymakers, regulators, and businesses—to change their behaviours and/or accelerate their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Fisher & Nasrin, 2020).

Activist movements use protests as a means of political action for certain issues. Often, in demonstrations symbolism is used by activists, to achieve media coverage. This way, discrete aspects of an issue are communicated to the audience. The self-proclaimed messages of activists are framed visually mostly with these symbolic actions (Wozniak, 2021). It plays a role in raising awareness to the climate crisis.

The persuasive nature of these actions refers to an organizations effort to persuade people to act. The focus of the actions lays on constructing arguments that will persuade large numbers of people of the validity of the organizations' case (North, 2011). Environmental organizations campaign to mobilize public support for specific purposes and to set social change in motion. With campaigns, they aim to inform the society often in combination with encouraging desired behaviour. This way a certain point of view on climate change and desired outcomes are framed through promotion. Greenpeace for example actively campaigns by conducting scientific research and training volunteers in addressing certain environmental problems.

Non-violent intervening actions

Another form of non-violent action is characterized by intervention, either physical, economic, social, or political. Climate change activism that intervenes can for example be lawsuits, blockades, and occupation of public spaces.

One form of action to influence the legislature in a country is through the process of taking legal action. This is called climate litigation. Urgenda in the Netherlands was the first of its kind in the world to take the impacts of climate change regarding to human rights to court this way. Climate change poses unequalled threats to fundamental rights, but climate litigation does “raise tensions between the protection of rights and deference for governmental policy discretion, and between the duty of courts to provide remedies for rights violations and the principle of separation of powers”, according to Adelmant et al. (2021). This may be a reason for low application of this form of activism. However, by focussing on the legal grounds of appeal that concern the interpretation and application of the European Court of Human Rights, Urgenda has proven climate litigation to be successful (Wewerinke-Singh & McCoach, 2021).

In 2015, the defender, Urgenda Foundation, had requested the court a ruling on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the Netherlands. They made their case to prevent the life and family life of citizens in the Netherlands from being affected. The plaintiff in this case was the State of the Netherlands (Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment). In 2015 did the judge already decide in favor of the Urgenda Foundation in this case against the Dutch State, and in 2018 the Court of Appeal did as well. In 2019 the actual verdict came for the Dutch State to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 25% before the end of 2020 (De Rechtspraak, 2015).

Non-violent civil disobedience

The final form of activism that is characterized by non-cooperation, is that of civil disobedience. These actions cause political intervention by moving beyond the courtroom and legislative hallways, into the streets and other spaces (Burkett, 2016). These are actions that are more assertive than the previously mentioned tactics and the participants in these actions are arrestable. Non-violent civil disobedience is aimed at causing economic disruption, and civil disruption to raise awareness (De Moor et al., 2021).

Examples of disobedient actions are mass gatherings or sit-ins like highway blockades and occupations of, for example, the headquarters of fossil fuel companies. So had activist organization Extinction Rebellion in the beginning of the year called upon people to come and demonstrate on the highway in The Hague, and organization Greenpeace had organized the private jets runway obstruction back in November.

Another complementary act of civil disobedience which has been occurring regularly and is characteristic for some organizations even, is striking. In a strike, people temporarily stop with their work or education to express negative feelings about certain political or social problems and to achieve socio-political goals. In 2018, Swedish pupil Greta Thunberg held a school strike to demand action from political leaders to prevent further climate change. Since then, many people all over the world, including the Netherlands, have taken this as an example and organized school strikes have been taking place regularly. In the research of Bowman (2020), climate strikers like Greta Thunberg are seen as “a ‘subaltern group’, who take political action in a wider context of intersecting categories of oppression and marginalization, including youth as a category of marginalization”. Young people stay away from their education to call on the government to take measures against global warming, forming an ‘enormous grassroots mobilisation’ as Hagedorn et al. (2019) describe it the letter send by thousands of natural scientists acknowledging the concerns of young protestors.

Movements like Fridays For Futures, and Youth for Climate are examples of environmental NGOs that regularly organize strikes, amongst other forms of action, where people can participate in the

Netherlands. The school strike has since been extended to Global Climate strikes, for a broader audience than just students.

2.2.3 Motivational framing

A final core framing task that Benford & Snow refer to is motivational framing. It provides an account for citizens to engage in a collective action strategy that is meant to improve a situation. It includes the construction of appropriate vocabularies of motive, and an account for sustaining participation. Activists mobilize their target group for their cause by motivational framing.

Collective identity and collective action

Activism and social mobilizations over environmental problems like degradation or waste disposal are not only about the distribution of environmental benefits and costs. They are also about the participation of citizens in decision-making processes and the recognition of group identities (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016). A group or collective identity is defined as a cognitive, emotional, and moral connection to a community that provides the foundation for collective action. When a person identifies themselves with an organization's goals, it builds a shared feeling of being a group that is reinforced by a sense of belongingness (Martínez et al., 2011). An environmental organization or the climate movement is such a group with a collective identity.

Collective action refers to any action that individuals undertake as part of a psychological group, with the subjective goal to improve the group's conditions (Van Zomeren, 2013). Individuals can participate in collective action by single actions, for example signing a petition or sharing a message, it does not necessarily refer to taking action with a group. Van Zomeren identifies four motivations for individuals to participate in collective action: group efficacy beliefs, sense of group identity, emotion towards a group, and moral standards. Efficacy refers to the ability to produce a desired result. According to Furlong & Vignoles (2020), collective action against climate change depends for a great part on believing that participating in a certain action could be effective. As well as experiencing feelings of moral outrage. Perceiving injustice and feeling anger are important motivators to participate in collective action.

Mobilization of citizens

Mobilizing citizens to participate in collective action is for many organizations one of their main tasks. According to Roser-Renouf et al. (2014), presenting scientific facts regarding scientific issues such as climate change to citizens does not necessarily lead to civic engagement in collective action. They argue that activists therefore deliver climate information in ways that connect with values of citizens, and that increase the relevance of the issue by for example emphasizing the local consequences, or the co-benefits of emission reductions. According to Cassegård & Thörn (2018), mobilizing citizens by raising awareness specifically to the threats is something characteristic for the environmental movement. Whereas many movements try to inspire people by presenting utopian outcomes, environmental organizations will often mobilize by creating a fear for future catastrophes. This refers to creating this moral outrage amongst citizens.

Even though mass mobilization is for many actions a requirement for achieving social pressure, there can be made a distinction between strategies of mobilization. In his research, Peter North (2011) makes a division between mass action involving all who want to participate, and direct action planned and executed by an inner circle of activists. Greenpeace is taken as an example of the latter, by which the organizations' core actions are supported by an outer periphery of supporters, rather than the persuasion of mobilizing the masses in an action. Often these actions are internally planned

and involve little to no outside influence. The same goes for organizations pursuing the route of litigation. They focus more on putting direct pressure on governments through the judicial system, instead of through the engagement of citizens. But organisations protesting for example often include symbolic metaphors to achieve high media coverage to reach citizens, as described earlier. The symbolism used in actions by environmental activists are successful in creating visibility via for example news visuals, but questions can be asked regarding the interpretation of the intended meaning. Results from Wozniak (2021) their research shows that for example news photos rarely manage to communicate the intended meaning of symbolic actions. They claim that the degree to which visual frame processing can have different meanings, is subject to both the ambiguities of the image’s features that bring up meaning, and to the viewer’s cognitive processing based on available knowledge. The symbolic nature of many forms of climate protest therefore may lead to lower engagement with certain actions.

How straightforward the mobilization process goes moreover depends on the contextual situation of the activist actions. The right to participate in protests is a democratic right in various countries, under which the Netherlands. Consequently, the civic engagement to public debates like the climate crisis is much higher in democratic countries, where citizens are afforded rights to participate and to voice their opinions (Fisher & Nasrin, 2020). This right participate in protests makes it also possible for the younger generation to voice their concerns. Younger students do not have voting rights to have a political influence yet, which can make them feel powerless. Protests thus mobilize many people to share thoughts, express opinion and claim political involvement (Kowasch et al., 2021). Next to this right to protest, factors like; available resources (including time, money, and skills); issue engagement, including involvement and the perceived effectiveness of actions; and the social accessibility to activist networks are all of importance in the engagement of citizens (Roser-Renouf et al., 2014).

2.3 Conceptual model

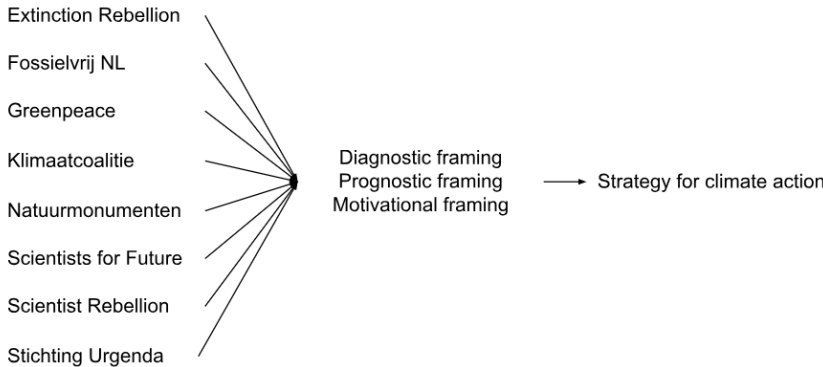


Figure 1: Conceptual model

The conceptual model in figure 1 illustrates how the choice for the certain strategies that are adopted is influenced by framing by the different environmental organizations. The organizations each have their own diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames in which they formulate the problem, the solution, and the rationale for citizens to engage in action. There might be similarities between the frames, which results in similar strategies or collaborations between the organizations.

2.4 Operationalisation

To analyse the collected data through the concept of framing, dimensions are added to each of the core framing tasks that are identified by Benford and Snow (2000). The dimensions are represented by variables in table 1 to make them “measurable”.

Concept	Dimensions	Variables	Relation to literature
<i>Diagnostic framing</i>	Problem identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culpable agents - Problematic situation - Injustice frame 	(Benford & Snow, 2000) (Gamson et al., 1982)
<i>Prognostic framing</i>	Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protest & persuasive actions - Intervening actions - Non-cooperative actions - Civil disobeying actions - Alignment of strategies 	(Benford & Snow, 2000) (Sharp, 1974) (Burkett, 2016)
	Target of strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government - Companies - Individuals 	
	Goal of strategy		
<i>Motivational framing</i>	Collective action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Citizen contribution (non-active followers, supporters with means, voluntary activists) - Measuring engagement (Followers, donations, members, petitions, etc.) 	(Van Zomeren, 2013) Dobson & Bell (2006)
	Mobilization of citizens (Efforts to engage citizens in strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media coverage - Citizen involvement in the implementation of actions 	(Benford & Snow, 2000)

Table 1: Dimensions and variables of the concepts relevant to the research.

3. Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was used for this research. This chapter will summarize and justify the research strategy, the data collection methods, the data characteristics, and the methods used for analysing the gathered data.

3.1 Research strategy

The aim of this research is to provide a better understanding of the different strategies in climate activism in the Netherlands, and how these strategies are framed by different environmental organizations. The study explores how different environmental organizations come to their certain action strategy and how they provide an account for citizens to engage in that strategy. To achieve the research objective and sufficiently answer the research question, a qualitative approach was used.

A qualitative approach helps to produce in-depth and illustrative information to understand the various dimensions of the subject under analysis (Queirós et al., 2017). It is directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the context of the research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives, and histories (Moriarty, 2011). It is used for understanding and explaining aspects of reality that cannot be quantified, which is the case with this study. Qualitative methods are also holistic, because it seeks to understand an entire complex picture of the specific settings of the studied subject (Forman et al., 2008). According to Creswell (2009), the researcher is a key instrument in qualitative research. The researcher collects the data themselves by consulting multiple sources of data. This also allows for interaction between the researcher and the participants, which results in a subjective and detailed collection. These methods to acquire qualitative data are however time consuming, and for a smaller sample group. The smaller sample size raises the issue of generalizability to the whole population of the research. The openness of the data collection methods also makes data interpretation and analysis more difficult (Rahman, 2016).

There have been comparative case studies with a maximum variation sample, comparing the cases of Extinction Rebellion, Fossilvrij NL, Greenpeace, Klimaatcoalitie, Natuurmonumenten NL, Scientists for Future, Scientist Rebellion, and Urgenda. Case study research builds an in-depth, contextual understanding of the case, relying on multiple data sources. Questions can be raised regarding the generalizability of a case study, but according to Flyvbjerg the generalizability of case studies can be increased by the strategic selection of cases (2006). By means of a comparative case study, concrete, contextual and in-depth knowledge about the topic of activist strategies is gained. This method allows for the analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences, and patterns across the 8 organizations that share a common focus or goal.

Organization	Founded in	Funding sources	National/ international	Strategy	Size
Extinction Rebellion	2018	Donations and fundings	International	Civil disobedience	33 local groups with around 15.000 supporters in NL
Fossilvrij NL	2013	Donations and fundings	National	Protest and persuasion Intervening action	7 people active in the organization
Greenpeace	1971	Donations and fundings (independent from government)	International	Protest and persuasion Intervening action Civil disobedience	100 employees and around 2000 volunteers in NL

Klimaatcoalitie	2000	No income	National	Umbrella organization for all strategies	Around 80 affiliated local groups
Natuurmonumenten NL	1905	Memberships, donations, governmental subsidies, and other gifts	National	Protest and persuasion	922.000 members among 12 member committees
Scientists for Future	2019	No income	International	Protest and persuasion	26 active people in NL
Scientist Rebellion	2021	No income	International	Protest and persuasion Civil disobedience	About 100 active people in NL
Stichting Urgenda	2007	Donations	National	Protest and persuasion Intervening action	15 people active

Table 2: Characteristics of the studied cases.

The cases were drawn from a maximum variation sample. Hereby the multiple cases with varying characteristics are compared to construct a holistic understanding of the different activist strategies in the Netherlands. The aim of this sampling strategy is to identify important common patterns as well as differences across the variations (Suri, 2011). As can be seen from table 2, the cases studied in this research vary in age, their fundings, their strategies and their size. Some organizations operate without funding, such as Scientists for Future, Scientist Rebellion and Klimaatcoalitie. For the other organizations, differences in the source of the fundings can be recognized. So does Greenpeace for example not accept fundings from governmental sources or companies but Natuurmonumenten does accept subsidies from the government. The source of the fundings, as well as the age and the size of the organizations may be relevant for the choices in strategies, therefore maximum varying cases are used here.

3.2 Data collection methods

To construct a holistic understanding of the different activist strategies in the Netherlands, a wider array of data sources and methods are used for triangulation. Triangulation refers to using a combination of methodologies in studying the same phenomenon (Denzin, 2007). By drawing upon different sources of evidence, convergence and corroboration through these different sources is being sought. This reduces the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study (Bowen, 2009).

In the following section, these different methods are elaborated on. The methods for data collection that are used are: an observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews with environmental organizations, and a document analysis of the websites and other social media platforms of the organizations. The interviews and the document analysis proceeded in an iterative manner whereby newly collected information was constantly reviewed.

Observation

Because I had little success in getting in touch with someone from Extinction Rebellion to schedule an interview, I went to a potluck lunch. I came here for the purpose of observing the organizational structure and to get in touch with someone from inside the organization. I took the role of participant as observer, where the role of observing comes second to participating in the social setting. This allowed for unusual aspects to be noticed during the observation (Creswell, 2009). The reason for the choice of this role was the informal setting and the organizational structure, where

there was no official head of the organization. However, the participating role did limit the ability to observe, since I had no time to take notes while participating.

In-depth semi-structured interviews

The choice for semi-structured interviews was made because its flexibility allows for patterns to be uncovered while still allowing for comparison between the cases. These types of interviews are designed to discover subjective responses from a person regarding a particular situation or phenomenon they have experienced. It may be used when there is already objective knowledge about the phenomenon, but subjective knowledge is lacking (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The open-ended nature of the questions minimalizes steering and therefore introduces more detail and richness. The data obtained with semi-structured interviews therefore could not be obtained by means of structured questionnaires or structured interviews. The semi-structure allows for adjustment to get more detailed and insightful information on a given domain (Creswell, 2009). These types of interviews are however time consuming. That is why all, except for the interviews with Greenpeace and Scientists for Future, were conducted via video-calls to avoid traveling long distances for both parties involved.

The interview guide for the semi-structured interviews was altered slightly per interview due to the differences in the organizations. In appendix | the base for the guide can be found. The participants of the interviews were all employees of the organizations with in-depth knowledge on their organization. The organizations are relevant since they share the common focus of climate change and are active in the Netherlands. The respondents were approached via e-mail, and all the interviews have been arranged via e-mail. Most organizations responded directly to the e-mail that was send to them by me. Others such as Extinction Rebellion, Fossilvrij and Scientist Rebellion were contacted indirectly through contacts at other organizations. The interviews have been conducted over the period of week 14 until week 21 in 2023. The duration of the interviews varied from half an hour to an hour.

Document analysis

To extract meaning, gain understanding and to develop further empirical knowledge, data from online documents is examined. These non-academic literature sources provide for a potential source of empirical data that is characteristic for case studies. The data helps uncover meaning and develop understanding of the context within which the participant operates and complement the gained information from the other data collection methods (Bowen, 2009). These online documents included the websites of the organizations, reports on strategies, annual reports, and social media platforms. The documents helped to provide an overview of the positioning and strategies of these organizations. In table 3, an overview of the consulted documents that are not webpages is provided.

Organization	Documents	Acquired from
Greenpeace NL	Jaarverslag 2022 Greenpeace Nederland	www.greenpeace.org/nl/over-ons/jaarverslagen/
Fossilvrij NL	Theory of change	www.gofossilfree.org/nl/theoryofchange/
Extinction Rebellion NL	Langetermijn strategie Extinction Rebellion Nederland	Acquired through personal contact.
Stichting Urgenda	54-puntenplan	www.urgenda.nl/over-urgenda/publicaties/
Scientist Rebellion NL	Organisatie structuur SR	Acquired through personal contact.

Table 3: Consulted documents.

3.3 Data analysis methods

After the collection of data through the triangulation of sources, the data had to be analysed to come to conclusions. The data is analysed inductively by working back and forth between the different themes and the data base. This way patterns, categories and themes are built from the bottom up (Creswell, 2009).

The transcripts of the interviews were uploaded to Atlas.ti and coded. The coding was done according to the codebook that can be found in Appendix XA. By means of inductive coding, a first layer of the codes was applied to all interviews. The base codes came from the existing literature and the operationalisation table (chapter 2.3). These codes are diagnostic framing (18 quotations), prognostic framing (43 quotations), motivational framing (23 quotations), similarities (51 quotations) and differences (39 quotations). By starting with these base codes for all interviews, patterns as well as specifics could be identified across the cases. This led to a new layer of codes that described more in detail how the base codes can be measured per organization. Eventually, final code layers were applied, which were more specific to the cases and quotations.

For interpreting and describing the concepts in chapter 4, the code managers were used for easy access to quotations that applied to certain codes and themes.

3.4 Validity and reliability

“Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects” (Creswell, 2009, p. 176). The validity as well as the reliability in this research was improved by means of data triangulation, as well as through the process of iteration between the existing literature and the collected data. This way, a coherent justification for the themes used could be built. Information that came from an interview, for example, was checked afterwards to ensure that valid conclusions could be drawn from it. This information was checked by consulting available documents and timelines. Another way that the validity of the research was improved, is by presenting discrepant information that runs counter to the proposed strategies. Most organizations will only present advantages of their chosen strategies, but discussing contrary information in the data analysis adds to the credibility of the real-life situation. It makes the subject more realistic and hence valid (Creswell, 2009).

To further increase the reliability of the research, the data was constantly compared within the coding process to ensure that the definition of the codes stayed consistent. This was done by inductively starting with coding from the base concepts only – diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing – and later adding new layers of codes that could be applied to all interviews.

3.5 Reflection on researcher positionality

Qualitative research is a form of interpretive study in which researchers make an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand of a situation. Interpretations cannot be separated from one’s background, history, and context (Creswell, 2009). This brings in a range of ethical and personal issues to the research process which must be acknowledged.

The debate around climate change and climate-related activism brings many different views and opinions with it. One’s age, political beliefs, social class, race, etc. may have an influence on the opinion and the lens through which the climate debate is perceived by that person. In this research, I

have taken the position of acknowledging that the climate is changing due to human activity. I am aware that my position could have had a possible influence on the data collection and analysis, and the validity of the results. I have tried to maintain as objective as is possible in this situation to minimize the effects of my positionality. By including as much context and information as possible, the thought process behind the interpreting of the data can be traced.

Due to the widely varying views and opinions on the climate change debate and climate-related activism, some opinions and views may also be controversial. So therefore, anonymity on the collected data is guaranteed if requested. The same goes for informed consent and confidentiality of the research subjects.

4. Results

4.1 The formulation of strategies based on framing processes

4.1.1 Diagnostic framing

The overall problem that drives environmental organizations to activism and that is agreed upon by all is like Greenpeace puts it, “the degradation of nature, and the climate crisis” (Greenpeace, 2023). The activities of each organization can be linked to the changing climate, whether that be through their goal to prevent the loss of nature, the struggle for a just society, or even the threat of a loss of human life. In table 4 the different problem statements of each organization are categorized. While all organizations mention climate change as part of their motive, it becomes clear that the specifics of the problem identification differ per organization.

	Organization	Problem identification
<i>Politically neutral</i>	Natuurmonumenten	“At Natuurmonumenten we are committed to protecting and enhancing nature in the Netherlands and our characteristic landscapes. Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. The increase in the average temperature on earth has all kinds of consequences for people and nature” (Natuurmonumenten, n.d.).
<i>Politically neutral</i>	Scientists For Future	“The individuals of Scientists4Future NL are concerned about anthropogenic climate change and the ecological crisis. We are academics motivated to actively call for a stronger response to these crises, whilst at the same time determined to maintain scientific independence” (Scientists4future NL, 2021).
<i>Need for climate justice and system changes</i>	Urgenda	“As an independent foundation, Urgenda strives for a circular economy that runs on sustainable energy and green raw materials. The organization works from a great sense of urgency because raw materials are becoming scarcer, and the climate is changing way too quickly” (Urgenda, n.d.).
<i>Need for climate justice and system changes</i>	Fossielvrij	“Since our foundation, we have been fighting against the power of the fossil fuel industry and for a just society. Inspired by the anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s, we demand that our universities, municipalities, and pension funds stop investing in the fossil fuel industry” (Fossielvrij NL, n.d.).
<i>Need for climate justice and system changes</i>	Greenpeace	“We believe that a green, sustainable world is necessary, better, and feasible. For that change, we need to break the current status quo. We expose major environmental problems and promote sustainable solutions. We stand up to companies that harm the environment and

<i>Need for urgent action</i>		governments that don't do enough to protect it" (Greenpeace Nederland, 2023).
<i>Need for urgent action</i>	Scientist Rebellion	"As scientists, we have been ringing the alarm bell about the climate crisis for decades. But governments did not take our warnings seriously, and year after year, emissions continued to rise" (Scientist Rebellion, n.d.).
<i>Need for urgent action</i>	Extinction Rebellion	"All over the planet, people are losing their way of life, habitat, and lives. We only have a few years left to avert the worst consequences of the climate crisis, if we are not already too late" (Extinction Rebellion Nederland, n.d.).
<i>Need for collaboration</i>	Klimaatcoalitie	"The Klimaatcoalitie is a national organization that is committed to a better climate. We put pressure on policymakers to take strong action and we mobilize a broad public for a climate-friendly and fair society" (De Klimaatcoalitie, n.d.).

Table 4: The identification of the problem per organization

Designation of culpable agents

Natuurmonumenten and SfF both seem to be more cautious when it comes to designating a culpable agent for the problem. A reason for this could be the backgrounds of the organizations.

Natuurmonumenten receives part of their income from governmental subsidies, which closely links them to the government. "If you look very deeply into the system, Natuurmonumenten is a semi-government organization designated to manage and protect nature in the Netherlands. Almost comparable to Staatsbosbeheer, only that is a...it is paid directly from tax money, we are paid by what they call, the 'Program Management'. So, nature in the Netherlands must be managed in a certain way, and you get paid for that. Ehm, and that makes us...we are independent, we are an association, we also do this on behalf of our supporters, our members. But yes, we are subsidized to a large extent to make that nature accessible, to protect nature, to improve that nature. So, what you see is, we are...we are moving cautiously" (Natuurmonumenten, 2023). Because of their income dependency on the government, it is unlikely that they would turn against it by framing them as the main culpable agents.

For SfF, there seem to be controversial opinions on their role as scientists when it comes to interfering with politics. "We can only provide facts, and in order to maintain our independence, we must also do nothing other than provide facts. Because if we no longer do that, people may no longer believe us, think that we have our own agenda. If we start getting involved in politics, that bites each other", Scientists for Future explaining how many scientists think about interfering with politics.

Urgenda, Fossilvrij and Greenpeace all three identify problems in the way that the current economic system is overly dependent on raw materials, and how citizens are the victims of this. "The energy transition should not become something that belongs to the elite and is then imposed on the people, so to speak. So, we try very hard to take people along, to ensure that the bill ends up with companies and governments, but not in the wallet of the citizen who actually just cannot afford it" (Urgenda, 2023). Fossilvrij also arose from this need to hold large institutions such as companies and governments accountable to keep society just. These organizations frame the situation more to be a problem of climate justice and need for systematic changes, rather than only a scientific urgency.

For SR and XR, the problem is framed with considerably more necessity and desperation. The layout and content of the XR website makes this desperation clear. One of their main pages is labeled "Emergency," and it talks about the threat of a mass extinction (Extinction Rebellion NL, 2022). For SR as well the urgency of the problem is made clear directly on their website. "We are moving into uncharted and terrifying territory. "Any further delay in concerted action", as the latest IPCC report notes, "will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all" (Scientist Rebellion, n.d.). The two organizations identify the timeline in which the problem occurs as one of the main problems. They also both directly refer to governments as the responsible parties for the current situation. "We exist because our government refuses to implement the necessary policies to protect its citizens. Instead, it continues to support the industries that endanger our lives" (Extinction Rebellion NL, 2022). SR has an identical manner in pointing towards the government as the culpable agent. "Today governments speak of "keeping 1.5°C alive", while continuing to subsidize fossil fuels and allowing oil and gas explorations across the world" (Scientist Rebellion, n.d.).

The Klimaatcoalitie takes a different approach than the other organizations when it comes to identifying the problem. During the interview, they explained that "you can see very much in the activist world that everyone is very busy on their own island" (Klimaatcoalitie, 2023). For them, it seems that there is a need for navigating all the different organizations in the climate movement. Their goal with the organization was to accommodate straightforward contact between like-minded organizations with the same goal to strengthen the overall climate movement.

Similarities & differences

There are clear similarities between organizations when it comes to the framing of the problem. These similarities and differences in the problem identification already have implications for the way that organizations organize themselves.

Organizations such as Scientists for Future and Scientist Rebellion were even founded on the idea that the claims of existing organizations should be backed up with scientific evidence from experts in the climate field. Scientists for Future explains what prompted their creation. "Actually, the reason was that we...manifest... support Fridays for Future, a group of students. They were really in the news at that time and so on, and we wanted to support that as scientists, and say 'scientifically speaking, these people are absolutely right'. Period. Just hey, the facts are, well they are enough reason to worry about that" (2023). This quote illustrates clearly how the two organizations identify the same problem, and how SfF tailored their action strategy to this similarity. SR described a similar reason for their creation, namely, to support the activist group Extinction Rebellion. "SR was actually started in England, as support...it was first, I think it was called Scientists for XR. So, they were scientists supporting Extinction Rebellion's message. With science. And thereby making Extinction Rebellion more... more reliable" (2023).

There are also clear differences between some organizations and the problem that they aim to focus on. So does Natuurmonumenten for example focus their activities specifically on the protection of nature in the Netherlands, and climate change is seen by them as part of the problem for this nature, instead of the main problem. XR on the other hand identifies the impact of climate change on the lives of human beings as the main motive for action. The Klimaatcoalitie believes that these differences in rationale are important for the climate movement as a whole. "It also keeps people motivated to do what they think is important" (Klimaatcoalitie, 2023). This implies that people might have a better focus to pursue their strategy to tackle a specific problem if they focus on what they

find important personally. When talking about the negative emotions that people may experience when little progress is made in achieving successes with certain strategies, XR as well explained how for many this battle against climate change can become demotivating and hopeless when looking at the bigger picture. “Just because, say, the shit of the climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis will not go away if you clear your agenda, because the best remedy is if you have a burnout that you clear your agenda and start doing fun things. Yes, that climate crisis is just there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and that is not going away” (Extinction Rebellion, 2023). Therefore, focusing on smaller parts of the problem that can be overcome will keep people hopeful.

4.1.2 Prognostic framing

The organizations that have been studied in this research have been categorized according to the variety of actions that has been presented in the theoretical framework. These actions each have different properties, only one thing they all have in common, namely that they are non-violent strategies.

The choice for non-violence is a moral consideration that each organization makes. XR for example explains that for them the choice for non-violence to achieve revolutionary change is based on moral considerations and historical facts. “The whole thing about nonviolent civil disobedience offers the great advantage that you can recruit among the entire population, from young to old and from disabled to you name it. Whereas if you were to commit acts of violence, yes, you actually have a very narrow... a very small fragment of the population. [...] It is of course also about moral considerations. Right, what...but the choice of civil disobedience is of course also based on the historical facts that...well, there's been a lot of sociological research on that too, of course, on the effectiveness of different upheavals. Well, there have been a number of studies that also show that the upheavals, social upheavals with the most lasting effect, have been the non-violent ones, not the violent ones. A very simple reason for this is that a violent upheaval literally and figuratively leaves wounds in a society. There are people who have become victims, who have lost people in the family. It causes mental and literally deep wounds. While a non-violent revolution in that respect does not have that handicap at all. And then of course you have fantastic examples to look at too, from Gandhi and Martin Luther King” (Extinction Rebellion, 2023).

Type of actions	organizations
<i>Protest and persuasive actions</i>	Fossilvrij Greenpeace Natuurmonumenten Scientists For Future Scientist Rebellion
<i>Intervening actions</i>	Fossilvrij Greenpeace Urgenda
<i>Civil disobedience</i>	Greenpeace Scientist Rebellion Extinction Rebellion

Table 5: Different type of actions that organizations adopt in their strategies

Table 5 illustrates how different organizations adopt certain actions in their strategy that can vary from light resistance like media-based activism, to more intensive forms such as arrestable actions

that can be categorized into civil disobedience. Some organizations may also combine multiple actions in their strategy, such as Greenpeace, whilst an organization such as Natuurmonumenten only stays within the boundaries of persuasive actions. These choices and strategies can be explained by the way that the organizations frame the problem that they stand up against, as well as the way that they frame the solutions for these problems, and the way that they frame the account for which citizens are to engage with their strategy.

Protest and persuasive actions

All organizations in this research use protest or persuasive actions in some way to attract attention to the changing climate and its implications. These actions are meant to achieve media-coverage to reach and inform the public and engage more people in the climate movement.

Examples of lighter protesting actions are media-based activism such as the letter that Scientists For Future published in which they emphasized the need in the situation from a scientific angle, in order to generate more attention for the problem (Scientists For Future, 2023). Or Natuurmonumenten their water campaign in which they aim to put pressure on the existing policies by collecting signatures and delivering these to the provinces (Natuurmonumenten, n.d.). As was established in the theoretical framework, organizations with persuasive strategies aim to persuade people into acting. Examples of these type of efforts are informative in nature, such as offering forms of knowledge transfers for individuals with less background information on the problem. So did Scientists for Future start with the Climate helpdesk where people could come with their climate-related questions as well as providing webinars for both citizens and fellow scientists, and so does Natuurmonumenten provide small tips that encourage people to adopt sustainable habits. These actions are examples of more superficial actions where people are encouraged to get involved in the movement on a more voluntary and informative basis, because “hopefully they will be alarmed, because there is every reason for that” (Scientists For Future, 2023). Citizens are addressed individually in educational actions, rather than corporations or the government. This depends on the type of organization and role that the organization takes. The organization examples mentioned above have a more limited ability to speak out, because they are either subsidized to focus on nature solely, or because they must maintain their credibility as fact-providing scientists. These limitations prevent these organizations from further intervening strategies.

With more intensive protest and persuasive actions, the target group of the strategy is often shifting from individuals towards corporations and the government. Scientist Rebellion has divided their strategy into legal and illegal actions. With their legal actions they focus on persuading people to act such as by signing a petition which in turn puts pressure on the government. They combine this with illegal actions, something which Fossielvrij refers to as the ‘escalation ladder’. Organizations often direct campaigns that include a variety of actions. “There is a strategy in advance, and also an escalation ladder” (Fossielvrij, 2023). This method of using multiple actions as an escalation ladder in campaigns is adopted by all the organizations that endorse a persuasive strategy. According to the escalation ladder, actions escalate incrementally as the campaign progresses. “So that you start very small, for example with a letter or with a conversation with an institution. And that you slowly build that up, so with a petition and a demonstration” (Fossielvrij, 2023). This creates an opportunity for the mobilization of citizens by creating “outrage and pressure in society” as Greenpeace puts it, which wields “so much power that it is possible to force major changes, even overthrowing established power” (Fossielvrij, 2023).

The escalation can consist of multiple persuasive actions, but it can also exceed to other strategies such as intervening actions. In their attempt to push politicians into action against the nitrogen crisis, Greenpeace has aligned multiple strategies that escalated in the process from persuasive and

protesting, to political intervention. “In 2021 we sent the first summons to the government. Since then, we have been interpreting the voice of nature in every way: we stood on the roof of the House of Representatives, published the report that showed that the most vulnerable nature must be saved before the end of 2025, sat down with nitrogen negotiator Remkes and collaborated with green farmers to a sustainable future for agriculture” (Greenpeace, 2023). The lack of action as response from the government to these actions of Greenpeace has now led to the filing of a lawsuit by Greenpeace against the government. Such an alignment of strategies by an organization leads to a single action not only producing an effect on its own, but also producing a combined effect. Namely, it draws attention not only to that particular action, but also to the other activities of an organization. “It is often the case with lawsuits that you can tell your campaign story very well anyway and get your audience on board, so even if you lose a lawsuit, you often help to organize support for those final changes, and then maybe a few years later it can be achieved either in court or by politics” (Greenpeace, 2023).

A final way in which a strategy can escalate is by going outside of the organization. Extinction Rebellion explains that escalation “doesn't necessarily mean that things are getting more intense, but that we constantly want to create, say, new dilemmas for the government. It is a kind of chess game in which we constantly look at how can we create a situation in which no matter how the government reacts, we win. So, if they intervene, then we are the underdog, and if they do not intervene, they implicitly agree with us” (Extinction Rebellion, 2023). Organizations increase their support base amongst the society by creating alliances for their strategies.

There is already a lot of collaboration between the organizations to coordinate these strategies. Many organizations broadly share the same concerns and want to mobilize as large a group of people as possible to take action against climate change. By collaborating and supporting each other, knowledge can be shared, as well as resources and men power. Reasons are that some organizations have to make trade-offs in their strategies because of their vulnerability as a foundation, such as at Fossilvrij. Extinction Rebellion is a foundation but because that foundation does not hold itself accountable for the actions of the movement, it is less of a risk for them to organize civil disobedient actions (Fossilvrij, 2023). The example of the ABP-campaign therefore clearly illustrates the benefits of complementing each other in areas where 1 organization would not have had enough capacity to accomplish the campaign. Eventually, collaborating means a sum of multiple organizations and their following, which causes more effect “because you are stronger together anyway, and your network is much larger, and we often have the same interests” (Scientist Rebellion, 2023).

Next to the advantages that come from collaborating, Natuurmonumenten points out that it is in some situations almost necessary given the fact that the Netherlands is a small country. For example, regarding the protection of nature they explain that it is of course special that a country that has so little nature has so many nature conservation organizations. “So, we have to work with those clubs, but we also work with a lot of clubs. [...] You have neighbors everywhere and there is hardly any room left to change anything” (Natuurmonumenten, 2023).

The Klimaatcoalitie is an example of an alliance that has been set up to coordinate the alignment of strategies. They provide the possibility of rapid contact between organizations for organizing actions and exchanging manpower, material, or knowledge. Next to the advantages for the organization of actions, it also forms an easier entry point for people new to the movement. “Because the action then becomes bigger and then there is also more attention for it, more attention for the media. But also, because if there is participation from different organizations, then those organizations also attract new people. Because everyone finds their own things attractive, and the one kind of action has a lot of impact on one person” (Klimaatcoalitie, 2023).

Intervening actions

A non-violent intervening action that organizations Urgenda, Greenpeace and Fossielvrij adopt is that of climate change litigation.

Urgenda is often linked to climate change litigation because of their climate case and the attention that it drew. It was however only a single lawsuit that they pursued since their primary focus lies more in stimulating the energy transition in the Netherlands through various projects. “What we actually do very much is trying to drive the energy transition very concretely. And we do that through...actually together with citizens, governments, companies, other NGOs, firstly to spread knowledge, we also try to bring people into contact with each other” (Urgenda, 2023). This description of their strategy shows how this organization frames a solution towards the problem and how the government plays a role in it. Their approach differs from the previous protesting and persuasive strategies because it focusses less on the bringing down off the current situation (such as the theory of change), and more on an integrative approach including the government and companies. They do so by initiating and funding projects that contribute to the energy transition. “We often walk a little ahead of the troops to show that it is possible. And the moment we have shown that it is possible, we hope that others will also take over, and then we will be looking for new things, projects” (Urgenda, 2023). With the climate case they took this initiative as well. The governments lacking in taking measures to prevent dangerous climate change was for Urgenda a beginning of venture to intervene with the situation. They showed that key actors like the State can be hold accountable and set an example to those organizations following. In their actions Urgenda tries to direct a certain tone for communicating their strategy towards the public. “There are examples where other environmental organizations opt for a somewhat harder tone, and with which we may not entirely agree” (Urgenda, 2023).

Urgenda created the Climate Litigation Network to “make it easier to take legal action worldwide in the fight against climate change” (Urgenda, 2023). The network offers support to organisations, communities and individuals in pursuing legal action. Urgenda’s climate case has inspired many organizations to also pursue legal action, including organizations Greenpeace and Fossielvrij.

For Greenpeace, escalating their strategy by including lawsuits to it was a choice made due to lack of effect from previous actions, but also because of promising results from moving towards other forms of action. The latter is explained by them when elaborating on their choice to escalate to litigation in their campaign. “In the entire climate movement, I would say there is a trend towards more lawsuits, because we also see that in recent, indeed in recent years, great successes have been achieved. So like, the Urgenda lawsuit against the state, the Milieudefensie lawsuit against Shell, eh, well, many of those kinds of lawsuits, and so there are more and more, I think there is and I also see that at Greenpeace, more and more faith in that we can achieve real system changes in an effective way” (Greenpeace, 2023).

Fossielvrij now has a lawsuit against KLM and their misleading ads. They work closely with Client Earth on this case since this is an organization specialized in climate litigation. At Client Earth they presume the environmental crisis as too big to be addressed from bottom-up only. They believe that “to deliver change at the rate at which it is needed, there needs to be industry transformation and governments have to be held to account” (ClientEarth, n.d.). Therefore, the law is believed to be the most effective strategy to take climate action, because through law the needed change becomes enforceable.

The lawsuit of Urgenda did however take 6 years before a final verdict was given. The longevity of this process could be experienced as a disadvantage to the strategy. So does Extinction Rebellion pressure the government to become climate neutral by 2025 in their strategy, which would mean that taking via the courtroom would not result in success.

Civil disobedience actions

The final type of actions occurred is that of peaceful civil disobedience. The organizations Greenpeace, Extinction Rebellion and Scientist Rebellion are known for the disruptive nature of their actions. These actions can range from smaller illegal actions such as paper pasting in public spaces, to blocking highways or illegally entering the premises of large companies. Scientist Rebellion explains as a sister organization of Extinction Rebellion that the two organizations have specifically chosen for a disobedient strategy based on great historical upheavals. They both mention the examples of decolonialization, civil rights and women's rights to vote where the rebelling of people did lead to those social changes. Scientist Rebellion frames this strategy as breaking laws "that were unjust. And that is necessary to get attention" (2023).

They distinguish themselves from Scientists For Future by the latter. Whilst the two organizations come from the same standing point that scientific evidence shows ... climate change, a trade-off has been made by Scientist Rebellion coming from desperation. "So, the scientists who join Scientist Rebellion who are desperate, have already tried a lot or that there has already been tried a lot. Things have changed, but in terms of politics and how we organize society, that hasn't changed enough at all. And also, inequality, so our privilege here in the rich west, and the big gap with the Global South where people still live far below the poverty line that are still having to develop, that hasn't gotten any better either. So yeah, writing more reports [IPCC reports] doesn't make much sense anymore and I think people who are with Scientist Rebellion all feel that very much. So there have now been 6 major IPCC reports, has not had the desired effect. History shows that civil disobedience does have an effect, well let's do that then" (Scientist Rebellion, 2023).

That civil disobedience would today the day still have effect is according to Extinction Rebellion due to the media attention that these actions generate. "Getting arrested and organizing an action where arrests are made is purely a means, a means to get media attention" (Extinction Rebellion, 2023). In April 2023 Extinction Rebellion UK had organized a protesting week where activists had prioritized "attendance over arrest and relationships over roadblocks" (Sky News, 2023). That week large numbers of protesters had gathered but the media coverage was considerably less than during XR actions that included activists disobeying the law or even more, getting arrested.

Even in the case of civil disobedience actions, receiving media attention seems to be tricky. The initial strategy of Extinction Rebellion NL was copied from their predecessors, Extinction Rebellion UK. It was focused on obtaining media attention by holding 'rebellion weeks' in which striking and disruptive actions took place for a week. However, once it became clear that these actions did not yield the desired result, despite the intensive organization and great involvement of the climate movement, trade-offs had to be made regarding the continuation of the strategy. "What that did to us as a very young organization with growing pains was that it attracted a lot of attention to that, to its organization. While the net effect... say in terms of media attention, was actually mainly concentrated on the first day of such an action, and in the run-up to it, but that attention then quickly weakened as a week progressed. Like 'oh yes they are doing something again'. While behind the scenes, the organizing group was completely exhausted afterwards. And yes, the rest who participated had a very nice time and just sat back a bit and thought 'well, when is the next one

coming?' And that is exploitation, and we found that out very quickly. And moreover, XR is structured in such a way that we work with a lot of rotating tasks and roles, to prevent some kind of unintentional concentration of power among certain people. And that as many people as possible get the chance to flow into the place where they can flourish. But because that rotated, it also meant that the transfer of experience from organizing such a whole week, that also happened quite rickety. That in the beginning a lot of things had to be reinvented again... the wheel had to be reinvented. That all took extra time. And yes, then half a year, half a year in between, will be over in no time, and then you have to get back to work. Well that, and therefore the cost and benefit analysis that we made, was also very clear that we should not want this anymore" (Extinction Rebellion, 2023).

The media coverage is thereafter according to Extinction Rebellion important "to create attention for the content of our actions" (2023). They frame civil disobedience as a disagreement with legal terms about what constitutes acceptable violence and what is unacceptable. If it is violence against an object which stands in the way of the activists and their possibility to draw attention to the problem of climate change, activists that disobey the law will count that as acceptable violence.

Often the conclusion that civil disobedience has the greatest effect is being drawn in situations where the strategy escalated. All 3 organizations in this research have either in their campaigns used a mix of strategies at the same time or started with small persuasive actions and escalated to disruptive actions. Scientist Rebellion explains that this approach is often taken to provoke a response from the target group, such as the Ministry. Results from campaigns that eventually escalated to disobedient strategies do as a matter of fact point into promising directions. One prime example of this is that of the ABP-campaign that Fossilvrij had set up in 2014. Their initial strategy was to put pressure on the pension fund and institutions supporting it. "We have signed petitions, conducted investigations and, together with colleagues, put pressure on our employers. We called, sent letters, shared videos and did creative actions" (Fossilvrij NL, 2021). Scientists For Future, among others, contributed to this campaign by supporting the claims with scientific substantiation. In the end, Extinction Rebellion did their bit by occupying the fund's offices, which they see as the deciding factor for the ABP to give in. "ABP fossil free, that was actually a campaign that had actually been running for years from Fossil Free Netherlands. Only that club, which specialize in collecting arguments and present them and also mobilize people on that, but still somewhat well-behaved. And at some point, we as XR jumped on that, and worked with them behind the scenes, to escalate it in the sense that we occupied ABP's headquarters several times. And well, they will never admit that, of course, but it was a coincidence that after three occupations, ABP came out of its own accord that they had read the latest IPCC report, and that they were shocked anyway, and that they would step away from fossil" (Extinction Rebellion, 2023).

However, escalating the strategy to civil disobedience is not always a logical follow up. Fossilvrij states that even though they are not principally against civil disobedience in activist strategies, they have not and will not be taking part in organizing these actions due to practical reasons. "There are simply risks if you organize a civil disobedient action as a foundation, because then you can also pay for the costs" (Fossilvrij, 2023). Being arrested costs a lot of time and money and it requires a lot of administration. This is not profitable for every organization, so then the decision is made to organize actions within legal boundaries.

4.1.3 Motivational framing

Motivational framing refers to organizations providing an account for citizens to engage in a collective action strategy that is meant to improve a situation. The engagement of citizens in the

climate movement is important to create a support base for the changes that organizations are striving for. A support base is important for a strategy if organizations indeed want to strengthen their position against the government. Fossilvrij refers to this as the 'Theory of change', in which a widespread support base can lead to the downfall of important pillars that determine the current situation (Fossilvrij, 2023). Eventually, Greenpeace explains, "it is not about, ultimately not about the Greenpeace campaigns, but about the power of the movement. And that by working together with those other clubs in the movement, that the movement becomes stronger" (Greenpeace, 2023).

The following paragraphs will review how different environmental organizations expect different strategies to mobilize citizens to participate in collective action.

Protest and persuasive actions

All organizations adopt in some way protesting and persuasive actions in their strategy. It seems that for these strategies organizations expect the accessibility of participating to be an important motivator for citizens to participate.

Natuurmonumenten focusses a lot on creating awareness amongst citizens, and on positive reinforcement to achieve change. They do so by for example motivating people to help through volunteer work, or to donate something. These acts are accessible for people to participate in and leave a satisfied feeling of doing something good. A large reason for this strategy is that their target group is relatively old. "There are a lot of people in the Netherlands with a lot of time left, of course we work with a relatively older target group, don't we, the average member of Natuurmonumenten is 64. Those are people with enough money and enough time. And this of course gives a very good feeling. [...] The profile of Natuurmonumenten is relatively old, and there is still a lot of future there, right between the ages of 60 and 80. Those people have the most time, the most money, so the tendency to focus on that is very big" (Natuurmonumenten, 2023). They explain that as a large organization with this type of target group, you must operate very carefully to maintain a support base, as opposed to other organizations with younger target groups.

Scientists for Future operates more carefully as well. Because they try to preserve their independence as scientists, they focus more on education on the situation, rather than mobilizing people to act radically. Bringing it "on to the streets" should prevent the problem and solution making from becoming something for the elite, as SfF puts it (Scientists for Future, 2023). By educating the citizens and helping them form a more complete opinion on the solutions to the situation, they are motivated to engage in the climate debate.

Fossilvrij takes it one step further by mobilizing their supporters to become active volunteers to increase the civilian power. They do so by providing tools and resources that enables people to act, and by working in local groups. This strategy where people are enabled to run their own campaign gives people more power to express their own point of view, in the collective battle that is being waged on by Fossilvrij. "So also, really trying to involve people who want to commit. And it worked out very well with the ABP campaign, there were many different groups active, which were campaigning at the same time as Fossilvrij NL, that is the foundation. All with the same goal, but all from a different angle" (Fossilvrij, 2023). Here, a support base signifies more involvement as opposed to the role of merely supporting the point of view of a certain organization. Fossilvrij however also explains that collective action and outside contributions matter a lot for their strategy. They illustrate this with the example of the ups and downs during the ABP-campaign. "A million euros was donated by the Postcode Lottery, which had given a great impulse. People could be hired, but that money was gone at a certain point, and then there was no other money and then people had to leave again" (Fossilvrij, 2023). Even after the campaign was successfully won, steady

engagement was not a given at the organization. “So, at the peak of the ABP campaign around 2020-2021, hundreds of people were active. But that also collapsed once that campaign was won. Well, there were just people who thought 'okay, now we're done', and then we started a new campaign, the ING then, but not everyone immediately felt something, so then you have to look for new people again. And people...a lot of people, me too, I am also active in Extinction Rebellion, so yes...people often only have limited time to do something for us” (Fossielvrij, 2023). It shows how these organizations that try to remain independent from the government are dependent on their engagement with citizens and make decisions based on that.

Intervening actions

For intervening actions such as lawsuits, organizations seem to frame the success of the actions as an important motivator for citizens to support them.

Urgenda appeals to the successfulness of their lawsuit not only to citizens, but also to other organizations to motivate them to do the same. They explain that the lawsuit was successful not only due to the verdict, but also due to the positive response that it received and the attention that it brought to other projects of the organization. “I really get a lot of e-mails from 'we are so happy with what you are doing', and we don't acquire donors either, so we don't have a regular...we don't call people with 'don't you want to be a donor yet', we do not do fundraising et cetera. We do get a lot of people who say of themselves that we want to donate. 'I want to support you'. And I think that also shows that people appreciate what we do” (Urgenda, 2023).

Greenpeace explains that a strategy with a lawsuit differs considerably from other strategies that depend more on collective action. The groundwork for a case involves no citizens, as well as the bringing about of it. However, it does create publicity that in turn engages people with the campaign as a whole, as was explained before.

Civil disobedience actions

For actions that involve civil disobedience, the strategies for mobilizing citizens differ substantially. Organizations such as Scientist Rebellion, Extinction Rebellion and Klimaatcoalitie which supports XR, show considerably more pessimistic approaches of providing an account for citizens to engage. Their diagnostic framing processes can be recognized in the way that they mobilize their supporters. Because the problem is framed much more urgently with a clear culpable agent, more acute and intense action targeting this agent is demanded for. A difference in the support base of these organizations is that it concerns for the most part concerns the actions, instead of common goal. As Scientist Rebellion explained, supporters of their organization have already reached a point of desperation, which other lighter forms of activism have failed to address.

Extinction Rebellion explains how often the bystanders of the actions are already involved to a further degree in the organization and support its actions. “Well, for example, what we see with that support demo to stay with that in The Hague [referring to the example of the highway blockade by Extinction Rebellion in The Hague] for a while, so you can see that very much, say the stepping-stone theory, that it really works... there. So, that is indeed how it works, people who go there to show their support, and who see what is happening on the sidelines, and they have something like 'next time I will be there too, down there, on that asphalt'. We hear that a lot of people who come to action training. [...] because that action training is designed to make people aware of perhaps unconscious mechanisms in themselves, or considerations, et cetera, and to hear them from others

about why or why not you should participate in an action or an action. Like this. So, we tempt people who have previously been in a kind of cheering and spectator role to take the next step, simply because it probably makes the most sense for them" (Extinction Rebellion, 2023). So, by addressing people's pre-existing motivation, and by offering enabling factors such as action training, Extinction Rebellion can realize its strategy.

Another factor that XR identifies as an important motivator for people to engage in their action, is when they can relate to already participating people. Spokesperson Lucas Winnips of Extinction Rebellion claims that the involvement of well-known people has a great effect, because these people often have many people looking up to them. "I've seen a lot on Twitter that people who have read the interview with Katja Herbers say: I'm participating, this appeals to me," said Winnips (RTL Nieuws, 2023). But even between organizations, connections are used for a greater reach. Scientist Rebellion for example uses the mailing list of Scientists For Future for their latest petition 'The elephant in the lecture hall', because more people are subscribed to it (Scientist Rebellion, 2023).

Strategies with multiple types of actions

For organizations with a more divergent strategy, such as Greenpeace, providing a rationale for citizens to engage in the strategy differs per action. For some actions, mass mobilization is used as an approach to put pressure on the target group. With these actions, citizens are mobilized by "giving large groups of volunteers a role in the campaign in an actually... a more accessible way. A good example is the recent action against Schiphol, where there were 800 participants, who could therefore participate in the action by entering the site" (Greenpeace, 2023). An action like this is more accessible because it involves little briefing for a large group of people and there are less strict guidelines on what should be presented towards the public.

When referring to their more controversial actions that involved only a small group of 'professionals', Greenpeace explained that their main goal is to get their campaign message across clearly, "and not everyone has to agree with the action, but the aim is that the media message is about that." (Greenpeace, 2023). Both strategies create pressure on the current situation, but they have different roles for citizens being either participants or receivers.

Media-coverage clearly appears to be an important factor in the strategies of organizations. Media is nowadays one of the most evident ways in spreading a message and reaching the public. In Greenpeace's annual report, the results of increased media coverage demonstrate this connection between media-coverage and engagement. In their annual report of 2022, the consequences of publicity appeared to be positive. "In September, Greenpeace was more visible, including a new TV spot and advertisements on billboards. We could also be found online, with articles on news sites and in online magazines. Not only did many new people join us, many of our loyal supporters also made an extra donation that month. The visibility also resulted in a measurable increase in brand awareness and image" (Greenpeace, 2022). Also, after the Schiphol action in November 2022 together with Extinction Rebellion the results were evident. Greenpeace shows in their annual report that a great amount of extra donations was made afterwards from old as well from new supporters. The source from which attention is brought on the organizations and their actions matter as well.

5. Conclusion, recommendations, and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

In this research, the activities of 8 different environmental organizations in the Netherlands have been analysed through Benford and Snow's concept of framing (2000). How organizations come to these actions differs on their diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames. Diagnostic framing refers to the identification of a problem. Prognostic framing refers to the articulation of how the problems that a social movement identifies should be solved by means of a certain strategy. Motivational framing refers to organizations providing an account for citizens to engage in a collective action strategy that is meant to improve a situation.

It appeared that differences in the identification of the problem and the culpable agents for it, could be explained by an organization their ideological values, which depends on their background. These differences in diagnostic frames as well as differences in capabilities of organizations, lead to different articulations of solutions to the problem in terms of climate activism. The forms of activism were categorized into 3 different categories: protest and persuasive actions, intervening actions, and civil disobeying actions. For each of these actions, organizations have different ways of providing an account for citizens to engage in their strategies.

The first type of climate action is protest and persuasive actions which were adopted by all organizations. These types of actions included in the strategies of organizations to attract attention to the identified problem and to persuade the target group into acting. Examples of these type of efforts are often informative in nature, and can be targeted at individuals, companies, and the government. An advantage of these actions that organizations communicate, is that participation for citizens is accessible due to the low risks and efforts attached to it. A disadvantage that organizations seem to experience is that only adopting protest and persuasive actions generates little media attention. While for many organizations these types of actions are part of a more comprehensive strategy, some are bounded to this due to their background and target group.

The second type of action is intervening action and appears to become more and more common in the activism world. Organizations that pursue climate change litigation often battle for more systematic changes in society in which the government is held accountable for their actions. Lawsuits against the government have seemed to be effective in terms of the verdicts and in terms of attention for other operations, which has inspired organizations to follow this lead. However, apart from the indirect engagement that they create for other projects, there is little to no role for citizens in this strategy to directly participate in collective action. Next to that, the process of filling a lawsuit is a long process which may be experienced as a disadvantage.

The final type of actions that were reviewed in this research are civil disobedience actions. Organizations adopting these actions in their strategies seem to frame the problem of climate change with substantially more urgency with the government as clear culpable agent. Civil disobedience actions are experienced to generate greater amounts of media attention than other type of actions, which in turn is believed to create pressure on the government. However, participating in civil disobedience brings the risk of being arrested, which can be costly time and money wise. The topic of acting against the law also seems to be controversial both inside the activism world and outside of it.

It appeared that for many organizations a combination of different types of actions is seen as the most effective strategy, which confirms the research of Scheidel et al. (2020). Campaigns of environmental organizations start with persuasive actions and escalate towards intervening and/or civil disobedience actions. It was found by multiple organizations that only protesting and persuasive

actions generated little to no response from target groups such as the government or targeted companies. By escalating the strategy towards other more intensive forms of activism, such as civil disobedience, more media attention is generated. The controversial aspect of civil disobedience in which activists act against the law, often creates outrage in society when it appears in the media. This in turn is expected to bring more attention to the campaign message that organizations try to bring across (Greenpeace, 2023). Organizations therefore expect outrage amongst society to result in more pressure on authority systems.

Escalating the strategy to other more intensive forms of activism however seemed not to be the evident pathway for every organization. Some organizations make a conscious choice to create a certain image in which civil disobedience does not fit. Others have limited capacities when it comes to time, money, and manpower, and are therefore more vulnerable for the risks that civil disobedience actions bring. The latter was found to be resolved by escalating a strategy by going outside of the organization to strengthen their position. Organizations that have similar goals with their strategy but are specialized in different actions are found to complement each other by exchanging manpower, material, or knowledge by means of collaboration. The combination of several actions by multiple organizations in a strategy was found to be effective for multiple reasons. By including accessible forms of activism, as well as intervening and disruptive actions, multiple target groups are addressed and encouraged to participate in collective action. Increased participation seemed important to create a support base for the strategies of organizations, as well as for the goals of the strategies. Participation from citizens in collective action also ensures independence from the government for organizations. Some organizations have already experienced that combining the strengths of several organizations has ensured that certain campaigns have been able to continue until success has been achieved.

To conclude, the framing processes of the studied organizations differ from each other which leads to varying strategies. The strategy which has been experienced to be the most effective is combining multiple forms of action, which confirms existing literature. However, this research has found by studying the backgrounds of multiple environmental organizations with divergent characteristics, that there are limiting factors in pursuing this strategy. It has also found that the possibilities for these organizations lie in strategic collaborations with other organizations that share similar goals. Existing collaborations have already yielded promising results for the climate movement as a whole. With this research, the main research question: *How do different environmental organizations frame different forms of climate activism in the Netherlands?*, is answered.

5.2 Recommendations & discussion

I would recommend environmental organizations to escalate their strategy either by adopting multiple forms of activism in their own campaign, or by collaborating with other organizations to organize campaigns together. By looking at the problem statements of environmental organizations, such as provided in table 4, similarities between target groups and goals can be uncovered. These similarities can form ground for strategic collaborations. Collaborations have shown promising results when it comes to the effectiveness of a climate action strategy. This is because of increasing media attention and increasing in citizen participation in collective action, which increases social pressure on targeted authority systems. To increase citizen participation in collective action, I would also recommend to collaboratively promote actions to increase the reach of a message. Collaborations within the climate movement bring together a collective identity with which people can identify themselves with. Increased citizen participation helps strengthen the movement from the bottom-up, rather than from the top.

For future research I would recommend to further investigate the relation between activist strategies and the overall climate movement from the perspective of the citizens. In this research, the efforts of organizations to engage citizens in their actions have been studied. These have shown a wide variety in the motivational framing processes of organizations, such as the provision of action trainings at Extinction Rebellion, the involvement of people through petitions and open meetings. To be able to provide more complete recommendations for the organizations, I would suggest exploring the effects of motivational framing on citizen engagement. The research of Feldman and Hart (2016) for example has shown that the emotions of fear and anger are strongly related to the participation in climate activism in the United States. By further researching these effects in the context of climate activism participation in the Netherlands, a better recommendation for the strategies of environmental organizations could be made.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Interview guide

Introduction

My name is Mette Timmers and I am a student at Radboud University in Nijmegen, currently in the last year of the bachelor Geography, spatial planning and environment. For my thesis I am researching different types of climate activism, and the choices that different environmental organizations make that lead to certain strategies. My focus is on the considerations and agreements between organizations in the Netherlands, and the involvement of citizens in activism.

This conversation will last about an hour - will be recorded if permission is given - will remain anonymous if desired.

Questions

- What kind of organization do you describe yourself to be?
- What is the problem that requires action according to this organization?
 - a) For example, is this the broad problem of climate change, or are you focusing on a more specific/time/place specific problem?
- What forms of activism do you use?
 - a) What was the reason behind the choice for this type of activism?
 - b) What is the purpose of the actions?
 - c) Who is the target group of the actions?
 - d) What are the disadvantages of these actions?
- What is the role of citizens in your organization?
 - a) How are citizens motivated/incentivized to get involved in the actions?
 - b) How is the involvement and participation of citizens in the organization measured? (Consider donations/registrations/active participation/social media involvement/petitions/volunteers)
 - c) How do you create public support for your actions?
- *In the case of an international organization:* What are the differences between the NL organization and abroad (in terms of involvement), and why?
- How actively does this organization cooperate with other activist organizations?
 - a) What are the existing collaborations?
 - b) Are joint actions sometimes organized, and if so, which ones?
 - c) Why are these collaborations chosen? (*If present*)
- How do you differ from other environmental organizations?

Outro

These are all the questions I had prepared. Do you have any questions or any recommendations for me? I want to thank you for the time and participation. I will share the results if desired (summary/transcript/thesis). Privacy is respected.