We are all green now

Hegemony, governmentality and fantasy in the global climate polity

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Abbreviations

CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
CCP Cities for Climate Protection Campaign
CCD United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CDP Carbon Disclosure Project
CDM Clean Development Mechanism
CER Certified Emission Reduction
COP Conference of the Parties
EU-ETS European Union Emissions Trading System
G7 Group of Seven
G20 Group of Twenty
GEF Global Environmental Facility
ICAO International Civil Aviation Organisation
IEA International Energy Agency
IMO International Meteorological Organisation
IUCN International Union for the Conservation of Nature
INC International Negotiation Committee
IO International organisation
IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JI Joint Implementation
MRV Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NEF New Economics Foundation
NGO Non-governmental organisation
OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
TAR Third Assessment Report
UNCED United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-SC United Nations Security Council
WCED World Commission on Environment and Development
WHO World Health Organisation
WTO World Trade Organisation
WWF World Wildlife Fund
WMO World Meteorological Organisation
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Introduction

‘Climate change is a genuine threat to humanity.’
UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon (The Independent, September 7, 2011)

‘Whoever invokes humanity cheats.’
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

‘I am truly disgusted about the way things have ended here. If you read in tomorrow’s headlines that a deal was reached?? remember it was nothing like what was needed and was filed by a bored complicit press who needed to show something for two weeks of crap [...] What on earth is going on? I pray something comes of this process. That all these people for all these years, all these flights to Copenhagen, all this hot air has some meaning ... What am I doing here?’

Thom Yorke, singer of the band Radiohead, commenting on his attendance of the Copenhagen Summit (The Guardian, December 21, 2009)

The tremendous failure of the Copenhagen climate change summit in December 2009 condenses all the paradoxes of present day global climate politics in one political event. Never before had so much attention been directed at global warming in the media, politics and society had been greater. Never before had a bigger summit dealt with climate change. Never before had one single political event been charged with so much hope. And never before had the disappointment been worse. The movie The Day after Tomorrow in 2004, the public concern with the impacts of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Stern Review (Stern 2007) and Al Gore’s Inconvenient Truth in 2006, or the fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007 (IPCC 2007) are only a few indicators of the tremendous increase in climate change attention which characterised the last semi-decade. With
the \textit{Bali Roadmap} in 2007, the general concern with a warming world had been translated into a political process which, it was thought, would culminate in an encompassing and effective global agreement on climate change in Copenhagen in December 2009. Hans-Joachim Schellnhuber, a leading climate scientist and advisor of German chancellor Angela Merkel, declared Copenhagen ‘the most important meeting in the history of the human species’ (\textit{Reuters}, September 9, 2009). These hopes collapsed on the morning of December 19, 2009, when negotiators had to admit they could not agree on more than the impotent \textit{Copenhagen Accord} – which could not even be adopted, but only ‘taken note of’. Despite the forced optimism of the following COP 16 in Cancun, it seems very unlikely that there will be a comprehensive, substantial and binding global agreement on climate change in the near future. The prospects for COP 17 in Durban are bleak. UN secretary general Ban-Ki Moon has raised severe doubts that it will deliver a comprehensive climate agreement (\textit{The Guardian}, January 27, 2011). Having engendered unprecedented recognition, the Copenhagen summit delivered only unprecedented failure. With only a few vital signs evident thereafter, Copenhagen was the Pyrrhic Victory of climate politics.

Political commentators have provided a range of explanations for the failure\textsuperscript{2} of Copenhagen. Among the most prominent interpretations rank the severe differences between the two major emitters, China and the US, the unwillingness of Chinese leaders to compromise or the almost tragic inability of US President Barack Obama to overcome domestic blockages (Lynas 2009; Rapp, Schwägerl & Traufetter 2010). Others point to the insufficient consideration of North-South justice and equity (Athanasiou 2010), while some simply argue that the \textit{Copenhagen Accord} is a ‘disastrous denouement of a chaotic and disastrous summit […] attended by historic levels of incompetence’ (Monbiot 2009). Scholarly attempts to make sense of Copenhagen follow the traditional International Relations interest in great power politics between the ‘carbon giants’ (Christoff 2010), highlighting the role of China and the US, diagnose a return of ‘climate realism’ (Brunnengräber 2009), argue that big international climate negotiations are the wrong approach for solving the climate crisis (Hulme 2009; Falkner, Stephan & Vogler 2010) or simply much less effective than multilevel approaches (Dimitrov 2010). The Copenhagen disaster of 2009 is told as a tale of stubborn and selfish actors, erratically straying in insufficient institutions.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} The 13th Conference of the Parties (COP 13) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) marked the formal beginning of the post-2012-negotiations, which were supposed to result in a comprehensive agreement as a successor to the Kyoto Protocol ending in 2012. The resulting \textit{Bali Roadmap} laid out a plan for the issues to be negotiated.

\textsuperscript{2} With ‘failure’ I refer here to the public perception of the summit, although I will argue later on that there is no such thing as failure in global climate politics.

\textsuperscript{3} Some scholars, however, see much more light in the \textit{Copenhagen Accord} (Vormedal 2010; Bodansky 2010).
Environmental sociologist Ingolfur Blühdorn, by contrast, has provided a more structural reading of the failure of Copenhagen. He suggests to interpret the outcome of Copenhagen as an expression of a deeply sedimented ‘politics of unsustainability’ that results in an ‘ecological paradox’:

This new form of ecopolitics is defined not simply by its effort to secure and defend social practices and socioeconomic structures that are well known to be unsustainable (ecologically, socially, and economically) but, more important, by what […] may be called the ecological paradox: the curious simultaneity of an unprecedented recognition of the urgency of radical ecological policy change, on one hand, and an equally unprecedented unwillingness and inability to perform such change, on the other. Oscillating between towering hopes and fundamental despair — “Hopenhagen” and “Floopenhagen” — the COP15 summit illustrated this ecological paradox more dramatically than any other event in the evolution of international ecopolitics. (Blühdorn 2011, 36)

Blühdorn attributes the persistence of this politics of unsustainability to, among other things, ‘a modernisation-induced cultural shift […] in which] the normative foundations of ecopolitics have been comprehensively reconfigured not just in the sense that ecological questions have been reframed as technological, economic, and managerial questions’ but also that the ecopolitical culture has shifted ‘in a way that demands the unsustainable to be sustained’ (Blühdorn 2011, 44). In other words, it seems that the politics of climate change systematically brackets or evades the questions it would need to solve for being successful.

In a similar vein, political geographer Eric Swyngedouw has linked the widespread recognition of climate change as a dawning catastrophe with a tendency of depoliticisation. He maintains that the ‘politics of climate change and, more generally, the concern with sustainability […] are not only expressive of [a] post-political and post-democratic organization, but have been among the key arenas through which the post-political frame is forged, configured and entrenched. This process of de-politicization […] calls for a reconsideration of what the political is, where it is located and how the democratic political can be recaptured. (Swyngedouw 2010, 216)

Both scholars contend that something is fundamentally wrong with politics in the field of global warming.

The above diagnoses, however, represent only the point of departure for the study at hand. Both Blühdorn and Swyngedouw locate the failure of global climate politics within its general cultural and social foundations, but are not concerned with global climate politics itself. The first aim of this book is to take their perspective to global politics. Closely related, furthermore, the impact of both scholars’ research has been confined to their respective dis-
ciplines. My goal is to discuss what such a perspective means for International Relations. Finally, both lack a *systematic* treatment of the politics of global climate politics. And this is the crucial reason for engaging with this issue at book-length. Blühdorn, on the one hand, understands the ecological paradox as a paradox. He juxtaposes widespread recognition of global warming and the politics of sustainability *in opposition*, whereas I suspect that both are systematically connected. On the other hand, although Swyngedouw suggests such a systematic treatment of this relationship and so points to the heart of the political in global climate politics, he does not go beyond developing a provocative thesis. He only puts forth rather fragile theoretical bones which are in much need of more empirical flesh in order to count as a proper explanation of the ecological paradox in global climate politics.

As such, the book at hand follows the above traces. It seeks to explain the ecological paradox in *global* climate politics without mobilising the traditional toolkit of International Relations theory. Or, put more, simply, it is interested in the ‘politics’ of global climate politics. Though, instead of adding yet another analysis of the UNFCCC to the literature, it seeks to approach this issue through a rather novel empirical field: the mainstreaming of climate change in global politics.5

1.1 The problem: Climate mainstreaming and the politics of global warming

In the last semi-decade, climate change has featured most prominently on the global agenda. It has diffused way beyond the narrow field of the UNFCCC. A broad range of international organisations, institutions and non-governmental organisations have discovered global warming as an issue that should be actively dealt with in their work. They have issued flagship publications, policy briefings, guidelines and fact-sheets, organised conferences and workshops, established new policy sections, or put it at the heart of their public relations. The remit of some of these organisations is far removed from being concerned with climate change or even environmental politics. However, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) now outlines free trade as a means for climate protection (WTO & UNEP 2009), the World Health Organisation (WHO) is now concerned with the spread of new diseases in the face of climate change (WHO 2009), the UN Security Council is presently discussing its security implications (Security Council 2007a; Security Council 2007b; Security Council 2011a; Security Council

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5. Mainstreaming climate change as a term has not really entered International Relations yet but is mostly used by policy practitioners to refer to the aim of integrating climate change into other policy areas, such as development (for example Gupta & van der Grijp 2010). It has certain resemblances with the aim of gender mainstreaming (see below). In this book, instead, climate mainstreaming is understood as an empirical phenomenon and not as an normative aim.
Introduction

2011b), and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) anticipates that a significant number of people will be displaced by climate change (UNHCR 2009). The NGO Transparency International (TI) is currently raising concerns about corruption in climate finance (Transparency International 2011), and traditional development groups such as Oxfam feature climate change issues as headlines on their homepages (Oxfam 2009). Global warming has permeated the whole sphere of global politics, it seems, and this book seeks to explain why it is so salient.

Throughout the following analysis, climate mainstreaming refers to three things: an empirical field, a puzzle to be solved, and a proxy to understand the general logic of climate politics. First of all, it simply represents an empirical area of inquiry, whose dimensions are broadly measured in table I on page 7. When I speak of climate mainstreaming, this refers to the engagement of those international organisations and institutions with climate change that are not traditionally associated with climate change or global climate politics. The debate about the relationship between climate change and displacement within the UNHCR would be an example of such a climate mainstreaming. This first understanding of climate mainstreaming as an empirical field thus provides the empirical material for this book.

Second, this empirical material displays a wondrous phenomenon, a puzzle which makes it relevant for an in-depth inquiry. In chapter 2, I will argue that established approaches of International Relations leave important things unsaid about climate mainstreaming. Neorealism, institutionalism, organisational theory, and global governance approaches focus too narrowly on actors and institutions. Therefore, for example, they cannot explain why climate mainstreaming has suddenly emerged as a ubiquitous phenomenon in global politics. Having not been triggered by a significantly increased problem pressure nor substantially altered preferences of the international community – in comparison to the previous two decades of international climate politics – it seems to be a contingent and discursive phenomenon; a phenomenon that is marked by discursive struggles about the content of climate protection. These approaches are also blind to the fact that climate mainstreaming is a hegemonic project; a project that serves particular political purposes, establishes a certain economy of power and so stabilises an established social order. Put simply, the blank spot on the popular map of climate mainstreaming is the relationship between discourse and power. Speaking of climate mainstreaming as such a puzzle thus constitutes, secondly, the starting point for the

6. It would, of course, be possible to expand the analysis of climate mainstreaming to other sectors below the global level. However, this book opts for a focus on global climate politics.
analysis of global climate politics with poststructuralist approaches. It is a puzzle, however, in the sense of the poststructuralist methodology developed in chapter 4, that changes throughout the analysis.

Third, therefore, climate mainstreaming serves as a point of entry for explaining the state of global climate politics in general. If climate politics is marked by an ecological paradox, which combines unprecedented attention to global warming with the enduring unwillingness to solve this problem, I contend that these two tendencies are inherently connected. By studying how attention to global warming increases at the global level, and how climate change spreads beyond the UNFCCC and global climate politics in the narrow sense, we can learn why growing political pressure has prompted such poor results. In this sense, climate mainstreaming is understood as a process which tries to (re-)construct, broaden and intensify global climate politics. I, hence, conceive climate mainstreaming not as something entirely different from global climate politics, but as a process which substantially extends its scope and scale, which in turn helps to explain the logic of this very politics.

Climate mainstreaming is an emerging empirical field. It represents a puzzle against the backdrop of mainstream International Relations approaches. And it promises to reveal insights about the general state of the politics in global climate politics. In other – rather tentative – words, an analysis of climate mainstreaming is supposed to answer the following question: *What is the ‘politics’ in global climate politics?*
Table I: Mainstreaming climate change in global politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Since</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Framing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Oxfam</td>
<td>In 1983, Oxfam published <em>Weather Alert</em>, a briefing paper on the human impacts of various climate anomalies affecting its programmes. In 1992, Oxfam took part in various activities at the UNCED. Today, it organises aid projects on adaptation, advocacy and campaigns on international climate politics.</td>
<td>‘Because the effects of global climate change are already having a devastating impact on people’s lives. Extreme weather events are destroying homes, schools, crops and animals – the foundations of everyday life.’ (Oxfam 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)</td>
<td>FAO has established an inter-departmental working group, which has been a priority area since 2001. They are working on REDD and ‘climate-smart agriculture’.</td>
<td>‘The increasing spectre of soaring food prices and global warming has brought food security and climate change concerns to the top of the international agenda. Agriculture – namely its agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors – now faces the double challenge of dealing with the impact of climate change at the same time that it must increase production.’ (FAO 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>International Organisation for Migration</td>
<td>They have organised a symposium on ‘Environmentally-induced Population Displacements and Environmental Impacts Resulting from Mass Migrations’ and offer policy dialogue and guidance on policies.</td>
<td>‘Environmental factors have long had an impact on global migration flows, as people have historically left places with harsh or deteriorating conditions. However, the scale of such flows, both internal and cross-border, is expected to rise as a result of accelerated climate change, with unprecedented impacts on lives and livelihoods.’ (IOM 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)</td>
<td>In 1997 UNCTAD established the <em>Earth Council</em>, a global forum on carbon markets. Since 2005, it has produced a work programme on biofuels, and has provided support for developing countries taking advantage of the Clean Development Mechanism.</td>
<td>‘Concerns about climate change have placed this threat to development prospects high on the international agenda, particularly in terms of its economic, trade and social impacts.’ (UNCTAD 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>International Energy Agency (IEA)</td>
<td>IEA has launched a database on climate policies and measures of member countries. It obtained an official mandate of the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005 for providing advice on climate change.</td>
<td>‘Decarbonising the power sector and reducing the CO₂ intensity of key sectors such as iron and steel, cement, paper, chemicals and petrochemicals, as well as aluminium will be critical to achieve the ambitious targets for halving global CO₂ emissions by 2050.’ (IEA 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)</td>
<td>ICRC has reported on the relationship between climate change and disasters.</td>
<td>‘Weather-related disasters are increasing; affecting 2.5 billion people and inflicting more than US-$ 400 billion of damage over the past decade. These figures reflect an alarming rise in vulnerability to extreme weather events.’ (ICRC 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)</td>
<td>Organised the <em>First International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism</em>, and follow up conferences.</td>
<td>‘For tourism, climate change is not a remote event, but a phenomenon that already affects the sector and certain destinations in particular, mountain regions and coastal destinations among others. At the same time, the tourism sector is contributing to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), especially through the transport of tourists.’ (UNWTO 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>In 2005, the G8 summit in Gleneagles decided that the bank should play a role in climate finance. It manages several funds on climate change and works on carbon finance.</td>
<td>‘Climate change is expected to hit developing countries the hardest. Its effects—higher temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, rising sea levels, and more frequent weather-related disasters—pose risks for agriculture, food, and water supplies.’ (The World Bank 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>Has initiated the Inter-Sectorial Task Force on Global Climate Change.</td>
<td>‘UNESCO has longstanding experience in scientific research and monitoring. We also have expertise in mitigation and in particular in adaptation. Additionally, UNESCO has critical experience in the often neglected “soft dimensions” of climate change, including education, disaster preparedness, ethics and culture.’ (UNESCO 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Action/Initiative</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation (ILO)</td>
<td>Initiating the Green Jobs Initiative with UNEP and labour unions.</td>
<td>‘A broader policy agenda for climate-resilient strategies and sustainable growth that also reduces poverty is emerging. Evidently, this has far reaching consequences for employment and the overall functioning of labour markets.’ (ILO 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>UN Security Council</td>
<td>Session on security implications of climate change</td>
<td>‘potential economic disruption on the scale of the two world wars and of the great depression. That alone will inevitably have an impact on the security of all of us — developed and developing countries alike.’ (Security Council 2007b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organisaton</td>
<td>36th Assembly recognises the importance to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; establishing new policy fora and contributing to the COP-15 in Copenhagen.</td>
<td>‘Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of this century. To address this challenge a clear path forward aiming at the reduction and stabilization of emissions to a level that does not endanger the globe is essential.’ (ICAO 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>International Telecommunication Union (ITU)</td>
<td>Launching the Dynamic Coalition on Internet and Climate Change (DCICC) as a form for debate and networking on climate change.</td>
<td>‘[ITU is] committed to moderating the environmental impact of the Internet, to seeking new ways to embrace the power of the Internet for reducing greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, and to enabling transformation in line with the objectives set and to be set under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).’ (ITU 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund (IMF)</td>
<td>Has included a chapter on climate change in the World Economic Outlook.</td>
<td>‘Responding to climate change has become one of the world’s foremost policy challenges. In line with its mandate and expertise, the IMF is focused on the fiscal, financial, and macroeconomic challenges of climate change and related policies.’ (IMF 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Care International</td>
<td>Has published of In Search of Shelter, an in-depth survey on the relationship between climate change and displacement; has created a Climate Change Strategic Plan and a global network on climate change; adaptation projects around the world.</td>
<td>‘CARE seeks a world of hope, tolerance and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security. Climate change poses the single greatest threat in history to achieving our vision.’ (Care International 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>World Health Organisation (WHO)</td>
<td>The 61st World Health assembly calls for a work plan for the ‘protection of human health from climate change’. The work plan was adopted in 2009. WHO provides expertise and knowledge.</td>
<td>‘The climate change that has occurred since the 1970s already causes over 140 000 excess deaths each year.’ (WHO 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>International Maritime Organisation (IMO)</td>
<td>The theme for the 2009 World Maritime Day was ‘Climate change: a challenge for IMO too!’. It has adopted mandatory measures for international shipping in 2011.</td>
<td>Although international maritime transport is the most energy efficient mode of mass transport and only a modest contributor to global CO\textsubscript{2} emissions (2.7 per cent on 2007 data), further improvements in energy efficiency and emission reduction are being actively sought […], as sea transport is predicted to continue growing significantly in line with world trade and the attendant growth of the world merchant fleet. (IMO 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)</td>
<td>Has adopted a resolution on ‘Human rights and climate change’ and commissioned a study on the the same issue.</td>
<td>‘Climate change “poses an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world.’ (UNHRC 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation (WTO)</td>
<td>Has published Trade and Climate Change together with UNEP.</td>
<td>‘Opening up trade and combating climate change can be mutually supportive towards realizing a low carbon economy the new report says.’ (WTO 2009b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Transparency International (TI)</td>
<td>Has dedicated its annual Global Corruption Report entirely to fighting corruption in mitigation and adaptation policies.</td>
<td>‘At risk are billions of dollars but more importantly the lives and livelihoods of millions of people. Corruption cannot be allowed to jeopardise efforts to combat climate change.’ (Transparency International 2011)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: websites of respective organisations.
1.2 A poststructuralist approach to climate mainstreaming

Since the deficiencies of traditional theories of International Relations involve a blindness towards the relationship between discourse and power, this book obviously employs a poststructuralist perspective on global climate politics. Poststructuralism is well-known for engaging with precisely these two aspects (Milliken 1999). In particular, I combine Michel Foucault’s concept of governmentality (Foucault 2007a; Foucault 2008) with the theory of discursive hegemony put forth by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985; for an accessible introduction see Torfing 2005). And although these are often understood as two very different animals (e.g. Howarth 2000), in chapter 3 I develop three points of contact between the two approaches, which make it possible to apply them together: the concept of the global polity, the dimension of fantasy and the understanding of the political.7

Hegemony, governmentality and fantasy in the global climate polity

Based on this theoretical amalgamation, I develop a perspective on climate mainstreaming which can briefly be summarised as follows. To start with, I understand global climate politics as a ‘global polity’ (Corry 2010b). Olaf Corry argues that all those supposedly ‘post-international’ approaches, which seek to overcome state-centrism in International Relations, ‘end up sitting uncomfortably astride concepts and terminology soaked in […] discursive horizons that express the spatiotemporal configurations of another era’ (Corry 2010b, 158). And, as will be discussed in chapter 2, this obviously also holds true for most mainstream IR approaches and correlates with their failure to exhaustively explain climate mainstreaming. To really overcome state centrism, he introduces the concept of a ‘global polity’, which is supposed to

exist when a group of units become oriented towards the governance of a common ‘governance-object’. The latter can be defined as an object that is constructed as real, distinct, malleable and subject to political action, for example, constructs such as ‘France’ or ‘the climate’. By extension, a global polity will hence have emerged to the extent that actors of whatever kind have become oriented towards the governance of specifically global governance-objects. (Corry 2010b, 159)

Departing from the traditional images of international relations as ‘politics among nations’ (Morgenthau 1948), this concept allows for a fresh perspective on climate mainstreaming. In

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7. It would like to emphasise that this work is neither the first one taking governmentality to the study of global climate politics; nor is the only one introducing hegemony and fantasy to this context. For the former see, for example, Slocum 2004; Oels 2005; Bäckstrand & Lövbrand 2006; Okereke, Bulkeley & Schroeder 2009; Paterson & Stripple 2010; Rothe 2011b, for the latter refer to Swyngedouw 2010; Swyngedouw 2007 So far, however, none have combined the approaches as proposed here and spent much time investigating into the theoretical and ontological conditions for doing so.
this sense, I conceive of global climate politics as a global climate polity: revolving around the earth’s carbon cycle as a real, distinct, malleable object subject to political action; formed of all those actors that attempt to contribute to the governance of this carbon cycle. And against this backdrop, climate mainstreaming is the (re-)constitution, expansion and intensification of this global climate polity through the inclusion of other polities, actors and institutions.

Such an understanding of the polity, however, implicitly addresses questions of discourse and power. On the one hand, if actors ‘become oriented towards’ a common governance-object, which ‘is constructed’ in a certain way, this clearly involves discursive processes of generating meaning and forging a consensus. How is it that actors come to be oriented towards a global governance-object, and how is this common governance-object constructed? Where lies the threshold from which a polity becomes relevant for the wider global scene? In other words: How is the polity discursively constructed?

On the other hand, if the polity concept is precisely about post-international politics, it is very likely that the power exercised in order to actually govern the governance-object cannot be described sufficiently in terms of the obvious sovereign force of nation-states. Instead, a more nuanced understanding of the subtle and indirect mechanisms of power is necessary. Both issues, discourse and power, are important for understanding climate mainstreaming, but are left unaddressed in the polity concept. In chapter 3, I argue that the approaches of hegemony and governmentality can address and connect these two issues, respectively.

Hegemony theory has emerged from a critical engagement with the history of Marxism and especially the works of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, which is why it has been labeled a ‘post-Marxist’ perspective by its creators (Laclau & Mouffe 1990). It endorses Gramsci’s concept of hegemony as a form of ‘moral-intellectual unity’, but frees it from its economist remnants. Whereas Gramsci tied hegemony to the rule of a particular social class, which was constituted through economic relations of production (Mouffe 1979), Laclau and Mouffe see hegemony as a general discursive phenomenon which does not necessarily have to be rooted in the economic sphere. Instead, they claim that all social, political and economic processes and institutions have to be understood as discursive entities. This is due to the fact that all society, including even the most material forces, is only intelligible within a certain ‘meaningful field’ (Laclau 1993). And this field, they argue with reference to Ferdinand de Saussure and Jacques Derrida, is inherently unstable and radically contingent. Hegemony theory, then, is interested in how under the condition of radical contingency meaning can be fixed, how a

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8. To clarify the last of the two questions: An anarchist in Indonesia and a communist in Greece – even if they did work together towards the world revolution – could hardly be called a global revolutionary polity. For it lacks some form of public consent or at least a critical mass of relevant actors acknowledging or even becoming part of that polity. I will discuss these two questions in more detail in chapter 3.
particular discourse can become hegemonic. And it provides a kit of useful concepts – ‘equivalence and difference’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985), ‘constitutive outside’ (Staten 1984), ‘empty signifier’ (Laclau 1996), ‘hegemonic project’ (Nonhoff 2006), ‘populism’ (Laclau 2005), ‘dislocation’, the ‘social’ and the ‘political’ (Laclau 1990) – which help to explain the construction and contestation of a widely accepted polity.

In this sense, I propose to understand a global polity as a hegemonic discourse. This highlights the fact that a polity is constructed vis-a-vis a discursive outside and converges around an empty signifier as a solution to the governance object, as well as accounting for the hegemony of the global polity in the wider global sphere. In chapters 5 and 6, for example, I will argue that climate mainstreaming is based on constructions of ‘dangerous climate change’ as an existential external enemy for the entire planet and climate protection as an empty signifier which is supposed to overcome all other major grievances ‘humanity’ faces. These discursive strategies, then, account for the reproduction and expansion of the global climate polity through climate mainstreaming.

The strength of Foucault’s concept of governmentality, by contrast, is to highlight the subtle and indirect mechanisms of power in modern societies (Foucault 2007a; Foucault 2008). He argues that the dominant models of power remain ‘under the spell of monarchy’ (Foucault 1978, 88). They were characteristic for the medieval state, but in modern times have increasingly been replaced by a more oblique and indirect use of power Foucault identified as ‘government’ and prominently defined as ‘the conduct of conduct’ (Foucault 1982, 220). In contrast to the traditional sovereign means of state power, government can be ‘any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies […] that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs’ (Dean 2010, 11). The notion of governmentality, moreover, points to the entanglement of these activities with the creation of certain forms of knowledge. Put bluntly, the concept of governmentality helps to shed light on the multiple ways through which power is exercised ‘at a distance’ beyond the narrow confinements of state policies (Miller & Rose 2008).

The ambition to understand the exercise of power beyond the state has turned governmentality into an attractive perspective for the study of global politics, and there is a remarkable body of literature on global governmentality (for example Lipschutz 2005; Walters & Haahr 2005; Merlingen 2006; Neumann & Sending 2010; White 2007; Okereke, Bulkeley & Schroeder 2009; Rosenow 2009; Death 2011– to name but a few). In line with this literature, I argue that exercising power within a global polity can best be described in terms of governmentality. For example, in chapters 5 and 7, I argue that the dominant mode of exercising
power which is implemented through climate mainstreaming is governmentality; more precisely, *carbon* governmentality, as it revolves around the earth’s carbon cycle as the dominant governance object.

Combining governmentality and hegemony as two faces of a global polity not only provides the first point of contact between the two concepts. It also enables these very concepts to be applied to the global level. Within the literature on global governmentality, concerns are emerging that the governmentality concept as developed by Foucault is deemed to be unfit to be applied to global politics (Selby 2007; Chandler 2009; Joseph 2009; Joseph 2010b; Joseph 2010c; Joseph 2010a). These scholars argue that the traditional domain of government – the population and a liberal civil society – do not exist outside ‘advanced liberal societies’, so that governmentality can hardly work beyond the Western World (Joseph 2009). By the same token, the use of the poststructuralist version of hegemony theory has been impeded in the study of global politics. One of the reasons for this is that it lacks its proper global domain: ‘Global hegemony in what, by whom and where?’ is a question rarely dealt with in the literature. In chapter 3, I thus argue that hegemony and governmentality do not only advance the polity concept, but that also only the polity allows these very concepts to go global, *vice versa*.

Finally, Slavoj Žižek has argued that hegemony theory misses a theory of the subject. Based on Lacanian psychoanalysis, he introduces a conception of the subject which is marked by a fundamental lack (Stavrakakis 1999). Social fantasies help to cover this lack and project it towards an external enemy or obstacle, such as the ‘Jew’, the ‘immigrant’ or, as will be argued below, to ‘climate change’. It is a narrative ‘providing an image of fullness, wholeness, or harmony, on the one hand, while conjuring up threats and obstacles to its realisation’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 130). And it is this dimension of fantasy which can account for the appeal of a hegemonic discourse. In chapter 3, I will argue that this dimension is also implicitly entailed in the governmentality framework, and thus provides a second point of contact between the two approaches. Moreover, it is an aspect that adds an affective dimension to account for the cohesion of a particular polity. In the subsequent analysis, I will attempt to show, for example, that climate mainstreaming builds on the fantasmatic image of a dawning apocalypse paired with hopes for universal salvation, which turns it into a salient discourse for political actors. This additionally contributes to explaining the expansion of the global climate polity.

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9. This does not hold true, of course, for the neo-gramscian version, which has received widespread attention in International Relations (see paradigmatically Cox 1981).
Put simply, the established approaches problematised in chapter 2 take global climate politics for granted as something that is simply out there, that has a clear cut and definite existence, so that it suffices to study what actors and institutions do within it. By contrast, this poststructuralist theoretical framework, by highlighting the relationship between discourse and power, digs deeper and inquires into a different set of questions: How is the global climate polity discursively established as a polity? How is its object of concern constituted, and what solutions does this imply? How is the climate rendered governable, and what is the associated economy of power within this polity? Or why is this polity so attractive and fascinating that actors engage with it? In other words, the poststructuralist framework developed in chapter 3 implies to ask a seemingly simple question: What is the ‘climate’ of the global climate polity?

Research questions and hypothesis

Following on from what has been said so far, the question that drives the inquiry into climate mainstreaming can be stated as follows: What is the ‘climate’ and the ‘political’ of the global climate polity? Jason Glynos and David Howarth have developed the ‘logics of critical explanation’ as a framework for poststructuralist research (Glynos & Howarth 2007). They propose to analyse any regime of practices in three different but interconnected dimensions: the political logics, which explain how a particular regime of practices is instituted, contested, maintained and defended; the social logics, which characterise the sedimented and routine practices of a regime; and the fantasmatic logics which explain why a certain regime of practices is attractive for and hence ‘grips’ subjects (Glynos & Howarth 2007, Ch. 5). This framework is helpful for differentiating this very condensed research question.

If one understands the global climate policy as a regime of practices, these three dimension allow for integrating the two theoretical approaches into a combined research programme. The political logics correspond to the practices of hegemony, while governmentality provides a fruitful way of accounting for the social logics. Hegemony explains how a certain polity is constructed as a homogenous and coherent space vis-a-vis its outside. And governmentality accounts for how this space is internally governed. The fantasmatic dimension, finally, combines hegemony and governmentality into a convincing narrative and turns it into an attractive hegemonic project. Against this theoretical backdrop, we can detail the general interest in the discourse and power of climate mainstreaming in four research questions:

1. In order to understand the enlargement of the climate polity, we first have to understand how it came into being in the first place. The first question thus asks: How has the global climate polity been created?
(2) If we understand climate mainstreaming as the expansion of this global climate polity, we have to ask: How – by what political logics – does climate mainstreaming (re-)produce, broaden and intensify a hegemonic global climate polity?

(3) Accounting for the power effects of this process, another question has to be: What is the governmentality – that is, the social logic – which renders this polity governable?

(4) And if climate mainstreaming merges the climate polity with other global polities, it is crucial to understand what happens to these very polities: How does climate mainstreaming affect the hegemony and governmentality of the polities it is mainstreamed into?\(^\text{10}\)

The eventual aim of answering these four questions is to reveal the general logics of the global climate polity and the ecological paradox, in which it seems to be trapped – hence, the overarching question: What is the ‘climate’ and the ‘political’ of global climate politics? In light of what has been said so far, it is possible to unfold the relationship of the two parts of this question. It is very obvious how the four research questions all speak to the first part of the general issue: understanding and explaining what ‘climate’ entails in global climate politics; how it has been constituted as an object of concern, what economy of power it entails, and so on. But what about the second part, what about the political?

Note, first of all, the slight, but all the more important change in terminology. Whereas in the beginning I spoke of the ‘politics’ of global climate politics, I now address the ‘political’. And this issue centralises the final point of contact between governmentality and hegemony: a framework for highlighting the political in politics. Conventional understandings reduce politics to a distinct sphere of social life, be it parties, the parliament, the White House, politics among nations, or class struggle – to the interaction of different types of agents in different types of institutions. Poststructuralism, by contrast, operates within a ‘post-foundational’ understanding of the political (Marchart 2005). It highlights the political as a general ontological category of all social life. Laclau, for example, assumes a ‘primacy of the political’ and claims that all social relations have been instituted by a political act and could hence be repoliticised, at least in principle (Laclau 1990, 31-36). In a similar vein, Foucault notes that ‘nothing is political, everything can be politicised, everything may become political’ (quoted in Sennelart 2007, 390). This assumption allows for distinguishing between two layers within society (Laclau 1990, 33). The ‘social’ represents the sedimented structures of a given dis-

\(^{10}\) The critical reader might note that none of the research question deal with the third type of logics – fantasmatic logics. As argued in chapter 3, though, I depart from Glynos and Howarth (2007) to the extent that I understand fantasy as inherent dimension in both social and political logics, in both governmentality and hegemony. In this sense, it is a common theme in all four research questions, although they do not explicitly mention it.
course which are taken for granted, where a particular discursive representation has become hegemonic, so that it is not questioned anymore. By contrast, ‘the political’ refers to those areas of social life where this implicitness has dissolved. This sphere is marked by contestation, instability and hegemonic struggle. In this view, the political ‘has to do with the establishment of that very social order which sets out a particular, historically specific account of what counts as politics and defines other areas of social life as not politics.’ (Edkins 1999, 2, emphasis in original). Within the sphere of the political, two basic strategies are possible: politicisation, that is, further unsettling and questioning the social order by broadening the scope of politics; and depoliticisation, that is, the defence of the status quo against fundamental transformations by narrowing the scope of politics.

This comprehensive notion of the political facilitates a different take on global climate politics. Against this backdrop, the history of climate change is a history of growing dislocation of social structures. Global warming appears as an ever aggravating and still not sufficiently tackled problem with potentially catastrophic consequences for the human civilisation (Swyngedouw 2010). In recent policy discourses it is even depicted as a dawning apocalypse (Methmann & Rothe 2011). Thereby, it represents the outside of the genuine modern narrative of infinite progress and growth. Decline and scarcity, which had been excluded from the discourses of advanced capitalist societies, return in the figures of pollution, resource depletion and ecological catastrophe. A politicising take on climate change would draw attention to these fundamental issues: relating continued ecological destruction to the ‘treadmill of production’ (Schnaiberg 1980); questioning the ‘carboniferous capitalism’ (Mumford 1934) – the model of fossil fuel based growth that still overwhelmingly dominates the world economy – as well as other deeply sedimented social practices, such as industrial agriculture, free trade in goods and services or individual mobility (Paterson 2000); highlighting the massive ‘ecological debt’ (Simms 2005) of the global North, and its related responsibility for transforming its own societies and bearing the costs of climate change and protection. In sum, a politicising take on climate change would involve public debate, address social structures and highlight global inequalities. A depoliticising take, on the contrary, would seek to prevent these issues from being put on the agenda, and instead focuses on an optimal management of the status quo; the administration of existing carbon emissions.

So if this book asks about the relationship between the ‘climate’ and the ‘political’ of global climate politics, it is precisely interested in the politicising and depoliticising effects – in the sense of a post-foundational understanding – of a particular hegemony and governmentality in the global climate polity. How do these open up some issues to become subject of politics, or how do they exclude them from it? In this sense, asking the four research questions is supposed to reveal the political effects of climate mainstreaming and hence the gen-
eral political logic of the global climate polity. And it is within this context that I locate the explanation for the ecological paradox in global climate politics. The increasing awareness of global warming is linked to the poor performance of global climate politics. The output of a growing political activity results in such a poor outcome and impact because it follows a logic of depoliticisation, narrowing climate politics to the administration and management of the status quo, while systematically bracketing and evading more fundamental questions. This is the general hypothesis that underpins the subsequent analysis of climate mainstreaming. And I will return to this issue in the conclusion in chapter 9.

1.3 Methodology: How to study climate mainstreaming

According to the outlined theoretical framework, the investigation into climate mainstreaming is informed by a poststructuralist methodology (consult chapter 4 for more detail). A poststructuralist perspective, in general, is incompatible with epistemic realism as employed by positivist approaches. Thus, it rejects any orthodoxy of standard procedures supposed to provide the silver bullet to truth (Campbell 1993, 7-8). However, this position has often led to an unproductive disregard of methodological considerations at all (Milliken 1999). The principle of ‘methodological holism’, by contrast, calls for a coherent translation of a theoretical approach into a methodological perspective and suitable methods (Diaz-Bone 2007). This study of climate mainstreaming is thus based on the proposition that a plausible postpositivist explanation depends on a certain methodological transparency and stringency – which actually involves some concerns of positivist approaches. This ‘postpositivist paradox’ (Wullweber 2010, 49) will be discussed in chapter 4. In particular, I will revisit the traditional positivist idea of explanation as well as its ‘holy trinity’ (Janesick 1994, 214) – reliability, validity and representativeness – from a poststructuralist angle. In sum, the methodological claim of this book is that poststructuralism can explain, although explanation here means something different; and that such poststructuralist explanation is stronger when it re-interprets the positivist ‘holy trinity’.

Discourse Analysis

In general, the explanation of climate mainstreaming and the state of global climate politics is informed by the ‘logics of critical explanation’ framework by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007). It conducts research in the form of ‘retroduction’ – a continuous ‘to-and-fro’ movement between theory and empiricism. The main methodological device for empirical inquiry will be the method of discourse analysis. While this has become a label for a broad
range of approaches to analysing mostly language (Glynos et al. 2009), the following analysis will draw on the Foucauldian toolkit of methods which can be subsumed under the label of ‘interpretive analytics’ as a common methodological tradition (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982).

It combines the methods of archaeology, genealogy and dispositif analysis similar to what positivists would call triangulation (Denzin 1978). But other than the positivist model of science, which seeks to simply increase validity through triangulation, I will deploy it in the form of a ‘crystallisation’ which highlights different aspects of the problem under investigation and so deconstructs traditional notions of validity (Richardson 1994, 522). I therefore propose to approach the four different research questions with different methods: The first research question is interested in the origins of the climate polity and will thus be approached from the angle of genealogy (Foucault 1986a). For the second research question is mainly interested in the discursive strategies of climate mainstreaming, it will be answered by a an arecheological discourse analysis (Foucault 1972). The third question involves practices and the exercise of power and thus lends itself to a dispositif analysis (Foucault 1980; Bührmann & Schneider 2010). The final research question, which historically compares different discourses, is well suited for a return to the archaeological method.

**Sampling the global economic, social and environmental polity**

The outlined methodological approach to the mainstreaming of climate change necessitates the use of case studies, as retroduction explanation can only be achieved by a close engagement with empirical material (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 202-4). If carefully selected, case studies can generate insights far beyond the individual case (Flyvbjerg 2006) – a principle which positivist would call generalisation. This book will explore the research questions in three cases, each of them representing an area of world politics that is subject to a mainstreaming of climate change: the global economic polity, global social polity11, and global environmental polity.12 In each of these cases, climate mainstreaming will be analysed in selected international organisations (IOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The roots of this choice reveal two lines of reasoning. On the one hand, this book approaches climate mainstreaming as a hegemonic discourse. And this eventually involves the question of how we can measure hegemony. How deep has a hegemonic discourse become sedimented? What

11. Social polity in a global sense of relieving poverty and working towards a just global society. Most would probably call it development polity, but I am skeptical of this term.

12. The only other case which could be considered is the mainstreaming of climate change in security politics – which is already covered by a quickly growing literature, though (Oels 2012; Brzoska 2009; Rothe 2011b; Detraz & Betsill 2009). Other cases, as for example, the governance of migration, do not provide sufficient material for a close engagement with climate mainstreaming, since they are not that advanced.
types of actors refer to it as their dominant frame of intelligibility? A discourse can certainly only be called hegemonic when governmental organisations as well as civil society share its basic assumptions. This meets, on the other hand, with the governmentality perspective. Here, governance is mostly accomplished ‘at a distance’ by employing supposedly semi-independent IOs and seemingly autonomous NGOs. I will hence analyse key publications – such as flagship publications, press releases, speeches, internet content, technical manuals etc. – of each of these organisations according to the methods outlined above. In each of the three cases, two international organisations and two non-governmental organisations will be studied (see table II on page 18, the appendix for the list of included sources, and chapter 4 on the further rationale for selecting the sample).

Table II: A sampling for studying climate mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IOs</th>
<th>Global Economic Polity</th>
<th>Global Social Polity</th>
<th>Global Environmental Polity</th>
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<tr>
<td>and Development (OECD)</td>
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<td>Programme (UNEP)</td>
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<td>United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</td>
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<td>The Rio Conventions:</td>
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<td>Convention on Biological Diversity</td>
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<td>(CBD), Convention to Combat</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Desertification (CCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>World Business Council on</td>
<td>Up in Smoke Coalition</td>
<td>Greenpeace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sustainable Development (WBCSD)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>World Economic Forum (WEF)</td>
<td>Global Humanitarian Forum (GHF)</td>
<td>World Resources Institute (WRI)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Structure of the Book**

The organisation of the book is straightforward. Chapters 1 to 4 are concerned with conceptual issues: problematising climate mainstreaming, developing a theoretical approach, and outlining a methodology. The second part of the book, chapters 5 to 8, seeks to answer the four research questions in turn. In contrast with many other books, I have not chosen to organise the empirical part of the book to reflect the case studies. Throughout the study, it became clear that the cases were not as different as expected. In fact, many facets of climate mainstreaming could be found in all three cases, and sometimes were even difficult to separate at all. For example, the WTO has published its report on Trade and Climate Change together with UNEP; the World Bank puts forth arguments for ‘green growth’ very similar to those of the OECD; and all three cases display a strong focus on the Clean Development Mechanism as the central instrument of climate mainstreaming. Consequently, in order to avoid repetition, I decided against a case-by-case structure. Of course, though, all three cases were properly and
Methodology: How to study climate mainstreaming

Equally analysed. Every chapter contains a discussion of the variations among cases and some use tables in order to visualise the minor differences. For these reasons, I felt that I could put forth a more comprehensive argument if focusing on the four questions.

In light of this general structure, the chapters seek to accomplish the following steps: Chapter 2 departs from established approaches of International Relations by problematising the blind spots in their analysis of climate mainstreaming. This rather short review seeks to justify the interest in discourse and power in global climate politics. Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical concepts in detail. It combines polity, governmentality, hegemony and fantasy into a theoretical framework for the analysis of climate mainstreaming. It discusses how governmentality and hegemony can be used for the study of global politics and relates them to the concept of a global polity. The chapter, furthermore, situates these concepts within a framework of depoliticisation and highlights a common dimension of fantasy. In this sense, it searches for the third side of the coin which connects hegemony and governmentality. Chapter 4 derives a methodological approach from this theoretical framework. It claims that although poststructuralism is critical of the methodological rigour of positivist approaches, its plausibility depends on a transparent and coherent methodology itself. Yet it brings about a fundamental change in perspective as it revisits core methodological concepts such as explanation, generalisation, validity and reliability from a poststructuralist perspective. Chapter 5 commences the actual analysis of climate mainstreaming by articulating the theoretical concepts with the field of global climate politics. It approaches the first research question from the perspective of a genealogy by tracing the emergence of the global climate polity and situating it within the field of sustainable development. It demonstrates how the wider global environmental polity has increasingly been turned into a more narrow global climate polity. Chapter 6 addresses the second question from an archaeological angle through a narrative analysis of climate mainstreaming. It analyses climate mainstreaming discourses in all three cases and seeks to carve out the discursive deep structure across them. It thereby reveals that climate mainstreaming follows a postpolitical populist logic. Chapter 7 turns to the third research question. It fleshes out the main characteristics of the governmentality displayed in all three cases. It analyses the climate mainstreaming discourse in all three cases according to an analytics of government. Thereby, it connects the level of linguistic discourses with the practices of the Clean Development Mechanism. In sum, I argue that the carbon governmentality put in place by climate mainstreaming functions as an empty signifier and de-

13. Only chapter 8 revealed different results across cases, where much evidence for the argument was found in the global social polity, but less in the environmental almost none in the economic polity. But even here, all three cases were equally analysed. The many similarities found in the three cases could actually retrospectively be advanced against my initial sampling. I will return to the problem in the conclusion.
politicises the global climate polity. Chapter 8 finally deals with the fourth question by a paradigmatic analysis of the ‘climatisation’ of the global social polity. It archaeologically analyses the discourses of adaptation to global warming and compares them to older images of development. These findings are eventually generalised to the global environmental and economic polity. In sum, it argues that climate mainstreaming reinvigorates a neoliberal governmentality in these polities. The final Chapter 9 concludes the study of climate mainstreaming. It pulls together the results of the previous chapters into four logics of depoliticisation, but also discusses their achievements and limitations. Furthermore, it outlines the implications for IR theory and proposes directions for future research. Eventually, it considers the practical implications for politicising global warming.
The puzzle: Blind spots in mainstream approaches to climate mainstreaming

If the International Relations literature lacks something, this definitely is not analyses of global climate politics (for example, in the leading journals of the discipline, Kavalski 2011; Roberts 2011; Vormedal 2010; Holzinger, Knill & Sommerer 2008; Bättig & Bernauer 2009). This does not hold true, however, for studies about how climate change is mainstreamed into other issue areas such as finance, economy or development. The aim of this section is to prepare the ground for the following analysis by doing three things: reviewing existing literature on global climate politics and asking what it can tell us about climate mainstreaming; showing that approaching climate mainstreaming with mainstream theories of International Relations leaves important things unsaid; and discussing why it therefore appears to be fruitful to approach it at book-length from a poststructuralist perspective. Discussing neorealism, institutionalism, organisational theory, global governance and more critical approaches, this chapter attempts to explain why climate mainstreaming poses a problem for the established landscape of International Relations.

Neorealism

Neorealism appears to be the least fruitful candidate for studying climate mainstreaming. Neorealist theories focus on the anarchic condition of the international realm (Waltz 1979). No mutually beneficial cooperation among states is possible, and no meaningful delegation of authority to international organisations should be expected. International institutions and organisations are nothing but ‘epiphenomena’ (Waltz 1979, 18; similar Mearsheimer 1995). If they embody substantial rules at all, these only reflect the existing power structure of the international system. According to the theory of hegemonic stability (Gilpin 1981), the only ef-
fective international organisations and institutions are those which are created and maintained by a hegemon. And once the hegemon loses his interest in or his power for maintaining them, they will decline.

Neorealism can be used to approach climate mainstreaming in two rather unconvincing ways. On the one hand, following hegemonic stability theory, mainstreaming could be caused by a changed attitude of the hegemon USA towards climate protection. Against the backdrop of the US not even having ratified the Kyoto-Protocol, and given George W. Bush’s neglect of and Barack Obama’s defeat in national climate politics, such a perspective does not appear very convincing. On the other hand, neorealism could suggest that climate mainstreaming is not worth being studied since international institutions simply do not matter. Such a conclusion would not only bring a sudden and somewhat unfortunate end to this book. It also does not live up to the realities of global climate politics. Climate change is first and foremost treated as a global problem. Throughout the last twenty years the problem of climate change has spawned a vast multiplicity of private and political practices at various levels. The majority of them have noticeably transcended transnational borders. This goes without saying. The formal international climate change regime, including the authoritative science of the IPCC, runs through transnational city partnerships (Betsill & Bulkeley 2004), advocacy groups (Newell 2008) or business and civil society activities (Pattberg & Stripple 2008), and also applies to the rather individual practices of carbon offsetting (Paterson & Stripple 2010). Even those policies that are seemingly situated at the local or national level have strong global linkages, as they are either derived from global arrangements, such as the European Emissions Trading System (EU-ETS), or seek to become transnational, as in the case of subnational trading systems within the US. More often than not, domestic political action is made contingent upon the activities of other states, as the run-up to the Copenhagen COP showed. Climate change is depicted within a global space, and as a global issue it is understood to require the creation of global institutions. When it comes to the politics of global warming, international institutions and cooperation play a crucial role. To deny the relevance of global climate politics, is to deny the relevance of climate change as a political issue in general. One might of course adopt such a position, but I don’t think it is very feasible.

14. Paterson (1996, chapter 5) provides a good overview of the trouble neorealism gets into when confronted with climate change.
Institutionalist theories argue, contra neorealism, that international institutions do matter for the behaviour of states, because they facilitate cooperation among them (Keohane 1984). These theories still conceive of rationally acting states as the dominant actors in world politics, and anarchy as the prevailing *modus operandi*. However, they are more optimistic about the prospects for cooperation and assume that it is only the anarchic condition of uncertainty that traps nation-states in a so-called ‘prisoners dilemma’ (for an overview see Simmons & Martin 2002). Institutions may help to overcome this inefficient situation in that they build trust, provide information and host multiple turns of cooperation, which allow for tit-for-tat strategies. In this sense, international regimes embody principles, norms, rules and procedures which overcome collective action problems in that they prescribe and facilitate collectively beneficial behaviour (Krasner 1983). And if institutions change, this consequently has to be triggered by a change in member-state preferences.

In recent years, institutionalist theories have abandoned the focus on single institutions and have started to engage with interaction between regimes (Rosendal 2001a; Stokke 2001; Chambers 2001; Rosendal 2001b; Velasquez 2000). Thomas Gehring and Sebastian Oberthür (2009), for example, present a sophisticated theoretical model to understand the mutual influence of international institutions. They stick to the basic institutionalist propositions – regimes as means of international cooperation, animated and maintained by states – and model four possible causal mechanisms between institutions. First and foremost, these involve the transfer of norms and ideas through overlapping membership of nation states, which seek to harmonise their international environment. Oberthür and Gehring, moreover, have analysed a large number of cases of institutional interaction (Oberthür & Gehring 2006). Their sample, however, comprises only one case involving climate change – interaction between the EU burden-sharing arrangement, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the UNFCCC. And although the analysis remains within the narrow field of environmental politics, they do not reveal much about climate mainstreaming.

Hence, one can only speculate how the diffusion of climate change norms would be analysed by an institutional interaction perspective. Climate mainstreaming would definitely point to altered preferences on the side of member states of these institutions. Once they were committed to the UNFCC, nation states would try to integrate their commitment to climate protection into other institutions they were part of. This explanation, however, is somewhat at odds with the general state of climate politics. It is true that the UNFCCC, as of now, has been signed and ratified by 194 parties. However, this is not to say that the climate protection
norm would really have been endorsed by all these nation states. For example, most national climate change policies fall short of what has been calculated as necessary by global climate science – most prominently by the fourth IPCC Assessment Report – in order to achieve the ‘stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system’, as Art. 2 of the UNFCCC prescribes, and even do not meet the requirements of the not very ambitious Kyoto Protocol (den Elzen et al. 2010). The collapse of the post-2012 negotiations at the Copenhagen COP-15 in December 2009 contributes to this more or less complete stalemate of international climate politics which so far has not be resolved. Ironically, it seems that while climate change is being mainstreamed, that while the political attention to global warming is rising across all different areas of global politics, so global GHG emissions rise. Given this rather disastrous state of climate politics, is it plausible to assume changed preferences on the side of member states behind climate mainstreaming? Apparently not.

At the centre of such institutionalist theorising, moreover, often stands the conception of stable, coherent and transparent norms, which are transferred among institutions. The norm of climate protection appears far removed from this, though. It comes in a lot of different, sometimes even contradictory variants. From the fight against corruption to the implementation of free trade, from the cleaning of fossil fuel extraction to the conservation of peatlands, from the establishment of global carbon markets to the reorganisation of global trade patterns, climate protection seems to be virtually anything. Although climate change is shared as an abstract policy goal, the actual means to achieve this goal are far from achieving consensus. Actors and institutions reframe existing and established policies as means for climate protection, resulting in a broad range of solutions and approaches. Some of these measures are heavily contested. All of them, however, manage to appear under a green label. Put bluntly, climate mainstreaming seems to be fundamentally inconsistent. Against this backdrop, the idea of climate protection as an easily transferrable and adoptable position appears to be implausible. This is, of course, rooted in the fact that climate change, other than most other environmental issues, concerns almost the whole organisation of society. While problems like acid rain or the depletion of the ozone layer, which are often cited as examples for successful environmental politics, could be solved by mitigating SOx and halogenated CFCs emissions with simple technical fixes (for the Montreal Protocol on HCFCs see Oberthur

15. For a recent assessments see latest figures from the IEA cited in Harvey 2011.
16. The problem of such a conception of norms in general has been discussed, among others, by Maja Zehfuss (2002, 148) and Antje Wiener (2007, 6).
2001), such end-of-pipe solutions are not readily available for climate change yet. And since there is no self-evident and simple solution to climate change, this opens the scene for disagreement. As such, we might understand climate mainstreaming as a discursive struggle about what climate protection actually is. This issue, however, is left aside by institutionalist approaches with their conception of norms as stable and transparent entities, which do not account for discursive struggle.

The lack of consensus about what constitutes climate protection, and climate mainstreaming in the absence of a substantial preference change in member states could point to what Stephen Krasner has called ‘organised hypocrisy’ (Krasner 1999). In general, or so the argument goes, norms may unfold a ‘logic of appropriateness’ which makes actors comply. In crucial cases, however, the ‘logic of consequences’ prevails and lets actors violate those norms. From this perspective, then, climate mainstreaming would represent a superficial agreement that fighting global warming is the appropriate behaviour, but the logic of consequence makes actors and institutions stick to their established policies and approaches and reframe them in green terms. Indeed, this perspective rightly points to the ambiguity of shared norms. Yet it suffers from two problems: First, it simply reduces ambiguity to the rational interests of actors, and this mirrors the epiphenomenalism of neorealism: appropriateness only prevails as long as there is nothing substantial at stake. This, eventually, declares climate mainstreaming an irrelevant phenomenon. Second, and this is crucial, it is not true that climate mainstreaming would be characterised by a constant violation of agreed norms. Instead, as will also be shown throughout the analysis in subsequent chapters, the contradictory behaviour of actors is justified by shared norms. It is not the case that actors say one thing and do the opposite, but that they manage to articulate their existing practices and policies as part of a wider climate protection discourse. So the hypocrisy perspective seems to omit an important part of the story, and this is how hypocrisy is actually established and maintained.

Organisational Theory

While institutionalist theories mostly focus on the normative aspect of international organisations, in recent years there is a renewed interest in studying them as bureaucratic organisations (Simmons & Martin 2002; Biermann & Siebenhüner 2009). For a long time, the popularity of the regime concept in International Relations drew attention away from the fact

17. Leaving aside carbon capture and storage (CCS), which has not been developed sufficiently yet, there are actually no end-of-pipe solutions at all.

18. These two logics, to which Krasner refers here, have been termed so by James March and Johan Olson (1998).
that international organisations are organisations, and do not just embody norms. However,
given both their growing importance in world politics and the various ‘pathologies’ they
have developed (Barnett & Finnemore 2004), it appears plausible to treat organisations as act-
ors in their own right. Organisational theory strives to overcome this bias, to focus on the in-
ternal dynamics of international organisations and to treat them as at least semi-autonomous
actors (Ness & Brechin 1988).

Organisational theory comes in two variants, rationalist and constructivist approaches. Its
rationalist version draws on the economic principal-agent-model to provide a causal explana-
tion of climate mainstreaming, that is put bluntly, ‘turf maximisation’ (Nielson & Tierney
2003). The ‘slack’ that exists between an institution and its creators allows the former to purs-
ue its own interests and strive to acquire more resources and broaden its mandate. Daniel
Nielson and Michael Tierney (2003), for example, have applied this model to environmental
reforms of the World Bank. Its constructivist version, by contrast, refers to the normative
power of international organisations (Barnett & Finnemore 1999). They hold that organisa-
tional defiance can be explained with a particular organisational culture (for example, the
World Bank employing mostly economists and hence applying an economic logic to all envi-
ronmental problems), and that their normative power, based on expertise and authority, en-
dows them with a certain autonomy.

Organisational theory has recently been employed to analyse the role of organisations in
global environmental governance (Siebenhüner 2008; Biermann & Siebenhüner 2009), and it
also provides a possible explanation for climate mainstreaming. The adoption of a climate
change agenda in other international organisations, from this perspective, is rooted in organi-
sations’ rational interest in broadening their mandate or in pulling attention towards their is-
sue. It is based on their normative power of expertise and reputation. For example, analysts
of so-called ‘climate bandwagoning’ highlight how institutions such as the Convention on Bi-
ological Diversity (CBD) or the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) have managed
to present their particular issue as a climate-related problem in order to promote their case
(McDermott, Levin & Cashore 2011; Conliffe 2011; Jinnah 2011; Axelrod 2011). Accordingly,
the mainstreaming of climate change may be rooted within the organisations.

While this is likely to be a convincing explanation for individual institutions, I would ar-
gue that this leaves the broader picture aside. On the one hand, climate change, at least from
2007 on, seems to be omnipresent in a broad range of different organisations – too prevalent
for an explanation which understands the adoption of climate change as rooted within indi-
vidual institutions’ self interest (see table I on page 7). While it might seem consequential or
appropriate for individual organisations to relate their work to climate protection in order to
broaden their resource base, organisational theory should stumble upon the swarm-like be-
behaviour of organisations. Why is it that a broad range of organisations and institutions suddenly dressed themselves in green? From an institutionalist perspective, one could assume changed preferences on the part of the principals. But given the lack of consensus among nation-states about how and to what extent to tackle global warming, which is displayed within the UNFCCC, this does not appear to be a convincing explanation. So if the principal side cannot be made responsible, perhaps turning to the agents has more explanatory purchase. Here it might be opportune for individual organisations to address climate change, indeed, because this has become sort of a fashion in global politics. The simultaneity with which climate mainstreaming happens would support this view. It is quite striking that the first serious efforts to tackle climate change on the international level go back almost 20 years to the UNCED of 1992. Climate mainstreaming, by contrast, is a very recent phenomenon. Why has it suddenly commenced in the middle of the last decade? There has been no substantial increase in problem pressure, which could have made it appropriate or necessary for individual organisations to deal with climate change. Instead, there seems to be a discursive shift towards climate change – the fashion – which happens within the environment of international organisations. This shift could explain the swarm-like behaviour of organisation, but adopting such a perspective immediately raises new questions: what is this discursive shift, and how and why does it occur? This is a question that cannot be answered by organisational theory, because it lacks the category of discourse. It assumes that the meaning and relevance of climate change is essentially given.

Global Governance

Both institutionalism and organisational theory struggle with the ubiquity and contradictory nature of climate mainstreaming. A possible solution to this problem is presented with global governance theory (Dingwerth & Pattberg 2006; Rosenau 1995; Zürn 1998b). In a sense, the global governance concept treats the sum of international and transnational attempts to govern particular problems as a genuinely global polity – a perspective which likens the analysis of global politics with that of domestic politics. It starts from the assump-

19. One could refer to the fourth IPCC report as an increase in problem pressure (IPCC 2007). But despite its public perception, it did not present substantially new findings, but rather corroborated existing knowledge gradually. If this report marks an increase in problem pressure, this pressure is definitely discursively created. And this, in turn, is a factor not considered by organisational theory.

20. Which is not to say indeed, that IOs may not have some influence on this discursive environment themselves by, for example, publishing studies.

21. Global governance comes in two variants (Mürle 1998): a normative and empirical-analytic strand. I will only consider the empirical-analytic version here, because I am concerned with theoretical accounts, not with normative aims.
tion that processes of fragmentation and integration in world politics debase the centrality of states. In contrast, they relocate ‘authority upwards to transnational and supranational organisations, sidwards to social movements and NGOs and downwards to subnational groups’, so that the ‘logic of governance does not necessarily follow hierarchical lines’ (Rosenau 1999, 293). This seeks to overcome state-centric analyses and detach the processes of governance from the institutions of governments (Rosenau & Czempiel 1992). From such a perspective, environmental and particularly climate politics is often analysed between the two poles of fragmentation and integration. Integration is the normative ideal of global governance theory (Biermann & Siebenhüner 2009; Zürn 2005), whereas fragmentation seems to be the diagnosed state of climate governance: governing takes place on a multiplicity of levels (Betsill & Bulkeley 2004) and is conducted by a broad range of different actors beyond the nation state (Risse 2002; Pattberg & Stripple 2008), occurring in a variety of different forms (for an overview see Biermann & Pattberg 2008; Biermann 2010). And although it does not refer to such terminology, this fragmentation is nothing less than an analysis of climate mainstreaming, as it seeks to map the diffusion of climate governance into various other places.

Although this change in perspective definitely provides an added value compared to more traditional approaches of International Relations, it is not without problems either. One particular objection is that global governance does not sufficiently account for the role of power (Barnett & Duvall 2005a). Governance approaches, for example, often diagnose a transfer of power from public to private actors which takes place through the fragmentation of governance architectures. Yet, for example, Sending and Neumann (2006) convincingly argue, with reference to the field of human rights, that the emergence of transnational governance by private actors is often actively promoted by governments in order to exert influence indirectly, meaning that we can hardly speak of a transfer of power from public to private actors. Okereke et. al. (2009) similarly argue for the field of climate change that a more nuanced understanding of power would reveal that climate governance mechanisms involve a changing rationality of power rather than simply a zero-sum shift between the public and the private (see also Oels 2005; Lövbrand & Stripple 2011; Rothe 2011a). Relating these findings to the problem of climate mainstreaming, they point to a fundamental weakness of all the discussed approaches so far. They focus mostly on how and why climate protection norms are transferred from one institution to another. In other words, they are interested in agency and the role of institutions in the process of climate mainstreaming. They are blind, however, to how this changes the way power is exercised: how does climate mainstreaming change the mode of governance, or more precisely, how does it affect the governmental rationality of climate protection?
Departing from the Mainstream: Marxism, Securitisation and Feminism

Finally, it is necessary to review a strand of theorising which one could call critical theory. As the term suggests, turning to these approaches marks a first disengagement with the mainstream of International Relations. I would like to highlight three particular critical approaches which have already dealt with the mainstreaming of issues or merging climate protection with other spheres: neomarxism, securitisation theory and feminism. They provide important insights for the following investigation of climate mainstreaming, but also entail some limitations.

It has been argued that organisational theory does not embed international organisations within the wider picture of the international setting. Robert Cox, drawing on Marxist and neo-Gramscian thought, has developed a critical theory of IR which seeks to overcome this shortcoming (Cox 1981; Cox 1987). He argues that international organisations have to be understood as an internationalisation of Gramsci’s ‘integral state’ (Gramsci 1971, 244). Gramsci argued that the ensemble of civil society and semi-public institutions, which is well established in Western societies, maintains the hegemony of dominant social forces. Hegemony, however, not understood in the (neo-)realist sense of one nation dominating the international system by pure force, but as a type of discursive consensus, stabilises a certain system of rule among social forces, such as labour and capital (Gramsci 1971, 182). In this view, international organisations adopt a particular issue in order to ensure that it does not challenge established power relations (Cox 1983). A similar perspective is taken by regulation theory, which argues that capitalism is always sustained by a particular set of social and political institutions (Aglietta 2001). At the heart of this perspective is thus the question of how social and political institutions reflect and affect the constellation of material relations of production (for an overview see Morton 2003).

The perspective of neo-Marxist approaches broadly understood has been fruitfully applied to make sense of the politics of sustainable development, which emerged around the UNCED in Rio 1992 (Brand & Görg 2002; Brand & Görg 2008). In a nutshell, this literature argues that sustainable development is a hegemonic project first and foremost concerned with the ‘survival of capitalism’ in the face of fundamental social and ecological challenges (Keil 2007). While not explicitly dealing with climate change, this picture of sustainable development also implies that also climate mainstreaming is about reconciling established economic structures with emerging ecological demands in a way that foregoes fundamental transformations. More recently, critical theory has been used to study political proposals of a ‘green economy’ or a ‘global green new deal’ as put forth, for example, by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP 2009c), which strive for a combined response to the economic
and the climate crisis. Merging climate protection and economic policy, from this view, is not so much about halting global warming but rather about capitalising on it. Investing in the ecological modernisation of capitalist economies is supposed to sustain economic growth in the face of major economic and financial crises, but does not solve the inherent ecological and social contradictions of the capitalist system (Altvater 2009; Brand 2009; Lohmann 2009a; Bailey, Gouldson & Newell 2011).

In a sense, this literature can be seen as an investigation of the mainstreaming of climate change into economic policies. It convincingly shows how this process is concerned with sustaining established social, political and economic structures and rendering concerns about climate change compatible with an economic logic. However, it would be too easy to argue that climate mainstreaming is only about capitalism, as this cannot explain the manifold areas which experience climate mainstreaming. Why is global warming dealt with by the security council? Why are politicians suddenly concerned about climate refugees? What is it that renders climate change a development issue? And why are most other environmental problems expressed in the language of carbon? It seems that there is more to climate mainstreaming than simply a transformation towards what some would call ‘climate capitalism’ (Newell & Paterson 2010). What is more, it seems that these perspectives tend to understand climate mainstreaming as a top down process that is determined by the laws of capitalist accumulations. The conceptions of the ‘green new deal’ or ‘greening the economy’ are simply understood as devices for sustaining the capitalist system, but not as contested themselves or bearing a politicising potential – a perspective which undervalues the contingent and political character of these proposals (Methmann 2009).22 Neo-Marxist approaches rightly point to the hegemonic character of climate mainstreaming, arguing that it is about reconciling economic and ecologic imperatives – points that are neglected in the rest of the literature. But as such this explanation is not sufficient, as it overvalues the role of capitalist accumulation.23

A second more critical perspective on climate mainstreaming is the Copenhagen School of securitisation theory. Other than traditional accounts of security, securitisation theory assumes that security problems are not essentially given, but are discursively produced (Wæver 1995; Buzan, Wæver & De Wilde 1998). According to this framework, security is understood as a speech act or discourse, which means that both the perceived threats as well as

22. This is, of course, a picture painted with a rather bold brush. Newell and Paterson are much more aware of the possibility of struggles, as well as they are not completely opposed to climate capitalism (Newell & Paterson 2009)

23. Given the fact that there is a debate within neomarxism about economic determinism (see for example Worth 2006), some might argue that this critique overshoots the mark. I would contend, however, that for most neomarxist works the economy determines politics in the last instance.
threatened reference objects are radically contingent. There is no threat as such – a threat only exists if something is discursively articulated as a danger for an imagined community. Securitisation draws upon a certain grammar – external enemy, existential danger – and results in the adoption of exceptional measures as a response to the threat. This account has most prominently been criticised by the Paris School, which argues that the securitisation of an issue does not necessarily have to result in exceptional measures but may also employ micro-practices of security (Bigo 2001).

This is also what can be observed when looking at the securitisation of climate change. A variety of different studies have analysed the recent trend of the securitisation of climate related issues, whose beginning is generally located in 2007 with the publication of the latest IPCC report and the UN Security Council debate on climate change, energy and security (Brzoska 2009; Detraz & Betsill 2009; Trombetta 2008; Rothe 2011b). There seems to be a strong consensus among them: while there is a remarkable securitisation of climate change at the rhetorical or discursive level, the resulting notion of urgency is not translated into exceptional political action, as securitisation theory would suggest (Buzan & Wæver 2009). Therefore, securitisation has to be understood as a discursive phenomenon which can bring about a broad range of different governmental rationalities (Oels 2011; Oels 2012; Rothe 2011b; Rothe 2011c; Methmann & Rothe 2011). For example, Delf Rothe argues from a Foucauldian perspective on security that

the securitisation of climate change after 2007 is best understood as a discursive struggle [...] and has not led to the adoption of exceptional measures or stronger roles by nation states in climate governance but to the reinforcement of already dominant risk-management approaches based on individualisation and marketisation. (Rothe 2011b, 343)

The Copenhagen School thus rightly points to the fact that the securitisation of climate change is a discursive process. But far from simply imposing language and logic of the security field on the climate change issue, it seems that the mainstreaming of climate change in the security policy – similar to what has been argued for neo-Marxism – is not governed by one particular logic but represents a contingent and discursive process that affects governmental rationalities broadly understood. And this is a factor acknowledged by those approaches that are closely connected to the writings of Michel Foucault – which points to the necessity of a different theoretical framework.

A third school of critical theorising important here is feminism. In general, feminist theories of International Relations seek to highlight gender inequalities, which are not properly displayed by traditional theories (Enloe 1989), or even strive to deconstruct the traditional dualism between men and women as a power relationship (Sylvester 1994). Feminism is of particular importance here because it has substantively engaged with the politics of gender
mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming denotes the ambition to acknowledge the gender dimension in all different social sectors and integrate it into all political fields in order to minimise gender inequalities. It was popularised by the World’s Women Conference in 1995 in Beijing/China, and was most prominently adopted by the European Union’s Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, which turned it into an official policy goal. In a sense, it can be seen as a forerunner to the idea of climate mainstreaming – highlighting the climatic effects of all political decisions. As Stefanie Wöhl (2011) reveals in an incisive analysis of the EU gender mainstreaming policies, gender mainstreaming is hardly about fighting gender inequalities. Instead, her governmentality analysis shows that it only re-structures the existing gender policies along a neoliberal line. She concludes that EU institutions

rearticulate gender mainstreaming within a neoliberal strategy, reducing gender equality to a question of the employability of women on the labor market. Furthermore, a neoliberal rationality has been used to (re-)produce gendered, normative entrepreneurial conceptions of subjectivity. (Wöhl 2011, 42)

Feminist analyses of gender mainstreaming teach that mainstreaming is mostly about a changing governmental strategy and not so much about transforming established gender relations. As with securitisation theory, this implies that climate mainstreaming involves a shift in the rationality of power.

In sum, I conclude that much can be learned from existing critical accounts of climate mainstreaming: that it can be understood as a hegemonic strategy which seeks to maintain existing structures; but that is also a discursive and contingent process, and cannot readily be reduced to one particular logic, be it that of capitalist economics or that of the security field. An analysis of climate mainstreaming has focus on the governmental rationalities and discursive struggles that are involved.

**Conclusion: Why study climate mainstreaming?**

In this brief chapter, I applied the different theoretical lenses provided by mainstream IR theory to the phenomenon of climate mainstreaming. I found that most have some explanatory purchase, but also that each of them leaves a certain blank space which does not appear to be plausible. Of course, theories are not designed to cover all different aspects of a particular problem. This would undermine the point in theorising. However, there are aspects of climate mainstreaming that have been left aside or dealt with insufficiently by all of the mainstream approaches.

Put bluntly, approaching climate mainstreaming from the perspective of mainstream IR theories leaves a number of blind spots: First, they cannot explain why climate mainstreaming suddenly emerged as an omnipresent phenomenon in global politics. It has not been
triggered by a significantly increased problem pressure nor by substantially altered preferences of the international community, as compared to the previous two decades of international climate politics. This sudden emergence seems to be a contingent and discursive phenomenon. Secondly, climate protection is not a coherent and stable norm or policy, as most approaches would assume, but – despite its mainstreaming – means different things in different places. It is subject to discursive struggle about the appropriate problematisation and the right solutions of climate change. Thirdly, climate mainstreaming transcends the idea of international politics (so characteristic of many mainstream approaches) and takes place in a genuinely global space, as it seeks to delegate the government of the global atmosphere to international institutions, organisations, and transnational actors. Fourthly, as was indicated by the more critical approaches, this is not simply a transfer of power from states to organisations and NGOs, but a reconfiguration of governmental mechanisms. Therefore, climate mainstreaming can be understood as a hegemonic project which serves particular political purposes, for example, to stabilise certain relations of power. In other words, the blank spot on the mainstream map of climate mainstreaming is the relationship of discourse and power.

I contend that unless we consider precisely these two dimensions it is impossible to arrive at a sufficient understanding of the dominant politics of the environment. More precisely, analysing the power of discourse and the discourses of power in climate mainstreaming is key to explaining the ecological paradox that is so characteristic for present day global climate politics. Highlighting how climate mainstreaming is discursively accomplished explains the ‘unprecedented recognition of the urgency of radical ecological policy change’ (Blühdorn 2011, 36) which makes everyone concerned about climate change. Revealing the economy of power which it brings about is crucial for explaining how, at the same time, ‘the management of the inability and unwillingness to become sustainable has taken the centre ground’ in global climate politics (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007, 192). Studying its political, and particularly its hegemonic effects, may account for why this ‘politics of unsustainability’ is so durable and resilient. In other words, analysing power and discourse in climate mainstreaming is crucial for understanding why global climate politics fails so reliably. It is for this reason, that in the following chapter I will develop a poststructuralist framework for studying discourse and power in climate mainstreaming.
The third side of the coin: Combining governmentality and hegemony

In the previous chapter, the interests of this book in climate mainstreaming were formulated as revolving around discourse and power. This is a different way of saying that this book approaches climate mainstreaming from a poststructuralist perspective. Poststructuralism or postmodernism are often presented as common and well-established meta-theoretical perspectives in IR theory, as a look in many textbooks reveals. Nonetheless, they have become labels which those being subsumed under it usually reject (Campbell 1998, 4). From a poststructuralist perspective, classifying a field and attaching labels to it necessarily has power effects. And all too often, the label postmodernism has been used to group scholarship into an ‘abnormal science’, with the effect of its exclusion from the field of regular scholarship (for example Walt 1991, 223; for an analysis of the marginalisation in poststructuralism in IR see Hynek & Teti 2010). By contrast, postmodernism seeks to advance International Relations towards a ‘post-disciplinary’ academic field, which leaves labels and categories behind and includes a broad variety of theoretical positions, methodological approaches and types of empirical data (Edkins & Vaughan-Williams 2009, ii).

The roots of such an approach to International Relations go back about more than twenty years, when some scholars started to attack traditional approaches such as neorealism for their supposed ‘poverty’ (Ashley 1984; Walker 1993). Their aim was to deconstruct mainstream approaches and reveal their hidden presuppositions and tacit normative assumptions (for example Campbell 1993; Zehfuss 2002). This deconstructivist endeavour is often based

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24. The labels postmodernism and poststructuralism are often confused in IR. I prefer poststructuralism, because it has a rather precise meaning deriving from its central philosophical move – the deconstruction of structuralism without completely abandoning it – compared to postmodernism, which is also to be found, for example, in music or architecture.
on (French) poststructuralist thought and concerned with the hidden political implications of International Relations theorising (Edkins 1999). Moreover, it broadens the traditional canon of empirical material towards the analysis of popular culture, media discourses and cartography (Der Derian 1992; Shapiro 1997; Der Derian & Shapiro 1989).

Whilst the book shares the general interest in power and discourse displayed in the poststructuralist perspective in International Relations, against the backdrop of this rather loosely connected literature I chose two particular approaches: the hegemony theory of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Laclau & Mouffe 1985) and Foucault’s concept of governmentality (Foucault 2007a; Foucault 2008). It is well known that Laclau and Mouffe draw on Foucault’s concept of discourse, and both strands are often depicted as similar: both are interested in discourse (Nonhoff 2006), both allow for a fresh look on power (Göhler et al. 2010), and both locate politics in areas which are not deemed to be political (Edkins 1999), to give but a few examples. They are, however, often also depicted as two rather different animals: Foucault’s work shows an interest in the micro-practices of power, while Laclau and Mouffe are interested in the working of the big hegemonies; Foucault’s concept of discourse is used to analyse knowledge formations, while Laclau and Mouffe are concerned with the society as a whole (Howarth 2000); Foucault’s work is rather skeptical of the Marxist tradition (for example his critique of economistic conceptions of power in Foucault 1978; Foucault 2003), while Laclau and Mouffe describe their approach affirmatively as ‘post-Marxism’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1990). And consequently, there are not many applications pulling together these two lines of though (for an exception see Mattissek 2008; Göhler et al. 2010). It seems that hegemony and governmentality are thought as parallel developments rarely brought together – inseparably linked but different, nonetheless, like two sides of a coin.

This chapter seeks to explore the third side of this coin – the edge which connects the two. I contend that much can be learned from a combined analysis of hegemony and governmentality. Yet I do not seek to advance them towards an integrated theory, but rather want to flesh out a couple of points of contact which make it possible to apply them together for empirical analysis. In particular, I argue that there are at least three such points, which are relevant for the study of climate mainstreaming: First, both have their roots in studying national societies and face hurdles when being translated for the study of global politics. I argue that the concept of a ‘global polity’ (Corry 2010b) helps to overcome this blockage and builds a bridge between the two. Secondly, against the backdrop of a ‘postfoundational’ understanding of the political (Marchart 2005), both share a similar understanding of politisisation and depoliticisation. From this, I derive the ideal-types of postpolitical populism and counter-conduct, which combine elements of Foucault’s governmentality and Laclau’s populism concept. Thirdly, both implicitly contain a dimension of what Slavoj Žižek (1990) has called
the ‘social fantasy’ as the dimension which turns a hegemonic project or a governmentality into a coherent and convincing whole. This is the third and final linkage between the three theories. The conclusion of this chapter than turns towards operationalising these concepts through the logics of critical explanation developed by Jason Glynos and David Howarth (2007).

3.1 Governmentality and hegemony in the global polity

As a starting point, it is necessary to introduce the two theoretical frameworks to be combined in this section in more detail. However, as there are enough superb introductions into both governmentality (Gordon 1991; Lemke 1997; Dean 2010) and hegemony (Torfing 1999; Howarth 2000; Nonhoff 2010), this section introduces the two perspectives shortly and in passing – by way of trimming the respective approaches as perspectives for the analysis of global politics. As a first point of contact, I contend that both concepts can be applied to the global sphere, but have to be augmented with the idea of a global polity. I start with problematising the governmentality concept, after which I introduce the global polity as a vehicle for globalising governmentality. Finally, I discuss how hegemony can contribute to the study of a global governmental polity, and how this in turn allows the hegemony concept to go global.

3.1.1 Governmentality

A core theme within Foucault’s overall intellectual project concerns the notion of power. In *Discipline and Punish*, he was interested in the shift from sovereignty to ‘disciplinary power’ (Foucault 1977). In *The Will to Knowledge*, he was concerned with the ‘biopower’ of modern societies (Foucault 1978). *Society must be Defended* proposed to analyse power in terms of war (Foucault 2003). In his later works, by contrast, Foucault was more interested in the relationship between power and subjectivity (Foucault 1982; Foucault 1993). Given this plethora of concepts, Foucault’s work has often been depicted as fragmentary and incoherent (e.g. Fink-Eitel 1992) or at least as consisting of different phases (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982). Others, however, have countered this ‘multiple Foucaults’-thesis, stressing the coherence of his work, which is provided by the concept of ‘governmentality’ that implicitly connects his various writings (Gordon 1991; Lemke 2002). I will follow the latter trail in order to sketch the added value of a governmentality perspective and then problematise its application to global politics.
Foucault’s critique of power

What unites Foucault’s writings on power is that they represent an attack on those models of power which remain ‘under the spell of monarchy’ (Foucault 1978, 88). If Foucault speaks of power, he does neither mean a ‘group of institutions or mechanisms that ensure the subservience of the citizens’ in a sovereign sense, nor ‘a mode of subjugation, which, in contrast to violence, has the form of the rule’ in the liberal sense, nor ‘a general system of domination by one group over another’ in the marxist sense (Foucault 1978, 92). These are only the most superficial condensations of power. Instead power has to be understood as

the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organisation; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens, or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly, as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallisation is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies. (Foucault 1978, 92-3)

What might at first glance seem to be a rather abstract characterisation of power radically alters the perspective. Power has to be seen as immanent to all other social relations. It is impossible to separate it as something external from the objects which it is applied to. All social processes are already always permeated with power. Power produces society; without it, there would be no society. Hence, power does not flow from a supposed centre such as the state or sovereignty but is ‘exercised from innumerable points’ (Foucault 1978, 94). Power is everywhere, ‘not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere’ (Foucault 1978, 93). Accordingly, it emerges bottom-up instead of being imposed top-down. All more general forms of rule draw on the existing patterns of power at the bottom of society, so that local relations of power are transformed into more overarching forms of domination – without, however, being possessed by a particular group of actors. In one of his last interviews, Foucault thus set apart three types of power:

It seems to me that we must distinguish between power relations understood as strategic games between liberties – in which some try to control the conduct of others, who in turn try to avoid allowing their conduct to be controlled or try to control the conduct of the other – and the states of domination that people ordinarily call ‘power’. And you have technologies of government – understood, of course, in a very broad sense, that includes not only the way institutions are governed but also the way one governs one’s wife and children. The analysis of these techniques is necessary because it is very often through such techniques that states of domination are established and maintained (Foucault 1994b, 299).

Foucault, hence, does not deny that more generalised and hierarchic systems of domination exist – such as capitalist relations of production or sovereign nation states – but he stresses the fact that these systems draw on the capillary power relations which pervade the whole society and precede them. In this sense, all forms of political rule are parasitic upon
‘the multiplicity of force relations in a society’ (Foucault 1978, 92). And government is the force that orders the dispersed power relations and condenses them into more general, stable and coherent systems.

**The concept of governmentality**

A governmentality perspective, hence, brings about at least three theoretical innovations as compared to traditional perspectives of power. First of all, it points to the subtle and indirect technologies of power. With the focus on government, Foucault seeks to bring to the fore a form of power which has long been neglected in political analysis and can be traced back to what he calls the ‘pastoral power’ of ancient times (Foucault 2007a, 123ff.). Contrasting it to the Greek city-state as the archetype for modern statehood, he argues that pastoral power models the shepherd’s care for her25 flock rather than the sovereign ruler who was concerned with the existence of her realm. Pastoral power, in short, is not interested in territory but in people, their movements and actions. It is not concerned with domination, but with the salvation of the flock. And it is an individualising as well as a totalising form of power – ‘omnes et singulatim’ (Foucault 1994a) – as it addresses every particular member but always-already in its relation to the flock. In his *History of Governmentality* lectures (Foucault 2007a; Foucault 2008), Foucault traced how this form of power has become the dominant way of exercising power in modern societies; how, in the 16th century, this pastoral power became secularised and entered the political sphere in the form of an ‘art of government’ – government, however, in an encompassing sense of governing the household, the children, the soul and the state alike (Foucault 2007a, 88); and how the state from the 17th century on became gradually ‘governmentalised’ – that is, in other words, how it relied more and more on techniques of government instead of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘discipline’ (Foucault 2007a, 109). Government, thus, would today best be understood as ‘the conduct of conduct’, a subtle and indirect combination of internal and external guidance, of ‘structuring the possible field of actions of others’ (Foucault 1982, 221), ‘creating possibilities’ for the behaviour of social actors (Lemke 2000, 29, own translation). Moreover, understanding government as the ‘conduct of conduct’ draws attention to the level of the subject. ‘Technologies of the self’ enable subjects to internalise governmental rationalities and translate them into individual practices (Foucault 1993, 203).

Secondly, governmentality shifts the focus from the state onto the ‘the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations and tactics that allow

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25. Although I am fully committed to the goal of gender equality I will, given the fact that the majority of people on this planet are women, use the female forms for the sake of simplicity and readability. Whenever I speak of ‘her’ or ‘she’, this of course also includes ‘him’ and ‘he’.
the exercise of [government; C.M.‘] (Foucault 2007a, 108). The broad literature on governmentality studies has shown how government has become the dominant form of power in liberal societies (for a review see Dean 2010; Rose, O’Malley & Valverde 2006). Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, for example, have coined the influential phrase of ‘governing at a distance’ (Miller & Rose 2008, 60). They argue that

The inauguration of liberal societies in Europe accords a vital role to key characteristics of modern government: action at a distance. Liberal mentalities of government do not conceive of the regulation of conduct as dependent only upon political actions: the imposition of law, the activities of state functionaries of publicly controlled bureaucracies; surveillance and discipline by an all-seeing police. Liberal government identifies a domain outside ‘politics’, and seeks to manage it without destroying its existence and its autonomy. This is made possible through the activities and calculations of a proliferation of independent agents, including philanthropists, doctors, hygienists, managers, planners, parents and social workers. […] Political forces have sought to utilise, instrumentalise and mobilise techniques and agents other than those of ‘the State’ in order to ‘govern at a distance’. (Miller & Rose 2008, 60-61, emphasis in original)

Crucially, applying governmental power is made possible by the ‘discovery’ of an autonomous and opaque domain. Foucault showed that governmentality could ensfold only in relation to the emergence of the population, understood as a distinct social sphere with its own regularities and laws such as rates of birth and death, epidemics, relationships between labour and wealth and the like (Foucault 2007a, 104). This was later replaced by notions of society or civil society, which emphasised that the social space can never be entirely grasped by the ruler, which is why power has to be exercised carefully. In other words, society as an independent and opaque organism is the prerequisite for applying power indirectly. Liberal governmentality thus operates through freedom in that it defines a space of laissez-faire, not without, however, making sure that this supposedly free space can be accessed through mechanisms of governing at a distance.

Thirdly, as the coinage governmentality suggests, the manifold processes governing conduct are permeated and held together by a particular mentality. They draw on theories, philosophies, calculations or values that are themselves social and cultural products and become (re-)produced in the processes of government (Dean 2010, 16). Knowledge, in this sense, constitutes the use of power, and power, in turn, produces knowledge; they form an immanent complex of ‘power-knowledge’ (Foucault 1978, 98). Given their omnipresence, governmental rationalities structure existing power relations. They embody ‘more or less systematised, regulated and reflected modes of power (a “technology”) that go beyond the spontaneous exercise of power over others, following a specific form of reasoning (a “rationality”) which defines the telos of action or the adequate means to achieve it’ (Lemke 2002, 53). Government is the ‘the regulation of conduct by the more or less rational application of the appropriate technical means’ (Hindess 1996, 106). In other words, governmentality highlights the way dis-
courses are intertwined with a field of seemingly disparate practices. The technologies of power, hence, cannot be analysed detached from the rationalities that connect them. In sum, governmentality is a subtle form of power, which is exercised by a multiplicity of agencies and institutions and inherently connected to the formation of knowledge.

**Varieties of governmentality**

Foucault used three particular, partially differing understandings of the term ‘governmentality’, which are relevant for the book at hand (Foucault 2007a, 108-9; Dean 2010, 28-30). First of all, ‘governmentality’ refers to the distinct historical phase of the emergence of governmentality that was presented in the last section: liberalism. Here, the main object of government is the population, and government seeks to increase its ‘health, welfare, prosperity and happiness’ (Dean 2010, 28). Its characteristic form of knowledge is ‘political economy’ (Foucault 2007a, 106). Governmentality, in this sense, is a particular thing-in-the-world, which is paradigmatically embodied by liberal and advanced liberal societies. I will refer to this as liberal governmentality in general.

Secondly, in this context, the term governmentality also refers to a general analytical perspective, which seeks to highlight how in many different times and places the form of power called governmentality, but also other forms of power, are utilised in order to govern at a distance (Dean 2010, 29). This makes it possible to speak of ‘governmentalities’ in the plural, and even analyse ‘illiberal’ or ‘authoritarian governmentalities’ (Dean 2010, chapter 7). Governmentality, put bluntly, is rather a theoretical point of view than a historically and spatially clearly identifiable thing-in-the world. Mitchell Dean draws mostly on this second understanding to condense these advantages of a governmentality perspective into an ‘analytics of government’, which has become a prominent approach in governmentality studies. He proposes to understand to govern very generally as

any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs (Dean 2010, 18).

Here, the governmentality concept serves as a theoretical lens which allows to study a broad range of ‘regimes of practices’, the ‘organised practices through which we are governed and through which we govern’ (Dean 2010, 40). In order to capture their entanglement with political technologies, governmental rationalities and individual subjectivities, Dean (Dean 2010, 37ff.) particularly focuses on four dimensions: the *field of visibility*, which pictures and highlights the objects of government, their relationships and their ordering in space and time; the *techne* of government, that is, all strategies, procedures, means, mechanisms, instru-
ments, tactics, physical technologies, modes of calculation, etc., which render reality as a governable entity and act on it accordingly; the episteme, which makes it possible to underpin these techniques with forms of knowledge and provide the overall logic of government; and an ethos, which offers the subject positions and technologies of the self-governing individual. These dimensions thus allow for distinguishing different governmentalities from each other. Dean himself distils and extends a broad variety of different governmentalities from Foucault’s historical analysis, ranging from 18th century biopolitics to present day advanced liberal governmentality (Dean 2010). For the study at hand, particularly these two extreme poles are relevant. It has to be noted though, that these are analytical ideal-types, which in practice might overlap.26

The object of biopolitics (Dean 2010, chapters 4 and 5) is the population as autonomous social entity which functions according to natural laws and can be understood as a biological organism. It is made thinkable and intelligible mostly through human sciences such as biology, medicine or demography – backed by the assumption that it is possible to understand the population in its totality if only enough profound knowledge about it is available. The political techne, thus, centres on the ideal of direct and precise intervention comparable to surgery. It is, for example, possible to identify criminal milieus of a population as it is possible to diagnose an illness, and cure it through police and disciplinary power. According to the idea of the panopticon, the population is deemed to be transparent to those who govern and can hence be managed in a top-down manner. The ethos thus conceives of men and women as subjects with drives and needs, which have to be treated by governmental interventions.

Advanced liberalism (Dean 2010, chapter 8), by contrast, increases the distance between government and society. It is associated with the rise of neoliberal discourses from the 1980s onwards, but cannot be reduced to what is often understood as neoliberalism.27 Larner (2000) distinguishes between neoliberalism as an economic policy – deregulation, privatisation, liberalisation – and neoliberalism as a governmentality which radicalises the liberal idea of governing at a distance. Whereas the former perspective often diagnoses a retreat of the state and a laissez-faire economic policy, the latter highlights that less government (in terms of public

26. The following presentation of the two governmentalities is based on Lemke 1997; Foucault 2007a; Foucault 2008; Dean 2010. Note that these are paradigmatic ideal-types which build upon each other. For example, apparatuses of security are not entirely absent in advanced liberalism.

27. Although neoliberalism and advanced liberal government are closely connected, they are not coterminous. According to Dean (1999, 176), the former designates the ‘specific styles of the mentality of rule’ as compared to other governmental rationalities. By contrast, the latter refers to more to the actually existing practices, which combine rationalities as well as as technologies and subjectivities into a governmental regime. In the following, I will stick to the latter term if I refer to governmentality. Neoliberalism, by contrast, will be reserved for the wider social hegemony that brings about advanced liberalism.
institutions and regulations) does not necessarily mean less governance. Instead, based on neoliberal economics and the idea that the social world is inherently complex and fragmented, society is deemed to be a construct which actually does not exist. Advanced liberalism is thus sceptical of the prospects for central planning and management and seeks to decentralise governmental mechanisms in order to govern at a distance. The objects of governments are communities, households and individuals – however they are not regulated through direct interventions but encouraged to govern themselves. Dean (2010), for example, highlights the technologies of ‘agency’ and ‘performance’ in advanced liberal technologies of rule. Whereas the former employs participatory strategies in order to activate and empower citizens, the latter seeks to spur competition through market mechanisms and comparison such as benchmarking. For example, where possible, artificial markets have to be created, which spur competition and make subjects optimise themselves. The ethos, thus, puts forth a responsible and calculating individual, which behaves according to its own cost-benefit analysis.

In this sense, one can draw a trajectory between biopolitics and advanced liberalism in which visibility is blurred and decentralised, profound knowledge is increasingly questioned, power works at a distance, and subjects are supposedly liberated. In the analysis of carbon governmentality in chapter 5, we will see that both governmentalities have a crucial role to play.

A third understanding of governmentality provides a narrower perspective and addresses the concept of security. For Foucault, the governmentalisation of the state resulted in the creation of ‘apparatuses of security’ (Foucault 2007a, 108). Usually, security refers to the ‘standing armies, police forces, diplomatic corps, intelligence services and spies’, whereas Foucault referred to all ‘the practices and institutions that ensure the optimal and proper functioning of the economic, vital and social processes […] and would thus also include health, welfare and education systems.’ (Dean 2010, 29). This enlarged understanding has inspired a broad array of critical security studies (see the brief discussion in chapter 8 on page 224p.), which seek to focus on the politics of security below the threshold of military practices, mostly centring on the notion of ‘risk’ (for an overview see Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero & Munster 2008). This literature makes it possible to differentiate between certain risk governmentalities more specifically; for example, the liberal-biopolitical risk governmentality, advanced liberal risk government and ecopolitics of disaster.

When I speak of liberal governmentality, I refer to the historical fact that government became the primary form of power by governing at a distance through freedom – mostly in order to draw an analogy with the governmentalisation of global politics in this chapter. If I refer to biopolitical and advanced liberal government, these denote particular variants of this.
general form of power as described above. This understanding is especially relevant for the analysis in chapters 5 and 7. And whenever I speak of dispositifs of security and governmentalities of risk, this implies the third understanding of governmentality. This comes to the fore particularly in chapter 8.

Towards a global governmentality?

Given the general interest in dissociating the practices of government from the institutions of the state, it comes as no surprise that the governmentality concept has increasingly gained attention among scholars of International Relations. On a theoretical level, Neumann and Sending (2007) argue that the governmentality concept addresses blind spots in existing International Relations scholarship. Whereas realism is solely concerned with power struggles but brackets normative changes and constructivism completely focuses on the emergence of liberal norms at the cost of neglecting power, a governmentality perspective combines the two. It asks how power is exercised through the establishment of liberal norms:

Our claim, then, is that the governmentality perspective retains the many valid insights of realism, while at the same time accounting for new dynamics in global politics. It provides a view of power, a factor neglected by constructivists, while at the same time accounting for the role of ideational factors, which has been the value-added of constructivism. (Neumann & Sending 2010, 13)

In the same way as the state has been governmentalised, it could be argued that the increasing globalisation and transnationalisation of international relations can be seen as a governmentalisation of global politics: an emerging realm of overlapping and interlocking practices of government criss-crossing and undermining national boundaries. Consequently, there is a growing body of literature concerned with the application of the governmentality concept to global politics: global civil society (Lipschutz 2005; Sending & Neumann 2006), the European Union (Walters & Haahr 2005); international organisations (Merlingen 2006), international summits (Death 2011), neoliberal policies (Larner 2000), counter-terrorism (Aradau & Munster 2007), human rights (Manokha 2009), globalisation (Perry & Maurer 2003; Larner & Walters 2004), the ‘new world order’ (Dillon 1995), global governance (Ziai 2003), good governance (Zanotti 2005), country benchmarking (Fouger 2008), civil society (Bartelson 2006) or the privatisation of security politics (Leander & Munster 2007), to give but a few examples. This literature demonstrates how power is exercised beyond the sovereignty of nation states and how particular issues are governed at a distance on an international or even global level.
It seems, however, that the application of the Foucauldian concept to the global sphere often neglects the fact that the latter represents a context different to that of national societies. A pointed example of this tendency is Ronnie Lipschutz, who asserts that:

Foucault wrote only of national governmentality, with each separate (state) order constituting its own sphere of discipline. As we shall see, the extension of this idea to the international arena is rather straightforward. (Lipschutz 2005, 15)

This attitude has invited a growing body of sympathetic but critical literature which suspects, contra Lipschutz, that such a straightforward transfer neglects the specific features of the global sphere. Put bluntly, this criticism can be summarised in three related points. First, critics claim that although one has to be sceptical about a sharp division between the international and the domestic, ‘the modern international arena is one in which liberal techniques and liberal reason of the sort that Foucault explores are much less developed, and face far stiffer structural challenges, than they do internally within modern liberal societies’, because power is much more concentrated in states and global corporations (Selby 2007, 338). The international realm is highly ‘uneven’ and still characterised by strong states (Joseph 2010a). The all-too-ready application of the governmentality concept to the international level thus undervalues sovereignty (Chandler 2009). Secondly, critics highlight the fact that ‘concern for populations is crucial for defining what governmentality is’ and that liberal governmentality draws on the existence of a civil society (Joseph 2010b, 34). And as both hardly exist outside the context of ‘advanced liberal societies’, governmentality lacks the appropriate problem space to enfold at the global level as a genuinely global governmentality (Joseph 2009; Selby 2007). Thirdly, attempts to establish governmentality at the global level or apply to non-Western regions of the world have proven unsuccessful (Joseph 2009). For example, while the World Bank’s poverty reduction strategies might represent a case of governmental power, their constant failure serves as a reason for applying more direct forms of disciplinary power on developing countries (Joseph 2010b). Jonathan Joseph concludes that ‘if the idea of global governmentality is to have any sort of meaning then it should be redefined as techniques aimed at regulating the behaviour of states and governments’ (Joseph 2009, 427). In this sense, there could perhaps be an international, but definitely not a genuinely global governmentality.

3.1.2 Polity

Contrary to these three objections, I contend that there is the possibility of a genuinely global governmentality, although acknowledging the critique helps to advance the concept in three crucial regards. To start with, where Joseph claims that governmentality fails, this appears rather awkward against the backdrop of Foucault’s overall work. With regard to the
The third side of the coin: Combining governmentality and hegemony

penal system, Foucault famously remarked that if one asks ‘what is served by the failure of the prison’, one would see that the prison ‘is not intended to eliminate offences, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them’ and constitute them as a ‘general economy’, which would justify the application of disciplinary power (Foucault 1977, 272). The idea of an economy of failure enables us to think about what happens in fact when governmentality fails in its own terms. Attempts at government might simply have functionality in their failure, serving the interests of certain projects or people. Below, I argue that the application of governmental power can result in a depoliticisation of a particular issue area. So Joseph might be right that global governmentality often fails regarding its own proclaimed aims, but it is highly successful in terms of depoliticisation. Before we return to the question of the political, this section addresses the two remaining critiques and develops them towards a refinement of the global governmentality concept: the role of sovereignty and the lack of a global governmental domain. Drawing on the work of Neumann and Sending (2010) I argue that the former needs a much more detailed reading of what sovereignty actually entails. And that the latter can be overcome with reference to the concept of a global polity (Corry 2010b). Finally, I qualify shortcomings of the global polity approach, and advance it towards a combination with hegemony theory.28

Sovereignty and governmentality

The first of the two remaining objections against the concept of a global governmentality concerns the relationship between sovereignty and governmentality. One indeed has to acknowledge that the application of the governmentality framework sometimes results in the ‘the effective disappearance of the [...] state’ (Du Gay & Scott 2010, 9). Yet even from Foucault’s point of view, who was always eager to avoid a proper engagement with the state (e.g. Foucault 2008, 76-77), it is definitely not the case that ‘sovereignty ceased to play a role when the art of government becomes a political science’ (Foucault 2007a, 106). Instead, he speaks of a triangle of sovereignty-discipline-government, and diagnoses a ‘governmentalisation of the state’ (Foucault 2007a, 109, emphasis added). Dean’s distinction between regimes of practices and the institutions of governments highlights this point very well: governmental power is exercised by a multiplicity of processes and agencies beyond the state, but this does not preclude them from being used by states to govern at a distance (Dean 2010, 40). As also Joseph notes (2010a, 227), Foucault is aware of the fact the governmentalisation of the state did not result in a decline but a strengthening of its position. Therefore, assuming a govern-

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28. Some of the arguments presented in this section have first been published as Methmann 2012.
mentalisation of world politics would not imply a replacement of sovereignty with government, or a transfer of power from the state to global civil society – as, for example, the global governance literature would assume. Instead, it seeks to cut across the usual distinction between public and private spheres and theorise its interactions.

The work of Neumann and Sending (2010) is particularly important here. They highlight the fact that the term sovereignty often mixes up two different things (Neumann & Sending 2010, 162). On the one hand, sovereignty refers to an organising principle which constitutes the state in the international realm. The most common conception of this ordering principle is the idea of ‘anarchy’ as put forth by neorealist thinkers such as Kenneth Waltz (1979). By contrast, especially in political theory, sovereignty is often understood as a form of power – the one which Foucault himself defined as a ‘strategic game of liberties’ with unknown outcomes (Foucault 1994b, 299). The crucial point now is that sovereignty as an organising principle does not imply

that all practices that states engage in would be permeated with the mode of power that Foucault calls sovereignty […]. It follows that there is nothing inherently sovereign about the practices that make up sovereignty. […] Sovereignty may remain as an ordering principle among states, but the practices that constitute it are permeated not only with the mode of power that is sovereign, but also with other modes of power, notably governmentality. (Neumann & Sending 2010, 163-64, emphasis in original).

In other words, what defines sovereignty (as an ordering principle) then is not so much the desire to impose one’s will upon others through power politics, as for instance in Morgenthau (1948), but the will and ability to govern particular problematisations (such as the global economy, poverty, security) as a member of the international community. Governmentality, therefore, as a mode of power increasingly redefines sovereignty as an ordering principle. Thus, a global governmentality perspective sheds light on the multiple ways through which states seek to use liberal norms, civil society or international organisations as a means to govern at a distance (Neumann & Sending 2010, 6). The prevalence of sovereign states at the international level, thus, does not contradict the assumption of a global governmentality. Global governmentality is not about discovering a new political sphere next to the state, but rather about theorising the state’s interaction with globalised regimes of practices.29

29. Neumann and Sending, however, seem to overstate this case somewhat in focussing too narrow on the connection between global governmentality and sovereignty. Despite their own analysis of civil society (Sending & Neumann 2006), they argue that ‘status and role of sovereignty are central’ and join sides with Barielson (2006) in denying the existence of a global civil society (Neumann & Sending 2010, 170). This is probably related to their claim that the governmentality perspective ‘retains the many valid insights of realism, while at the same time accounting for new dynamics in global politics’ (Neumann & Sending 2010, 13, emphasis added). This is quite awkward, though, given the fact that the title of their book – Governing the Global Polity – promises to overcome the state-centrism of mainstream IR through the concept of the global polity – but this is not explained before page 171 of 182.
One could think of governmentality in terms of different layers. Foucault himself did not treat the population as a uniform and coherent problem space but as a culmination of practices on different scales, ranging ‘from the internal conversations one has with oneself about how to act, to urban regulation and conduct, to national policies, to epistemologically abstract knowledge formations and imaginations’ (Legg 2005, 144). He taught, for example, that the art of governing a state is intrinsically related to a governmental rationality of international relations – a case in point being the liberal concern with international competition and the ‘comparative advantage’, which enables certain – national or local – economic policies (see e.g. Foucault 2008, 52ff.). In this sense, national policies are often cast within the imagination of a global frame, and ‘weave together domestic and international spaces’ (Dean 2010, 239). Accordingly, if one speaks of a governmentality at the global level, this does not refer to an entity that is restricted to a planetary scale, but rather as an interconnected domain of government which spans from the global to the local and manifests at various spatial levels. Therefore, Joseph is indeed right that global governmentality might be directed at the conduct of states. But it comprises much more than that - acting, for example, directly from the global on the local in an advanced liberal way. Governmentality and sovereignty are far from being mutually exclusive.

**The domain of a global governmentality**

The second objection concerns the relationship between governmentality and the population or civil society. Joseph and Selby argue that the preconditions for governmentality to unfold at the global level are not given, because its traditional objects – the ‘population’ or ‘civil society’ – do not have global correlates. From the angle of biopolitics, which Foucault developed in his earlier writings and lectures (Foucault 1978; Foucault 2003), it comes as no surprise that he strongly connected governmentality to the notion of the population. This was also the historical context in which pastoral power was secularised without, however, tightly marrying these two concepts. For one thing, he and others traced the transformations through liberal and advanced liberal rationalities, which added ‘civil society’, the ‘social’ or the ‘community’ as relevant objects of government (Foucault 2008; Rose 1996b). According to Neal, ‘it is not possible to engage with Foucault while holding on to even the most rudimentary of disciplinary commitments, such as the idea that ‘the international’ is an [objective; C.M.] object of study. For Foucault, such objects do not exist.’ (Neal 2009, 541) It is thus hardly a Foucauldian perspective if a supposed nature of ‘the international’ precludes governmentality from being applied to it.
Moreover, if governmentality is supposed to be essentially tied to a particular problem space, this reproduces an overall bias Andrew Barry (2001, 19) detects within governmentality studies: the dominant concern with the government of populations comes at the cost of neglecting other zones of government formed by technological devices and calculations. If Foucault argues that the population is not essentially given but was ‘discovered’ through technologies such as census, statistics and the apparatuses of security (Foucault 2007a, 102), there should be no a priori reason to rule out that government might apply to other, also artificially created ‘technological zones’ (Barry 2001, 25). Contributions from political geography, for example, have shown how practices of governing the ‘national farm’ (Murdoch & Ward 1997), the ‘mineral nation’ (Braun 2000), the ‘national forest’ (Agrawal 2005), or territory in general (Rose-Redwood 2006), created such calculative spaces and turned them into a basis for the conduct of conduct. This is a recurrent theme in the ‘green governmentality’ literature, too, which assumes that governmentality itself creates the environment as a thinkable and governable space (Darier 1999; Rutherford 2007). Governmentality is not limited to the government of the population per se. But the critique rightly points to the fact that especially a global governmentality cannot easily draw on long established spaces such as the population. In other words, it depends on the creation of an appropriate problem space – a theoretical category which is so far mostly missing in contributions on governmentality in International Relations. In the following, I will thus introduce the notion of the ‘global polity’, which helps to overcome this shortcoming.

The concept of the global polity

The objection that governmentality lacks an appropriate global space mirrors a conundrum within International Relations debates about the ‘post-international’ (Hobbs 2000). A lot of ink has been spilled writing about the insufficiencies of traditional models of international relations as ‘politics among nations’ (Morgenthau 1948). For most of these observers, the statism in International Relations misses crucial features of today’s global politics such as the rise of non-state actors, new forms of political authority, the interplay of different spatial levels, or globalisation in general (see most prominently Rosenau 1995). However, as Olaf Corry diagnoses, such a ‘plus non-state view’ (Chong 2002) of international relations often re-instates the very paradigm which it seeks to overcome:

Post-internationalism’s persistent claims about change thus end up sitting uncomfortably astride concepts and terminology soaked in what Rob Walker has called the “discursive horizons that express the spatiotemporal configurations of another era” (Corry 2010b, 158; , citing Walker 1993, x).
As the term ‘post-internationalism’ already indicates, conceptual innovation is mostly a negation of dominant models of international relations. For example, the prominent distinction of ‘governance by states’, ‘governance with states’ and ‘governance without states’ (Zürn 1998a, emphasis added) relativises but also centres on exactly that notion of the state which it attempts to de-centre.

To get a grip on this conceptual impasse, Corry introduces the concept of a ‘global polity’, which is supposed to exist

when a group of units become oriented towards the governance of a common ‘governance-object’. The latter can be defined as an object that is constructed as real, distinct, malleable and subject to political action, for example, constructs such as ‘France’ or ‘the climate’. By extension, a global polity will hence have emerged to the extent that actors of whatever kind have become oriented towards the governance of specifically global governance-objects. Thus, if for example ‘global poverty’ or in wider terms a ‘global society’ comes to be considered real and meaningful as an object that can and should be operated upon politically - and a set of actors become oriented towards governing this object, then a global polity will have come into existence. (Corry 2010b, 159)

Other than traditional models of world politics such as ‘hierarchy’ or ‘anarchy’ (Waltz 1979) as well as existing notions of global polity, which Corry finds to be trapped within a statist discourse, his definition completely focuses on the relationship between governance-object and governance-subject instead of only the relationships between the subjects. On the one hand, the governance-object must be considered to be ‘real, malleable and subject to political action’ in order to constitute a political entity (Corry 2010b, 169). For example, the weather as such could not constitute a polity because political action cannot influence it. On the other hand, it must be significantly constitutive of the subject’s identities. If it does not matter to them, it is not forming a polity (Corry 2010b, 171). The membership of the polity, finally, is ‘decentralised’ (Corry 2010b, 171). While accession to the anarchic international system is based on mutual recognition, one becomes part of a polity only by virtue of one’s commitment to being concerned with that particular governance-object. A polity only revolves around this object.

The concept of a polity, thus, solves the conceptual impasse found within the governmentality literature. On the one hand, by focusing on the subject-object relationship and not that among subjects, it is not important whether sovereignty prevails or not. It might be true that sovereignty in terms of an anarchic system still plays an important role in global politics. But the polity serves as a prism which captures all the features that go beyond sovereignty and thus has an added analytical value (Corry 2010b, 173). On the other hand, adopting a social constructivist conception of a polity – ‘a group of units becomes oriented towards’ it – is highly compatible with a Foucauldian approach. In fact, Corry himself acknowledges Foucault as one of the few thinkers who were concerned with the construction of governance ob-
jects – ‘the economy’, ‘the population’ etc. – instead of only the identity of governance subjects (Corry 2010b, 169). If it was argued that governmentality creates the very space it is applied onto, then this resonates very well with Corry’s concept of a global polity. Last but not least, both share the interest in a post-statist understanding of global politics. If one speaks of a global governmentality, hence, one actually has to speak of ‘governing a global polity’ (Neumann & Sending 2010). This implies, however, that there is not one single global governmentality, which is either there or not, but that it depends on the existence of a globalised governance-object. The prospects for global governmentality thus depend on the issue area it is applied to.

*Advancing the polity concept*

In other words, referring to the two understandings of sovereignty discussed above, a shift from sovereignty as a form of power towards governmentality also implies a shift from sovereignty as an ordering principle towards the polity. It thus provides an important theoretical underpinning for applying the governmentality concept to the global level. However, this theoretical acquisition does not leave the polity concept unaffected.

On the one hand, combining it with a Foucauldian perspective affects the concept of the polity in at least two ways. First, it is interested not only in whether or not actors believe in the existence of a common governance-object, but first and foremost how this is reflected in what they do (Neumann & Sending 2010, 172). That is, a global polity does not only consist in relations between governance-subjects and the governance-object, but more precisely in the practices through which the subjects seek to constitute and act on the object. And from a Foucauldian perspective, practices are always permeated with power. Therefore, the concept of a global polity inherently entails implementation of a governmentality. If the global polity is about the retreat of the state and new forms of political authority beyond the state, this is precisely what (advanced) liberal governmentality entails: ‘governing at a distance’ (Miller & Rose 2008). This not only allows governmentality to go global, but governmentality – *vice versa* – shows how this polity is intrinsically connected to governmental power. Secondly, a Foucauldian take on a polity implies that the objects of governance are also its subjects. The population and the society, which were the historical spaces of governmentality, are all both objects and subjects: They are capable of governing themselves in the sense of a ‘conduct of conduct’. Hence, if we speak of a global polity from a Foucauldian perspective, the distinction between governance-subjects and governance-objects partially blurs, as it puts in place
mechanisms for the indirect use of power. In other words, governmentality can both account for how governance-subjects relate to the governance-objects and how the latter impinges on the former’s identity. If states seek to govern poverty, for example, this also affects the territories, populations or policies of these very states. In this sense, governmentality details the concept of the global polity.

On the other hand, the global polity concept leaves at least two important questions unanswered. First, while the global polity has a strong discursive connotation, it does not entail a particular discursive ontology. A polity is supposed to exist when ‘a group of units become oriented towards the governance of a common governance-object’ which is ‘constructed as real, distinct, malleable and subject to political action’ (Corry 2010b, 169) The term ‘constructed’ as well as the fact that it represents a collective endeavour point to the discursive nature of a polity. A polity only exists to the extent that actors have agreed that it exists. Yet it goes beyond the scope of Corry’s piece to detail how we should conceive of this discursivity: does it involve a symbolic interactionist framework as in Wendt (1999), a Habermasian deliberation or something else? While Corry is deliberately unspecific at this point in order to be adaptable for different strands of theorising, it is clear that any meaningful application of the polity concept cannot function without this question being answered. How is it that that this common orientation of actors comes about? How is it possible that they conceive a problem as a common governance object? A related problem is that a polity might not be grouped around a coherent governance-object, but that this very object is contested without this resulting in the dissolution in two or more different polities. For example, climate change is not a clear-cut problem in the sense that some regard it as a security problem where other see it as a problem of global justice. However, it would make no analytical sense to speak of different global climate polities, because the different attempts to govern the climate have effects on each other. Otherwise, we would have a variety of climate polities. In this sense, the question how a certain governance-object comes into being and is sedimented as the dominant perception in the global polity is left open.

Secondly, it seems strange that no threshold is defined at which a polity comes into existence. Take the example of three communists making plans for the world revolution. This revolution is (more or less) distinct, malleable and so on, but even if the three were scattered across the globe, one could hardly speak of a global revolutionary polity; or, more precisely,

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30. This indeed implies that objects which cannot ‘govern’ themselves, such as some animals or raw materials, thus cannot be objects of governmentality in the strict sense. What can be governed, by contrast, would be the relationship between women and animals or resources. This does not contradict, however, the neglect of subject-subject relations in the polity-concept (see above), but only affects the relationship between subjects and objects.
of course, one can do so, but this would be of little analytical value. Therefore, it seems that a polity has to acquire a certain size, relevance or influence for becoming a meaningful polity. In other words, it has to be acknowledged as being a polity by relevant social or political actors; be it that relevant actors are becoming part of the global polity by themselves attempting to affect the governance-object, or be it that the general public perceives this polity as a polity without becoming part of it. In any case, the polity has to become socially relevant.

In the following, I suggest that these two problems can be framed as questions of hegemony: ‘how does a certain governance-object become relevant for the members of a polity?’ is a different way of asking about the internal hegemony in a polity. And asking ‘how does a polity become accepted by those which are not part of the polity such as the global public?’ is a different way of asking about the external hegemony of a polity. Hence, these questions can be addressed with hegemony theory.

3.1.3 Hegemony

The term hegemony is probably most prominently associated with the writings of Italian communist Antonio Gramsci (1971), who questioned the absence of socialist revolution from central and southern Europe, and the contrasting successful revolution in Russia. His explanation emphasised that in Europe the bourgeois rule was not only based on coercion but on consent. Through the institutions of the ‘integral state’ (the church, schools and universities, etc.) the bourgeoisie had established a ‘moral-intellectual unity’ which could present their corporate interests as synonymous with the common good (Gramsci 1971, 244). However, in contrast with traditional Marxist accounts of ideology, this superstructure was not simply determined by the economic base, but the outcome of political strategies such as coalition building, integration of proletarian elites (‘transformismo’) or the creation of a ‘popular will’ (Gramsci 1971, 58, 130). In other words, Gramsci’s work brought politics – at least as a semi-autonomous sphere – back into Marxism. Indeed, Laclau and Mouffe use Gramsci as a starting point for a critical engagement with the Marxist tradition and develop it towards a ‘post-Marxism’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1990; see also Mouffe 1979; Laclau & Mouffe 1985). Drawing on the works of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, they argue that hegemony is a type of rule that does not only apply to the relationship between economic classes but can be found throughout the whole society affecting a broad range of grievances – such as environmental movements, gender relations or religious conflicts. Moreover, instead of rooting it in one foundational principle such as the capitalist mode of production, they stress the radical contingency of hegemony. In short, hegemony in the poststructuralist sense of Laclau and Mouffe can be understood as discursive and political predominance in the construction of an imaginary universality (Nonhoff 2007). The following subsection argues for a combination of
hegemony theory and the concept of a global polity. Hegemony theory provides a discursive ontology for the global polity, while the latter can provide the appropriate space for studying hegemony in global politics. If hegemony is a discursive and political predominance with the aim of constructing a universal space, it is precisely this universality which constitutes a global polity.

**Everything? Yes, everything! Society as a discourse**

The central argument of poststructuralist hegemony theory is that everything – that is, all social, economic or political structures, agents and processes, even physical processes – represents discursive entities. This argument can be disaggregated in two different assumptions: an anti-essentialist ontology and an anti-foundationalist epistemology. They constitute the discursivity of society.

Relating to the epistemological commitments, discourse theory does not challenge, as often insinuated, the existence of an independent external reality. In this sense, it is far from being an idealist theory, as it acknowledges the importance of material events, causes and processes. However, it does challenge the idea that it is possible to access this material reality directly through neutral representations:

The basic hypothesis of a discursive approach is that the very possibility of perception, thought and action depends on the structuration of a certain meaningful field which pre-exists any factual immediacy. (Laclau 1993, 431)

In other words, while a discourse approach accepts that there is an external reality, it questions that truth is an intrinsic feature of it (Torfing 2005, 13). For example, although the material causes and impacts of a hurricane are undisputed, it depends on a socially constructed field of meaning whether this storm counts as an expression of god’s wrath, a simple meteorological phenomenon, a symbol for racism (as hurricane Katrina became) or a result of global warming. In contrast with common insinuations, poststructuralism thus does not doubt that a hurricane really happens. It doubts that it is impossible to represent this hurricane neutrally. It is important to note that such an epistemological understanding broadens the common-sense conception of discourse, which is restricted to the sphere of linguistic systems or processes, towards a theory of society. If we accept that both language

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31. The term epistemology here has to be understood in a two-fold sense – one at the level of social actors, who depend on discourse in their actions; the other at the level of the social science researcher. While this chapter primarily discusses the consequences for social theory, chapter 4 deals with the epistemological implications from the point of view of the philosophy of science.

32. Such an epistemological conception, hence, comes close to what Wittgenstein called a language game: For example, builder, A, and his fellow, B, build a house with different types of material: A calls out the words ‘slab’, ‘block’, ‘beam’ and ‘pillar’, and B hands the stones over to A, who inserts them into the walls.
and practice, speech and action are constituted on a contingent meaningful field, it is possible to analyse social processes only at this level of signification. This is the ‘anti-foundationalist epistemology’ of hegemony theory (Torfing 2005, 13).

On the ontological level, on the other hand, meaning is necessarily constituted in purely relational systems of signification. This basic proposition of poststructuralist discourse theory follows from the structuralist linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure (1974). De Saussure’s central insight was the idea that the meaning of a term is not essentially given, but only constituted in relation to other terms. The term ‘climate’, for example, does not entail something substantially ‘climatic’ which provides its meaning, but only makes sense in relation to other signifiers such as ‘weather’, ‘atmosphere’ or ‘temperature’. De Saussure concluded that language is ‘form and not substance’, and that there are only ‘differences without positive terms’ (Saussure 1974, 84). In other words, language is an arbitrary and conventional system of signification. There is no extra-linguistic entity which could provide a solid ground for meaning. The meaning of any signifying entity only exists relatively to other signs:

Discourse is the primary terrain of the constitution of objectivity as such. By discourse, as I have attempted to make clear several times, I do not mean something that is essentially restricted to the areas of speech and writing, but any complex of elements in which relations play the constitutive role. This means that elements do not pre-exist the relational complex but are constituted through it. (Laclau 2005, 68-69)

Hegemony theory – and this is crucial – adopts Derrida’s radicalisation of de Saussure’s linguistic. Derrida showed that if one accepts that meaning is relational, it follows from this that there can be no stable meaning at all. In fact, meaning is not constituted through difference, but through ‘differáncé’ (Derrida 1982, 5ff.), combining the notions of ‘difference–differing–deferring’ (Culler 1983, 97). This pun implies the parallelism of the possibility and the impossibility of a term’s meaning. Put simply, in principle every term is different from all other terms, but when attempting to define it, only some of the differences are actualised, while others are disregarded. In actual speech and writing, it is simply impossible to do justice to the entire web of differences. If a term is only determined by other terms, and these terms in turn depend on other terms, one ends up following an infinite trace – an ‘instituted trace’ (Derrida 1976, 62). This concept combines two distinct but related moments: on the one hand, meaning is constituted in relations of difference, it is arbitrary and conventional, that is, ‘instituted’. On the other hand, this institution can only be revealed as a trace, as something whose presence has always-already disappeared but can still be perceived fragmentar-

Wittgenstein (1967, paragraph 4) calls this whole process, consisting of both ‘language and the actions into which it is woven’ a ‘language game’. In a sense, this corresponds to Laclau’s and Mouffe’s discourse, which also comprises linguistic and non-linguistic elements.
ily. Thus, ‘differance captures the way in which meaning is produced both by the interplay of different traces and by the necessary deferment of some possibilities not actualised or signified by the play of traces’ (Howarth 2000, 40). Meaning is necessarily incomplete and contingent. It is situated on a terrain of ‘undecidability’ (Derrida 1996, 77).

The notion of radical contingency is thus central to hegemony theory. Following from the paradoxical notion of the instituted trace, the conditions of possibility within any society are its conditions of impossibility at the same time (Derrida 1996, 82). In other words, although we might agree on a certain meaning, this agreement has a very limited scope, and is always precarious. It cannot domesticate the play of differences. Thus, it is the ‘link between the blocking and simultaneous affirmation of an identity what we call radical contingency’, ‘which introduces an element of radical undecidability into the structure of objectivity’ (Laclau 1990, 21). It is this idea of meaning as a relational and radically contingent system of signification which constitutes the ‘anti-essentialist ontology’ of discourse theory (Torfing 2005, 13).

In sum, if we accept that society has to be studied as a system of meaningful relations, and that this system is necessarily purely relational, and that, finally, relational systems of signification are radically contingent, this results in the fact that the whole society is founded on a so-called ‘field of discursivity’, marked by a ‘surplus of meaning’, which ‘determines at the same time the necessarily discursive character of any object, and the impossibility of any given discourse to implement a final suture.’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 111). For instance, if you ask me ‘what is global warming?’, I could give you a broad range of different answers, ranging from physical descriptions of the greenhouse effect or a discussion of the ‘tragedy of the commons’ (Hardin 1968) to testimonials from people who experience more frequent floods. All of these answers would not be wrong, but all have different implications, and can be more or less correct depending on the context of our conversation.

Given this field of discursivity, the question arises how stable discourses would be possible to achieve at all. This must be possible, otherwise my answer about the greenhouse effect could prompt a response that involved flowers and irrigation. An unquestioned underlying discourse is the precondition for any enduring and consolidated social order. The basic discursive operation to achieve this is that of ‘articulation’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 105). It establishes a relation between two ‘elements’ of the discursive field and turns them into ‘moments’ of a discourse. Articulation, thus, results in the creation of certain ‘nodal points’ partially fixing meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 112) – such as the greenhouse effect as a definite concept. However, the fixing of meaning through articulation is only partially possible because, as was argued above, all differential relationships are always inflicted with instability and the ‘nodal points are constituted within an intertextuality that overflows it’ (Laclau &
Mouffe 1985, 113). In the 19th century, for example, people conflated greenhouse and hot-house effect. Such a slight shift in terminology, however, has very different implications for how global warming works (Paterson 1996, 17). And today, even 5 years of global warming hype have not prevented students from relating climate change to the ozone layer in their essays. Thus, although every discursive formation is established through articulating elements into moments, the result is only a fragile discursive formation which is always subject to the general ‘openness of the social, a result, in its turn, of the constant overflowing of every discourse by the infinitude of the field of discursivity’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 113).

In sum, if one asserts that society is discursive in nature, this entails speaking of two different levels (Howarth 2009, 313): on the one hand, the term ‘discourse’ remains at the ontic level and refers to a concrete particular set of articulations and discursive relations – such as the discourse of sustainable development or that of Thatcherism. And at this ontic level, one can distinguish three different notions of discourse (Nonhoff 2007, 175-76): the agglomeration of individual articulations, the process of arranging these articulations into a structured totality as well as the structuration of articulations resulting from this process. It denotes a temporal dimension of forming and a spatial one of formation at the same time. The field of discursivity, on the contrary, is an ontological category establishing the claim that all meaning, every discourse and thus every social order is built upon a ‘field of significant differences and similarities’ (Howarth 2009, 313). And as this field is radically contingent and can never be stable or even complete, it becomes the condition of possibility and impossibility of any society at the same time. The discursive operation which seeks to turn the discursive into discourse, forming a formation, which seeks ‘to arrest the flow of differences to construct a centre’ is what Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 112) have termed hegemony. It is the precondition of any stable social/discursive order.

**Hegemony between antagonism and empty signifier**

Such hegemony depends on the existence of an antagonism and an empty signifier. Given the relational and radically contingent nature of the field of discursivity, a stable discourse, hegemony, can only be constructed if the infinite play of signification is suspended. Some elements have to be excluded so that the structures of discourse are not permanently disturbed by alternative meanings. The discourse of climate change, for example, is permanently ‘disturbed’ by those articulations attributing it to changes in solar radiation. Society thus needs an outer limit, beyond which these elements can be ‘pushed’. The fundamental problem is, however, that there is nothing outside the discourse, because *everything* is discourse. This outside, therefore, does not actually ‘exist’, but is the radical opposite of everything that ex-
ists. Consequently, the outside corresponds to the negation of a discourse as such. Such a negation is in principle possible in two ways (Nonhoff 2010, 39): on the one hand, it can be undermined by an existential external threat or enemy, something or someone who puts the existence of its elements or the relationships between them at risk. But there is also a not so obvious positive form of challenging the existence of a social order. As order rests on difference, cancelling out these differences by constructing a complete unity among its elements also negates it. Laclau refers to this ‘pure being’ as a state in which a society succeeds in fulfilling all possible demands and desires. So, the perfect society also represents such an outside of society. Or, as Nonhoff puts: ‘human being is neither possible in heaven nor in hell’ (Nonhoff 2010, 40, own translation). It is this virtual negation of the existing discursive/social order which amounts to the ontological category of antagonism.

Antagonism, however, denotes not only an ontological category but also manifests ontically. In order to make sense to anyone, the discursive outside has to be represented within the discourse (as everything that matters has a discursive existence). The external negation of the social order, the fundamental antagonism with its outside, is thus translated into concrete antagonist struggles within society about how to symbolise and represent the ideal society or its fundamental enemy. People disagree about how to achieve the common good or what constitutes an existential threat, what promises or jeopardises universal salvation. They struggle about the discursive manifestation of the limits of discourse. And because these conflicts cannot be settled, antagonism is not only theoretically, but also actually the condition of impossibility of a completely sutured and stable social order. It is ‘a witness of the impossibility of a final suture, [...] the “experience” of the limit of the social’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 125).

Hegemony, in this sense, involves a common-sense interpretation of the limits of society. Paradoxically, this ‘constitutive outside’ of a discourse, the discursive Other, its fundamental opposite and radical negation, threatens its cohesion, and at the same time it is this very Outside which makes the discursive order possible in the first place. It is an ‘outside which blocks the identity of the inside and is nonetheless the prerequisite for its constitution at the same time’ (Laclau 1990, 17). Antagonism is simultaneously the condition of possibility and the condition of impossibility of a social order. Stability comes at the cost of its own subversion.

To return to the example of climate science discourses again. One way of constructing an Outside to it is the invention of the category of ‘climate sceptics’, which groups proponents of

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33. Žižek (1990) has first introduced this double meaning of antagonism – outside and inside – and Laclau has adopted it subsequently.
the solar-radiation-thesis together with the sceptics of historic temperature records and those arguing that climate change is of inferior significance compared to other global problems. This category, on the one hand, constructs an Outside, which cleans the actual discourse of climate science from fundamental doubt. It constitutes ‘rational’ and ‘sound’ science \textit{vis-a-vis} unsound scepticism and, moreover, adds another legitimate cause to the former: refuting sceptics. This discursive outside, however, constantly threatens the existence of the climate science, as recent scandals have proven (see below). In this sense, ‘climate sceptics’ at the same time provide the conditions of possibility and impossibility of a coherent climate science discourse.

What is more, hegemony depends on the existence of an ‘empty signifier’ which comes to represent this fundamental threat or, in other situations, the universal good. It provides for the unity of the discursive formation. It therefore introduces a new logic, which structures the field of discursivity which would otherwise be dominated by the monotonous dispersion of differences. The logic of equivalence stresses the fact that the elements of a discourse belong together, and that excluded elements do not belong to a discourse. Equivalence means that two discursive elements are similar with regard of a third element. However, equivalence cannot entirely take over, as difference constitutes order, and pure equivalence hence undermines this order. As a consequence, each element of a discourse is ‘constitutively split’ between the logic of difference and the logic of equivalence. For example, all different disciplines of climate science remain different disciplines and employ fundamentally different forms of knowledge, but are all united by a ‘scientific approach’ (a kind of empty signifier) in comparison with those arguments which lack proper science. Nonhoff (2007, 179) argues, moreover, that equivalence can mix with a third type of relationship – contrarity – when the limits of society are primarily defined in the negative form of a fundamental threat. Here, two discursive elements are equivalent because they are contrary to a third element outside the discourse. In sum, constructing hegemony involves creating a chain of equivalence among all elements of a discourse with regard to one distinct element. This element, of course, cannot be extra-discursive, as there is nothing outside discourse. It has to be a discursive element itself. In other words, this particular element enters into a relation of equivalence with all other elements of a discourse, and this equivalence replaces or at least subverts difference. But if difference constitutes meaning, the meaning of this particular term vanishes. It becomes an ‘empty signifier’, which constitutes the ‘horizon’ of a particular discourse.
Globalising hegemony

There are few proper applications of hegemony theory, understood in the poststructuralist version of Laclau and Mouffe, to global politics so far (for some of the notable exceptions see Mert 2009; Nabers 2010; Wullweber 2010). Applications of hegemony theory have mostly been restricted to the level of the nation state or the European Union (Norval 1996; Howarth 2000; Howarth & Torfing 2005). The reluctance of applying a poststructuralist hegemony concept to international relations or global politics might be explained in two ways. First, within International Relations hegemony is mostly interpreted in the terms of a neo-Gramscian reading which stresses the role of global capitalism. Robert Cox introduced this approach in 1981 with his seminal article in *Millennium* spurring a lively debate as well as a rich set of empirical applications often subsumed under the label Italian School (Cox 1981; Cox 1983; Gill 1993; Van der Pijl 1998; Rupert 1998). However, the Italian School sticks to an orthodox Marxist concern with the economy, and even its critics are awkwardly eager to distance themselves from the ‘postmodern insignificance’ of Laclau and Mouffe and fear ‘the confusing cul-de-sac of radical discourse theory’ (Worth 2006, 385). It is the hegemony of the neo-Gramscian concept of hegemony in IR, in combination with a misunderstanding which seems to confuse de-centring analysis away from the economy with neglecting it in entirety, which explains the relative lack of empirical applications of poststructuralist hegemony on global politics.

In addition, there is also a theoretical reason why hegemony has remained mostly national. Outside the framework of the nation-state, it is not clear what represents the actual space of hegemony at the global level. It is particularly striking that hegemony suffers from the same problems which troubled the all-too-ready application of governmentality to the international level: it lacks the appropriate ontological place at the global level (Germain & Kenny

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34. I am well aware that climate scientist would immediately come up with such a definition. But although ‘science’ is often invoked as the opposite of climate scepticism, the latter’s methods would often be covered by this definition was well. Björn Lomborg, for example, a leading climate sceptic, produces work which is definitely scientific. Science, I would argue, is merely a symbolic umbrella which those gathering under it use to guard against scepticism.

35. As a case in point, among the 31 thinkers assembled in the recent volume *Critical Theorists and International Relations* (Edkins & Vaughan-Williams 2009), Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe are not included. In the whole book, only Laclau is mentioned 3 times, Mouffe not at all.

36. Italian because of Gramsci and not because of the members of this school.
1998). On the one hand, it has all-too-often been embedded in grand narratives of ‘world order’ (Cox 1987), where hegemony comes to refer to the dominance of one state among others through consensus (Robinson 2005). On the other hand, it has been located within the emergence of a transnational class of capitalist elites, without clarification regarding how these transnational classes have come into existence or what their theoretical status would be (Germain & Kenny 1998). As the terms ‘international hegemony’ (Cox 1983, emphasis added) or ‘transnational class’ (Van der Pijl 1998, emphasis added) already indicate, this literature revolves around the nation state and does not account for the complex theory of the state in Gramsci’s writings (Worth 2006). The concept of hegemony, thus, seems to be blocked to be applied to a ‘post-international’, global politics.

I suggest that the concept of the global polity, by contrast, provides the appropriate dimension for hegemony to be globalised; and in turn, that the global polity has to be understood as a hegemonic global discourse. The relationship between the two can be unfolded in a couple of points. To start with, the global polity sets out the task of breaking with a supposed essential nature of the international. This resonates well with the anti-essentialist ontology of hegemony theory, which assumes that there are no pre-given and independent elements or basic entities within a society. In this sense, applying hegemony theory to the global level fits well with the rather open and flexible conception of the global polity.

Vice versa, the theory of hegemony is able to address the two questions of hegemony that were left open in the concept of the global polity. The first question involves the discursive ontology of the polity. How is it that actors perceive a certain commonality in face of a governance-object? How do they agree on a common governance-object? What is the stuff that makes the polity hang together? In terms of hegemony theory, it is about constructing a chain of equivalence among different subject positions, as equivalence likens two elements with regard to a third element, which here is the common governance object. This common governance object is often defined in terms of a common good to be achieved (for example, welfare gains through global trade) or an existential enemy to be defeated (for example, the threat of transnational terrorism). However, this is a different way of saying that the global polity is constructed on a fundamental antagonism: it depends on a notion of either a ‘pure being’, of an ideal global society (for example, to be achieved by entirely eradicating poverty), or of a radical negation, a symbol of non-being of the global polity (for example, the community of free democracies subjugated by authoritarian regimes). A hegemony perspective thus augments the global polity perspective with a crucial insight: namely, that a global polity depends on a constitutive outside. It is this outside which enables a community of actors inside the global polity. Moreover, this fundamental antagonism is represented by a signifier that loses its particular meaning and comes to stand for the universality of the dis-
course. In other words, the common governance-object takes the form of an empty signifier. Discourse theory, moreover, can elucidate how the struggle concerning the definition of the common governance-object takes place. We will return to these discursive strategies below. All this also explains how a global polity substantially impinges on the identity of the subjects that form it, because identity, from the hegemony perspective, is only possible within a stable system of social relations.

The second question relates to the question of how a certain polity becomes relevant for the wider global public and how it relates to other polities, with which there might be overlaps regarding the governance-object. Here, hegemony theory can also step in to fill the gap. On the one hand, the same discursive strategies that construct a political community among the members of a polity can be used to increase the relevance of the polity for its non-members; for example, by depicting terrorism as an existential threat of the whole global society. This might convince subjects of the importance of that polity, without them actually trying to affect the governance-object themselves. Nonetheless, this strengthens and intensifies this polity. Moreover, hegemony also allows for theorising the relationship between different polities. Nonhoff (2010) argues that in advanced liberal societies, hegemonic struggle is often restricted to a particular political arena. It may, however, spread across the boundaries of that arena and link with cleavages in others. Now replace arena with polity. A polity is always bound to a particular governance-object. However, if it is possible to link different governance-objects together under a unifying empty signifier, it should be possible to merge polities. The hegemony in one polity might then come to overlay that in another polity and thus colonise it. In the second part of the book, I will show how climate mainstreaming is precisely this attempt to subsume other global cleavages and governance-objects under the problem of climate change and so turn the climate polity into an encompassing hegemony.

3.1.4 Conclusion: Towards theoretical mergers and acquisitions

In sum, the global polity provides a first point of contact between governmentality and hegemony theory. The global polity has to be understood as a hegemonic global discourse, constructed on a fundamental antagonism, symbolised by an empty signifier, which links its particular governance-subjects into a coherent whole as well as making the global polity socially relevant. Thus, if we speak of hegemony at the global and not only international level, this involves the creation of a particular global polity. The concept of governmentality, then, describes how the governance-object of this polity is made salient through rationalities and technologies of power and how relations of force are structured within the global polity. In this sense, I understand climate mainstreaming as the (re-)production, expansion and intensification of the global climate polity. Through the lens of hegemony, I ask in subsequent
chapters what discursive strategies constitute, enlarge and thicken the climate polity; especially, how climate change is constructed as an existential threat which creates a fundamental antagonism between humanity and climate change and so creates and stabilises an encompassing global climate polity. I explain how, through this very process, a certain governmentality constitutes the governance-object of that polity, the global climate, and how it establishes a particular economy of power to act on it; namely, a carbon governmentality that affects all different aspects of social life throughout the planet and seeks to govern the earth’s carbon cycle at a distance, mostly through techniques of advanced liberal government.

3.2 The political in hegemony and governmentality

The second connection between hegemony and governmentality is their shared relationship to the political. Previously, it was said that hegemony is a political and discursive form of predominance. While enough light has been shed on the latter two – discourse and power – I will now turn to the question ‘where is the political within the polity?’ From what has been said so far, it should have become clear that the political in Laclau/Mouffe and Foucault differs from traditional understandings of politics. Traditionally, politics is situated within a particular space. Political science usually studies the political system – consisting of governments, parliaments, parties and the like. In International Relations, politics is often supposed to be what takes place ‘among nations’ (Morgenthau 1948). Furthermore, more critical approaches, for example the Marxist tradition, also usually draw a stark line between the economy and the political. By contrast, poststructuralist approaches often put forth a much more encompassing understanding of the ‘political’ (Edkins 1999). Such a ‘postfoundational’ understanding of the political highlights ‘the political dimension of the social’ in general and so turns it into an ontological category (Marchart 2005, 16, own translation). Laclau, for example, assumes a ‘primacy of the political’ in that he claims that all social relations have been instituted by a political act and could hence be re-politicised, at least in principle (Laclau 1990, 31-36). In a similar vein, Foucault notes that ‘nothing is political, everything could be politicised, everything may become political’ (quoted in Sennelart 2007, 390).

This section tries to exploit this apparent similarity between these two thinkers and present a common perspective on the political, politicisation and depoliticisation, which further links the two approaches. I start with the distinction between politicisation and depoliticisation in Laclau and Foucault, and link them to two different ideal-types of hegemonic projects: populism and institutionalism. The latter is then equated with Foucault’s
governmentality. Finally, I argue that there are two more ideal types of hegemonic projects – postpolitical populism and counter-conduct – which allow for a more nuanced picture of political action.

3.2.1 Postfoundationalism and the political

Recall that in Laclau and Mouffe all social facts are radically contingent and discursive in nature. Although, for example, climate change consists of objective and natural processes, it only makes sense to us in terms of discursively constituted representations. And these representations are inherently unstable and depend upon the outcomes of discursive struggles. Once a discourse is settled, it excludes some notions and ideas, and this gives rise to an antagonistic outside as the necessary Other of social life. This assumption allows for distinguishing between two layers within society (Laclau 1990, 33). The ‘social’ represents the sedimented structures of a given discourse which are taken for granted, where a particular discursive representation has become hegemonic, so that it is not questioned anymore. By contrast, ‘the political’ refers to those areas of social life where this implicitness has dissolved. This sphere is marked by contestation, instability and hegemonic struggle, where the discursive outside breaks in. In this sense, the political is a latent feature in all areas of social life, which comes to the fore when their implicit foundations are called into question:

The sedimented forms of ‘objectivity’ make up the field of what we will call the ‘social’. The moment of antagonism where the undecided nature of the alternatives and their resolution through power relations become fully visible constitutes the field of the ‘political’ (Laclau 1990, 35).

From this perspective, there is a difference between politics and the political. The former comprises those areas conventionally understood as politics – parliament, diplomacy, elections and the like – and distinguishes it from other social spheres which are not deemed to be political at all. This is also the case with the understanding of politics dominant in International Relations (Neumann & Sending 2010, 50) The political, on the contrary, ‘has to do with the establishment of that very social order which sets out a particular, historically specific account of what counts as politics and defines other areas of social life as not politics’ (Edkins 1999, 2, emphasis in original). In other words, politics is an ontic expression of the ontological category of the political. Or, more simply, the political comprises much more than simply politics. To give an example from the field of global warming: The politics of global warming is usually understood as those interstate negotiations taking place within the UNFCCC. However, from the perspective of the political, one would highlight the fact that the UNFCCC is the outcome of a political process which frames climate politics in a particular way (as the
matter of national governments striving for international cooperation) and thereby excludes other possible framings (as a bottom-up process rooting in civil society). And one would emphasise that the political of climate politics is not sufficiently described in terms of the UNFCCC. For example, some of the supposedly scientific debates within the IPCC are highly political. In this sense, it will be argued throughout the analysis of climate mainstreaming that although one might describe the politics of climate change as strongly politicised (in terms of struggle between national governments), from a perspective of the political these politics are caged into the very narrow framing of carbon governmentality, which declares a broad range of relevant social processes as supposedly apolitical and irrelevant.

The moment that re-activates sedimented social structures and a particular understanding of politics is called ‘dislocation’. It occurs when a particular discourse is ‘confronted by new events that it cannot explain, represent, or in other ways domesticate’ (Torfing 2005, 16). In other words, it is confronted with elements that were once excluded, so that the discursive outside breaks in with such a force that it threatens the unity of the discourse. Given the radical contingency of all meaning, dislocation is an every-day phenomenon, but discourses are often able to deal with small dislocations. In my view, it is thus helpful to analytically distinguish between micro- and macro-dislocations. While a sedimented social order might have developed a system to effectively cope with minor dislocations, macro-dislocations embody such a force that sedimented structures are severely ruptured, and ‘floating’, that is, contested, signifiers emerge. In such a case, a discursive struggle commences about ‘how to heal the rift in the social order’ (Torfing 2005, 16).

An illustrative example for such a dislocation is provided by the ‘climategate’ affair in November 2009, when thousands of emails leaked from the server of the University of East Anglia and bred distrust in the methods of leading climate scientists (The Guardian, February 1, 2010). Previously, climate science had developed quite reliable methods of dealing with climate sceptics (for example, leading scientist used the media to refute them, and created big collaborate assessment reports) so that the regular amount of sceptical dislocations could be managed. However, the ‘climategate’ affair, followed by the ‘Himalaya glacier’ scandal which questioned the credibility of the IPCC (The Guardian, January 20, 2010), developed with such a force that the idea that climate change is an objective and man-made process was called into question. The discursive outside (‘climate scepticism’) re-entered the sphere of the political again. This also makes clear that dislocation can both be the result of mere accident (substandard practices by IPCC members) or political actions (climate sceptics joining sides with computer experts in order to hack a university server), but also physical processes
(Hurricane Katrina, which before had previously dislocated the US climate sceptics discourse). Regardless of the cause, such a dislocation triggers a new hegemonic struggle about the credibility of climate science.

And dislocation is also the place of agency within hegemony theory. In times of stable hegemony, subjects are usually understood as occupying subject positions. This restricts their actions to ‘business as usual’. However, dislocation opens the space for indeterminate decisions. Autonomous action, then, has to be understood as a function of the breakdown of social structures. If the hegemonic order is disrupted by events it cannot process, structural identification becomes impossible for the subjects. In order to integrate the floating elements into an existing discursive order it is necessary to make new decisions on a terrain of undecidability: ‘The subject is nothing but the distance between the undecidable structure and the decision.’ (Laclau 1990, 30). From this perspective, politics is not restricted to the parliament or the government, but a latent feature of all social spheres.

3.2.2 Politicising and depoliticising strategies

As a reaction to a dislocation, subjects can engage in political action. Usually, there are two possible types of operation: a politicising treatment of a particular problem brings the underlying antagonisms to the fore, seeks to broaden the political and aims for the transformation of sedimented social structures. Depoliticisation, on the contrary, includes all counter-strategies which seek to conceal the contingency of reality, sew the gaps in hegemonic discourses or channel dislocations in a way that fundamental social structures remain untouched. It seeks to close down the space of the political again. Based on this, hegemony theory usually distinguishes between two types of hegemonic projects (see for example Howarth 2009; Laclau 2005): populism as the politicising strategy par excellence, and institutionalism as a form of depoliticisation.37 I contend that the latter is paradigmatically embodied by governmentality as a form of power.

37. To avoid misunderstandings, two things have to be kept apart: The political, as opposed to the social, is that part of society which is subject to political struggle. Within this sphere, two types of strategies exist: Depoliticisation, which seeks to restore the old and previously sedimented social order, and politicisation, which tries to increase reactivation of sedimented social structures. In this sense, politicisation and depoliticisation are both political strategies.
**Politicking populism**

The first type of hegemonic project corresponds to the politicising dimension of hegemony and seeks to make use of dislocations in order to trigger social change and challenge the sedimented institutions of a discourse. It is a ‘political practice that captures the making and breaking of political coalitions’ (Howarth 2009, 317). Laclau argues that this offensive type of hegemony is what we often refer to as ‘populism’. He rejects the usual notions of populism identifying it with a certain type of movement, made up of a particular social base or ideological content (Laclau 2005, 117). Here the term is often used pejoratively, defining populism as a simplification of political matters, as a political move seeking to debase the ‘ordinary people’. By contrast, Laclau argues that populism is a general political logic which seeks to construct a ‘people’ in opposition to the established social order. In this sense, it is supposed to be a political act par excellence, because it challenges an existing hegemony in order to institute new types of social relations. Therefore, populism becomes the prime mechanism of real change in society. Laclau argues that such a counter-hegemonic type of political action consists of three moments:

- equivalential relations hegemonically represented through empty signifiers; displacement of the internal frontiers through the production of floating signifiers; and a constitutive heterogeneity which makes dialectical retrievals impossible (Laclau 2005, 156; see also Nonhoff 2006, 213-21).

These dense formulations obviously need to be unpacked. First, as to the latter one, the rather enigmatic aspect of ‘heterogeneity’ means that any successful counter-hegemonic project has to take as its point of departure the Outside of the hegemonic discourse. An established hegemonic order is based on a certain sense of homogeneity of the social space – as, for example, the idea of a political or national community. Heterogeneity, in contrast, refers to ‘the absence of a common space’ (Laclau 2005, 140). Any populist movement has to take its starting point in this discursive outside. It depends on an event of dislocation, that is to say, the intrusion of the discursive outside into the discourse. Only such a point of reference outside the discourse is able to form an actual social antagonism, dividing society into two opposing camps, and thereby challenging the established order. Populism thus depends on a new and challenging representation of the fundamental antagonism which constitutes any social order.

Secondly, the populist movement depends on the existence of floating signifiers. That is, through an event of dislocation, moments which were deeply integrated into the existing hegemonic order, are loosened or even dispatched from the sedimented social structures. These

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38. In order to clarify: this outside is only a virtual and symbolic outside, as everything is discourse. See the previous explanation of the concept of antagonism for this point.
floating signifiers become the objects of political struggle. And while both sides of the antagonistic frontier seek to integrate them into their hegemonic project, they begin to mean different things. Their ‘meaning is indeterminate between alternative equivalential frontiers’ (Laclau 2005, 131). In other words, populist movements seek to break existing signifiers out of a hegemonic bloc and alter their meaning in their own sense. One example for this would be the notion of democracy, which was moved from the liberal sphere of politics to the socialist discourse of economic democracy.

This brings us to the third point: populism involves establishing a chain of equivalence through the creation of ‘empty signifiers’ in order to enable the creation of a new popular identity. In order to grow and gain significance, any counter-hegemonic project needs to assemble a variety of unsatisfied demands questioning the established order. And this unity has to be established discursively, so that the point of reference can only be another demand which acquires a certain centrality (Laclau 2005, 95). That is, the counter-hegemonic project centres on a particular demand, which represents the totality of demands. It is thought to be the one thing that will change the whole social setting. A particular case in point would be the French anti-globalisation movement which initially demanded a financial transaction tax. This tax, however, soon became a symbol for a different form of globalisation also linked to ecological justice, peace, fair trade, equity, and the like. Far from really bringing about all these changes, the tax became a symbol for this whole populist discourse. In a similar vein, the climate-gate emails were turned into a general symbol for the corruption of climate science.

A political strategy is thus politicising when ‘a particular demand (cutting greenhouse gases, stopping the exploitation of a particular resource and so on) starts to function as a metaphoric condensation of the global opposition against Them, those in power, so that the protest is no longer just about that demand, but about the universal dimension that resonates in that particular demand’ (Žižek 1999, 204). Turning Otto von Bismarck’s famous quote upside down, politicisation ‘is the art of the impossible – it changes the very parameters of what is considered ‘possible’ in the existing constellation’ (Žižek 1999, 199)

**Depoliticising governmentality**

The second type of hegemonic project corresponds to the dimension of depoliticisation and comes close the initial questions posed by Gramsci about why the capitalist societies in Western Europe remain so stable. Because hegemony seeks to maintain a particular social order, one can call it the defensive type of hegemony. It is more like a ‘form of rule’ (Howarth 2009, 317). Its basic aim is to avoid major changes in a society, that is, to keep the social struc-
tures sedimeted, to prevent dislocations and political struggles from arising at all. One can see it as a ‘pure administration within a stable and institutional framework’, which results in the ‘death of politics and its reabsorption by the sedimented forms of the social’ (Laclau 2005, 154). David Howarth (2009, 321) has noted – in passing – that this institutionalist form of hegemony is related to Foucault’s concept of governmentality. Indeed, Foucault stated that ‘nothing is political, everything can be politicised, everything may become political. Politics is no more or no less than that which is born with resistance to governmentality, the first uprising, the first confrontation’ (quoted in Senellart 2007). In turn, this would imply that governmentality is a depoliticising form of power – revealing a striking resemblance to the understanding of the political as displayed by Ernesto Laclau. In fact, governmentality is concerned with the ‘right disposition of things’ (Foucault 2007a, 96), which resonates well with the image of a sedimented social setting. Government seeks to manage grievances, problems and demands in a way that the dominant order is not disturbed (Howarth 2009, 321). This forms the heart of the liberal doctrine of government. Ever since the emergence of liberal governmentality, the administration of politics has been obsessed with not ‘governing too much’ (Hindess 2005, 394). It is as well an art of governing as it is an art of not governing. As Foucault notes, the ‘apparatuses of security’ which emerged with governmentality, are concerned with ‘organising circulation, eliminating its dangerous elements, making a division between good and bad circulation, and maximising the good circulation by diminishing the bad’ (Foucault 2007a, 18). Only when circulation crosses a certain dangerous threshold, is governmental intervention necessary. Liberalism, hence, ‘identifies a domain outside “politics”, and seeks to manage it without destroying its existence and autonomy’ (Miller & Rose 2008, 60). By constituting this domain as an autonomous and ‘natural’ entity and managing its disturbances, governmentality (re-)constitutes its basic social structures and so depoliticises them. This parallel is further displayed in the treatment of the welfare state in the two approaches. In order to prevent antagonism from arising, it is necessary to make ‘the limits of the discursive coincide with the limits of the community’ in order to secure its homogeneity (Laclau 2005, 81). In the terms of hegemony theory, the rise of equivalential chains within the social space has to be prevented. For this would divide the social into different camps, followed by antagonism and political struggle. However, the best way to keep equivalence from emerging at all is to strengthen the logics of difference, as it is the natural counterpart of equivalence. And this is precisely what a comprehensive welfare system does: it treats the different demands in a society as distinct cases, isolates them in their specificity and so keeps them from being recognised as having something in common. Whereas there might be multiple demands revolving around injustice and inequality in a society, therefore, they may not
come into being as a general struggle for social justice because they are kept separate through social security institutions. The literature on governmentality, on the other hand, theorised precisely this effect of welfare state institutions through the Foucauldian notion of risk and security. François Ewald and Jacques Donzelot, for example, have shown how risk insurance emerged as a technology of government in response to the many social grievances which accompanied the development of capitalism:

More generally, the dispositif of risk insurance never calls for the reorganization of society but for compensation of damages caused by the social division of labour — and this is not done in the name of a fundamental injustice. (Aradau & Munster 2007, 99; summarising Donzelot 1984).

Or as Deleuze puts it: ‘risk-management turns “individuals” into “dividuals”’ (Deleuze 1992). It is precisely the logic of difference as a depoliticising force in Laclau and Mouffe which characterises the Foucauldian risk dispositif. Slavoj Žižek summarises this point very well:

The ultimate sign of post-politics in all Western countries is the growth of a managerial approach to government: government is reconceived as a managerial function, deprived of its proper political dimension (Žižek 2002, 303)

It is this governmental management which amounts to the core of a depoliticising political strategy.

3.2.3 Hybrids of de/politicisation

In light of the previous distinction between populism and governmentality, it has to be stressed that Ernesto Laclau claims that populism ‘is a necessary ingredient of politics tout court’, ‘the political act par excellence’ (Laclau 2005, 18 & 154). Yet in this section, I argue that it is too simple to equate the creation of equivalences (populism) with politicisation, and the logic of difference (governmentality) with depoliticisation. No hegemonic project is either revolution or reaction, populism or institutionalism, antagonism or common good. Such a simple distinction would only mirror the questionable ‘classic binaries of political thought: power and resistance, government and freedom, and dissent and collaboration’ (Death 2010a, 235) when the relationship between power and resistance is far more complex. What is more, Slavoj Žižek has maintained that populism is far from always politicising but often results in the contrary (Žižek 2006a). In this section, I would like to highlight the depoliticising functions of populism as well as the possibility of politicisation in governmentality. This will result in two additional ideal types of hegemonic strategies: postpolitical populism and counter-conduct. And it is these two that are mostly relevant for the study of climate mainstreaming in subsequent chapters.
Postpolitical populism

First, I disagree that populism is always a politicising strategy. What has been said so far can be boiled down as follows: while a politicising hegemonic project creates a chain of equivalence among some subjects and demands within society in order to forge an antagonism, a depoliticising hegemonic project seeks to organises all parts of social reality according to a logic of difference – often in the form Foucault described as governmentality – in order to prevent equivalences from arising. The climate sceptics attempted to link the ‘Himalayan glacier’ with ‘climate-gate’, but IPCC chairman Pachauri declared the error an unfortunate but singular case (The Guardian, February 2, 2010). Yet I hold that this appealing but overly simplistic distinction, which is common in hegemony theory, violates its very basic propositions.

One has to acknowledge that from a hegemony perspective equivalence and difference are irreducible categories of all social being: ‘all social (that is, discursive) identity is constituted at the meeting point of difference and equivalence’ (Laclau 2005, 80). The problem starts, however, with Laclau’s definition of equivalence in the case of an institutionalist discourse: ‘the universal principle of “differentiality” would become the dominant equivalence’ (Laclau 2005, 81). This comes as a rather awkward twist given the fact that Laclau, laying out the basic propositions of his approach, argues that difference and equivalence are different ontological categories: Each element is ‘constitutively split’ between a logic of difference and a logic of equivalence, which constantly undermine each other (Laclau 1996, 38). So how can it be possible for difference to fulfil the function of equivalence? One can only make sense of this obvious contradiction if one reads difference not as equivalence, but as the downside of every successful hegemonic project. The entity establishing the equivalence, then, would not be difference, but something else. In other words, successful and instituted hegemonic projects also rely on the equivalence among its different moments established by an empty signifier.39

In a similar vein, Slavoj Žižek criticises Laclau’s thesis on populism because it seems to be ontologically tied to politicisation as a political strategy. Although he welcomes Laclau’s

39. The intricate relationship between equivalence and difference is also displayed by the examples Laclau himself discusses in order to illustrate his definition of populism and institutionalism. On the one hand, he argues that even the most equivalential hegemonic project needs to find a way to deal with its internal differences. Laclau cites the case of late Peronism in Argentina (Laclau 2005, 214ff.). The return of Peron, being the empty signifier for that movement, was associated with a whole bunch of different and sometimes contradictory aspirations. However, as the signifier only comprised a person and was extremely empty, the discourse did not find a way to deal with these differences, making the whole project collapse once he finally arrived in Argentina. On the other hand, even the most differential institutionalist discourse relies on equivalence. For instance, the neoliberalism of Thatcher, imposing the market as a general – differential! – organising principle for society, soon had to invent the category of the ‘social security parasites’ which were defined as the threatening Outside of the institutional setting which had to be fought – an equivalence in the form of Them against Us. These examples undermine the very idea of populism-equivalence-politicisation and institutionalism-difference-depoliticisation.
purely formal definition of populism as ‘a kind of transcendental-formal political dispositif that can be incorporated into different political engagements’ (Žižek 2006a, 553), he is sceptical of equating it with politicisation as such. Far from always disclosing the contingency of social formations and turning them into political struggles, it often contains depoliticising elements itself. On the one hand, not only do populist movements summarise their demands in an empty signifier; they also represent their antagonistic ‘other’ as a ‘pseudo-concrete enemy’ so that the ‘the enemy is externalised or reified into a positive ontological entity (even if this entity is spectral) whose annihilation would restore balance and justice’ (Žižek 2006a, 555).

On the other hand, because of this, populism must necessarily exclude ‘the system’ from its analysis and locate the cause of the trouble in the ‘intruder who corrupted it’ (Žižek 2006a, 555). For example, it is often the ‘Jew’ or the greed of ‘bankers’, who are made responsible for economic crises in populist discourses, while the basic economic structures of capitalism fade to the background. And as these are, at least minimally, intrinsic features of every populism, it always harbours a ‘proto-fascist tendency’ (Žižek 2006a, 557). While one does not have to follow this rather extreme conclusion, Žižek draws our attention to the fact that populism does not necessarily have a politicising function, but can itself conceal the radical contingency of all social order. Thus, it resembles an institutionalist hegemony in that it seeks to divert attention away from structural issues. *Vice versa*, the drawing of boundaries and the creation of antagonisms is not a unique feature of populism, but can itself be used by an institutionalist hegemony. For example, the UK’s conservative Major government succeeded in presenting the unemployed single mother as the prime cause for all social problems, whether they be budget deficits or juvenile delinquency concealing the social injustice of the welfare system.

Therefore, Žižek asserts ‘the full inner entwinement of these two logics [of equivalence and difference; C.M.]’ (Žižek 2006a, 558). So, obviously, both types of hegemony share, at least in principle, important resemblances. In other words, often both merge into a third form of political intervention, which one could term ‘postpolitical populism’:

In the highly developed countries of Western Europe and in the U.S., at least, populism is emerging as the inherent shadowy double of institutionalised postpolitics; one is almost tempted to say it is its supplement in the Derridean sense, the arena in which political demands that do not fit the institutionalised space can be articulated. In this sense, there is a constitutive mystification that pertains to populism. Its basic gesture is to refuse to confront the complexity of the situation, to reduce it to a clear struggle with a pseudoconcrete enemy figure (from Brussels bureaucracy to illegal immigrants). Populism is thus by definition a negative phenomenon, a phenomenon grounded in a refusal, even an implicit admission of impotence. (Žižek 2006a, 567)

As a conclusion, postpolitical populism should be seen as a third ideal type for the study of hegemonic projects, which combines elements from populist and institutionalist discourses. On the one hand, it ‘attempts to make the limits of the discursive coincide with the
limits of the community’ (Laclau 2005, 81) by creating a logic of equivalence among its various subjects. It therefore employs a modified combination of operations that Laclau describes for populist projects. First, it creates an antagonism with reference to a radical heterogeneity, yet not within societies, but with a supposedly external enemy, who comes to stand in opposition to the political community – such as, for example, climate change. Secondly, it provides an empty signifier which promises to overcome all grievances and problems. This empty signifier, however, functions in a slightly different way than in populism.\footnote{40} It does not only promote a particular demand, but also frames (almost) every part of the established hegemonic order compatible with this demand. For example, if climate protection became the empty signifier of a postpolitical populist project, it would promise to solve all other grievances, such as poverty. What is more, everything from free trade to growth can be inscribed as a means to achieve climate protection. The empty signifier provides for the cohesion of social order, giving way to the third feature. With regard to floating signifiers, thirdly, it does not seek to promote but to prevent their emergence. Instead of politicisation, it seeks to depoliticise – precisely through the virtues of governmental power, ‘structured around dialogical forms of consensus formation, technocratic management and problem-focused governance, sustained by populist discursive regimes’ (Swyngedouw 2010, 215). In other words, antagonism and empty signifier stabilise the unity of the discourse \textit{vis-a-vis} an (imaginary) external enemy, while governmentality holds the social formation together by conducting conduct in a non-destabilising way. In sum, transferred to the global level, postpolitical populism combines the depoliticising virtues of populism and governmentality and so creates a hegemonic global polity by posing a (virtual) external enemy/threat to this polity, which in turn constitutes the application of governmental power – both with the effect of depoliticising the particular issue area it is applied to.

\textit{Counter-conduct}

In the same way that depoliticisation becomes bound up with populist strategies, one can also imagine an ideal type of politicisation that does without populism. This politicisation can exist within governmentality, which was identified as a depoliticising logic \textit{par excellence}.

The idea of counter-conducts can be revealed through a closer inspection of the relationship between power and resistance in Foucault’s oeuvre. In general, Foucault was eager to stress that ‘where there is power, there is resistance’ (Foucault 1978, 95). For freedom is the prerequisite of power, and hence subjects can opt to refuse and behave differently. However,
in the same way that power is decentralised in Foucault, resistance is also bound to the micro-level (Kulynych 1997, 328). Foucault, hence, claims that ‘there is no single locus of great refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary’ (Foucault 1978, 96). This obviously stands in opposition to the idea of a hegemonic struggle and the virtues of populism, which are precisely interested in how such a single alternative discourse to a social order can emerge. Indeed, it is quite striking and troubling that Foucault actually never analysed how social movements are constituted as movements with a larger significance, and thus missed their role as a collective actor in wider social change. As some suggest, he ‘has deprived the modern rebel of any institutional, normative, or personal resources for constituting herself in terms other than those made available by the forces that already control her’ (Cohen & Arato 1994, 294; cited in Death 2011, 237). Yet he nonetheless taught that there is meaningful resistance below the threshold of a populist hegemonic movement which relies upon stark antagonistic frontiers.

This perspective paradigmatically condenses in Foucault’s understanding of ‘counter-conduct’ (Foucault 2007a, 200; Foucault 2007b, 75). While outlining pastoral power as the ancestor of governmentality, he also discusses the various forms of resistance that Christianity faced, and concludes that ‘if the objective of the pastorate is men’s conduct, I think equally specific movements of resistance and insubordination appeared in correlation with this that could be called specific revolts of conduct’ (Foucault 2007a, 194). Accordingly, he terms these movements of resistance ‘counter-conduct’, understood as a ‘struggle against the processes implemented for conducting others’ (Foucault 2007a, 201). And more precisely he notes that

I do not mean by that that governmentalisation would be opposed by a kind of face-off by the opposite affirmation, ‘we do not want to be governed and we do not want to be governed at all’. I mean that, in this great preoccupation about the way to govern and the search for the ways to govern, we identify a perpetual question which would be: ‘how not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such an objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them’ (Foucault 2007b, 44 emphasis in original).

Instead of focusing on a global alternative outside of a governmentality, as the concept of a populist hegemonic project would do, ‘a counter-conducts approach looks within government to see how forms of resistance rely upon, and are even implicated within, the strategies, techniques and power relationships they oppose’ (Death 2010a, 240, emphasis in original).

Carl Death, who can be credited with establishing counter-conduct as a theoretical perspective to study social movements, thus, proposes to study resistance along the same four dimensions that Dean (2010) established for an ‘analytics of government’. Accordingly, ‘protests make visible particular vistas or discursive horizons and obscure others’ (Death 2010a, 240). Additionally, protestors might invoke alternative forms of knowledge or turn incoher-
ence and gaps within a governmental episteme against it. Furthermore, protest involves a techne – political technologies such as demonstrations, direct action etc. – which are ‘produced and shaped by the forms of government they confront’ (Death 2010a, 241). Finally, protests also rely on an ethos, which form particular counter-subjectivities or play with and subvert existing images of self and others.

Above, it was argued that the depoliticising form of an institutionalist hegemony can be understood in terms of governmentality. The notion of counter-conduct, which is closely related to the concept of governmentality, thus, reveals the politicising potential of such an institutionalist, defensive order. It was said that for Foucault politics is ‘no more or no less than that which is born with resistance to governmentality, the first uprising, the first confrontation’ (quoted in Sennelart 2007, 390). It is precisely this first uprising which irrupts without a broader social antagonism but from the simple refusal to be governed in certain ways which nonetheless represents a politicising movement. It is politicising because ongoing and repeated subversion of governmentality is not simply a refusal, but will shift the governmentality and so have a hegemonic effect. As Foucault has made clear several times, it is the practices from which rationalities of government derive (not the other way round) – and if practices change, so will the rationalities (Foucault 1991). Instead of forging an encompassing antagonism between an old order and a new order, counter-conduct seeks to transform a hegemonic order from within. Put bluntly, while populism employs the logic of equivalence for social change, counter-conduct harnesses the logic of difference in order to invoke the necessary play of differences – Derrida’s ‘differance’ (Derrida 1982, 5ff.), the radical contingency and ambiguity of an established social order.

To give but a brief example of this distinction from the field of climate change: a common – equivalential – strategy of protest against carbon offsetting is to link it to carbon fraud, colonialism, and windfall profits. This situates it within a broader scepticism towards market mechanisms and capitalism in order to constitute it as an antagonistic enemy. A different strategy is employed by the British activist group Cheat Neutral (CheatNeutral 2011). They seemingly adopt the idea of offsetting and translate it to the field of personal relationships. Their website offers individuals an allowance for cheating their partner by paying a small amount of money to someone else who in return promises not to cheat anymore in her relationship. In other words, Cheat Neutral draws on and affirms a particular governmentality, but invokes the play of differences by putting offsetting into a different context and so discrediting it – without, however, creating an antagonistic frontier.

This is not to say that such a counter-conduct might not well become a populist project, drawing on the space that was created through resistance in order to forge a more encom-
passing alternative. The concept of counter-conduct, however, sheds light on the practices of resistance and the ambiguities of discourse below the threshold of a coherent hegemonic project.41

3.2.4 Conclusion: Evading the normative deficit

In this subsection, I have drawn on a distinction between the political and the social as well as between politicisation and depoliticisation in order to flesh out different forms of hegemonic projects. Departing from a simple division between populism and institutionalism as politicising and depoliticising forms of hegemony, I have established two additional ideal-types of hegemonic strategies: postpolitical populism and counter-conduct.42 Whereas the former uses equivalence and antagonism as a means of depoliticisation, the latter harnesses the logic of difference for politicising a particular issue area. Through this elaboration of different types of hegemonic projects, it has also become clear that these types are not strict opposites, but situated on a continuum between politicisation and depoliticisation as well as between the logic of equivalence/antagonism and the logic of difference/governmentality. This double continuum (see figure 1 on page 77) represents the second point of contact between hegemony and governmentality.

With regard to climate mainstreaming, connecting governmentality and hegemony to politicisation and depoliticisation like this makes it possible to flesh out the relationship between the ‘climate’ and the ‘political’ in global climate politics by evaluating the political effects of hegemony and governmentality in climate mainstreaming. In particular, this typology will be used to characterise climate mainstreaming as a postpolitical populist discursive strategy implementing a carbon governmentality – as a depoliticising way of expanding the climate polity – which is mostly challenged by strategies of counter-conduct.

41. This is a point also raised by Johannes Angermüller (2007b) who argues that Laclau and Mouffe undervalue the role of radical contingency in their analysis of hegemony, by neglecting that meaning in principle escapes fixation.

42. Despite the risk of boring repetition, I would like to emphasise that these are ideal-types in the Weberian sense. Max Weber defined ideal-types as the ‘one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view’, through which ‘concrete individual phenomena […] are arranged into a unified analytical construct’, so that the result represents an ‘utopia [that] cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality’ (Weber 1949, 90). In this sense, the ideal-types are unlikely to be carved out in their pure form in empirical analysis, but rather present an analytical heuristic for it.
Figure 1: Types of hegemonic projects

![Graph showing the relationship between Populism, Postpolitical Populism, Counter-Conduct, Governmentality, Equivalence, and Difference]

Source: own compilation

Adding complexity to the politicisation/depoliticisation-distinction, finally, also affects the question of normativity. It has to be stressed that the distinction between politicisation and depoliticisation as such does not entail a particular normative position on whether or not one of the two is desirable or not. The hegemony literature sometimes seems to imply that politicisation understood in terms of revealing the contingency of social order is ‘ethical’, whereas depoliticisation is deemed to be ‘ideological’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 191-99). Although I would broadly agree, there are clearly limits to it. For one thing, it is difficult to deduce such a normative position from hegemony theory itself – which is why particularly Laclau has often been accused of a normative deficit (most prominently by Critchley 2004). Moreover, one could easily imagine situations in which reality is not as easy. For example, the NSDAP in the 1920s and 1930s in Germany could easily be understood as a politicising

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43. Please note that this is not a mathematical graph, but a combination of two continua (as the two arrows on each axis indicate). The intersection between the two axes therefore is not to be conflated with an origin or zero-point – it simply represents the place where equivalence and difference, for example, are rather balanced.

44. It is not entirely clear if Glynos and Howarth really judge these two concepts normatively. Yet the choice of terminology at least implies this.
movement, without however having anything in common with what I deem to be a normatively desirable position at all. By contrast, one would wish a country such as Afghanistan a much more depoliticised setting, in which the battle between the antagonistic hegemonic projects is not fought with such violent means. This of course does not do justice to these two complex empirical examples, but highlights the fact that equating politicisation with emancipation is too easy.

In light of the often cited critique of a normative deficit in Laclau, one should be aware, however, that Hegemony and Socialist Strategy embodied a deeply normative element, which is expressed in the subtitle: Towards a radical democratic politics. This is a normative element, however, which is not inherent to the theory itself but an external commitment by those using this theory. Chantal Mouffe (for example Mouffe 2005), has since tried to develop a model of agonistic pluralism, which acknowledges the fact that politics is antagonistic but seeks to translate this into an institutionalist order so as to evade the extremes of politicisation and depoliticisation. She argues that democratic politics has to offer strong alternatives which are fought over and must not invoke the dubious idea of a common good which could be achieved rather technocratically. The idea of radical democracy, as developed by Laclau and Mouffe together, goes even further and stresses the contingency of all order, which makes it necessary to constantly question the the foundations of a democratic society. Following Martin Nonhoff (Nonhoff 2010, 48ff.; citing Laclau 2005), this ideal can be summarised in five points: First, Laclau and Mouffe argue that there is no natural place and necessary holder of power, but that ‘the empty place of democracy’ is subject to political struggle (citing Lefort 1989). Secondly, the common good is an empty place, but is always the result of political articulations. Thirdly, the demos of democracy cannot be seen as a given entity, but something which is constantly in reformation. Fourthly, a radical egalitarianism is necessary, which does not give priority to one particular grievance or struggle (such as anticapitalism), but links different struggles together. In other words, radical democracy combines elements of institutionalism, populism and pluralism. And this, as Laclau admits, an impossible ‘square circle’, but it is ‘the impossibility of conceptually mastering the contingent forms in which it crystallises’ is what constitutes radical democracy (Laclau 2005, 261). In other words, it is the impossibility of radical democracy that calls for its constant re-foundation, which, in turn, makes it democratic. As Martin Nonhoff aptly puts it, radical democracy means

that essential elements of this democracy are not based on necessary ground: The political structures, the people and its common good and the plural identities of political actors as well as relationship among these elements can only be understood as a result of a collective political process. And this process is necessarily antagonist – precisely because there is no reliable ground, and if we look for this ground, we always have to demarcate it from its alternatives. (Nonhoff 2010, 50)
This, obviously meets with the Foucauldian perspective on emancipation, who was never specific about an alternative order. For him it was clear that power was an irreducible factor of social life, and thus emancipation would depend on keeping power structures as mobile and reversible as possible.

3.3 Fantasy: The glue of hegemonic narratives

Before we turn to a joint operationalisation of hegemony and governmentality, a further, though somewhat smaller, point of contact has to be introduced: the notion of fantasy. An early criticism of hegemony theory raised by Slavoj Žižek concerns the role of the subject in hegemony theory (Žižek 1990). He argued that the identification of the subject can much better be accounted for with reference to the Lacanian concept of fantasy. The notion of social fantasies since then has become a common point of reference in a large part (but not all) of the hegemony literature (Glynos & Howarth 2007; Stavrakakis 1999). In this subsection, I will flesh out the relationship between hegemony and fantasy, and argue that fantasy is a category that has so far been neglected in the literature on governmentality, although it is often implicitly entailed. And even though it is not essential to governmentality, it provides an interesting point of contact to the hegemony literature. Moreover, it also addresses a question that has implicitly been raised in the previous section: how is it possible for a postpolitical populist hegemonic project to depict its outside as an existential and urgent threat but also to propose to react by implementing governmentality, which is concerned with not governing too much? I argue that both are connected by a logic of apocalypse. Finally, it adds to understanding what makes a polity attractive for subjects.

3.3.1 Laclau’s lack of fantasy

Žižek’s starting point for the critique of hegemony theory is Lacanian psychoanalysis. According to Laclau, desires are based in the constitutive lack of every individual identity. He distinguishes between the three levels of the psyche: the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. The imaginary is the level of self-imagination or self-consciousness and is intrinsically tied to the ‘mirror stage’ – the moment in which a baby realises its own mirror image and experiences itself as a complete and whole being. However, when it comes to social interaction, it is necessary to translate this whole image into words and other symbols, the symbolic order.

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45. As Lacan is a very complex and inaccessible thinker, the following presentation of his ideas is taken from Stavrakakis (1999).
And as the symbolic order is, analogous to our argument about discourse, a system of purely differential relations and radically contingent, it is impossible to completely represent the imaginary. Representation necessarily fails. In other words, the subject experiences a fundamental and constitutive lack when trying to represent its individuality. However, at the level of the imaginary, the idea of a whole, pure and complete being remains intact, and this discrepancy between the symbolic and the imaginary creates an ‘absent fullness’ (Stavrakakis 1999, 47). Finally, the level of the real comprises those things that can neither be said nor imagined. It marks the limits of all symbolic as such. In sum, while the symbolic constantly fails to catch the imaginary, it does not even have the means trying to catch the real. The subject is marked by a ‘constitutive lack’ (Stavrakakis 1999, 37). And this constitutive lack, in turn, constitutes a desire. It is sublimed into a particular object, which becomes the symbol for the unachieved fullness. Once achieved, this object compensates the fundamental lack. However, this is only an illusion, because the lack is fundamental and can never be compensated.

Such a conception of the subject offers striking parallels to the discursive ontology laid out so far. Where the discourse is radically contingent, the subject is marked by an absent fullness, a constitutive lack. Where the discursive outside defines the limits of the social, the real represents the outside to the symbolic and imaginary order of the psyche. And where the subliminal object represents the desire for an unachievable fullness, the empty signifier seeks to establish a necessary but impossible discursive stability. However, the linchpin where both theoretical strands converge is the idea of antagonism. Antagonism is the necessary condition of any discursive identity:

Insofar as there is antagonism, I cannot be a full presence for myself. But nor is the force that antagonises me such a presence: its objective being is a symbol of my non-being and, in this way, it is overflowed by a plurality of meaning which prevent its being as fixed and full positiv-ity. (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 125)

Therefore, both identities constantly subvert each other, and each subject position is marked by a fundamental lack of fullness - and the responsibility for this failure of full identification is located in the opponents identity. This antagonism is not a pre-given and stable entity, but an internal relationship. One identity could not exist without its constitutive outside. Thus, antagonism, the general negation of my own identity, is an ontological category, which can be filled with a variety of ontic contents. And this is where it meets with the fundamental lack in psychoanalytic theory. This lack of fullness corresponds to the Lacanian notion of the subject as ‘the empty place of the structure’ (Žižek 1990). As subjects are marked by a fundamental lack of identity, i.e. they can never realise their full presence as a being and try to compensate for this lack by identifying with different subject positions. Filling this gap with a blocked identity is especially attractive because it enables the projection of the con-
stitutive lack onto the antagonistic opponent. Then, it is not myself that prevents me from achieving my fullness, but my antagonistic other: ‘the negativity of the other which is preventing me from achieving my full identity with myself is just an externalisation of my own auto-negativity’ (Zižek 1990, 252).

This relationship of filling the subjective lack can be captured by the Lacanian notion of social fantasy:

Fantasy is then to be conceived as an imaginary scenario the function of which is to provide a kind of positive support filling out the subject’s constitutive void. […]It is a necessary counter-part to the conception of antagonism, a scenario filling out the voids of the social structure by the fullness of enjoyment. (Zižek 1990, 254)

The category of enjoyment, thus, enables the theorising of the subject before subjectivation and explains the ‘grip’ that hegemonic orders can exert on human subjects – in that it makes the antagonistic Other responsible for blocking the development of its full potential. Social fantasies are thus to be understood as narratives ‘providing an image of of fullness, wholeness, or harmony, on the one hand, while conjuring up threats and obstacles to its realisation’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 130). Thus, the enjoyment which is provided by such a discourse comes comprises two dimensions: a horrific and beatific one, or even a combination of the two (Stavrakakis 1999, 100ff.). Either someone or something is depicted as the enemy or obstacle to be overcome for regaining ones absent fullness. Or something has to be depicted as a necessary achievement for filling the subjective lack. In any case, every hegemonic project, in order to be successful, has to contain such a fantasmatic narrative.

### 3.3.2 Foucault’s lack of fantasy

Fantasmatic narratives are also crucial for the form of power Foucault describes as pastoral power, the origin of modern governmentality.46 Foucault, however, neglected, or at least downplayed, the fact that Christianity47 and/or its oriental ancestors not only gave birth to the pastorate as a distinct form of power, but were also the first apocalyptic religions. Apocalyptic religions do not assume that god(s) will intervene into the course of history to steer it but will appear at the end of history for a last judgment. On the contrary the Roman gods, such as Fortuna, had a direct influence on people’s lives and fates.

This focus on the end of times highlights a crucial element for pastoral power to actually work. The ideological background of pastoral power is a fantasmatic narrative that takes the

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46. Large parts of the arguments within this subsection have been developed in collaboration with Delf Rothe (Methmann & Rothe 2011).

47. For Foucault’s analysis of the pastoral power, confession and the Christian regime of truth see Macmillan 2011.
twofold form of a promise and a warning. On the one hand, the end of the world is looming; on the other, it promises a universal salvation, an absolute fullness-to-come if the subjects behave properly according to God’s law. Pastoral power is only effective because the Last Judgement must be feared at any moment. As such, the confession not only deploys ongoing practices of surveillance, optimisation and the conducting of conduct, but at the same time also serves the function of continuously recalling the millenarian context of human life. In this sense, the Christian conduct of conduct drew inherently on an image of living in the end times – backed up by a series of constitutive antagonisms between good and evil, this world and afterworld, light and darkness etc. Thus, the subject’s fear and its perceived lack were confronted with the Last Judgement and this can be regarded as the primary governmental fantasy behind the pastoral power. This corresponds to Lacan’s lack of the subject.

In this sense, I argue that the governmentalization of the state not only introduced pastoral power into politics, but also the dimension of an apocalyptic fantasy. Governmentality as the modern form of pastoral power is still necessarily grounded upon and legitimised through fantasmatic narratives. In these modern fantasies, god has disappeared and is substituted with different concepts such as technological development, a nature out of control or the poor that have become dangerous. In other words, the establishment of governmental power within a global polity has to be backed up by a social fantasy, defining a particular obstacle which has to be overcome in order to achieve the common good. Claudia Aradu and Rens van Munster (2011, chapter 2) have provided a fascinating account of the threat of a dawning, possibly apocalyptic, nuclear war enabled the government of the Cold War through Foucauldian risk technologies. Michael Dillon has also recently drawn attention to the fact that modern apparatuses of security are essentially tied to apocalyptic imaginaries:

As a political eschatology, the rule of truth spoken by modern politics of security is concerned with the end of things, while the truth of rule that it institutes, and for which it kills, derives from the positive exigencies of government and rule that arise in restricting that end. (Dillon 2011, 782)

As will be shown in chapters 5 and 6 of this book, apocalypse helps to spread a pastoral responsibility at the global level by constructing humanity as a political subject confronted with an external enemy like dangerous climate change, and that this enables the application of pastoral power in the form of governmentality. In this sense, it is helpful to analyse the fantasmatic content of a global polity in order to flesh out how it gives coherence to the combination of external antagonism and internal governmentality that so impinges on the identity of the subjects of that polity. And if climate change as an external threat results in no more than piecemeal and technocratic carbon governmentality, this is due to the fantasmatic logic of apocalypse.
3.4 Towards operationalisation: Governmentality, polity, hegemony and fantasy

I would like to conclude this theory chapter by pulling together what has been said so far about hegemony and governmentality into what traditional approaches would call operationalisation, thereby drawing on the ‘logics of critical explanation’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007). I suggest that hegemony is particularly helpful to what Jason Glynos and David Howarth describe as the ‘political logics’ of a polity, while governmentality corresponds to their ‘social logics’. The ‘fantasmatic logics’ explain how both play together as a coherent whole.

Positivist theories of International Relations and even some post-positivist approaches operationalise theories through deduction: they deduct hypotheses from the covering laws or causal mechanism of their theoretical framework and set out to test them against the empirical material. Without anticipating too much of the following chapter on methodology, it should be clear that this not a path a poststructuralist explanation can take. Acknowledging the radical contingency of all (that is, also academic!) knowledge implies a different function for theories, and hence a different way of operationalising them. Explanation, from a poststructuralist perspective, is close to what Laclau and Mouffe have termed articulation (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 105); articulating two elements alongside each other alters the meaning of both. Theoretical concepts, when articulated within an empirical context, do not stay the same, but adapt to that particular context. Thus, theories do not so much function as hard theoretical edifices but rather as conceptual quarries which help to make sense of empirical reality. This section, thus, does not deduct hypotheses for operationalisation, but rather proposes a framework which provides tools for empirical analysis. How can we bring the different concepts that were discussed into a feasible order?

The ‘logics of critical explanation’ developed by Glynos and Howarth (2007) proposes to focus on ‘regimes of practices’ as the primary units of analysis, the sedimented practices which structure a given field. In the first part of this chapter, it was found that the concept of the global polity – understood as common orientation towards a governance-object — enables the concepts of governmentality and hegemony to become relevant to the analysis of global politics. It was also argued that the global polity has to be understood as a set of practices organised around a common object, so I propose that a first step involves understanding regimes of practices at the global level as global polities. A global polity is supposed ‘to have been constructed whenever a set of actors or “governance-subjects” agree upon the existence
of one or more common “governance-objects” that significantly impinges upon the identities of those actors’ (Corry 2010b, 101). It is obvious that global climate politics constitutes what can be labelled a global climate polity.

Glynos and Howarth, moreover, argue that regimes of practices can be characterised by means of ‘logics’. Logics, here, comprise ‘the rules and grammar of the practice, as well as the conditions which make the practice both possible and vulnerable’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 136). Hence, one can distinguish between ‘social’ and ‘political’ logics, which represent these two dimensions, respectively. A third type of logics speaks to the way the subject is made complicit within such a hegemonic discourse as discussed by Slavoj Žižek (1990). It is called the fantasmatic logics. Together, they structure the investigation of regimes of practices.  

First, social logics condense what is actually going on, what makes up the essence of a regime; how it ticks and how power is exercised. I suggest that these logics can best be explained in terms of governmentality. Foucault, and particularly Dean's (2010) analytics of government, are both interested in the practices which constitute a regime of government, in the recurring processes which organise the exercise of power. Thus, I propose to study the social logics of a global polity through its fields of visibility as the imagined governance-object on which government is to act; through the episteme of governmental rationalities that make this object thinkable and define the means and ends of government; through the techné of political technologies and technical devices that enact these rationalities; and through the ethos of subjectivities and identities it produces within the global polity. This is supposed to reveal how power operates in the global polity beyond national sovereignty through invoking liberal norms and harnessing IOs, NGOs and supposed soft and indirect mechanisms of power; in short, how the global polity is governed at a distance. The social logics thus address the question how the global climate polity is rendered governable, how a certain governance-object comes into existence and how it is acted upon. In the following analysis of cli-

48. Very similarly, Martin Nonhoff has argued that both discourse and hegemony actually entail two dimensions: a static-spatial one, which comprises the order and structure of a set of discursive articulations; and a temporary-dynamic understanding, which comprises the way these articulations are formed (Nonhoff 2007; Nonhoff 2010). This is precisely what it is entailed in such an understanding of logics.

49. It has to be clarified, though, that there is a slight difference in terminology between Foucault and Glynos/Howarth. When the latter speak of regimes of practices, they refer to those everyday practices that are carried out unquestioned and implicit. Foucault, on the contrary, focuses on practices that are deliberately aimed at governing conduct – that is, practices that seek to shape everyday practices. I propose to combine these two understandings towards a regime of practices which comprises both the everyday practices and the practices which govern them.
mate mainstreaming I claim that this is achieved by constructing ‘carbon’ as the main governance-object of the climate polity, and implementing governmentality as the main form of power acting on carbon.

Second, the political logics describe how regimes are instituted, challenged, defended and transformed. I suggest that this dimension can best be analysed with the conceptual toolkit of hegemony theory. As was mentioned earlier, hegemony theory highlights the fact that a global polity cannot do without antagonism and a constitutive outside, which creates a logic of equivalence among its subjects. And it depends on the existence of an empty signifier, which comes to be the governance object, either in the form of a threat to be averted or the common good to be achieved. In sum, it thus sheds light on how a global polity is constituted discursively.

I have introduced four different types of hegemonic projects – populism, institutionalism, postpolitical populism, and counter-conduct – which provide ideal types of political strategies for establishing, contesting or even enlarging a particular global polity. For example, below I will argue that the global climate polity is established through a strategy of postpolitical populism: It creates a fundamental antagonism between ‘humanity’ and ‘dangerous climate change’, and thus results in the construction of a global polity. This polity revolves around ‘climate protection’ which takes the form of an empty signifier. It implements carbon governmentality as a way of dealing with climate change. In sum, the postpolitical populist climate polity administered by carbon governmentality results in a depoliticisation of climate governance. As another example, I will show that this polity is contested through the mode of counter-conduct. Governmentality is mainly confronted with attempts to destabilise it from within. Finally, I seek to demonstrate that postpolitical populism can also account for the enlargement of the climate polity through climate mainstreaming. By constructing ‘dangerous climate change’ as a master threat to many other global polities such as development or security, and climate protection as an empty signifier that promises to solve other world problems such as economic stagnation or ecosystem degradation, it allows for carbon governmentality to intervene into these other policy areas and work towards depoliticisation.

Third, the fantasmatic logic deals with the question of how a particular hegemonic discourse becomes attractive for individual subjects, that is, in other words, how a global polity becomes a coherent and compelling narrative surface. As I have shown above, this is a dimension which is implicitly contained in the two other dimensions, so I will not employ a distinct theoretical approach to deal with it. However, it is important to have this linkage in mind as it can account for how a particular polity is rendered significant and impinges on the
identity of its subjects. Below I will argue that the global climate polity is held together by an apocalyptic fantasy underpinning the postpolitical populism, and that it results in an externalisation of existing grievances and problems towards climate change. In chapter 2, I have argued that established approaches of International Relations are insufficiently equipped when it comes to dealing with climate mainstreaming. Particularly, they focus too much on actors and institutions, and pay too little attention to discourse and power. With the theoretical framework developed, I attempt to overcome these shortcomings. The concept of the global polity allows for leaving behind the traditional image of international relations, and enables hegemony and governmentality to become global. And these two, combined with the affective dimension of fantasy, introduce a systematic treatment of the relationship between discourse and power to the study of global politics.

50. These are, of course, analytical distinctions: on the one hand, every social order has of course clearly political effects. For example, governmentality works towards depoliticisation. On the other hand, every political project necessarily entails some ideas what would be a good social order in the sense of the social. Therefore, it is necessary to treat these logics as the analytical dimensions, and always bear in mind the various points of connection between governmentality, hegemony, polity, and fantasy that were fleshed out throughout this chapter.
Poststructuralist methodology: A contradiction in terms?

Within the positivist mainstream of International Relations, methodology is often understood as a set of unchanging and transcendent rules for research, which, when correctly applied, will allow us to accumulate true knowledge about the world out there (for a prominent example see King, Keohane & Verba 1994). Poststructuralism, of course, dissents from such epistemic realism. It does not rely on ‘a free-standing and neutral set of rules and techniques which can be applied mechanically to all empirical objects’ (Howarth 2005, 317). Thus, poststructuralism rejects any orthodoxy of methodological standards (Campbell 1993, 7-8). Yet this raises the question as to why one explanation should be regarded as better than another, if every explanation is just one contingent representation of reality. How can we distinguish ‘true’ from ‘false’ explanations? This problem has led some scholars to declare poststructuralism a ‘dead tradition of thought’ (Giddens 1988, 195), a ‘cul-de-sac’ of ‘postmodernist insignificance’ (Worth 2006, 385) and made others claim that postmodern approaches are not scientific at all (Walt 1991, 223). Even if one does not agree with this elaborate form of academic scolding, one cannot deny that poststructuralism often comes with a certain lack of explicit methodological considerations (Milliken 1999). Too often, it is couched in a literary, inaccessible and opaque style. Although I acknowledge that this style is mostly a deliberate methodological choice in order to break with the idea of a superior ‘scientific’ knowledge, I support Jennifer Milliken’s argument (1999) that poststructuralism would not work without some at least some implicit methodological principles, too – although they are much more flexible.

51. If I refer to poststructuralism in this chapter, I am aware of the fact that this is a label which the ones subsumed under it usually reject – for good reasons – and that there actually is no single and coherent school which could be called poststructuralism. Instead, poststructuralism here first and foremost refers to the theoretical framework developed in chapter 3.
and context-dependent than in positivism. Making these implicit choices explicit is the aim of
this chapter. I will start by introducing plausibility as the general yardstick for postpositivist
approaches\textsuperscript{52}, which results in a ‘postpositivist paradox’ (Wullweber 2010, 49). The second
part then revisits core themes of positivist methodology from a poststructuralist perspective
and utilises them for increasing the plausibility of postpositivist explanations. In passing, this
second part also outlines the methodological choices made for the study of climate
mainstreaming.

4.1 Plausibility and the postpositivist paradox

Poststructuralist explanations cannot do without certain methodological principles. This
claim is based upon the idea of ‘methodological holism’ (Diaz-Bone 2007), which derives
from the French school of epistemology. It argues that scientific progress does not simply ad-

dvance on a gradual scale, but is marked by discontinuity and ‘epistemic breaks’ (Bachelard
1993). Suddenly, a novel and more convincing conceptualisation of the world emerges and
makes science incompatible with past conceptual images.\textsuperscript{53} Science is organised by different –
and most importantly: incommensurable – abstractions of the world. There is no ‘universal’
idea of science. Instead, every attempt to capture, measure, or describe reality is based on this
very conceptual imagery which defines what exactly reality is. An overarching and tran-
scendental criterion for the truth of scientific statements is hence impossible. In other words,
the philosophy of science is no abstract undertaking. Every school of thought has to define its
own criteria for the validity of knowledge. Having said this, it is clear that research centres
on a ‘primacy of theory’ (Diaz-Bone 2006a, paragraph 6, own translation). Theory becomes
the ‘metaphysics of method, and the trilogy of theory, methodology and method form an aes-
thetic whole’ (Diaz-Bone 2006b, 6, own translation). In other words, any empirical inquiry
has to be congruent with methodological principles that have to be derived from the theore-
tical framework. In a nutshell, this theoretical framework developed in the previous chapter
claims that truth is a function of hegemony, which is the sedimented result of political
struggle and hence radically contingent. And this also affects, of course, scientific knowledge,

\textsuperscript{52} In this section I use poststructuralism and postpositivism almost interchangeably. Bearing in mind that
the latter refers to the methodological commitments of a much broader range of approaches which break with
positivist principles, I refer to postpositivism to address questions which also apply to poststructuralist
approaches – without denying that there are severe differences between poststructuralist and other
postpositivist approaches.

\textsuperscript{53} This apparently is close to the Kuhnian philosophy of science. It was, however, formulated some decades
before Kuhn and is reflected implicitly in the tradition of French poststructuralism (Diaz-Bone 2007). This is
why it serves here as the main point of reference.
so that ‘there is no truth or value independent of the context, that the validity of any statement is only contextually determined’ (Laclau 1996, 52); Michel Foucault stated a little more precisely, about the same matter that:

Each society has its regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth – that is, the types of discourses it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements; the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault 1994c, 131).

Accordingly, explanations are not true because they adhere to some independent, transcendent criteria or procedures, as in positivism. Nor are they simply convincing in and by themselves. Poststructuralism, hence, replaces scientific objectivity with plausibility. Yet the plausibility of an explanation derives from its compatibility with a hegemonic discourse (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 190). Thus, by its very own assumptions, what makes a poststructuralist explanation a convincing or true one is that its methodological choices relate to a dominant regime of truth.

And this results in what Joscha Wullweber has aptly termed the ‘postpositivist paradox’ (Wullweber 2010, 49). For this dominant regime, ironically, happens to be a positivist one. Therefore, whereas postpositivism as a methodological position champions a plurality of research styles and strategies of inquiry, any postpositivist explanation has to be articulated within a positivist environment; yet articulated, in the sense of Laclau and Mouffe, so that both their identities are modified (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 105). Therefore, poststructuralist explanations are all the more plausible when they are postpositivist in the strict sense of the term: not only post-positivist by breaking with positivist principles in line with its own theoretical commitments, but also post-positivist by not disposing of its positivist context at all. In the following section I thus seek to utilise core themes of a positivist methodology for the study of climate mainstreaming and discuss how they could be interpreted from a poststructuralist angle.

4.2 Conditions of plausibility

The remainder of this chapter reads some core propositions of positivism from a poststructuralist perspective. It first of all answers the question in the affirmative whether and how poststructuralism can provide explanations, which are often understood as the gold standard of social science (cf. King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 75). It then turns to the ‘holy trin-
ity of validity, reliability and generalisability’, the ‘methodolatry’ of the positivist philosophy of science (Janesick 1994, 214) and discusses how they can be used to increase the plausibility of a poststructuralist explanation.

### 4.2.1 Explanation: Replacing deduction with retroduction

According to terms of the philosophy of social sciences, a poststructuralist approach cannot ‘explain’. As Martin Hollis and Steve Smith in their highly influential work on the philosophy of International Relations argue, the discipline can be grouped broadly in two incompatible camps, which correspond to the Weberian notions of explaining (*Erklären*) and understanding (*Verstehen*) (Hollis & Smith 1990; Hollis & Smith 1994). Explanation seeks to reveal causes through scientific methods, whereas understanding is a hermeneutic endeavour. Indeed, a distinction between two camps in International Relations – tied to the notion of the so-called Third Debate – is common sense in IR theory and organises the discipline along the line of positivism vs. postpositivism, rationalism vs. reflectivism, or causal vs. constitutive explanations – often paradigmatically condensed in questions of ‘why’ and ‘how’, respectively (Wight 2002). Within this picture, poststructuralism is, of course, located within the latter side of the distinction – as an account which is primarily concerned with understanding the generation of meaning, rejecting the positivist methodology, and providing constitutive accounts of social phenomena. Hence, it is deemed as not being able to explain.54

Colin Wight and others have convincingly shown that this blunt picture is highly problematic as it does not do justice to the richness and ambiguity of International Relations theory (Wight 2002). And this especially applies to poststructuralist approaches. Given its interest in discourses as *structures* of meaning and the very limited role of an independent subject, it is an odd misunderstanding to group poststructuralism as a hermeneutic approach.55 It is interested in interdiscursive meaning, but not in the hermeneutic sense of uncovering individual reasons, but in order to flesh out larger structures across different individual perceptions. Poststructuralism, hence, cannot be captured by this distinction. And in the following I will argue that it can indeed explain – *but transforms what counts as an explanation*.

This argument departs from what is usually understood as an explanation in International Relations and social sciences in general. Here, explanation is thought of in terms of causal in-

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54. To be precise, poststructuralism is strangely absent in the work of Hollis and Smith (1990). However, given the binary structure of their argument, there is no other option than grouping poststructuralism as an understanding approach.

55. Below we will see that Foucault’s (1972) method of archaeology, for example, is precisely about bracketing individual intentions.
ference (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 75). And causal inference is only possible in virtue of the ‘Deductive-Nomological Model’, which is imported from the natural sciences (Hempel 1942). Here, the *explanans*, a particular phenomenon or case, is related with an *explanandum* which transcends the particular case: a covering law. This is derived from a theoretical framework and tested against a broad range of empirical cases in order to show that this particular cause systematically results in the phenomenon to be explained. Only such a covering law is deemed to be ‘true’ and able to explain the individual case. This model of explanation is crucially based on retrospective prediction. Only when the theoretical law would have predicted a particular phenomenon, it is regarded as a proper explanation. While laws are much more obvious in the natural sciences, there is probably no single social science law which has not failed to explain a certain range of cases, successively extending the list of exceptions and narrowing conditions.\(^{56}\) Some have concluded from this that the model of natural science does not apply to the social in general, as it does not account for the complexities of human life (Flyvbjerg 2001).

In line with this criticism, a poststructuralist perspective rejects the positivist model of causal explanation. It problematises both the *explanandum* as well as the *explanans* as conceived by positivist approaches (Wullweber 2010, 45-46). On the one hand, poststructuralism breaks with the idea of a purely empirical realm. If we adopt an anti-foundationalist epistemology (see chapter 3) and assume that although there is an independent material reality, this reality can only be accessed through a ‘certain meaningful field’ (Laclau 1993, 431), we have to accept that every representation of reality is always already structured and permeated by discourse. There is no ‘pure empiricism’ (Wullweber 2010, 45). Every empirical problem, phenomenon or case is the result of an active problematisation which draws on a certain theoretical discourse.\(^{57}\) Every *explanandum* is thus always already a *constructed explanandum*.

Poststructuralism also rejects the idea of purely theoretical universal laws. If the anti-essentialist ontology of hegemony theory (see also chapter 3) asserts that all structures are radically contingent, this extends to scientific discourses. If positivists speak of the ‘systematic features of a causal effect’ and establish a stark distinction between the systematic and non-systematic parts of reality (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 83), they are clearly not aware of the poststructuralist objection that there are no closed, stable and coherently structured systems.

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56. One could conclude from this that social science is not positivistic enough yet, that it simply lacks the proper ambition and permanence to discover exhaustive law-like explanations. It is obvious that this not likely to be the road a poststructuralist would go down. For a more detailed justification of the claim about the impossibility of prediction see Glynos and Howarth (2007, chapter 1).

57. For example, as was argued in chapter 2, climate mainstreaming only becomes a problem worth studying when approached with a certain theoretical framework in mind and cannot be depicted as an independent thing-in-the-world that would be a problem as such.
Every law exists only by virtue of a hegemonic discourse and is thus a contingent and historical entity. Abstracting a transcendental and true explanans which would exist independent from its empirical context is an impossible endeavour.

In sum, a poststructuralist perspective undermines the stark distinction between theory/explanans and empiricism/explanandum. If an empirical problem is only a theoretical problematisation, and theory is always subject to empirical contingencies, the traditional strategies of empirical research are called into question. One cannot construct a universal theory and test it against purely empirical cases as in deduction. In a similar vein, generalising theories from a pure empiricism inductively is also impossible. In poststructuralism, explanans and explanandum begin to overlap.

In order to mirror the close relationship of theory and empiricism in poststructuralism, Glynos and Howarth propose to call this logic of explanation ‘retroduction’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, chapter 1). Classically, retroduction is distinguished from induction and deduction as a third type of reasoning, which generates hypotheses. Retroduction, in the words of Charles Sanders Peirce, who imported it from Aristotle, consists of ‘studying facts and devising a theory to explain them’ (Peirce 1934, 145). While ‘deductive reasoning purports to prove what is the case, and inductive reasoning purports to approximate what is the case, retroductive reasoning conjectures what is the case’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 26, emphasis in original). Glynos and Howarth draw on this conjecturing model of reasoning, which bridges theory and empiricism, and push it beyond mere hypothesis generation towards a fully-fledged model of explanation. If theory building and theory testing as two stages of an explanation cannot be separated, both merge into a reflexive circle. Accordingly, investigation has to start with a wondrous phenomenon – a ‘problem’ – and ‘crawl back’ towards theoretical concepts in order to flesh out a convincing explanation for its occurrence:

our logic of explanation begins with something we encounter in the present – an anomalous phenomenon that needs to be rendered intelligible for example – which calls for thought and theorization. This active process of problematization involves the constitution of a problem – or an explanandum to use more traditional terms – which invariably results in the transformation of our initial perceptions and understandings. Work is then started on furnishing an explanation that can render the recalcitrant phenomenon more intelligible. This process is understood in terms of the logic of retroductive explanation and theory construction, which involves a to-and-fro movement between the phenomena investigated and the various explanations that are proffered. In this way, an initially chaotic set of concepts, logics, empirical data, self-interpreta-

tions, and so on, at varying levels of abstraction, are welded together, so as to produce an account which, if it removes our initial confusion, can constitute a legitimate candidate for truth and falsity. (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 34)
In other words, retroductive explanation proceeds in a circular form, involving theoretical concepts and explorative analysis in order to generate proto-explanations. These are then tested and refined against the background of more empirical material, generating more nuanced explanations and so forth.

In sum, the poststructuralist understanding of explanation undermines the distinction between explaining and understanding dominant in International Relations. First, it does not restrict itself to the understanding of a phenomenon but also aims to provide a causal explanation of it. This being said, however, entails a different understanding of causality which breaks with the positivist notion of causation. Instead of reducing a broad range of phenomena to a small set of transcendental causal factors – *causal simplification*, so to speak – a poststructuralist perspective strives for what Foucault has called ‘causal multiplication’: ‘rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on which at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal and necessary’ (Foucault 1991, 76). In this sense, the ‘how’ of a particular phenomenon becomes the ‘why’.58 Secondly, poststructuralism bridges the gap between explaining and understanding with a changed relationship of theory and empiricism. Rather than a stark distinction between the two, it seeks to weave them together into a comprehensive account of the problem at hand – a process that already starts by defining what that very problem is and continues in a ‘retroductive circle’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 40).

This book applies such a retroductive model of reasoning. The second chapter problematised a phenomenon against the hegemonic background of mainstream International Relations approaches. This problematisation, however, was not simply empirical, but already bore in mind the theoretical framework which was laid out in chapter 3. The following chapter 5 seeks to articulate this framework with the empirical context of global climate politics, thereby generating proto-explanations. These are then refined throughout the subsequent chapters towards an encompassing account of climate mainstreaming – however, not without further refining the theoretical concepts developed beforehand. Thus, the organisation of this book transcends the usual distinction between theory and empiricism. From the very beginning, it renounces to present a purely empirical problem, and quickly advances towards a merging of theoretical and empirical explanations. In other words, this book provides a retroductive explanation for climate mainstreaming and global climate politics.

58. I am indebted to Carl Death for highlighting this point in our conversations about poststructuralist methodology.
4.2.2 Validity: Crystallisation through discourse analysis

A core yardstick for the quality of positivist research is the question of validity. Validity usually ‘refers to measuring what we think we are measuring’ (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 25). In a broader understanding, which also applies to more qualitative approaches, it depends on ‘the extent to which our observations indeed reflect the phenomena or variables of interest to us’ (Pervin 1994, 48). This involves an ‘understanding of knowledge as a map of an objective reality, and validity as the correspondence of the map with the reality mapped’ (Kvale 1995, 19). Obviously, poststructuralism breaks with such a correspondence theory of truth, as reality can only be represented in discourses. And this break with a positivist conception of validity basically leaves two options: Patti Lather has proposed to deduce principles of validity from a different regime of truth, namely poststructuralism, and ‘de-center validity as about epistemological guarantees’ and instead understand it as an ‘incitement to discourse’ (Lather 1993, 3-4). In this sense, validity is turned on its head: not a call for rigid explanations, but one for deconstructing and opening them towards a plurality of possible readings. Such a strategy, however, does not do justice to the postpositivist paradox as it entirely disconnects validity from positivism. On the contrary, others have proposed to basically leave validity within the everyday understanding of convincing, strong and justifiable. As Steinar Kvale suggests:

In a postmodern era [...] the conception of knowledge as a mirror of reality is replaced by knowledge as a linguistic and social construction of reality. [...] This involves a change in emphasis from observation to conversation and interaction. Truth is constituted through a dialogue. (Kvale 1995, 24).

Essentially, validity becomes a communicative enterprise. For the development of a plausible poststructuralist methodology, I will thus particularly draw on two types of communicative validity. Communication within the research conducted, and communication with the scholarly community about one’s findings. In this section I concentrate on the former. The latter will be understood as an issue of reliability below.

Kvale terms what I call communication within a single analysis ‘validity as craftmanship [...]’, which includes continually checking, questioning, and theoretically interpreting [one’s] findings’ (Kvale 1995, 27). This obviously comes quite close to the ideal of retroductive reasoning, which consists of a constant dialogue between theory, empiricism, precedent cases or proto-explanations. Furthermore, a lot of ink in qualitative research has been spilled in order

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59. It is usually differentiated between two types of validity (Miles & Huberman 1994, 184): Internal validity refers to the credibility and authenticity of an explanation, external validity involves the question of transferability and generalisation. Generalisation/external validity will be discussed in the next chapter.
to outline criteria or tactics for such a constant control and comparison within a study (Miles & Huberman 1994; Corbin & Strauss 2008; Steinke 2004). This attitude has implicitly informed my investigation of climate mainstreaming in general.

Yet I would like to explicitly draw attention to one such technique of intra-study communication: triangulation as a combination of different angles on a particular problematisation. Traditionally, triangulation has been introduced to social science research by Norman Denzin to increase validity in the narrow positivist sense. Using multiple sets of data, theories or methods was supposed to corroborate empirical findings for one single explanation (Denzin 1978, 304). The later Denzin, however, has advanced the concept to using different approaches in order to gain additional knowledge and thereby refining a more comprehensive explanation (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). For the investigation of climate mainstreaming I am drawing on the latter sense, however read in a poststructuralist way and thereby departing from the metaphor of the triangle. Instead of assuming that triangulation could determine the exact location of an object (in the sense of drawing a precise map of reality), one should rather see this idea as crystallisation:

We do not triangulate; we crystallise. We recognise that there are far more than ‘three sides’ from which to approach the world. […] Rather, the central image is the crystal, which combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transformation, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. […] Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, arrays, casting off in different directions. […] Crystallisation, without losing structure, deconstructs the traditional idea of ‘validity’ […] and crystallisation provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. (Richardson 1994, 522)

In this sense, I am using different methods in order to elucidate different aspects of the problem of climate mainstreaming – a perspective which is very much in line with the idea of retroductive reasoning and thus likely increases the plausibility of the explanation proposed. In this sense, a different combination of methods will serve the different questions concerning climate mainstreaming.

Given the centrality of power and discourse, it is an obvious methodological choice to base the investigation into climate mainstreaming on the method of discourse analysis. The notion of discourse is present in the works of Foucault and Laclau and Mouffe alike. Yet the latter have never been much concerned with its empirical application, whereas Foucault was at pains to develop a mainly empirical research programme. The following analysis will thus draw on the Foucauldian tool kit of methods which can be subsumed under the label of ‘interpretive analytics’ as a common methodological perspective (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982). This comprises the methods of archaeology, genealogy and dispositive analysis. The first refers to the ‘early Foucault’ who established the notion of discourse as a way of theorising the order of knowledge in his Archaeology of Knowledge (Foucault 1972). The archaeology
treats discourses as a set of ‘practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak’ and seeks to reveal the ‘regularities in dispersion’ in these practices (Foucault 1972, 49, 48). Genealogies focus ‘on the process by which we have constructed origins and given meaning to particular representations of the past’ (Bleiker 2000, 25; see also Foucault 1986a). Revealing the contingency of our present knowledge, they represent Foucault’s turn to an interest in power (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982). Both perspectives are often accused of restricting discourses to collections of texts and disregarding the role of non-discursive practices (Bröckling & Feustel 2010). They mostly focus on governmental programmes, but not on actual practices of power. This has also been declared a major incompatibility between Foucauldian approaches and Laclau’s and Mouffe’s conception of discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 107; see also Howarth 2000). The concept of the ‘dispositif’ (Foucault 1980, 194), thirdly, seeks to overcome this supposed shortcoming and focuses explicitly on the relationship between discourse and practice in order to reveal how power actually works apart from what is claimed in political programmes (Bührmann & Schneider 2010).

Whereas some present these approaches as different phases of Foucault’s work and so stress their discontinuity (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982; Fink-Eitel 1992), I contend that archaeology, genealogy and dispositif have to be understood as different angles of the same project. The later Foucault, for example, maintained that what he called problematisations have to be studied both from an archaeological and genealogical perspective (Foucault 1986b, 11-12). In this sense, I suggest to use them as different facets of a crystallisation, each stressing a different aspect of the explanation of climate mainstreaming. In particular, climate mainstreaming has been analysed with varying combination of these methods throughout the following four chapters:

**Genealogy**

For answering the first research question (‘How has the climate polity been created?’) I combine genealogy and archaeology. As a first step, the following chapter embarks on a genealogy of the central themes of this book – ‘climate’ and ‘mainstreaming’. As Dean puts it, a Foucauldian genealogy is

an attempt to renew an acquaintance with the strangeness of the present against all the attempts to erase it under the necessary dialectic of reason in history or to mark it as a final denouement or irreversible loss (Dean 2010, 56).

Such an endeavour is particularly important given the widespread perception that climate change poses a new dimension of challenge (see chapter 6). In this sense, the genealogy undertaken in the next chapter seeks to understand how it is possible that we speak of some-
thing as climate change and climate politics, and how it became plausible to introduce this concept into other areas of social life as a mainstream issue. In other words, it allows for tracing the emergence of an encompassing climate polity.

_Narrative archaeology_

When answering the second question (‘How does climate mainstreaming (re-)produce, broaden and intensify a hegemonic global climate polity?’) I will approach contemporary discourses of climate mainstreaming in an archaeological fashion. It has to be stressed that the value of an archaeological perspective lies in treating discourses as ‘simple positivities’ (Foucault 1978, 125), that is, the analyst is not interested in the subjective meaning of the articulating subjects but seeks to reveal the supra-individual systems of signification which make these utterances possible. In this sense, an archaeological perspective on the climate mainstreaming discourse aims for the ‘regularities in dispersion’ (Foucault 1972, 49) across different discursive arenas and reveal the ‘deep structure’ (Diaz-Bone et al. 2007, paragraph 65) of that discourse.

Yet two modifications are in order: First, to do justice to the idea of radical contingency put forth by hegemony theory, I will also look out for _irregularities_ in dispersion (see also Angermüller 2007b). Secondly, the analysis will be guided by a different heuristic in order to adapt this method to the study of hegemonic struggle within this discourse: the apparatus of narration analysis. Basically, this method builds on the linguistic insight that most actual language uses a narrative structure – even beyond the narrow genre of the narrative. Not only are all discourses permeated with some kind of narration (Herrnstein Smith 1980, 228). What is more, narration has to be understood as a ‘concept of social epistemology and social ontology’ (Somers 1994, 606, emphasis in original). This fits well with the discursive perspective developed above, so that discourses can be analysed as narratives. Studying discourses through narrative analysis, thus, represents a promising way to understand hegemony. Laclau (2005), for example, highlights the crucial role of rhetoric operations in the construction of hegemony. Similarly, rhetoric features prominently in narrations (Viehöver 2001, 193). Narrations, moreover, involve a dynamic aspect of transformation. The process of narrating ‘comprises the work of categorisation and identification, positioning the narrator as well as other persons, events and “objects” in a web of relations and in a storyline’ (Viehöver 2001, 182). In this sense, narration does not only embody the structure of a discourse. It first and foremost presents antagonisms and struggles, and contains political strategies of making and breaking hegemony. What is more, finally, narration involves the use of ‘myths’ as important structuring principle (Somers 1994, 152). Situated at the boundary between ‘fiction’ and ‘fact’,
it is well placed to highlight the role of myths in hegemonic discourses and fantasmatic logics in general. In sum, a narrative archaeology, without being an archaeology in the strict Foucauldian sense of the term, adopts a Foucauldian perspective but looks for the discursive structures regarding three points: the actants as the discursive personnel consisting of, for example, heroes and victims, villains and assistants (Viehöver 2001, 196); the problematisations which define problem, causes, consequences, (attempted) solution, positive and negative consequences of these solutions, and legitimising principles (Viehöver 2001, 195); and the plot providing the ‘matrix that creates meaning, coherence, temporal and spatial structure and establishes relationships between objects, events and actors and that provides orientation’ (Viehöver 2001, 186).

**Dispositif and analytics of government**

The third research question (‘What is the governmentality that renders this polity governable?’) will be analysed from the perspective of the dispositif since it involves the question how power is actually exercised. Foucault defines the dispositif as

>a thoroughly heterogenous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. (Foucault 1980, 194)

This conception responds to the regular criticism that Foucault would be inattentive to the relationship between linguistic discourses and the non-linguistic world. Put bluntly, the comprehensive concept of discourse in Laclau and Mouffe corresponds to Foucault’s concept of the dispositif.

The dispositif can be linked to the study of governmentality (Bührmann & Schneider 2010). In chapter 7, I will present the insights generated by such a perspective organised through the ‘analytics of government’ (Dean 2010) by combining the results of the archaeological perspective with the study of non-linguistic apparatuses. For studying governmental regimes of practices, Dean (2010, 37ff.) particularly focuses on four dimensions: the field of visibility, the techne and the episteme of government and its ethos. This study of practices will be based on secondary and grey literature.\(^\text{60}\)

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\(^{60}\) Iver Neumann argues that studies that would not account for practices properly represent mere ‘armchair analysis’ (Neumann 2002, 628). In line with the Laclau/Mouffe concept of the discourse, I agree that linguistic discourse cannot explain reality alone. It has to be acknowledged, though, that the study of practices creates severe problems for poststructuralist research. Given the fact that strictly speaking every linguistic representation of practices is only another linguistic discourse, the only proper way of studying practices as such would be ethnography and observation. Yet such research is costly and time-consuming and can hardly be integrated into a project as broad as the study of climate mainstreaming. The strategy of
Comparative archaeology

The third research question (‘How does climate mainstreaming affect the governmentality and hegemony in other global polities?’) returns to a simple archaeology of the climate mainstreaming discourse. It does so, however, in a somewhat comparative fashion. In his outstanding application of the archaeological perspective, The Order of Things (Foucault 1970), Foucault studies discourses across a range of different epistemic fields in historical comparison and reveals a change in the deep structure of these field, resulting in the emergence of the ‘human subject’. Whereas the ambition of chapter 8 cannot be compared to this macro-perspective, it is also interested in comparing different polities before and after the advent of climate change in order to study continuity and change in range of different fields. In this sense, it seeks to read the discourse about climate change as a discourse about the economy or development, and asks how climate change affects the regularities within these fields. It relies, however, mostly on secondary literature in order to get a grip on the discursive structures before climate change, which are well studied.

4.2.3 Generalisation: Pleadings for case studies

Having dealt with internal validity in some detail, this section now turns to the question of external validity, generalisation, or what positivists often call representativity (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 142). This question is all the more important as the nature of retroductive reasoning involves a rather deep treatment of the selected problematisations and thus does not allow for a broad sample of phenomena. Thus, the study of a particular problematisation is usually tied to a small selection of cases.

Studies which rely on a small number of cases are often confronted with distrust by positivist accounts. A case in point for this attitude is the following quotation from a leading handbook of sociology, which defines a case study as the
detailed examination of a single example of a class of phenomena. A case study cannot provide reliable information about the broader class, but it may be useful in the preliminary stages of an investigation since it provides hypotheses, which may be tested systematically with a larger number of cases. (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 1984, 34)

Bent Flyvbjerg, on the contrary, convincingly argues that case studies, if carefully selected, can have an explanatory value way beyond the individual case (Flyvbjerg 2006). In line with some of the proponents of qualitative case research (Eckstein 2000; George & Bennett 2005), he provides a typology of different case study designs which allow for generalisation. For ex-

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analysing practices from their linguistic representations in newspapers and grey literature, thus, is clearly insufficient, but was the only viable way of accounting for practices at all. I will return to this problem in chapter 9.
ample, he distinguishes between critical cases (most likely and least likely), paradigmatic cases, maximum variation design, or extreme cases, which all provide different advantages for generalisation (Flyvbjerg 2006, 230).

The concept of generalisation is indeed relevant for the study of climate mainstreaming conducted in this book. If climate mainstreaming is understood as a hegemonic strategy, this invokes the question of generalisation, since hegemony is not only defined as a discursive relationship with certain qualitative characteristics (equivalence, antagonism, empty signifier), but obviously also involves a quantitative dimension. A discourse can only count as hegemonic to the extent that it is shared by a critical number of relevant actors or institutions. Conducting an in-depth, interpretive discourse analysis on all possibly relevant spheres, however, is almost impossible within a single book project. It thus depends on the selection of those discursive manifestations, from which one can infer to the wider discourse.

The following study thus utilises the ideas of paradigmatic and maximum variation cases as a principle for its sampling, and uses them in a way that could be called fractal logic (on the role of fractal processes in social sciences see Abbott 2004). First of all, the study of climate mainstreaming is restricted to three cases: the global social, economic and environmental polity. On the one hand, these represent paradigmatic cases: social, environmental and economic questions have often been connected through the field of sustainable development, and thus are the ones first and foremost affected if it comes to climate mainstreaming. In fact, all three cases represent areas of global politics in which the mainstreaming of climate change is most visible and advanced. The only other case which could be considered is the mainstreaming of climate change in security politics – which is already covered by a quickly growing literature (Oels 2012; Brzoska 2009; Rothe 2011b; Detraz & Betsill 2009). Other cases, as for example, the governance of migration, do not provide sufficient material for a close engagement with climate mainstreaming, since they are not that advanced. On the other hand, the selected areas represent a ‘maximum variation’ (Flyvbjerg 2006) case design since all three policy areas bear a different degree of likeliness of being inflicted with climate policy. Environmental policy as an environmental issue is close to climate change. Economic policy, by contrast, is often seen as the opposite of climate protection. Development takes the middle ground between these two: it is understood as an economic problem, but is often framed as sustainable development.

Within these cases, I have selected organisations as sedimented discourses according to a logic of paradigmatic instances, too: I have chosen four of the most important and representative institutions within this field, yet combined with a logic of crucial cases: Two of these four are international organisations, which are often understood as expressions of a hegemonic order (Cox 1983) – they are most-likely institutions within the case. The other two are
organisations from transnational civil society, which can be seen as least-likely cases\textsuperscript{61}. If a hegemonic discourse is also sedimented within transnational civil society, it can count as hegemonic.\textsuperscript{62} Finally, it may not come as a surprise that I have started the analysis within these organisations with the most paradigmatic documents, such as, for example, flagship publications on climate change and proceeded according to the idea of ‘theoretical sampling’ (Corbin & Strauss 2008, 143p.) These considerations result in a sampling as presented in table III on page 102, and a list of sources as presented in the appendix on page 295 passim. What is more, the study of the climate mainstreaming dispositif is restricted to the paradigmatic regime of practices, the Clean Development Mechanism, which is cited throughout the discourse as the most important means to integrate climate change into other issue areas.

\textsuperscript{61} Quite obviously, the question of whether a case is least-likely or most-likely depends on the hypothesis. From the perspective of climate mainstreaming as such, NGOs might appear as most-likely cases: They are likely to take up the issue of climate change and advocate its mainstreaming into, for example, IOs – the latter being the least-likely case. However, recall that the hypothesis here is a different one; namely, that climate mainstreaming is a hegemonic strategy which strives for the maintenance of the established order through depoliticisation. Against this backdrop, IOs are far more likely to adopt such a position, whereas NGOs are usually associated with politicising issues and calling for change. It is this rationale which prompts the classification of the latter as least-likely institutions.

\textsuperscript{62} The critical observer might object that the NGOs included in the sample represent rather the moderate part of global civil society and do not contain any radical grassroots-movements; that it represents, thus, not the actual least-likely case. Excluding the radical part of civil society is justified by the fact that for the development of climate politics this part of civil society has been marginal. Even one of the leading proponents of the radical end of the civil society spectrum in Europe concedes that it has failed to become relevant (Bricke & Müller 2011). Nonetheless, I will expand the scope of analysis to some of its discourses, for example, the Cochabamba Declaration in chapter 6. For a more detailed analysis of the relationship between radical and moderate parts of environmental civil society see the work of Philipp Bedall (2012) and the edited volume by Achim Brunnengräber (2011).
### Table III: Detailed sampling of climate mainstreaming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IOs</th>
<th>Global Economic Polity</th>
<th>Global Social Polity</th>
<th>Global Environmental Polity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>The World Trade Organisiation was founded in 1995 as a successor to the GATT-Agreement. It has 153 member states and is based in Geneva. Its general aim is the liberalisation of international trade. Several international treaties are administered and enforced under the Umbrella of the WTO. It also serves as a forum for negotiations on further trade liberalisation, which are making little progress at the moment, though. Due to its effective Dispute Settlement Body, whose rulings can be sanctioned by trade measures, it is often said to be one of the most powerful international organisations. This makes it a rather obvious candidate for the sample.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>WBT</td>
<td>The World Bank was founded in 1944 as an outcome of the Bretton Woods Conference. It was founded as an institution of financing and reconstruction after World War II. Today, its main aim is lending money to developing countries in order to spur development. It is based in Washington and also dominated by the USA and other major developing countries. Working in a close relationship with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and being endowed with remarkable financial power, it can be seen as one of the, if not the, international development agency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>The United Nations Environment Programme was founded in the 1972 as a result of the first major international conference on the environment. It assists global environmental policy-making through the provision of knowledge, administration and funding (although relatively small amounts). It had a leading role in establishing the IPCC, but deals with a broad range of environmental issues such as marine pollution or desertification. Recently, there have been proposals of turning the Programme into an UN Organisation in order to strengthen it. As the leading international organisation in environmental politics, it is part of the sample.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>The term ‘OECD-countries’ often serves as an umbrella for its 34 member countries which are deemed to make up the developed world. The OECD was founded in 1961 and is based in Paris. Its direct predecessor was created in order to administer the implementation of the Marshall Plan. Today, its general aim is to foster economic growth and trade and proposes mostly liberal economic policies. This is to be achieved mostly through soft measures such as peer pressure. Nonetheless, the expertise it creates often has considerable impact on national policy making. As “the” organisation of the ‘first world’, it was included in the sample.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>The United Nations Development Programme is the UN development agency. Established in 1965, it is based in New York. It by far lacks the financial power of the World Bank and its activities thus revolve around expertise and capacity building. It is formally subject to the UN General Assembly and thus is, in contrast to the World Bank, a ‘true’ UN agency. Because of this, and due to its manifold project activities around the world and its authoritative <em>Human Development Report</em>, it is a major voice in the global social polity – the reason for its inclusion into the sample.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rio Conventions</td>
<td>Instead of some strong international organisations, the global environmental polity is populated by a vast array of international regimes. The conventions adopted at the UNCED in Rio in 1992 appear as paradigmatic and well-known in this regard. In particular, they comprise the FCCC, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD, which has, to be precise, not been adopted in Rio but in the aftermath of the summit). Especially the latter two will be analysed in order to account for how the UNFCCC has affected other environmental issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

63. As the World Bank is working closely together with the IMF, I will occasionally include IMF documents into the analysis.
NGOs

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development is a business NGO whose founder was chief adviser for business and industry to the secretary general of the UNCED in 1992. Founded in 1995 in Geneva and today speaking for more than 200 international corporations, it defines its role as a mediator between politics and the economy; trying to convince to corporations of the goal of sustainable development, informing governments with business expertise. In 2003, the World Bank identified the WBCSD as the most influential corporate social responsibility forums (Berman & Webb 2003). As one of the leading business NGOs on environmental topics, it is a perfect candidate for the study of climate mainstreaming.

The Up in Smoke coalition is a British coalition of NGOs initiated in 2004 by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) and the International Institute for Environment and Development. It was formed in order to explore the relationship between climate change and development, and the various reports commissioned by the coalition and mostly written by the NEF as a lead-author, it has been influential far beyond the British context. Moreover, it comprises a broad variety of NGOs, which have international significance, such as the WWF, World Vision, ActionAid or Tearfund. Although its membership thus partially also includes NGOs from the global environmental polity, it is representative for the discourse within the global social polity due to its focus on development.

Greenpeace is probably the environmental NGO (next to the Worldwide Fund for Nature – WWF). Founded in 1971 at the beginning of the environmental movement, it has become well-known to the wider public through its spectacular protest activities, mostly direct actions. Today, it has offices in over 40 countries. It covers a wide range of issue-areas, such as deforestation, whaling or climate change. It is therefore deemed to be an appropriate source for assessing hegemonic knowledge and practices in the global climate polity – although it is a rather critical organisation.

The World Economic Forum, formed in 1971, is widely renowned for its annual meeting in Davos attended by influential people from the political, economic and scientific sector. The aim of these meetings is to discuss topical issues and facilitate networking among its participants. It is often criticised by the anti-globalisation movement as a place where business dictates economic policy to political leaders. Given its widespread perception as one of the most important business and political meetings, it is an important place for analysing climate mainstreaming in the global economic polity.

The Global Humanitarian Forum was a global civil society forum formed in 2007 as a platform for advocacy in the run-up to the Copenhagen climate summit. Founded by former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, it assembled prominent, mostly retired, representatives of the global social polity, such as Mary Robinson or Jan Egeland. It initiated the tcktcktck campaign – a focal point for protest in and before Copenhagen. It thus can be seen an influential climate-change-related part of the global social polity, although it was shut down in 2010 due to financial problems.

The World Resources Institute is an environmental think tank based in Washington. It was founded in 1982 and has since then become an influential voice especially in US environmental policy making. However, it has a well-known reputation across the globe, and is a prominent proponent of market-based instruments in environmental policy. It was selected for the sample because it works on issues way beyond climate change and works, in contrast to Greenpeace, closely together with official institutions.
A certain *caveat* must be made when generalising from these paradigmatic cases, organisations and texts, however. In positivist research, generalisation is crucial: ‘the key distinguishing mark of scientific research is the goal of making inferences beyond the particular observations collected’ (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 8). And the instrument for generalising and condensing these inferences is a theory, which consists of general propositions (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 19). This is obviously problematic from a poststructuralist perspective. On the one hand, generalisation is not mandatory. The explanation of a particular case has a value in itself, and generalisation can reduce this value by increasing the level of abstraction and neglecting important details (Flyvbjerg 2006). Generalisation is not necessarily adequate.

On the other hand, it is obvious that a theory is not the right means of generalising for poststructuralist approaches. This, however, is not to say that generalisation is not possible from a poststructuralist perspective at all. The task is to transcend a particular empirical context without falling into the trap of forming universal covering laws. In chapter 3, I introduced the ‘logics of critical explanation’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007) as a framework for studying regimes of practices through their social, political and fantasmatic logics. The concept of logics allows for generalising from a single empirical inquiry without over-generalising (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 76). The logic of a practice ‘comprises the rules and grammar of the practice, as well as the conditions which make the practice both possible and vulnerable’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 183-4). In this sense, the concept of logics captures a certain content to be generalised, but is always aware of the changing contextual conditions of possibilities which facilitates their existence.

Therefore, logics can be used to condense the insights generated from the analysis of particular cases through retroductive reasoning: combining empirical data and theoretical concepts into a coherent whole. A case in point is the notion of carbon governmentality which will be developed in the following chapter. As the term indicates, it articulates a theoretical concept (governmentality) with the empirical insight that climate change is made governable through carbon into a social logic which helps to make sense of global climate politics. This social logic, then, can be used to make sense of other empirical fields, such as the mainstreaming of climate change in global social governance – not without, however, being somewhat altered there. The final chapter of the book, then, discusses what these logics could mean beyond the field of climate change for other areas of study. Poststructuralist explanations, in this sense, have much in common with the use of precedents in legal arguments; they explain ‘by virtue of their paradigmatic status, in conjunction with the theoretical language used to articulate them (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 189).
4.2.4 Reliability: The scholarly trial

Reliability is the third component of the positivist's holy trinity. While it is difficult to separate it completely from validity, it essentially refers to the question if 'applying the same procedure the same way will always produce the same measures' (King, Keohane & Verba 1994, 25). This principle, of course, seeks to eliminate the subjectivity of individual researchers for the sake of objective results. I hope it is not necessary anymore by now to explain why this is highly problematic from a poststructuralist perspective. An even more important point is made by Bent Flyvbjerg with regard to a postpositivist research process. In a way, he reverses the perspective and highlights the fact that it is not only subjectivity which influences results, but the results which influence subjectivity:

The researcher who conducts a case study often ends up by casting off preconceived notions and theories. Such activity is quite simply a central element in learning and in the achievement of new insight. More simple forms of understanding must yield to more complex ones as one moves from beginner to expert (Flyvbjerg 2006, 236-37).

In this sense, research follows an individual logic which cannot easily be replicated. It does not only affect some abstract state of knowledge but first and foremost the researcher. This is obvious given the nature of the retroductive research process, and also corresponds to the hegemony theory assumption that articulation always alters the identity of the articulating subject. Eliminating subjectivity from the research process would cut off this value of learning through research and deny its procedural character. What is more, post-positivist approaches are born of critical ambition, which opposes the idea of value-free science, which is why research is always already subjective (see for example Glynos & Howarth 2007).

All this being said, however, there remains a core to reliability which also affects poststructuralist inquiries, and when acknowledged can increase the plausibility of an explanation: namely, that the findings of an inquiry survive the trial of the scholarly community. Reliability, hence, has to be thought in terms of its original meaning of rely-ability:

Knowledge claims are established in a discourse through which the results of a study come to be viewed as sufficiently trustworthy for other investigators to rely on in their own work (Kvale 1995, 30).

In other words, research is communicative endeavour, and the plausibility of explanations also depends upon whether other scholars can reveal relevant inconsistencies or come up with counter-explanations. That academia is a collective enterprise might be a truism but all too often fades into the background when seemingly transcendental tests and criteria become the prime matter of concern. However, the collaborative nature of research, though, provides possibly the best criterion for plausibility. In this sense, the arguments in this book were put forth in a number of conference papers, articles and workshop contributions. However, here
we run up against the central limitation of a book: the logic of presenting research is different than that of conducting research. And although investigation has been a process, and retroductive reasoning is circular, the following chapters present a rather straightforward explanation. The process that lead to their drafting, however, was a highly retroductive process.

4.3 Conclusion: This cage is a ladder

To be very clear on this matter: this chapter does not argue that poststructuralism has to be forced into a positivist methodology. On the contrary, I claim that precisely because poststructuralism breaks with the central assumptions of positivism – namely, the quest for objective universal knowledge – it paradoxically should utilise positivist concepts in order to increase the plausibility of the explanations it provides. This is why it can be called a truly post-positivist as well as post-positivist approach.

In particular, I argue that poststructuralism can provide causal, valid and reliable explanations – without, however, leaving these very concepts untouched. In particular, it was found that poststructuralism can indeed explain, but that explanation follows a retroductive style and strives for a multiplication of causes; that postpositivist validity calls for a multiplication of perspectives in the form of crystallisation; that poststructuralist explanations can provide valid generalisations by drawing on crucial, paradigmatic or extreme cases, but that this generalisation has to be thought in the form of a logic which adapts to the respective context it is transferred to; and that they can provide reliable insights – in the sense, however, that reliability does not mean value free or non-subjective research, but that it passes the tests of the scholarly community. Moreover, I would suspect that most poststructuralist studies refer to these ideas in one form or the other: providing causes for discursive changes, increasing the relevance of their insights by studying paradigmatic problems, or championing methodical or even methodological pluralism in order to better understand a particular problem. These works often have good reasons not to express these principles with reference to a positivist language in order not to support the positivist hegemony. I contend, however, that it can increase the plausibility and accessibility of poststructuralist studies to make these implicit considerations explicit.

It is important to stress, though, that it would entirely subvert the poststructuralist project if such considerations would be turned into a cage which forced poststructuralist approaches into a certain standard research programme. In fact, I propose that drawing on positivist concepts is a means for an end: increasing the plausibility of the proposed explanation. The bars of the positivist cage, thus, in fact should be recycled into a ladder which helps to climb the
obstacles of poststructuralist persuasion. In the end, however, the “proof of the pudding” consists in the production of persuasive narratives that better explain problematized phenomena’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 191). In other words, the concept of plausibility – which is at the core of poststructuralist methodology – entails a dimension which cannot be grasped by methodological considerations at all: the intuition of the researcher. If other principles and considerations or additional empirical material promise to provide elements of a plausible explanation, one should not refrain from adopting or using them. To give an example: throughout the following analysis of climate mainstreaming I will draw on examples and material which I came across during my research but which do not fit into the sampling strategy that was developed in this chapter – which, however, contribute to the explanatory narrative which I seek to put forth, and which were thus used. In this sense, poststructuralism indeed is an ‘anything goes’ approach as often suspected. Anything goes, however, only if it is made explicit and is (retrospectively!) justified by contributing to a plausible explanation. Nonetheless, or so this chapter should have demonstrated, plausibility depends on methodology – methodology, however, in the poststructuralist sense of the term.
Climate change is often perceived as a major catastrophe of planetary dimensions, and global climate politics seeks to respond to this dawning crisis. This chapter seeks to undermine this perspective by highlighting the origins of this perception. If Mitchell Dean describes the genealogy as an ‘attempt to renew an acquaintance with the strangeness of the present against all the attempts to […] mark it as a final denouement or irreversible loss’ (Dean 2010, 56), this is precisely the aim of the following analysis. I thus try to destabilise the common catastrophe-reaction model by revealing how the political of sustainable development, and particularly global climate politics, actively constructed the environmental and climate crisis as an object of concern – and how they came to be a political problem. For Foucault, inquiring into the process of problematisation was an important task, as problematisation ‘develops the conditions in which possible responses can be given; it defines the elements that will constitute what the different solutions will attempt to respond to’ (Foucault 1994b, 118). In this sense, the genealogy of the global climate polity is an important first step for carving out its general political logic.

The chapter attempts to do four things. First, it starts with an inquiry into the history of the politics of sustainable development. The reason for this is that sustainable development, on the one hand, is the forerunner to the idea of *mainstreaming* ecological concerns. As we will see, it renders environmental problems as problems for the general development of modern societies, affecting all of their different sectors. On the other hand, sustainable devel-
Development is the general hegemonic backdrop against which the global climate polity could emerge. It is the roof for global climate politics. The second part of the chapter then turns to the narrower climate polity and seeks to flesh out how carbon became an object of government. These two steps show how from the beginning of the 21st century onwards, the global environmental polity turned into a global climate polity. A third overarching theme of this chapter is thus how climate change turned into the master signifier of the global politics of the environment, which now serves as a basis for its mainstreaming into other social spheres.

Fourth, this argument also serves as a first amalgamation between the theoretical framework developed in chapter 3 and the empirical field of climate mainstreaming. In particular, I have suggested that climate mainstreaming be understood as the expansion of the global climate polity. The concept of the polity was introduced above as existing ‘whenever a set of actors or “governance-subjects” agree upon the existence of one or more common “governance-objects” which significantly impinge upon the identities of those actors’ (Corry 2010b, 101). And it was argued that when read from a poststructuralist perspective, the polity has aspects of both hegemony and governmentality; Hegemony relates to the question of how the polity is constituted as relevant for the wider public or other important actors; and governmentality relates to the question of how its governance object is constituted as a ‘common’ governance object. The section, thus, presents the emergence of sustainable development as a particular framing of the environmental and more specifically the climate crisis, which turned it into a legitimate and significant domain for a global polity. In the second part of this chapter I ask how, within this context, climate change itself has been constituted as a governance-object, and how a set of political solutions have emerged from this problematisation. It particularly investigates how climate change has been rendered governable as carbon governmentality. In sum, this twofold genealogy will furnish a proto-explanation for climate mainstreaming providing important concepts for the analysis in the following chapters.

5.1 Sustainable Development

In this section, I seek to undertake a genealogy of sustainable development. The idea that climate protection has to be mainstreamed into all spheres of social life flows from the negotiation and agreement of the UNFCCC was negotiated and agreed on at the Rio Summit of 1992, placing it right in the middle of the politics of sustainable development. The Brundtland Report, through which the concept came into existence, states that it is ‘impossible to separate economic development issues from environmental issues’ (Brundtland 1987, 3). Since then,
sustainable development has usually been understood as a reconciliation of different spheres: the social, the environment, and the economy (Meadowcroft 1999, 224). Climate mainstreaming, so to speak, is sustainable development put into practice.

I seek to argue that sustainable development represents a hegemonic discourse, which creates the global environmental polity in a postpolitical populist way. In chapter 3, postpolitical populism was defined as consisting of three different elements: constitutive antagonism, empty signifier and depoliticisation. In the following, I divide the genealogy of sustainable development in four stages: environmental dislocations, the emergence of sustainable development, its establishment as a sphere of global politics, and its diffusion into all areas of social life. Thereby, I seek to show that the last three stages each constitute one of the defining elements of postpolitical populism.

5.1.1 The Context: Dislocation and the discovery of the environmental crisis

In very general terms, the relationships between societies and nature in Western societies are based on exploiting nature and externalising the negative consequences of its appropriation (Brand 2010b, 139-40). This is definitely characteristic of the classic industrial period of Fordism, but also holds true for the post-Fordist period usually referred to as globalisation. Both forms of social organisation are based on mass-consumption and production. Both inherently involve economic growth as a ‘treadmill of production’ (Schnaiberg 1980). Moreover, they rely heavily on the extraction and use of fossil fuels, and deserve the label ‘carboniferous capitalism’ (Mumford 1934). The alimentation of a growing population is secured through the intensification and industrialisation of agriculture (Bonanno & Constance 2001). Mobility is organised according to a ‘car culture’ (Paterson 2000). And the organisation of everyday life is based on an ‘imperial lifestyle’ that places most of the ecological burdens that come with modern consumption upon Southern societies (Wissen 2010). The shift towards a post-Fordist model of development since the 1970s further intensified these patterns

64. Of course, if I speak of different stages, this is rather an abstraction. In actual fact, some of the elements described in later phases were also present before and vice versa. In this sense, the highlighted layers are particularly characteristic for the respective stage.

65. The concept of social relationships with nature, as well as the concepts of Fordism and post-Fordism, are based on a neo-Marxist approach broadly understood. In the following, I use these as theoretical concepts without subscribing completely to all underlying theoretical assumptions, as they provide useful concepts to describe prevalent social structures, nonetheless. For a similar, but much more sophisticated integration of neo-Marxist thought into hegemony theory see Wullweber 2010, chapter 3.

66. Put bluntly, the term ‘Fordism’, dubbed after the automobile tycoon Henry Ford, refers to the period of mass consumption and production in rather closed national economies regulated by a corporatist political system and relatively strong economic regulations in the first two thirds of the 20th century ‘post-Fordism’, by contrast, from the 1970s onwards liberalises the national economies to advance the international division of labour, deregulates industrial relations to increase competitiveness. (Hirsch & Roth 1986)
towards what John Urry has called an ‘excess capitalism’ (Urry 2010): increasing the use of fossil fuels, extending high mobility systems, and multiplying the spaces of consumption. What is more, this model of development is now copied more frequently by the so-called developing countries, which are practicing – supported by development agencies and forced by the international division of labour – development as a ‘catch-up’ process (Escobar 1995).

This picture, albeit very rough, demonstrates that the exploitative relationship with nature has been deeply ingrained within social institutions and structures. And it is these very institutions that are increasingly causing material alterations to our planetary environment: depleting natural resources, shrinking the capacity of natural sinks and increasing pollution with dangerous chemicals. This obviously implies an anthropogenic perspective. Social structures are changing the planetary environment in a way that the latter’s ability to sustain these very social structures decreases. In other words, ‘capitalism is not able to control the exceptional powers which it itself generated, especially through new forms of excessive consumption that are changing climates and eliminating some conditions of human life and its predictable improvement’ (Urry 2010, 193).

It thus comes as no surprise that, since the late 19th century, the material consequences of this model have increasingly been problematised as an environmental crisis, for example through the US conservation movement or the German Heimatbewegung. Throughout the following decades, this critique has become more and more popular (though was, of course, interrupted by the two world wars). Rachel Carson’s book Silent Spring, published in 1964, is often interpreted as marking the birth of the modern environmental movement (Carson 1964). With the widespread awareness given to the Limits to Growth, published by the Club of Rome in 1972, the environmental crisis had showed signs of having become a mainstream issue. Its authors argued that resource use, economic and population growth had increased exponentially, while resource efficiency only advanced linearly (Meadows et al. 1974). During the 1970s, environmental movement and consciousness became a relevant social factor – the sign of widespread perception that the Western model of development would result in an environmental crisis.

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67. The different understandings of development underpinning this will be discussed in chapter 8.

68. This paragraph obviously is a very lively demonstration of the anti-essentialist epistemology of hegemony theory (see chapter 3.1.2). While it aims at describing the material consequences of social relations, it cannot do so without referring to particular discursive concepts. For example, as I will discuss below, the idea of a ‘planetary environment’ both renders environmental destruction as a global phenomenon and refers to a particular understanding of nature. Being aware that I cannot describe these material consequences neutrally, I just go on as if I could and ask the reader for forgiveness. All the critical remarks developed below about representations of the environmental crisis especially apply to this paragraph.
In terms of hegemony theory, since the 1960s the environmental crisis has become a major discursive dislocation of Western societies (Stavrakakis 2000). It represents the discursive outside rupturing the existing hegemonic order and thereby reactivating various social structures that seemed to be deeply ingrained. The environmental crisis undermined the modern narrative of infinite progress and growth. Decline and scarcity, which for a long time defined the lives and fates of European societies but had been excluded from the discourses of advanced capitalist societies, returned in the figures of pollution, resource depletion and ecological catastrophe and put issues like limits to growth and renouncement of consumption on the political agenda. Crucially, they became systematically linked to those deeply ingrained structures of production, consumption and mobility which define what a modern capitalist society actually is.

The conjunction of this environmental dislocation with the crisis of the Left in Western societies – a dislocation of social movements, so to speak – resulted in the emergence of a radical environmental movement, ‘investing the signifier “nature” with major social importance’ (Stavrakakis 2000, 115). This framed the environmental crisis as the paradigmatic expression of the failure of the capitalist model of development, and linked it to a range of other social grievances – the threat of nuclear war, widespread poverty etc. In terms of hegemony theory, the environmental crisis served as a prism through which a fundamental antagonism between the way societies are organised and human and natural life was established. Life (humanity and nature alike) vs. capitalism emerged as the dominant frame through which the environmental dislocation became to be represented.

5.1.2 Brundtland 1987: Society vs. nature as the constitutive antagonism

The success of this populist hegemonic project centred on the environmental crisis, the growth of environmental movements and consciousness, can be explained in connection with the inability of existing hegemonic discourses to deal with the environmental dislocation. ‘Fordist orientations of universal progress and growth via modernisation processes were questioned’ but there was no discourse providing ideas ‘how to produce societal innovations or radical transformations in order to deal with these issues.’ (Brand 2010b, 143) This changed during the 1980s, when ‘a hegemonic perception emerged and became condensed in the broadly shared understanding of sustainable development’ (Brand 2010b, 143).

The concept of sustainability dates back to the 16th century.69 It was first introduced as ‘Nachhaltigkeit’ (the German equivalent to sustainability) by Hans Carl von Carlowitz in

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69. The etymological roots of sustainability referred to in this chapter are discussed in Tremmel 2003, who provides also a perfect example of the struggle to define sustainable development.
1713, who wrote about the sustainable use of forests. The underlying principle, though, is much older. A Saxon forest regulation of 1560 prescribes that forests should be exploited for mining in a way that future supplies of wood were not undermined. From here, the concept travelled as ‘sustainable yield’ to international forestry science, before it later appeared in the context of conservation politics – as a concept not restricted to the narrow field of forestry anymore. In the 1960s, a series of African-based conferences problematised the relationship between nature conservation and the livelihoods of local populations. In 1969, 33 member-states of the Organisation of African Unity signed a convention, initiated by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which recognised that conservation must be designed so as ‘to achieve the highest sustainable quality of life’ (O’Riordan 1993, 49).

The term ‘sustainable development’ first appeared in the World Conservation Strategy, published by the IUCN, UNEP and the WWF, stating that ‘conservation and sustainable development are mutually dependent’ (cited in Death 2010b, 39). Its breakthrough as a concept was not reached until 1987. Before then, many different discursive concepts and interpretations of the environmental crisis were evident (McManus 1996, 50; Carruthers 2001, 94ff.). But with the publication of the report Our Common Future, the concept of sustainable development started to become hegemonic. In this report, the Brundtland commission, officially established as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) but dubbed after its Norwegian head, Gro Harlem Brundtland, sought to define the appropriate response to growing concern about environmental degradation and the still unsolved ‘development problem’. It endowed sustainable development with its canonical definition, stating that ‘sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (Brundtland 1987, 43).

The WCED, although often understood as an ‘expert’ commission, was a deliberate political intervention into the environmental discourse. It had been formed following an initiative of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in 1984, but was formally independent from the UN. Hence, there was no equal representation, and the members of the commission were closely connected to their countries. Lloyd Timberlake (1992, 2) emphasises that the commissioners were ‘not environmentalists but real, experienced, elderly, elitist politicians’ who ‘had to go back home and defend before their colleagues and their governments whatever they wrote in their paper.’ In this sense, sustainable has to be characterised as an articulation by established hegemonic forces; more precisely, an articulation by ‘eco-bureaucrats and diplomats’ with a ‘top-down’ perspective on the environmental crisis (Brand 2010b, 146).

The remarkable achievement of the Brundtland Report was, first of all, that it put the environmental crisis on a new plane – on that of development. The idea of development has a complex genealogy of its own. Suffice it to say here that although its roots were already es-
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established in colonial times, it was only formally endorsed by US president Harry Truman’s famous 1949 inaugural address rendering ‘poverty’ as a problem to be cured through ‘development’ (cited in Escobar 1995, 3). Crucially, the idea of development has since embodied the idea of a divided planet; one which is understood to be split between the developed North and the poor South (Death 2010b, 37). Sustainable development, first of all, changed that picture entirely by stressing the unity of the planet in the face of the environmental crisis. Most famously, the Brundtland report began with the picture of one earth:

> From space, we see a small and fragile ball dominated not by human activity and edifice but by a pattern of clouds, oceans, greenery and soils. Humanity’s inability to fit its doings into that pattern is changing planetary systems, fundamentally. Many such changes are accompanied by life-threatening hazards. This new reality, from which there is no escape, must be recognised – and managed. (Brundtland 1987, 1)

Secondly, the register of development implies the idea of human progress and prosperity. Development is something inherently positive, which improves the lives of human beings around the planet. In that sense, Our Common Future combined the ‘optimism of development with the pessimism of environmentalism’ (Death 2010b, 39). Development was thus made to recognise that this beneficial progress runs up against environmental ‘limits’ (Brundtland 1987, 43). The environmental crisis, so to speak, threatens to block human progress.

The environmental crisis as a problem of sustainable development turns the initial perception on its head. In very general terms, it is not life threatened by capitalism, but (capitalist) development threatened by a nature out of control. In this sense, sustainable development as framed in the Brundtland Report, constitutes the fundamental antagonism – which is the first necessary element for a postpolitical populist hegemony – between nature and society. On the one hand, this separates nature from its social and economic determinants and turns it into an independent and radical outside of human prosperity. This is not to deny the fact that nature has been transformed through human action. Rather, once nature is out of control, one cannot deny its superior power: ‘It might well be society’s fault for changing nature, but it is the consequent power of that nature that brings on the apocalypse.’ (Smith & Harvey 2008, 245). On the other hand, it constitutes humanity as unitary and coherent actor, united in the face of the environmental crisis. This is not to deny the differences across the globe. However, these differences are not perceived as a dividing line. Instead, they even increase the dimension of the threat, for example because the poor are understood as being incapable of managing environmental change (Swyngedouw 2010, 221). In this sense, ‘Humanity vs. Nature’ becomes the frontline at which the decisive struggle rages.
5.1.3 Rio 1992: Sustainable development as empty signifier

The publication of the report in 1987 envisaged a review after 5 years, which eventually became a huge international conference: the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The ‘Earth Summit’, as it was dubbed, gathered several 10,000 delegates and observers, 1400 officially registered NGOs and official representatives from 183 countries. It adopted the Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (defining 27 principles of sustainable development), two legally binding conventions on biodiversity and climate change (later followed by one on desertification), and a declaration on deforestation. In effect, the Earth Summit ‘has come to occupy an almost mythical role in the discourse of sustainable development’ (Death 2010b, 47) and the ‘advance for the cause of sustainable development throughout the world’ (Osborn 2001, xv). The Rio summit enshrined sustainable development as a major principle and programme of global politics. While it is neither necessary nor possible to assess the outcomes of the UNCED in detail, I would like to highlight one particular aspect. As many observers have noted, ‘the agenda changed from a pro-development one favouring poorer countries in the Brundtland Report to an agenda which reflected the environmental concerns of wealthier nations at Rio.’ (McManus 1996, 53). And this shift is very relevant for the argument advanced here.

The Brundtland Report had already married the concept of sustainable development with economic growth. In short, it argued that economic growth would be a necessary means to achieve a level of well-being which allowed for environmental policies, especially in developing countries. Moreover, environmental policies guided by the principles of sustainable development were thought to promote economic growth (Brundtland 1987, 3). In fact, the development of sustainable development was all too often understood in terms of economic growth (Escobar 1996, 330).

With the Rio declarations and conventions, this abstract optimism in growth is condensed into a concrete politics of ecological modernisation. Ecological modernisation, as a paradigm of environmental politics, puts forth the idea that overhauling societies according to environmental necessities will spur economic growth and result in the creation of jobs and other social improvements (Hajer 1995). These combined benefits, furthermore, are best achieved through economic mechanisms and market-based policies. This vision of ecological modernisation was the core leitmotif across the outcomes of the Earth Summit (Brand 2010b, 144). For example, the Rio declarations assumed that growth orientation, poverty alleviation, free trade and technical innovation were mutually supportive goals all to be achieved through sustainable development (Carruthers 2001). Finally, ecological modernisation has also been used to translate sustainable development in concrete policy (Baker 2007). It was this discurs-
ive pattern which enabled the shift from development to environment between the WCED and the UNCED. If sustainable development in terms of ecological modernisation also brings about various economic and environmental co-benefits – that is, also brings about development – all we have to care about is environmental politics.

In terms of hegemony theory, this corresponds to another constitutive feature of postpolitical populism: sustainable development emerges as an empty signifier. A particular demand, namely that of environmental policies in the sense of ecological modernisation, is represented as a universal solution, one which is supposed to bring about a broad range of improvements and presents solutions to various grievances. And this, of course, affected the field of development, which was reframed in environmental terms. The argument suggested that if the environmental crisis were politically tackled, then the development impasse would also be overcome. Eventually, this was also applied to a broad range of other problems. In other words, ‘sustainable development is considered so wonderful for all of us, for as we drive our hybrid car we can think we are saving the environment and making our cities better, when in reality we are simply perpetuating the idea of economic growth or “business as usual”’ (Gunder & Hillier 2009, 20). Sustainable development bridges contradictions between growth and ecological limits, between North and South. This goes as far that it is almost impossible to define what sustainable development actually is (Davidson 2010).

In line with this, one could easily argue that the story put forth in this chapter is way too simplistic and does not do justice to the ambiguity and contestations surrounding sustainable development. Of course, one can distinguish between different conceptions of sustainable development (Dobson 1996). Many have attempted to define it in a way that it embodies fundamental social transformations and counter-hegemonic articulation (Lélé 1991; Baker 2007). And it is indeed true that ‘other more radical visions and interpretations of sustainability co-exist with sustainable development’ (Whitehead 2007, 26). Finally, it is not wrong to understand sustainable development as a ‘terrain of conflict’ (Bauriedl & Wissen 2002). However, all that supports the argument that is put forth in this chapter. As the next section will show, the hegemonic conception of sustainable development in effect is a weak, a depoliticising, version. Thus, the conceptual ambiguity surrounding this discourse, the very definitional struggle about its content reinforces the dominance of this model. It is possible for everyone to understand sustainable development in their own terms: ‘people choose, or mould, a form of sustainability that to some degree fits their existing belief system’ (McManus 1996, 54). And this, finally, allows for assembling a broad range of social and political actors behind the concept:

Greenpeace is in favour, George Bush Jr. and Sr. are, the World Bank and its chairman (a prime war monger in Iraq) are, the pope is, my son Arno is, the rubber tappers in the Brazilian
Amazon are, Bill Gates is, the labour unions are. All are presumably concerned about the long-term socio-environmental survival of (parts of) humanity; most just keep on doing business as usual. (Swyngedouw 2007, 22)

This is important. While it is possible to articulate everything as part of sustainable development, and articulate sustainable development as good for almost everything, by virtue of its very vagueness, it is not possible to actually achieve these aims with sustainable development. You can demand everything with sustainable development, but you cannot have everything with it. As a postpolitical populist empty signifier, it manages to catch a broad range of different demands and disarm them at the same time. This points to the third feature of sustainable development: preventing fundamental social change – depoliticisation.

5.1.4 Johannesburg 2002 and beyond: Depoliticisation and the politics of unsustainability

Since Rio, sustainable development has become the hegemonic discourse of environmental politics (Brand 2010a, 137). For many, sustainable development has become the core idea of environmental protection per se (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007, 189). It represents the ‘ideological masterframe’ of environmentalism (Eder 1996, 183). Everything from ‘wetlands’ to ‘cities’, from ‘growth’ to ‘loss’ can be ‘sustainable’ (Swyngedouw 2007, 20). Sustainable development, furthermore, has become the dominant paradigm in national policy making (Meadowcroft 1999). It has even been firmly integrated into the language of business communication (Springgett 2003, 74), for example by corporations forming the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. It has been endorsed by major international organisations such as the World Bank, the IMF, or the WTO. And it has even spread way beyond the field of environmental politics, and come to embrace a vague meaning of resilience and durability. For example, during the course of the recent financial and economic crisis, the declaration of a G-20 meeting spoke of ensuring ‘sustainable growth’ without referring to the environment at all (Spiegel Online, February 19, 2011). It seems that throughout the course of the 1990s, sustainable development pervaded the whole global society.70

In 2002, the 10th anniversary of the Earth Summit was held in Johannesburg as the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). At the time, it was probably the world’s largest-ever political meeting, a ‘mega-event’, gathering representatives from 190 countries, 100 world leaders and about 22,000 other participants and 15,000 other visitors (Death 2010b, 1-3). Whereas it had acquired tremendous attention around the globe, it did not bring about concrete results, and initiated a phase of disappointment in global conferences (Death 2010b, 1-3).

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70. This is, of course, not to say that there would be no critique which points exactly to the vagueness of this concept (for example Eblinghaus & Stickler 1996).
4). It can, however, be read as a sign for the successful expulsion of images of an environmental crisis. In an analysis of TV representations of Rio and Johannesburg in Denmark, which is one of the forerunner countries of environmental politics, Lars Petersen diagnoses a severe shift. In Rio, there were ‘clear traces of a survivalist framing of the environment with indications of limits to growth, bleak predictions of environmental disasters to come and perceptions of man and nature as connected’ (Petersen 2007, 226). Nonetheless, it was supposed that this, if sufficiently tackled through sustainable development, does not necessarily stand in the way of economic prosperity. In 2002, by contrast, ‘environmentalist positions of a survivalist character are pitched against open anti-environmentalism with the latter established as good sense’ (Petersen 2007, 227). In other words, while sustainable development had successfully framed growth and sustainability as mutually supportive aims, this framing has become so successful by the time of the Johannesburg Summit that it appeared to be counter-productive to care too much for the environment. In sum, ‘the earth is subordinate to the global economy’ again (Petersen 2007, 227). Carruthers summarises the success-story of sustainable development in the following way:

The 1990s were a decade of triumphalism for the North, as it shook off old doubts about the virtues of growth and technology, and restored confidence in the universal applicability of the Western path. Sustainable development could now stand alongside neoclassical capitalism and liberal democracy—the picture of hegemonic universalism. (Carruthers 2001, 100)

At the time of writing this book, the UN is involved in preparations for the Rio+20 summit in Rio de Janeiro. The core theme of this conference is the idea of a ‘green economy in the context of sustainable development’ (United Nations 2011). ‘Green growth’ is at the heart of this idea. We will investigate this in detail in the next chapter. But the term already demonstrates the state of sustainable development in 2011.

Here, the discourse that provides for the external hegemony of the global environmental polity (as the umbrella under which the global climate polity emerges, see next section) becomes fully visible. This polity is rendered as a legitimate, necessary and significant polity through two complementary storylines. In the beginning, the framing of the environmental crisis as an existential threat to the established order made such a polity urgently necessary. Today, the ‘success story’ and the merits of ecological modernisation come to the fore when legitimising its existence. It is therefore impossible to understand the emergence of the global environmental polity without the hegemony of sustainable development.

Moreover, against the background of the history of sustainable development, Ingolfur Blühdorn and Ian Welsh have argued that one should speak of a ‘politics of unsustainability’ instead of sustainable development (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007). They identify a number of characteristic features – such as the ‘normalisation’ of environmental crises, a fixation on eco-
onomic growth, the perception that capitalism is part of the solution and not the problem, the alignment of critical NGOs, the transformation of green parties or the rebranding of nuclear energy as clean energy – which clearly indicate a shift in environmental politics at all different levels (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007, 187-88). Instead of identifying and transforming those deeply ingrained social, economic and political structures which cause the ecological crisis, ‘the management of the inability and unwillingness to become sustainable has taken the centre ground’ (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007, 192). In this sense, the politics of sustainability can be labelled a ‘politics of simulation’ (Blühdorn 2007), which has resulted in an ecological paradox:

This new form of ecopolitics [the politics of unsustainability; C.M] is defined not simply by its effort to secure and defend social practices and socioeconomic structures that are well known to be unsustainable (ecologically, socially, and economically) but, more important, by what […] may be called the ecological paradox: the curious simultaneity of an unprecedented recognition of the urgency of radical ecological policy change, on one hand, and an equally unprecedented unwillingness and inability to perform such change, on the other. (Blühdorn 2011, 36)

This ecological paradox points to the third characteristic feature of the postpolitical populism of sustainable development: depoliticisation. Against the backdrop of the political developed in chapter 3, the environmental crisis re-activated and politicised a range of previously ingrained social structures – growth, fossil fuel extraction, high mobility etc – thereby turning them into floating signifiers. Sustainable development, by contrast, seeks to re-integrate these floating signifiers into the established order so as to preserve the status quo. It depoliticises the environmental crisis; hence, David Harvey’s statement that sustainable development is about the ‘preservation of a particular social order rather than a debate about the preservation of nature per se’ (Harvey 1996, 148) and Roger Keil’s assumption that sustainable development is about ‘the survival of capitalism’ (Keil 2007); and hence, the politics of unsustainability.

As was mentioned in chapter 3, a great deal of this depoliticisation can be understood through the lens of governmentality. Timothy Luke, for example, argues that sustainable development has extended a biopolitical governmentality to the entire planet, pacifying environmental movements and sustaining the status quo (Luke 1999). Carl Death argues similarly that the history of sustainable development has to be understood as a history of the deployment of governmental power ‘in which all aspects of social, economic and environmental life were to be brought under the explicit government of authorised experts and managers’ (Death 2010b, 156). For him, the Johannesburg Summit marked a shift towards an advanced liberal government, governing the environment at a distance through partnerships (Death 2010b, 157). Finally, Erik Swyngedouw concludes that an extraordinary techno-managerial apparatus is under way, ranging from new eco-technologies of
a variety of kinds to unruly complex managerial and institutional configurations, with a view to producing a socio-ecological fix to make sure nothing really changes. Stabilizing the climate seems to be a condition for capitalist life as we know it to continue. (Swyngedouw 2010, 222)

In this sense, sustainable development creates the global environmental polity through a depoliticising logic of postpolitical populism, which paves the way for the application of governmentality as a form of power. The exact nature of environmental governmentality, exemplified through climate governmentality, is the subject of the following section. Before, however, I would like to shed light on the relationship between sustainable development and climate change.

5.1.5 Turning point: A new master signifier

The history so far has demonstrated how the politics of sustainable development created a depoliticised global environmental polity. And it has shown how the successive establishment of this polity resulted in what can be called a ‘normalisation of the environmental crisis’ or the ‘death of environmentalism’ (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007). In terms of hegemony theory, one could argue that (at least with Johannesburg) sustainable development has been successfully implemented as a hegemonic discourse. The rift in the social order created by the environmental crisis had effectively been closed by the politics of the sustainable development (in this sense, for example, Petersen 2007).

In this context, the revitalisation of the issue of climate change that began shortly afterwards has to be seen as a dislocation of this rather settled global environmental polity. A first sign of this was the dramatic failure of the UNFCCC COP-6a in The Hague in 2000, when it became clear that the US would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol (see next section). In 2004, Roland Emmerich’s movie The Day after Tomorrow was a huge success and framed the environmental threat as a problem of climate change. In 2005, hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and became a symbol for the vulnerability of even Northern societies. In 2006, Al Gore’s documentary An Inconvenient Truth became another blockbuster and raised public awareness of climate change – followed by the Nobel peace prize in 2007 for Gore and the IPCC. 2007 was also the preliminary peak of concern about climate change, triggered by the IPCC’s Fourth Assessment Report and the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change published in late 2006. Put bluntly, whereas at the beginning of the 21st century it seemed that everything was on track to be solved for good, this was demonstrably false only a few years later.

This new dislocation of the global environmental polity led to its transformation into a global climate polity. This is not to say that the traditional politics of sustainable development would have vanished, or that other environmental problems would have ceased to ex-
ist. It is to say, though, that the public concern with the latter had been displaced by a dramatic attention to climate change. For example, in 2006, a survey found that Americans rank climate change as the top environmental problem, while only three years before it was ranked sixth (ScienceDaily 2011). This trend has been corroborated by many subsequent polls (BBC, December 7, 2009; The Guardian, January 31st, 2011; The Daily Mail, April 19th, 2011). Also global politics has been primarily concerned with climate change in the last decade. One can hardly think of any other meaningful conference in the last couple of years (except perhaps the CBD COP-10 in Nagoya). Even scientists tend to rank climate change as the most serious environmental problem (Rockström et al. 2009). It is probably not too far-fetched to argue that climate change has become the new master signifier of the global environmental polity. The effect of which is that it has dislocated the dominant hegemony of sustainable development and turned the global environmental polity into a more narrow global climate polity.\footnote{It is possible that the failure of Copenhagen triggered a certain backlash in this regard. For example, as mentioned the UN is preparing the Rio+20 summit under the more encompassing theme of a green economy (United Nations 2011). Yet this very recent development is not relevant for the argument made here.}

### 5.2 Climate change

This section seeks to provide a genealogy of climate politics and reads the history of global climate politics through the lens of ‘governing the global polity’ as introduced in chapter 3. I propose to distinguish five phases, each adding a different layer to the emerging governmental polity: the creation of a global governance-object; the constitution of a global polity; the intensification of governmental power; the diffusion of carbon subjectivities; and the emergence of adaptation discourses. These show that the problematisation of climate change establishes carbon as the dominant governance-object of the global climate polity.\footnote{The following history of climate politics draws mostly on the concise overviews by Wolfgang Behringer (2007) and Matthew Paterson (1996, chapter 2). In fact, Behringer’s work has to be read with care. He often puts forth a rather crude climate determinism when it comes to explaining, for instance, the famines of these times, neglecting other social and economic factors. Moreover, I do not agree with his conclusion – the climate has changed before, which is why global warming should not be seen too dramatically. Yet I think that the strength of his book lies in revealing the cultural translation of climatic phenomena in human history and especially in modern times – which I use it for in this chapter.}
5.2.1 Carbon: Constructing a global governance-object (until 1987)

The relationship between governmental power and the climate is much older than the recent concerns about global warming. The earth’s climatic system always had an influence on the lives and fates of human beings. It thus comes as no surprise that it had been the subject of political discourses before the recent attention to global warming. For example, Europe’s Little Ice Age had a strong influence on social and political problematisations of that time (Behringer 2007). Early modern religious discourses related the cooling climate to transgressions of religious moral. This ‘sin economy’ (see also below in section 5.3) was the central ‘mechanism which endowed the meteorological event [of the Little Ice Age; C.M.] with its social relevance’ (Behringer 2007, 180, own translation). Later on, during the 18th century, the social problems associated with a cooler Europa effectively made governments deploy a broad array of precautionary political measures resulting in a ‘triumph of Enlightenment’ over the extreme winter of 1739/40 (Behringer 2007, 211). Although Behringer does not establish this connection, this was an early form of climate governmentality - trying to calculate the climate and act on its effects in a planned and managerial way.

Other examples can be found in Europe’s colonial politics. Mike Davies, for example, shows how the great Asian famines in the second half of the 19th century not only created huge economic and social disparities in the world economy, but also functioned as a kind of a laboratory for applying different forms of governmental rationalities in dealing with these famines, among them the liberal doctrine of laissez faire (Davis 2002). Ashwini Tambe, more recently, showed that at the beginning of the 20th century, the biopolitics of the League of Nations heavily relied on an amalgamation of climate and racial discourses. Disparities among nations were naturalised by explaining them with climatic differences, so that the ‘climate thus provided the unproblematic grid upon which hierarchies were mapped, and then social reformist projects were mounted’ (Tambe 2011, 124). All this is not to say that the climate had a decisive influence on the deployment of governmental power (although it must not be neglected), but rather that experiences of climate variability have for a long time been coded in different problematisations – the ‘sin economy’, the Enlightenment quest for domesticating the forces of nature or the problem of ‘development’ – and have resulted in different governmental rationalities which render the climate as an object of political action. Therefore, the relationship between climate and governmentality is obviously older than usually thought. Yet it could not enfold as a comprehensive economy of power because it lacked its appropriate governance-object. Whereas governmentality was directed at the conduct of the population, no such sophisticated object existed for governing the climate.
This systematic object started to emerge in the early 19th century. Baron John Baptiste Joseph Fourier is usually recognised as the first person who established a connection between the composition of the atmosphere and its average temperature in 1827, terming it the ‘hot-house effect’. The refinement and systematisation of meteorological observations and knowledge throughout the 19th century, involving the First Meteorological Congress in 1873 and the foundation of the International Meteorological Organisation (IMO) in 1878, allowed for the improvements in climate science. In 1863, John Tyndall described vapour as a greenhouse gas and was later the first one to explain past ice ages with a variation in atmospheric carbon dioxide. In 1896, Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius published a paper in which he argued that doubling the CO$_2$ concentration in the atmosphere would result in a mean temperature increase of 5-6°C. In 1908, he was the first to propose a relationship between industrialisation and global warming:

The actual percentage of carbonic acid in the air is so insignificant that the annual combustion of coal, which has now risen to about 900 million tons and is rapidly increasing, carries about one-seven-hundredth part of its percentage of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Although the sea, by absorbing carbonic acid, acts as a regulator of huge capacity [...] we may yet recognise that the slight percentage of carbonic acid in the atmosphere may by the advances of industry be changed to a noticeable degree in the course of a few centuries. (cited in Paterson 1996, 54)

It is worth noting at this point that global warming was not experienced as an actually existing problem. From its very beginning, it was discovered as a theoretical phenomenon which was derived from the physical attributes of CO$_2$ and other greenhouse gases. Already here, climate change was thought in terms of carbon. And carbon, as is already indicated here, was understood as a planetary system, a carbon cycle between the atmosphere and the sea.

Arrhenius’ work was left unnoticed until six decades later. In the course of the International Geophysical Year in 1957, the first permanent CO$_2$ monitoring station was established at Mauna Loa, Hawaii. Before that, the prevailing view has been that any carbon emitted by human societies would be absorbed by the oceans. In 1957, however, Roger Revelle and Hans Suess argued that this would only apply to a certain percentage of emitted carbon, so that the rest would remain in the atmosphere. Humanity, in fact, was conducting ‘a large scale geophysical experiment’ (Revelle & Suess 1957, 19). As a result Revelle persuaded one of his students to establish the measurements at Mauna Loa.

Nonetheless, it took more than two decades to establish a scientific consensus on climate change. In 1960, the Keeling Curve, based on the measurements at Mauna Loa, was able to prove that the increase in atmospheric CO$_2$ in one year roughly corresponds to the amount of fossil fuels burnt – proving the sea-compensation-hypothesis wrong. During the 1960s, the scientific and partly political discourse on climate change shifted from the ambition to actively control the climatic system and counter-act a possible change towards a concern about
the consequences of an unintentional global warming. During the 1970s, efforts were made to establish a reliable climate modelling (as opposed to mere weather forecasting, which had dominated international meteorological cooperation before). These efforts proved rather successful when in 1979 both the US National Academy of Sciences and the First World Climate Conference, organised by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), concluded that these models appeared to be plausible in predicting further global warming through carbon emissions. Since then, climate science has become ever more sophisticated. As a result, the World Climate Programme was established in 1979, which would host most of the subsequent climate research. Among others, it organised the important Villach Conference in 1985, which further corroborated the earlier findings and called for substantive political action to halt global warming.

This tour de force through the history of climate science reveals two crucial things for the overall argument of this section: First, it is quite striking that the constitution of climate change as a global problem goes back to the activities of a coalition of non-state actors. It appears that agenda setting was mostly advanced by concerned scientists as ‘knowledge brokers, helping to translate and publicise the emerging scientific consensus about the greenhouse effect’ (Bodansky 2001, 27). Yet it would be misleading to draw a too stark line between science and politics, and assume that the former called upon the latter for a political response. Although scientists might have been a driving force for setting climate change on the global agenda, these were often government employees (Bodansky 2001, 28), and their activities were often sponsored by national governments or international organisations such as the WMO or the UNEP (Bodansky 2001, 37). So if one concludes that agenda-setting activities ‘were nongovernmental rather than intergovernmental in character’ (Bodansky 2001, 37, emphasis added), this only holds true when informed by a stark distinction between public and private actors which a governmentality perspective seeks to overcome. In fact, this brief analysis of the early phase of global climate politics suggests that global warming represents a case of agenda-setting at a distance. This is a first indication that global politics did not just respond to a given problem.

Secondly, despite all this concern with global warming, it was not until the 1980s that global warming came to be experienced as an actual phenomenon. Only then the historical temperature measurements were interpreted as displaying an anomalous warming since the middle of the 20th century. In other words, global warming was discovered roughly a century before it was actually experienced – simply by extrapolating from the physical attributes of carbon and other greenhouse gases. After World War II, climate science developed in two distinct and often competing scientific discourses: carbon cycle science and meteorological modelling (Hart & Victor 1993). The growing concern about global warming provided a win-
dow of opportunity for merging the two (Hart & Victor 1993, 667). This combination, in turn, constituted the terrain of intelligibility for the emerging problem of climate change. Ever since Arrhenius’ first publication, it had been rendered as a problem of stocks and flows of carbon: the earth’s carbon cycle (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006, 225-26; Boyd 2010). And today, ‘everything we know about the world’s climate – past, present, and future – we know through models’ (Edwards 2010, xiv). Such a complex thing as warming on a planetary scale cannot be experienced directly, but has to be computed by a ‘vast machine’ (Edwards 2010).

In chapter 3, the space for global governmentality was defined as a global polity, which was supposed to exist when actors turn towards a common governance object understood as ‘real, malleable and subject to political action’ (Corry 2010b, 169). It has been found in climate models: More than a century of climate science constituted the earth’s carbon cycle as a real – having effect on people’s lives – and malleable – being affected by people’s lives. The next stage of development turned it into an object which is subject to political action and constituted a complete global polity.

5.2.2 The UNFCCC: Constituting a global polity (1988-1992)

In 1988, climate change had its breakthrough as a political issue. Triggered by the massive drought experienced in the United States that year and the emerging scientific consensus that the 1980s were the hottest decade on record, political actors around the world started to discover the possibility of a warming world as described by the emerging climate science as an issue to be dealt with (Paterson 1996, 32-33). The Toronto Conference of 1988, convened by the Canadian government, gathered more than 300 representatives of science, NGOs and governments (once again displaying a blurring of boundaries between private and public) and called for a comprehensive international convention on global warming. UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher acknowledged climate change as a ‘massive experiment with the system of this planet itself’ (cited in Paterson 1996, 34), and George Bush senior made it an issue in his presidential campaign (Paterson 1996, 35). Finally, climate change was termed a ‘common heritage of mankind’ by the UN General Assembly the same year (Bodansky 2001, 25). It called for the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), under the umbrella of WMO and UNEP, in order to forge a scientific consensus which could inform decision makers. From 1988 on climate change became an issue of global politics and formed a global polity by asserting that the global carbon cycle had to be acted upon politically.

During the following years, calls for a global convention on climate change (which had previously been raised only by scientists) were taken up in the political sphere. In 1989, the G7 meeting in Paris envisaged ‘common efforts to limit emissions of carbon dioxide’ through
a ‘framework or umbrella convention’ (Paterson 1996, 37). The Noordwijk Conference of the same year committed 72 nations to stabilise their emissions at a level to be determined by the IPCC. After a series of political meetings and conferences during 1989 and the first half of 1990, the Second World Climate Conference, with the results of the IPCC’s First Assessment Report of the same year, urged the UN General Assembly to start negotiations for a climate convention. It was followed by the establishment of the International Negotiation Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC) (Paterson 1996, 48). It was only due to the interventions of developing countries that these negotiations were placed under the auspices of the General Assembly rather than within the WMO, UNEP or the IPCC (Bodansky 2001, 30). The latter had been the favoured option of industrialised countries, which had managed to endow the IPCC with a carefully selected staff representing Northern perspectives (Biermann 2003) – another early example of governmental power at a distance through the production of knowledge.

Following the establishment of the INC in 1990, intergovernmental negotiations accelerated in the run-up to the UNCED – the ‘Earth Summit’ – in 1992. However, substantial agreement on the scope and scale of emission reductions could not be reached. Interestingly, the two dominant lines of conflict among negotiating parties both involved the question to what extent climate change really constituted a global polity. On the one hand, the US and other OECD countries disagreed about whether measures and targets should be adopted on a global basis or remain national responsibilities. The US favoured the latter approach and was mainly interested in a globalisation of research. On the other hand, industrialised and developing countries had divergent opinions on the issue of historic responsibility. The South argued that climate change had been caused by the Northern development model, and should thus be solved by OECD countries. These difficulties were kind of papered over by the approach presented in Rio: a general legal framework, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), for future more substantive negotiations. According to Article 2 of the convention, it strives for the

stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

In effect, the UNFCCC thus solved the two lines of concern about the globality of global warming and turned it into a concern of all nations, although acknowledging a ‘common but differentiated responsibility’ (UNFCCC Art 3.1). The Earth’s carbon cycle became a global polity. However, the UNFCCC does not provide any concrete or even legally binding provi-
sions about how to achieve its goals. Thus, the Rio summit and the UNFCCC were only the starting point for an ever more sophisticated and complex process of negotiations which resulted in the third stage of the global polity (see below).

In chapter 3 it was argued that speaking of a global polity always invokes a global governmentality. And despite its weak legal obligation, already the UNFCCC can be seen as the manifestation of a ‘green governmentality’ (Oels 2005). Green governmentality expands Foucault’s biopolitics, which sought to govern the entire population as a comprehensive and complex organism (Dean 2010, chapter 5, see also chapter 2 of this book), to the government of the entire planet (Luke 1999). It is ‘a system of geo-power, eco-knowledge and enviro-disciplines’ (Oels 2005, 194). Climate change is governed according to the idea of ‘planetary management’ (Oels 2005, 195), putting forward an image of the whole planet Earth as the visual field to be acted upon. In line with the dominant approach of climate science to understand the Earth’s carbon cycle as a comprehensive human-ecological system, its episteme implies that it is possible to advance humanity’s knowledge of that science to a level where it would be possible to manage it on a planetary scale. Its techne consists of ‘apparatuses of security’ (Oels 2005, 200), monitoring and controlling the earth’s entire carbon cycle and the consequences of its disruption for global ecosystems and patterns of human life. As Angela Oels puts it:

The planet gets to look like a spaceship that humankind is able to steer on the basis of data and models provided by the natural sciences. The planet needs to be protected from self-inflicted as well as human-made destructive forces that may become excessive if not managed carefully. (Oels 2005, 198)

The ethos thus involves the whole of humanity, united in the face of a common challenge, acting in concert through multilateral arrangements and global institutions. This is very much in line with the postpolitical populist discourse of sustainable development. However, as has been said earlier, it has to be noted that actual political action did not really occur – so that power worked indirectly through the production of knowledge and particular images of global warming.

Green governmentality, in the first place, systematically produced the Earth’s carbon cycle as an global object that could be acted upon – without actually acting upon it. As Eva Lövbrand and Johannes Stripple explain,

Throughout the climate treaty [the UNFCCC; C.M.] anthropogenic climate change is represented as a global problem and a common concern for the signing parties. […] This global framing of climate change in the UNFCCC is closely connected to scientific representations of the climate

73. I am referring here to the four dimensions of an analytics of government: Fields of visibility, episteme, techne and ethos (see chapter 3).
system and the global carbon cycle. (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006, 25)

Green governmentality constitutes the global climate polity around the governance-object of the global carbon cycle, which was scientifically developed since Arrhenius’ initial publication in 1896. This carbon cycle, in turn, provided the appropriate space for a global governmentality to enfold. A comprehensive ‘regime of government’ which would systematically conduct the conduct of states or other subjects did not yet exist at that time. This was added in the next stage – the negotiation of the Kyoto-Protocol.

5.2.3 Kyoto: Governing the carbon polity (1992-1997)

Negotiations for a concrete convention protocol, which was supposed to settle those questions that could not be solved in the run-up to Rio, began immediately after the UNCED. The first Conference of the Parties (COP-1) in Berlin was seen as a disappointment by many observers since it again could not reach an agreement on concrete emission reduction commitments. However, it did agree on the so-called Berlin Mandate which said that a protocol containing such commitments would be negotiated until COP-3, which would be held in 1997 (Paterson 1996, 70). This protocol later became known as the Kyoto Protocol. The negotiations following the Earth Summit were complex and controversial. Two aspects are particularly important here, namely that the debates were caught in a tension between ‘(re)territorialisation and deterritorialisation’ of the atmosphere (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006). On the one hand, despite the fact that the green governmentality embodied by the UNFCCC framed climate change as a global issue, much of the Kyoto-Protocol negotiations were concerned with (re)territorialising the atmosphere into national carbon inventories, which could be regulated by individual commitments for reduction:

Although this national greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting made little sense to carbon cycle science at the time, it was the direct result of the interstate negotiations in the early 1990s. In order to allocate responsibility for climate mitigation efforts among the negotiating states, it was necessary to first know how much carbon is emitted and sequestered within respective state borders. Hence, the global cycling of carbon between the atmosphere, oceans and land – long a preoccupation for climate scientists – had to be broken down into the conventional geopolitical grammar of the nation-state. (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011, 192)

These debates were particularly characterised by disagreement on the role of terrestrial carbon sequestration, that is, national carbon ‘sinks’. Initially, a US-led group of countries maintained that re- and afforestation provided much cheaper mitigation options than a de-

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74. Lövbrand and Stripple, however, stress that the UNFCCC does not only revolve around governing the carbon cycle as a global system, but through the call for national inventories also led to a re-territorialisation of the atmosphere as a contradictory tendency (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006, 227).
carbonisation of society and should thus be included in national emission calculations. This green governmentality strategy – representing a large-scale and calculated manipulation of the Earth’s carbon cycle – could not be realised, and sinks were only accepted in a very limited sense in the final protocol (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006, 230). Yet how to calculate national inventories could not be entirely settled even for a long time after Kyoto. On the other hand, a similar, also US-led, coalition pushed for the adoption of the so-called ‘flexible mechanisms’, that is, the possibility of trading carbon emission reductions across different countries (Lohmann 2006, chapter 2; Stephan 2010). In other words, they opted for a deterritorialisation of the atmosphere again in order to lower mitigation costs by being able to buy cheap mitigation potential from other countries, particularly the developing world. This position could successfully be implemented into the Kyoto Protocol against EU opposition. In sum, the Kyoto Protocol, amongst others, obliges the so-called Annex I countries, the industrialised nations, to an overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 5.2% between 1990 and 2012 – a re-territorialisation of the atmosphere. Yet at the same time, the protocol also establishes three so-called ‘flexible mechanisms’ (Emissions Trading, Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism) which allowed for trading emission reductions as well among Annex I countries as between them and the rest of the world – de-territorialising the atmosphere into an (at least in principle) global carbon market. In this sense, global climate politics inhibits the aperture between ‘representations of climate space as global and deterritorial on the one hand, and political practices that reterritorialise the climate on the other’ (Lövbrand & Stripple 2006, 217).

Angela Oels interprets the Kyoto Protocol as a shift towards what she calls a governmentality of ‘ecological modernisation’ (Oels 2005, 199). For her, ecological modernisation is the green version of advanced liberalism. Advanced liberalism understands markets as the optimal technologies for organising societies and thus puts forth economic thought as its main rationality and the identity of the entrepreneur (Dean 2010, chapter 8, see also chapter 3 of this book). Accordingly the rationality of ecological modernisation, ‘believes that a free market setting and limited government incentives will spur technological innovation that solves the ecological crisis in a cost-efficient manner.’ (Oels 2005, 196) Economic thinking and flexible mechanisms such as carbon trading make up the basis of climate protection. Accordingly, its techne promotes the almost universal implementation of market mechanisms, and relies on ‘technologies of agency and performance’ in order to conduct the conduct of states (Dean 2010, 197). Its episteme involves economic thought such as valuation, cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment. And it creates the ethos of the calculating individual, be it a state, a company or an individual, which reckons its optimal amount of climate protection in the face of market prices and works on its carbon footprint accordingly.
In a similar vein, Karin Bäckstrand and Eva Lövbrand diagnose contesting governmental discourses – green governmentality and ecological modernisation – that rendered the tackling of the forest issue in the climate regime in different ways and were predominant at distinct times (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand 2006, 68). However, despite their conflicting nature, both discourses support and mutually reinforce each other:

[T]he green governmentality discourse has provided the scientific and administrative rationale for measuring, monitoring and certifying carbon removals. [...] In contrast, ecological modernisation operates as a legitimising discourse - a blueprint for action. (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand 2006, 68-69)

Also Oels (2005, 195) concludes that ecological modernisation ‘still draws extensively on the apparatuses of [...] green governmentality], but progressively recodes them in economic terms.’ Together they provide core pillars of a governmental discourse of climate protection; an assemblage that allows for governing climate change on a global scale. Therefore, I would argue that the Kyoto Protocol was not a simple shift from green governmentality to ecological modernisation, but a realignment of the global climate polity which combined the constitutive features of green governmentality with a comprehensive economy of power. In the same way as Foucault described the invention of the population through biopower and biopolitics as the prerequisite for governmentality, it is possible to understand green governmentality and ecological modernisation as two devices performing particular and rather accidentally interlocking functions: while the former creates the global climatic system as the calculating space of a carbon cycle, the latter renders it governable on the basis of advanced liberal technologies of government.75

5.2.4 Beyond the climate regime: The diffusion of carbon subjectivities (since 1997)

Since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, the regime of governmental power within the global climate polity has gradually advanced. With Kyoto, as we have seen, the global climate polity has mostly been made governable by harnessing the power of nation states through a territorialisation of the atmosphere. And of course, this track has been followed by interstate negotiations, which advanced in three steps. As with the UNFCCC, Kyoto represented only a last-minute compromise, papering over severe differences among the parties and leaving many questions unaddressed. First of all, the COPs and meetings following Kyoto were characterised by trying to solve these issues, which failed dramatically at COP-6a in

75. To be precise here, some proponents of the green governmentality concept have argued that already green governmentality seeks to work through the creation of particular ethical subject position and environmental consciousness (e.g., ‘separate your waste’) (Luke 1999). I do not have the space to discuss this in detail here, but I would interpret this in support of my thesis that green governmentality and ecological modernisation are closely connected.
The Hague in 2000, when it became clear that the US would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Secondly, the following years were concerned with trying to keep Kyoto alive despite the withdrawal of the United States. These efforts proved successful when Russia in 2004 eventually ratified the Protocol, which could enter into force in 2005. This breakthrough inaugurated the third phase, when COP-11 in December 2005 started to think about the future beyond 2012, when the commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends. This process, formally endorsed in the Bali Action Plan in 2007, eventually culminated in the Copenhagen disaster described in chapter 1, when governments could not agree on a binding post-Kyoto agreement.

This short history of the formal climate regime after Kyoto could be interpreted as the exhaustion, blockage, defeat or even a disintegration of the global climate polity. Yet I suggest that this phase should be read as a diffusion and intensification of the climate polity, where more and more actors became oriented towards the government of the carbon cycle. For, in fact, there were ‘two Copenhagens’ (Bernstein et al. 2010): one world of blocked interstate negotiations, and one of thriving carbon markets and transnational governance practices. Lövbrand and Stripple conclude that

Since the Mauna Loa measurements started in 1957, and climate change was established as a global phenomenon, new ways of seeing and knowing the climate have gained ground. Artefacts such as sinks, credits, benchmarks and personal budgets have in a few years become new objects of government through which political interventions emerge. Forests and soils, industry installations, and even human bodies are now established as sites of climate governance in ways that were very difficult to imagine just 15 years ago. (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011, 197)

An often-cited example for this intensification and broadening of the climate polity is the so-called Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP). The campaign was founded in 1993 by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, a NGO networking among local governments, and connects around 650 cities in over 30 countries. It represents a decentralised, transnational network which seeks to motivate city governments to carbon emission reductions and assists them in formulating respective legislations and measures (Betsill & Bulkeley 2004). It effectively includes cities into the global climate polity. Rachel Slocum, analysing the CCP from a governmentality perspective, argues that it represents a clear example of governing at a distance; the state seeking to govern through the shaping of subjectivities: ‘The production of truth and the administrators’ authorisation to speak is shaped by the understanding that the bottom line is the most likely way to motivate people to act on energy use and thereby lower greenhouse-gas emissions’ (Slocum 2004, 765). Similar examples are provided by the myriads of ‘climate partnerships’ – ‘technologies of agency’ (Dean 2010), so
to speak – which seek to implement transnational governance of climate change, cut across the public-private divide and integrate a whole new set of actors into the global climate polity (Bäckstrand 2008).

What is more, whereas official negotiations are stalling, the central device of ecological modernisation which entered the global climate polity with Kyoto is thriving: carbon markets. These encompass, of course, those flexible mechanisms which were implemented with the Kyoto Protocol: Emissions Trading, Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism. The latter two especially seek to harness the power of private actors for governing the climate (see chapter 7). However, there are also private carbon offsetting schemes (Lovell, Bulkeley & Owens 2009). In their study of different types of these schemes, Matthew Paterson and Johannes Stripple argue that these have to be understood as forms of governmental power which ‘entail the “conduct of carbon conduct” through moulding and mobilising a certain subjectivity (the individual as concerned carbon emitter) to govern his or her own emissions in various ways – as counters, displacers, dieters, communitarians, or citizens’ (Paterson & Stripple 2010, 342). These often transcend national borders by linking activities in the global North with abatement of carbon emissions in the South, and represent a global regime of government in its own right. Others have highlighted the role of professional carbon accountants and accounting in general as a governmental technique in the global climate polity (Lovell & MacKenzie 2011). As will also be argued in chapter 7, carbon markets present a prime example for the capacity of the carbon governmentality to bypass states and govern at a distance. One could thus bluntly summarise that, from a Foucauldian perspective, sovereign power might be blocked, but governmentality is very well alive and functions more intensively than ever before within the climate polity.

In light of this picture, it makes probably sense to adapt Stephen Legg’s (2005) idea to think of governmentality in terms of different layers. Accordingly, Foucault did not treat the population as a uniform and coherent problem space:

Populations experientially exist from the internal conversations one has with oneself about how to act, to urban regulation and conduct, to national policies, to epistemologically abstract knowledge formations and imaginations. At each of these scales, particular geographies emerge. These geographies can include the organisation of the home, the comportment and performance of a walker in the street, the sexual spaces of a community, the drilling of subterranean water channels, citywide administration, the policing of national boundaries, or the genocide of a community considered ‘bad stock’. Each scale informs the other, each geography has infinite possible networks of cause and effect. (Legg 2005, 144)

In this sense, already before but also since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, the global climate polity has been diffused into various different levels and has intensified the exercise of government power. Throughout the last twenty years the problem of climate change has spawned a vast multiplicity of private and political practices at various levels. This goes
without saying for the formal international climate change regime, including the authoritative science of the IPCC (Oberthür & Ott 1999), runs through transnational city partnerships (Betsill & Bulkeley 2004), advocacy groups (Newell 2008) or business and civil society activities (Pattberg & Stripple 2008). It also applies to the rather individual practices of carbon offsetting (Paterson & Stripple 2010) and even those policies that are seemingly situated at the local or national level have strong global linkages, as they are either derived from global arrangements, such as the European ETS, or seek to become transnational, as in the case of subnational trading systems within the US. All these regimes of government have strikingly transcended national borders. They are forming a comprehensive global polity.

5.2.5 Adapting to the inevitable: Climate risks as an emerging agenda (Since 2001)

Yet within the global climate polity, there is an emerging discourse which complements the hegemony of carbon governmentality: the discourse of adaptation to climate change.76 Adaptation has been put on the agenda of the global climate polity in 2001 with the Third Assessment Report (TAR) of the IPCC (IPCC 2001). It acknowledged that the ‘Earth’s climate system has demonstrably changed on both global and regional scales since the pre-industrial era, with some of these changes attributable to human activities’ and presents rather detailed regional scenarios of probable consequences (IPCC 2001, 4). It concludes that ‘[a]daptation is a necessary strategy at all scales to complement climate change mitigation efforts’ because mitigation will not suffice to deal with global warming (IPCC 2001, 23). In this sense, the TAR establishes a second, competing, governance-object in the global climate polity: adaptation.77

The COP-7 in Marrakesh in 2001, therefore, created three political mechanisms, which were all put under the auspices of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the financial facility of the UNFCCC: the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund, and the Trust Fund Strategic Priority on Adaptation.78 In this sense, adaptation has mostly been rendered governable as a problem of acquiring the necessary funding for adaptation projects mostly in the developing countries, estimates of which range between US-$ 10-24 billion (EU), US-$ 28-59 billion (UNFCCC) and US-$ 20-100 billion (World Bank) (IRIN News 2010). The Cancun Agreement adopted at COP-16 in Mexico, finally, agreed on raising US-$ 30 bil-

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76. The following presentation of adaptation is mostly informed by Rothe 2007 and Oels 2012.
77. The original conception of the global polity (Corry 2010b) suggests that polities revolve around one particular object of governance. This point thus supports the augmentation of discursive struggle with a theory of hegemony, that was suggested in chapter 3.
78. To be precise, the Trust Fund had existed since 1994, but was asked to make adaptation a priority in 2001.
lion from 2010-2012 as a fast-track finance for adaptation (The Guardian, December 11, 2010). Put bluntly, adaptation has emerged mostly as a financial problem in the global climate polity.

It thus comes as no surprise that similarly to governing carbon, governing adaptation is informed by green governmentality, but dominated by a scheme of advanced liberal government. This is already demonstrated by the fact that most adaptation projects are implemented on the ground by NGOs and IOs (Paavola & Adger 2006) – a clear case of governing adaptation at a distance. And this is also reflected in the four dimensions of an analytics of adaptation government (Rothe 2007, 103p.). The fields of visibilities are constructed as places at risk, as places of vulnerability, which can be calculated and mapped based on an episteme of natural sciences and economic thought. The techne of adaptation comprises technologies of agency and performance: ‘contracting out’ adaptation projects, empowering local communities, or techniques of ‘participatory monitoring’ (Rothe 2007, 112). Finally, the ethos is one of calculating and rational communities-at-risk, which seek to achieve an optimal level of adaptation. In sum, this is the same combination of biopolitical management and governing at a distance that also characterises the discourses of mitigation.

As these brief remarks have already indicated, adaptation is rendered as a question of climate change ‘risks’, thereby invoking the third notion of governmentality as involving a different perspective on the apparatuses of security (see chapter 3). And as Angela Oels points out, the politics of adaptation are increasingly shaped by two competing risk rationalities (Oels 2012). The first one, in line with the TAR, assumes that risk can be calculated and mapped, and hence acted upon and managed politically. This is the rationality of risk which broadly fits into Rothe’s adaptation discourse – governmentality informed by biopolitics and advanced liberal government. The second rationality of risk, by contrast, involves the idea that climate change is too uncertain to be predicted and managed, which is why preparation for the dangers of climate change becomes increasingly important. Instead of mapping and managing the vulnerability to climate change, it has to be invested in the ‘resilience’ of those affected by the impacts of global warming (Corry 2010a). In this sense, the turn towards adaptation in global climate politics can be read as a challenge displacing, or at least complementing, its dominant governance-object ‘carbon’ with ‘vulnerability’. And this is associated with the emergence of a new governmentality rendering this object governable: a governmentality of risk.  

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79. Of course, vulnerability could also be conceived of as the object of a different global polity, for example a humanitarian polity of disaster prevention. This points to the importance of studying the relationship between different polities, which will be undertaken especially in chapter 8. There, I also further engage with the consequences of a shifting rationality of power.
5.2.6 Carbon Governmentality and the global climate polity

This brief genealogy of the climate polity has revealed a couple of important things. From its very beginning, climate change has been problematised as an imbalance in the Earth’s carbon cycle. Since the end of 1980s, this problematisation has become the governance-object of a global polity, rendered governable through a green governmentality. Starting with the UNFCCC of 1992, this polity has increasingly been filled with governmental power, which manifests itself in a broad range of different levels, ranging from the atmosphere and the national sink to the personal carbon budget. What makes translating the global climate polity to so many different levels and sites possible is its common currency. What makes the the global climate polity hang together is its governance-object – carbon:

Carbon accounting as a governmental rationality insist on the ‘counting of carbon’ and allows stocks and flows to be measured, quantified, demarcated and statistically aggregated. We have argued that these calculative practices enable certain ways of seeing and knowing the climate, and hereby turn carbon into an object of governance. Carbon accounting, here understood as the technical capability to give carbon flows, produced by different people in different geographical sites, a certain degree of uniformity and comparability, is thus a necessary step in order to make climate change governable. (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011, 197)

And this is, finally, why I propose to call the governmentality which renders the global climate polity governable carbon governmentality (Methmann 2012).

It is important to note that the government of carbon is an important point of contact with the populist nature of the sustainable development discourse, which provides the hegemonic roof for carbon governmentality to enfold. As has been argued in the first part of this chapter, sustainable development identifies nature out of control as the external enemy of humanity. And it represents an empty signifier, which is to bring about a kind of universal salvation. Carbon, as Erik Swyngedouw argues, manifests and combines both sides of this hegemonic project:

The ‘point du capiton’, the quilting point through which the signifying chain weaves a discursive matrix of meaning and content for the climate change problematic, is CO₂, the objet petit a that simultaneously expresses our deepest fears and around which the desire for change, for a better socio-climatic world is expressed. (Swyngedouw 2010, 220)

The Lacanian concept ‘objet petit a’, which Swyngedouw invokes here, roughly corresponds to Laclau’s empty signifier. In other words, CO₂ and the associated governmentality of climate protection, becomes the empty signifier of the climate change discourse. It is the manifestation of the discursive outside of a nature out of control, turned into an object of governance, and at the same time embodies the solution of the climate crisis through that very
governmentality. Carbon is the quilting point that connects postpolitical populism and carbon governmentality. We will return to this relationship within the analysis of carbon governmentality as an empty signifier conducted in chapter 7.

The Earth’s carbon cycle replaced the population as the problem space of governmentality. A carbon governmentality emerged, so to speak, but this point necessitates a number of qualifications. First of all, historically this government of the population hinges on the fact that it is both object and subject of government at the same time. Only this makes it possible to govern it at a distance. In order to achieve this subject-object duality, it is hence necessary to understand the carbon cycle in terms of a coupled human and ecological system. And this is precisely why carbon governmentality is in fact an ‘Earth system governmentality’ (Lövbrand, Stripple & Wiman 2009, 12), which underpins the government of climate change. It does not completely replace the population, but rather recodes it in terms of an atmospheric science that combines human and ecological systems. The key epistemic figure that makes it possible to think of human life in terms of carbon is that of the ‘carbon footprint’ – this is the identity of carbon governmentality. It integrates individual activities (e.g. flying) and lifestyles into the calculative space of the carbon cycle, and can be extended to the impact of firms, communities, NGOs, or entire nation states.80

Secondly, the thesis of a global climate polity rendered governable through carbon reinvokes the critique of the applicability of the governmentality concept to the global level. In chapter 3 I argued that the concept of the global polity provides the appropriate problem space for a global governmentality to enfold, and I am now able to put more empirical flesh on the theoretical bones of that argument. Critics like Joseph (Joseph 2009; Joseph 2010a) claimed that governmentality cannot be used outside the context of Western nation states because a corollary to its domain – the population and civil society — would not exist there. The genealogy of global climate politics reveals precisely the opposite. Translating governmental power to the global level created its governance object in the first place. The Earth’s carbon cycle, understood as a coupled human-ecological system provides the necessary domain for carbon governmentality to enfold. Moreover, Joseph argues that if there is governmentality at the global level at all, it is an international governmentality, directed at the conduct of states (Joseph 2010b). This might hold true for the formation of the Kyoto-Protocol. But as the last section showed, governmental power is applied to a broad range of different

80. There are actually a lot of different tools or techniques for calculating carbon footprints – web-based carbon footprint calculators, carbon labelling in supermarkets, the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) which seeks to monitor carbon emissions of corporations, or the concept of measurable and verifiable emission reductions (MRVs) which permeate post-2012 climate negotiations. The latest World Development Report (The World Bank 2010b), for example, discusses national emissions in terms of ‘carbon footprints’ (that is, the national emissions per capita).
spatial levels and subjects, which easily bypass the nation state but relate to the same global polity. In sum, carbon governmentality is a prime example for refuting critics of global governmentality (see also Methmann 2012).

5.3 Pure nature, dangerous nature: The fantasmatic dimension

Carbon governmentality, finally, is also invoked by the fantasmatic dimension of sustainable development. The concept of social fantasy was introduced as missing in both hegemony theory and governmentality in chapter 3.3. Jason Glynos and David Howarth define it as narratives ‘providing an image of fullness, wholeness, or harmony, on the one hand, while conjuring up threats and obstacles to its realisation’ (Glynos & Howarth 2007, 130). Fantasy increases the appeal of hegemonic projects. I discuss both the beatific as well as the horrific dimensions of the sustainable development discourse, in particular the image of harmonious nature and the idea of a dawning apocalypse, and connect it to Foucault’s governmentality. Doing so, I am opening a genealogical perspective which goes beyond and complements the analysis of political processes in a more narrow sense which mostly dominated this chapter.81

To start with, sustainable development has to be situated within the framework of the ‘end of nature’, namely that at least in the Western world, nature as a pure and untouched sphere has disappeared (McKibben 1990). Regardless of whether or not this is true, one can observe the end of nature in the sense that with the beginning of industrialisation our understanding of nature has been transformed into environment: ‘No longer does nature denote an entity with its own agency, a source of life and discourse, as was the case in many traditional societies, with European Romantic literature and art of the 19th century.’ (Escobar 1996, 331) Instead, nature becomes completely defined in its relations to social and economic systems: ‘Everything that is relevant to the functioning of this system becomes part of the environment.’ (Escobar 1996, 331) Turning nature into a resource for the development of human systems is constitutive of sustainable development. Only such an understanding allows for managing the environment so as to increase its support for human systems.

Paradoxically, sustainable development is at the same time based on the idea that nature once was a harmonious and autonomous sphere, and that this lost paradise will eventually be regained. This fantasy, for example, is exemplified by the best-selling book The World

81. A more comprehensive version of the argument put forward in this section has been developed in Methmann & Rothe 2011.
**Pure nature, dangerous nature: The fantasmatic dimension**

without Us, in which author Alan Weisman asks ‘how long would it take [nature; C.M.] to recover lost ground and restore Eden to the way it must have gleamed and smelled the day before Adam, or Homo sapiens, appeared?’ And he concludes that

just days after humans disappear, floods in New York’s subways would start eroding the city’s foundations, and […] as the world’s cities crumble, asphalt jungles give way to real ones. […] organic and chemically-treated farms would revert to wild, […] billions more birds would flourish, and […] cockroaches in unheated cities would perish without us. (Weisman 2007, 4p.)

This perfectly illustrates the desire to a return to a status quo ante. Yet Slavoj Žižek has highlighted the fantasmatic content of this idea. He argues that since the emergence of humanity, nature as a separate and idealised sphere has always been a mythicised abstraction (Žižek 2008, chapter 9). The discipline of environmental history, moreover, shows that nature has always been subject to change and transformation – nature is a highly dynamic concept (Behringer 2007, 276); a construction that has increasingly been subject to the idea that it can and has to be preserved.

This problem is well highlighted by the debate about the anthropocene. In 2000, Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen put forth an article in which he argued that since the middle of the 18th century we have entered a new geological epoch: the ‘anthropocene’, which was characterised by the fact that humanity had appeared as a geological agent in its own right (for an overview see Crutzen & Steffen 2003). This thesis was backed up with data that showed a man-made increase in greenhouse gases. In this sense, it establishes a ‘before’ and an ‘after’, the former representing the ‘true’ state of nature. Others, however, have demonstrated that this distinction is in fact wrong and man-made climate effects had been experienced much earlier (Ruddiman 2003). For example, already the massive deforestations in the Bronze Age had climatic effects (Behringer 2007, 279). This debate, therefore, paradigmatically expresses the simultaneous desire to locate and the impossibility to find a pure origin of nature.\(^{82}\) Nature is a myth; it does not exist (Swyngedouw 2007). In other words, while sustainable development is based on an exploitative relationship with the environment, it mobilises the fantasmatic image of a harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature – to be re-established once sustainable development has been implemented. This constituted a core beatific appeal of that hegemonic discourse.

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82. Some might argue that before the Bronze Age there was something that could legitimately be termed a pure nature. However, this is a fiercely debated point, and for the present day politics of sustainable development that time is hardly relevant. However radical our political measures might be, we will definitely never return to that state.
On the other hand, the discourse of sustainable development, and particularly that of climate change, is sutured with apocalyptic images. Such an ‘ecology of fear’ (Davis 1999) has a long tradition. Environmental politics has always been an ‘apocalyptic environmentalism’ (Katz 1995). Erik Swyngedouw has analysed the climate change discourse as an ensemble of a world without water, or at least with endemic water shortages, ravaged by hurricanes whose intensity is amplified by climate change; pictures of scorched land as global warming shifts the geo-pluvial regime and the spatial variability of droughts and floods; icebergs that disintegrate around the poles as ice melts into the sea, causing the sea level to rise; alarming reductions in biodiversity as species disappear or are threatened by extinction; post-apocalyptic images of waste lands reminiscence of the silent ecologies of the region around Chernobyl; the threat of peak-oil that, without proper management and technologically innovative foresight, would return society to a Stone Age existence; the devastation of wildfires, tsunamis, diseases like SARS, avian flu, Ebola or HIV. (Swyngedouw 2010, 217)

Imageries of a dawning apocalypse have a long-standing tradition in the history of humanity, most prominently embodied by the Christian mythology of apocalypse. Today, apocalyptic images like a nature out of control are taking this place, they become the ‘new opium for the masses’ (Žižek 2006b). However, the modern versions of apocalypse does not provide the possibility of redemption, it is an ‘apocalypse forever’ (Scherpe & Peterson 1986). Yet it is an end that never comes. The environmental crisis in general, and increasingly climate change in particular, put forth the idea of a permanent crisis. And it is this crisis which allows for externalising the lack of the subject into the idea of sustainable development (see chapter 3.3). The dawning environmental apocalypse displaces other social, political or economic grievances. This horrific dimension of fantasy turns sustainable development into an attractive discursive project.

And these two dimensions of fantasy, finally, connect hegemony to governmentality, as they imply the application of governmental power. On the one hand, the idea of pure nature disturbed in the anthroposcence is constitutive for an ‘Earth system governmentality’ (Lövbrand, Stripple & Wiman 2009), which seeks to manage the planet in order to restore its natural equilibrium (Swyngedouw 2007). Such an ecological governmentality implies the idea of managing the earth in a natural state (Luke 1999).

What is more, in a highly original analysis of New Zealand sustainable development policies, Simon Swaffield finds interesting parallels between sustainable development and what he calls ‘the pastoral’. He concludes that the practices of sustainable management ‘are characterised by a core structure of natural and social order, natural wealth, permanence and simplicity, set within a contemporary Arcadian setting of ‘natural’ ecology.’ (Swaffield 1997, 118-19) This corresponds to nature as a primordial and harmonious system, which can be managed according to a pastoral idea. From here, it is only a small step towards the ‘pastoral power’ which Foucault described as the origins of modern governmentality.
On the other hand, also the horrific fantasy has strong correlations with pastoral power and governmentality. Wolfgang Behringer, for example, has shown how climatic changes in early modern times have resulted in a ‘sin economy’ (Behringer 2007). Since climatic variations were interpreted as God’s punishment for violations of moral and religious rules, they had to be remedied and counteracted by religious rituals. For instance, he refers the increase in the burning of witches directly to climatic variability. Climatic change deployed a comprehensive apparatus of pastoral power in the Foucauldian sense. These examples highlight the close relationship between fantasmatic narratives of sustainable development and the establishment of pastoral power. This logic of fantasy that makes sustainable development attractive for subjects at the same time gives way to the constitution of carbon governmentality.

5.4 Conclusion: A proto-explanation

At its beginning, this chapter set out the task of a twofold genealogy: that of sustainable development and that of climate change. I have also reintroduced material from chapter 3 which developed a framework for the analysis of climate mainstreaming, highlighting its political, social and fantasmatic logics. The genealogy of climate mainstreaming now allows me to fill these theoretical categories with first empirical insights. First, the genealogy of sustainable development has shown that the global environmental polity, while providing the conceptual frame for climate politics, has been created according to a logic of postpolitical populism. It has created a fundamental antagonism between humanity and nature change; established sustainable development as an empty signifier; and resulted in depoliticisation through governmental power. Secondly, with regard to the social logics, the genealogy of climate change revealed that this polity was narrowed into a climate polity and traced the emergence of a carbon governmentality – enshrining a global field of visibility, based on sound science, administered through market mechanisms, putting forth carbon footprints as the dominant subjectivities. It provides a lively example of the general depoliticising tendency of sustainable development. Thirdly, both were found to be underpinned by common fantasmatic images: a beatific vision of pure nature, and a horrific apocalyptic threat, both implicating the application of pastoral power.

Moreover, the analysis demonstrated that the polity concept can be usefully applied to global climate politics, but that this concept is indeed in need of a more discursive understanding. Far from being a clear-cut polity with a definite object of government, it was found that the focus of this object can easily shift (from environment to climate), that it can find
multiple problematisations (mitigation vs. adaptation), and that it can be the object of different polities. In this sense, it showed that governmentality and hegemony can enhance our understanding of global polities.

These findings, finally, provide what could be called hypotheses for the study of climate mainstreaming. Namely, that climate mainstreaming represents an attempt to broaden the global climate polity through an equally postpolitical populist hegemony; that this enlarged polity will be governed by a depoliticising carbon governmentality; and that core features of both will thus affect the governmental rationalities of the areas climate change is mainstreamed into. So far, however, this picture only amounts to a rough draft painted with bold strokes. Its conclusions remain incomplete and tentative, somewhat dissatisfactory. The following three chapters, thus, provide a more detailed and nuanced explanation of climate mainstreaming.
The danger posed by climate change cannot be denied, and our responsibility to meet it must not be deferred. If we continue down our current course, every member of this Assembly will see irreversible changes within their borders. Our efforts to end conflicts will be eclipsed by wars over refugees and resources. Development will be devastated by drought and famine. Land that human beings have lived on for millennia will disappear. Future generations will look back and wonder why we refused to act why we failed to pass on intact the environment that was our inheritance.

US President Obama, at the UN General Assembly 2009
(The White House 2009)

In previous chapters, the global climate polity has been described as being trapped in an ‘ecological paradox’; combining an unprecedented interest in environmental issues, but at the same time obsessed with the maintenance of the status quo (Blühdorn 2011). While Copenhagen represented its preliminary climax, this paradox is deeply ingrained within global climate politics. On the one hand – as the epigraph of this chapter displays – it is often underpinned by an apocalyptic and millennial rhetoric. On the other hand, it seldom results in more than the piecemeal and technocratic approach of carbon governmentality. This chapter begins to undertake empirical analysis of climate mainstreaming in global politics. It asks by what political logics climate mainstreaming (re-)produces, expands and intensifies a hegemonic global climate polity. It contends that the answer to this question also provides a solution to the initial ecological paradox; namely, that the global climate polity, and hence climate mainstreaming, is held together by a postpolitical populist logic. Carbon governmentality is dominant not despite but because of its apocalyptic framings.
Postpolitical populism as a logic of hegemonic struggle involves three moments (see chapter 3.2). First of all, it creates an antagonism between the established order and a dangerous intruder, who threatens and thereby constitutes the former as a cohesive political community. In sustainable development (see chapter 5.1), this intruder was shown to be nature out of control. Secondly, postpolitical populism establishes an empty signifier, which purports to provide a simple solution for all these ills. In sustainable development, this was embodied by ideas of ecological modernisation. Thirdly, postpolitical populism results in a depoliticisation of the respective issue area employing a comprehensive economy of governmental power, which manages the status quo, but leaves its basic social structures untouched. This is paradigmatically embodied by the carbon governmentality dominant within the global climate polity (see chapter 5.2). The first part of this chapter interprets climate mainstreaming as such a postpolitical populist discourse, while the second part turns to the discursive strategies of resistance that have been used to challenge this discourse. Resistance commonly takes the form of what has been termed counter-conduct. Counter-conduct is a political intervention below the threshold of a competing hegemonic project, which mostly relies on the play of differences and the contingencies in hegemonic discourses. It seeks to transform hegemony from within. The chapter ends with an excursus to the Cochabamba Declaration, which contrasts climate mainstreaming with a politicising populist discourse.

The following analysis subjects the climate mainstreaming to a narrative discourse analysis. In treating climate mainstreaming as a narration, it seeks to highlight the actants (the narrative personnel), the problematisations (the problem around which the story revolves), and the storylines (the plot that defines how the story unfolds) within the mainstreaming discourse. The first three sections deal with these three aspects, respectively. The remainder of this section then turns to tensions within this discourse and alternative narrations, which challenge or at least complement this dominant discourse.

6.1 Actants: An antagonism between humanity and climate change

The first aspect highlighted in narration analysis is the actant structure which identifies the central subjects in the narration and their relationship with each other; for example, villain and hero, assistants and henchmen, victims and objects (Viehöver 2001, 186). In the climate mainstreaming narration, the actant structure unfolds around a constitutive antagonism between ‘humanity’ and ‘dangerous climate change’ – which also constitutes the first dimension of postpolitical populism.
6.1.1 Of villains…

Within the discourse of climate change in global social, environmental and economic governance, it is climate change itself which features as the villain. One of the most common terms associated with ‘climate change’ is the word ‘dangerous’. The usage of the term as such might not be surprising because it is directly evident within the UNFCCC of 1992. Its usage there, the objective of policy is the stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. (Art. 2, UNFCCC)

In the climate change discourses under investigation, this formulation turns ubiquitously into ‘dangerous climate change’. For instance, the following statement is emblematic: ‘The threshold for dangerous climate change is an increase of around 2°C.’ (UNDP 2007, 3) While the UNFCCC formulation seeks to qualify the degree of human interaction with the climate system as dangerous, the latter attaches this label to climate change itself. At first glance, stressing this difference might look like a quibble. However, it comes with a change in perspective: the initial activity that causes climate change – human interference – is concealed within the statement of the fact of climate change, which is qualified as inherently ‘dangerous’. Climate change mutates from a process rooted in human activity to an external danger; it becomes the dangerous Other. This idea is reflected in various other discursive patterns. For example, it is evident within the salient formulation of ‘climate shocks’ (e.g. Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 29; UNDP 2007, 88; The World Bank 2010b, 14). Shocks are external to the affected; they are caused by sudden changes from the outside. The same applies to the very common depiction of climate change as a ‘threat’/‘threatening’ something (e.g. WRI 2008, 40; UNEP 2009a, 7; WTO & UNEP 2009, V). And the severity of the threat is underpinned by the imminent risk of ‘catastrophic events’/‘catastrophic outcomes’ associated with global warming throughout the sample (e.g. Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 8; UNDP 2007, 7; GHF 2009, ii). These include the possibility of ‘unpredictable and non-linear events that could open the door to ecological catastrophes’ (UNDP 2007, 2). Climate change appears not only as the villain in this storyline, it is also a potentially very dangerous rogue, and its actions are unpredictable. The encompassing threat posed by climate change is further increased by the omnipresence of this villain. For example,

climate change threatens markets, economies and development gains. It can deplete food and water supplies, provoke conflict and migration, destabilise fragile societies and even topple governments. (Ban 2009, 6)

Climate change is not only a threat that has to be put alongside other major international issues, but becomes the ‘defining challenge of our age’ (Ban 2007).
In this sense, climate change is even presented as a master security threat. For example, in 2007, a session of the UN Security Council was completely dedicated to climate change. As discussed in chapter 1, in recent years, climate change has evidently been securitised. Observers of this trend equivocally conclude that this paradoxically does not result in the use of the traditional toolkit of military security (Trombetta 2008; Brzoska 2009; Detraz & Betsill 2009). This paradox could well be interpreted as countering the claim advanced here; namely that climate change is not successfully constructed as a fundamental antagonism between Us and climate change. Yet take for example the statement of Margaret Beckett, then UK Foreign Secretary, explaining the reasons why the UK had called for the Security Council session on climate change:

Our responsibility in the Council is to maintain international peace and security, including the prevention of conflict. An unstable climate will exacerbate some of the core drivers of conflict, such as migratory pressures and competition for resources. The recent Stern Review Report on the Economics of Climate Change speaks of potential economic disruption on the scale of the two world wars and of the great depression. That alone will inevitably have an impact on the security of all of us — developed and developing countries alike. (**UNRESOLVED**)  

If this is not the exceptional rhetoric of securitisation, then what is? The fact that this does not result in exceptional measures, as predicted by the Copenhagen School, can be read in support of the thesis of this chapter. If climate change is presented as fundamental threat, but one which does not result in military responses, this might reveal evidence of a different governmental rationality (Rothe 2011b). It could be interpreted through the frame of the post-political logic of climate mainstreaming (which is precisely not about exceptional measures). As I have argued elsewhere together with Delf Rothe (Methmann & Rothe 2011), the securitisation of climate change is thus a central feature of postpolitical populism, creating a fundamental antagonism between Us and climate change, and turning the latter into a universal threat

6.1.2 …and heroes

The existence of such a threat, on the other hand, gives rise to a new protagonist in the fight against climate change: ‘humanity’. The whole world is in danger, and this renders climate change as a concern for each and every individual. Climate change makes it necessary for all nations to join sides, as it ‘must be tackled with the greatest sense of urgency by the entire community of nations’ (WTO & UNEP 2009, V). Climate politics, as well as that of sustainable development, frame the environmental, and particular the climate crisis, as a prob-

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83. The term securitisation, as it is used here, broadly refers to the framework of the Copenhagen School, which argues that security threats are established through an authoritative speech act, which legitimises the adoption of exceptional measures (Buzan, Waever & De Wilde 1998).
lem of planetary dimensions (Jasanoff 2001, see also chapter 5). Inspired by the images of Planet Earth taken by the Apollo Mission in the 1960s, the Brundtland Report framed the object threatened by the environmental crisis as a ‘small and fragile ball dominated not by human activity and edifice but by a pattern of clouds, oceans, greenery and soils’ (Brundtland 1987, 1). This resulted in the UNCED of 1992, where the UNFCCC was adopted.

The discursive strategies of climate mainstreaming drew heavily upon this image and deploy it within their creation of ‘humanity’ as a unitary global actor. Climate change, for example, ‘has brought the world together in a way perhaps not witnessed since World War II and it has brought the UN together, too’ (Steiner 2009, 5). As the reference to World War II makes clear, this unification is dependent upon the existence of ‘dangerous climate change’ as an external enemy. Hence Kofi Annan’s statement at the beginning of the UNFCCC COP 15 in Nairobi: ‘Climate change threatens the entire human family. Yet it also provides an ‘opportunity to come together and forge a collective response to a global problem’ (Annan 2006); hence, ‘the battle against dangerous climate change is part of the fight for humanity’ (UNDP 2007, 6); hence, ‘there are no sides in the fight for climate justice’ (GHF 2009, iv). In this sense, the dialectic of this storyline is that the external villain ‘dangerous climate change’ is constitutive for the only one protagonist that stands up to fighting that very enemy: ‘humanity’.

With reference to the discussion of the concept of populism it is possible to conclude that the strategy of climate mainstreaming is indeed populist, as it functions by introducing what Laclau termed a ‘radical heterogeneity’ (Laclau 2005, 156). However, in line with Žižek’s (2006a) argument, this does not necessarily have to result in a division of society into two antagonistic camps. Rather, climate mainstreaming constructs ‘dangerous climate change’ as an external Other.

The upshot of this is that humanity as the protagonist of the discourse is unified and homogenised vis-a-vis its external enemy. As was discussed in chapter 5.1, the fundamental antagonism of the sustainable development story creates humanity not ‘as heterogeneous political subjects, but as universal victims, suffering from processes beyond their control [...so that it] silences ideological and other constitutive social differences and disavows conflicts of interests by distilling a common threat’ (Swyngedouw 2010, 221). It is precisely this image which is mirrored in the climate mainstreaming discourse, especially in the concept of ‘ecological interdependence’:

Ecological interdependence is not an abstract concept. We live today in a world that is divided at many levels. People are separated by vast gullfs in wealth and opportunity. In many regions, rival nationalisms are a source of conflict. All too often, religious, cultural and ethnic identity are treated as a source of division and difference from others. In the face of all these differences, climate change provides a potent reminder of the one thing that we share in common. It is called planet Earth. All nations and all people share the same atmosphere. And we only have one.
At least since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world has commonly been perceived as divided between ‘North’ and ‘South’ (see e.g. Slater 1997). And although this image is increasingly challenged by concerns about the emergence of regional powers and a multipolar world order (Nolte 2010), in most parts of global politics this logic still prevails. Sustainable development has challenged this deeply ingrained perception with the ‘one planet’ rhetoric of the Brundtland Commission. Climate mainstreaming further exaggerates this image with this concept of ecological interdependence. It cuts across previous antagonisms and differences, and thus turns humanity into a homogeneous entity – how this framing affects other polities will be discussed in chapter 8.

6.1.3 Accounting for differences: Walking with a carbon footprint

Throughout the sample, we can thus find articulations which increasingly blur the distinction between developing and developed countries within climate change politics. For example, even though the differing responsibilities for climate change are acknowledged, these differences are then made to disappear. For example, in the UNEP campaign in the run-up to Copenhagen: ‘“Unite to combat climate change”, says that we are all part of the solution.’ (UNEP 2008b, 3) The unequal responsibilities are covered by the urgency of the situation:

The distributional challenge is made particularly difficult because those who have largely caused the problem— the rich countries— are not going to be those who suffer the most in the short term. […] But] We should not allow distributional disagreements to block the way forward just as we cannot afford to wait for full certainty on the exact path climate change is likely to take before we start acting. (UNDP 2007, vii)

And although this statement represents a call for putting these differences aside, it nonetheless reinstates that there are differences among the globe and so points to an important qualification of the argument advanced here: namely, that the external antagonism of ‘dangerous climate change’ cannot completely neglect the existing differences among the globe. These are evident within global climate politics itself. For example, the UNFCCC established the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibility’, differentiating among developing and developed countries (UNFCCC, Art. 3.1); it further enshrined this principle in dividing its parties into Annex-I and non-Annex-I parties. And also the negotiations about the future of the global climate regime have been marked by severe differences between North and South. All this, then, could be read as evidence contradicting my argument.

I would like to advance two arguments against such objections: First of all, in actual fact, the often perceived binary structure of the global climate polity is already dissolving within
the post-2012 negotiations about a successor to the Kyoto Protocol. For example, as has been argued in chapter 1, the dominant frontline in Copenhagen ran between the US and China (Christoff 2010). The rationale behind this fact is the emerging perception, especially in the North, that a simple division between North and South is not appropriate anymore, as some of the quickly industrialising countries such as Brazil or China cannot be treated the same way as Burkina Faso, for instance; hence the calls for integrating these countries into concrete emission reduction commitments by both Europe and the US (The Guardian, December 17, 2009). What is more, the internal cohesion of the South is also increasingly called into question – especially the small-island states, which present themselves as immediately threatened by global warming, departing from a line of commonality with other states of the South, in their push for much stronger emission reductions and the implementation of a $1.5^\circ C$ target (The Guardian, December 10, 2009). Therefore, one could argue that the once dominant distinction between North and South dissolves into a more complex and differentiated picture within the global climate polity.

Secondly, this tendency is mirrored within the climate mainstreaming discourse within the idea of carbon footprints, which tends to result in a dissolution of the binary structure of climate politics in favour of a more nuanced and differentiated picture. In the previous chapter, carbon footprints were introduced as the dominant subjectivities of carbon governmentality, which integrate different spatial levels into the overall carbon polity. In the climate mainstreaming discourse, the image of carbon footprints is taken up and, on the one hand, calculated on a national basis. For example, the World Development Report stresses the differences between various northern countries:

Evidence shows that policy can make a big difference in how carbon footprints change when incomes grow. The average carbon footprint of citizens in rich countries, including oil producers and small island states, varies by a factor of twelve, as does the energy intensity of GDP, suggesting that carbon footprints do not always increase with income. (The World Bank 2010b, 46f.)

The point, then, is not that carbon footprints function to articulate gaps between rich and poor populations. One can indeed stress the fact that there are huge disparities on the globe in terms of carbon footprints (UNDP 2007, 7, 69). Instead, the important things is that the construction of the carbon footprint signifier enables the expression of these disparities on a more differentiated scale than two simple blocks.

What is more, carbon footprints are even calculated to dissolve nation states into smaller units; comparing, for example, the US-state of Texas, Sub-Saharan Africa, New York and Sri

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84. In fact, also directly after Kyoto, there had been two different binaries within the global climate polity: One between Europe and the US, and one between North and South (see chapter 5.2).
Lanka (UNDP 2007, 43). One can even boil climate change down to the carbon footprint of New York (UNDP 2007, 117). Carbon footprints literally become the attributes of individual persons, where ‘the world’s poor walk the Earth with a light carbon footprint’ (UNDP 2007, 3). Clearly, this bears a tendency to individualise the responsibility for climate change and protection. This strategy of individualisation, in its purest form, does not simply shift the blame on individual subjects, but a creates a ‘conduct of a carbon conduct’ in the Foucauldian sense of the term, which integrates individuals into a more general frame of governmental rationality (Paterson & Stripple 2010).

In sum, the binary, or even antagonistic structure of the global climate polity – which structures humanity and climate change along two chains of equivalence – is supported by a logic of difference within humanity, based on the notion of carbon footprints. This tends to dissolve the antagonistic camps – North and South – within humanity and thus enables it to become understood as a unitary actor. I will further explore how this difference is acted out through the mobilisation of carbon governmentality managing carbon differences in chapter 7.

6.1.4 Assistants

So far we have been concerned with the villains and the heroes of the climate mainstreaming narration. But in every good story, there are also assistants on both the side of protagonist and antagonist. This part of the story involves the self-positioning of those institutions under study in this narrative archaeology: international organisations (IOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). On the one hand, IOs mostly position themselves as the assistive personnel to the international community. The IMF, for example, stresses the fact that it ‘stands ready’, but acknowledges the ‘primacy of the UN’ (IMF 2007), and especially that of the UNFCCC. The WTO acknowledges that the ‘trading system needs to respond to the signals that would be send by a successful Copenhagen accord’ (WTO 2009a). Also the OECD ‘stands ready’ (OECD 2010c). And the World Bank seeks to contribute to climate protection under the leadership of the UN (The World Bank 2009). All this might not seem too surprising against the background that all these organisations have been created by states and obviously would not dare to question the primacy of their principals. Nevertheless abstracting from the individual reasons for such statements, an archaeological perspective stresses the discursive effects of such a position. And these are quite clear: the case that climate change is a global problem and a concern for whole humanity becomes strengthened. We will return to the depoliticising effects of this tendency in the next chapter.

NGOs, on the other hand, also acknowledge the primacy of UN political processes – yet in a much more demanding way, urging political leaders to take action. For example, Greenpeace
concludes that ‘there are no real technical obstacles in the way of an Energy Revolution, all that is missing is political support.’ (Greenpeace & EREC 2008, 6). The World Business Council on Sustainable Development also diagnoses ‘inertia stemming from inadequate governance and policy responses’ (WBCSD 2010, 7). Such statements, although they are probably meant as a demand to political leaders, of course, reinforce the image of climate change as a matter of the heads of state. This is paradigmatically condensed in the following quote from the Up in Smoke Coalition of environmental and development NGOs: ‘Whether our expertise is environment, development, or social and economic affairs, we recognise that global warming presents a challenge much bigger than any or all of us.’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 6). NGOs, it seems, also see themselves only as assistants. Only humanity as a whole is able to defeat dangerous climate change.

Dangerous climate change has, by contrast, if at all, very abstract and vague assistants. On the one hand, it is mostly associated with a set of rather complex physical processes. These so-called ‘tipping points’ which are understood to increase the effects of dangerous climate change might come into play, ‘if warming causes the permafrost to thaw, releasing the vast amounts of methane (a potent greenhouse gas) it contains and further accelerating warming’ (The World Bank 2010b, 49). It might seem a little farfetched to liken this with a gangster who frees her associates from prison, but it at least implies that potential allies of climate change can be found even in remote areas.

Although expressing climate change as a matter of physical processes is the dominant framing within the climate mainstreaming discourse, there is a tension within the discourse here, as some statements connect climate change to the activities of developed countries. For example in the words of Ban Ki-Moon: ‘Climate change presents a stark injustice: it has been largely caused by the emissions of the richest countries’ (Ban 2009, 6). Here, it is quite clear that the initiator of climate change is the North. However, this statement remains on a rather abstract level, again it refers to emissions as causes, and does not specify what type of individuals, what practices or what structures are involved (on stressing structural causes as a discursive tension see section 5.5 below). It is quite striking throughout the discourse, at least within the statements of international organisations, that CO₂ is understood as a very abstract problem:

Global atmospheric concentrations of CO₂, the most important greenhouse gas, ranged between 200 and 300 parts per million (ppm) for 800,000 years, but shot up to about 387 ppm over the past 150 years (figure 4), mainly because of the burning of fossil fuels and, to a lesser extent, agriculture and changing land use. (The World Bank 2010b, 4).
This quotation lists rather concrete causes, however, again in an abstract sense. It is not clear how these processes are socially embedded. This is even shared in parts of the civil society discourses. For example, the *Up in Smoke Coalition* asserts that

> [g]lobal warming, and its predominant cause - the rate at which humanity is burning fossil fuels - is making us look anew at how the world works. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 7)

In this sense, the actual causes of climate change are rarely analysed. The problem of climate change remains on fairly descriptive level. The main henchmen of climate change are physical processes.

### 6.1.5 Conclusion

In sum, the structure of the climate mainstreaming narration reveals a fundamental antagonism between ‘humanity’ and ‘dangerous climate change’. The latter becomes the existential enemy of the former. At the same time, it covers existing cleavages between, for example, North and South, or at least reorganises them on a scale of carbon footprints, enacting a logic of difference. The World Business Council on Sustainable Development summarises this quite nicely:

> This vision is encapsulated in the core value: “One World - Planet and People”. However, given the scale of change, not all might agree. Many could fail to understand and act. (WBCSD 2010, 38)

This in fact, blurs the different responsibilities across the globe – a first instance of depoliticisation. As table IV on page 153 displays, this is a widely shared discursive pattern among IOs and NGOs in the sample. Some NGOs, however, and even some IOs, foreground the problem of inequality. We will return to this below in the discussion of counter-hegemonic strategies. Nonetheless, the image of humanity vs. climate change provides a strong justification for the integration of other actors and institutions into the global climate polity. If climate change can only be solved by the cooperation of all actors, it is indeed a global polity, which has to be broadened substantively.
Table IV: Humanity vs. Dangerous Climate Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IOs</th>
<th>Global Economic Polity</th>
<th>Global Social Polity</th>
<th>Global Environmental Polity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>‘Climate change is not a problem that can afford to wait. It is a threat to future development, peace and prosperity that must be tackled with the greatest sense of urgency by the entire community of nations.’ (WTO &amp; UNEP 2009, V)</td>
<td>UNDP ‘Climate change is different from other problems facing humanity—and it challenges us to think differently at many levels. Above all, it challenges us to think about what it means to live as part of an ecologically interdependent human community.’ (UNDp 2007, 2)</td>
<td>UNEP ‘[Climate change] may well overwhelm the coping capacities of national and global institutions, forcing societies to scramble to deal with events that are already unfolding and challenging the very foundations upon which modern civilization depends.’ (Steiner 2009, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>‘We are running out of time. We cannot afford to delay action on climate change. The costs and consequences are simply too high for our economies, our people and our environment. (OECD 2010d)</td>
<td>World Bank ‘Climate change is one of the most complex challenges of our young century. No country is immune. No country alone can take on the interconnected challenges posed by climate change, including controversial political decisions, daunting technological change, and far-reaching global consequences.’ (The World Bank 2010b, XIII)</td>
<td>Notably, The UN-CCD explicitly mentions the role of mankind in causing climate change and the environmental crisis: ‘For decades now mankind has been at the fore in creating a vicious cycle with critical environmental consequences as a result. By degrading the atmosphere with greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation has risen. This in turn is worsening the degradation of the atmosphere.’ (UNCCD 2007, 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NGOs**

| Of all four populist discursive patterns, the ‘humanity vs. climate change’ pattern is probably the one most shared by NGOs. They add, however, especially the social and environmental NGOs, however, stress the remaining inequality across the globe, which creates a tension with the global framing (see chapter 6.5 for further discussion of that tension). | WBCSD, in its vision for 2050, expresses the desire for a unified planet in the face of existential problems (the notion of ‘resilience’ will be further discussed in chapter 8): ‘The “One World - People and Planet” ideal is embedded and practiced globally, emphasizing interdependence among all people and dependence on the Earth. There are still conflicts, disasters, shocks, crime and terrorism, but societies are resilient, able to withstand disruption and quickly recover.’ (WBCSD 2010, 12) | Up in Smoke Coalition After a decade of UN conferences designed to end poverty and save the global environment, disasters - driven or exacerbated by global warming - could spell out the end of human development for the poor majority, and perilous political and economic insecurity for the rest of the world. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 20) | The WRI discourse mirrors the idea of ecological interdependence: ‘It marked the onset of our awareness that we all share a common environment, a fact not fully appreciated then or for many years after. Today, the manifest reality of climate change and its certain impact on all of us, no matter how privileged, leaves no doubt as to that fact.’ (WRI 2008, 11) |
| The WBCSD draws on, for example, apocalyptic images: ‘Scientists tell us that 2010 is likely to tie 1998 as the hottest year on record. The ice is melting. The seas are rising. The weather is behaving everywhere in new and ominous ways.’ (WEF 2010, 7) | The GHF stresses unity of humanity in the face of this threat: ‘We live in a global village and we each have a responsibility to protect our planet.’ (GHF 2009, ii) | Greenpeace ‘Never before has humanity been forced to grapple with such an immense environmental crisis.’ (Greenpeace & EREC 2008, 15) |
6.2 Problematisation: Silver Bullet

The second aspect relevant for analysing discourses as narrations is the dominant problematisation (Foucault 1986b, 11-12; Viehöver 2001). It defines the problem around which the narration revolves, stipulating the situation which must be resolved for the story to result in a happy ending. The dominant problematisation within the climate mainstreaming discourse is, very obviously, climate change. This centrality is achieved by a twofold problematisation: the carbonification of the world and the creation of climate protection as an empty signifier.

6.2.1 Carbonification

It is crucial to note that the basic pattern of problematisation broadens the notion of interconnectedness to the entire planetary natural environment, and so creates the planet as a coupled human and ecological system. This is basically achieved by two complementary discursive strategies.

The first move is to broaden the threat posed by climate change beyond human societies to ecological systems in general. For example, the United Nations Programme on the Environment (UNEP) states with regard to the situation of maritime ecosystems:

The world’s oceans are already under stress as a result of overfishing, pollution and other environmentally-damaging activities in the coastal zones and now on the high seas. Climate change is presenting a further and wide-ranging challenge with new and emerging threats to the sustainability and productivity of a key economic and environmental resource. (UNEP 2008a, 5)

As it appears here, climate change adds up to the existing environmental problems and creates a new dimension of threat. Similarly, climate change is presented as ‘one of the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss’ (UNCBD 2010) and a major ‘challenge for the world food system’, opening up a ‘virtual Pandora’s box of major global threats’ (FAO 2009). Climate change is such a severe problem because it not only threatens societies, but also their corresponding ecological systems. This combines the notion of humanity with nature towards an encompassing planetary system and represents climate change not only as the most important threat to humans, but also to the environment.

It is this image of the planet as an inherently interconnected system that is characteristic for recent developments in those branches of the natural and geo-sciences which are concerned with global environmental change. It is at the centre of what Lövbrand et. al. (2009) call an ‘Earth system governmentality’. It renders the Earth’s human, ecological and physical systems as part of an all-encompassing planetary organism, which can be scientifically mod-
elled and politically steered as expressed in the metaphor of ‘spaceship earth’ (Oels 2005). Climate mainstreaming draws extensively on this idea, and suggests that this interconnectedness is even increased in the face of climate change.

What makes this system hang together is the common currency of carbon. Therefore, the second discursive strategy supports this idea of human-natural interconnectedness by virtue of the concept of ‘carbonification’ (Mert 2009; Stephan 2012). For example, when focusing on the dominant problematisation within the discourse of the global environmental polity with regard to climate change, it is striking that most environmental problems are presented as a kind of additional cause for climate change. For example, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) states that

Conserving natural terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems and restoring degraded ecosystems (including their genetic and species diversity) is essential for the overall goals of both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change because ecosystems play a key role in the global carbon cycle and in adapting to climate change [...] (UNCBD 2010)

Not only is biodiversity threatened by ‘dangerous climate change’, its further degradation even increases its impact and severity. The same holds true for the problem of land degradation, as the problem of climate change might help to

put a new value on land, the value of its capability to sequester and to literally ‘breathe in’ the excess blanket of CO₂ and help cool the planet. And when mixed with water and sun, CO₂ enriches the soil, giving life to trees and vegetation, which then can generate more carbon sinks. (UNCCD 2007)

The ‘new value’ which climate change puts on land strengthens the case for halting desertification. In a similar way, marine ecosystems are not only threatened by, but also help to avoid climate change:

Maintaining or improving the ability of forests and oceans to absorb and bury CO₂ is a crucial aspect of climate change mitigation. [...] The loss of these carbon sinks, and their crucial role in managing climate, health, food security and economic development in the coastal zones, is therefore an imminent threat. (UNEP 2009a, 7)

In sum, the problematisation suggests that climate change not only threatens other ecosystems, but that their very maintenance is ‘important in removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere’ (UNEP 2010a, 5) This however does not mean that the centrality of climate change is questioned within the problematisation. Rather, this centrality is introduced through the backdoor. It is quite striking that the common theme that runs through all the quotations just discussed is the concept of carbon. Ecosystems absorb or set free carbon, they play a key role ‘in the global carbon cycle’ (UNCBD 2010). And this is what connects the various ecological subsystems of the planet with each other.
It is here that the fantastmatic dimension of climate mainstreaming comes to the fore again. The previous chapter argued that sustainable development puts forth the ideal of a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature. The problematisation echoes this with the idea of a planetary human-natural system. Harmony within this system is threatened by climate change. But it can be restored once the flows and stocks of carbon in and between the different parts of the system are brought into a healthy balance again.

The mainstreaming of climate change, thus, draws extensively on what can be called a ‘carbonification’ of environmental problems (Mert 2009, 334). As Lövbrand and Stripple (2006) argue, climate change has been made governable from its very beginning on a global scale through the concept of carbon. It was mentioned above that ever since its discovery in 1896, climate change has been represented as a disturbance of the Earth’s carbon cycle. This does, however, not only imply that it is a matter of planetary dimensions, but also that climate change is a problem of carbon. The climate has been made thinkable in terms of a carbon cycle science (cf. Boyd 2010). The development of technologies such as computer modelling, satellite surveillance, glaciology, and other scientific practices enabled the modelling of the Earth’s carbon cycle as a vast epistemic field (Edwards 2010). It seeks to make ‘precise estimations of the global cycling of carbon between the terrestrial biosphere and the oceans’ and ‘turns stocks and flows of carbon into objects of governance’ (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011). In sum, carbon is what constitutes our knowledge of climate change, and this is also what facilitates the integration of climate change with other environmental problems (see chapter 5.2). The latter are simply transformed into elements of the earth’s carbon cycle.

Eventually, this carbonification does not only apply to other ecological systems, but can be extended to all other aspects of planetary life, such as the human societies or the world economy. In the previous section we have seen how the carbon footprint is enacted in climate mainstreaming as the main subjectivity within humanity. Carbonification functions via attempts to value global corporations in terms of their carbon emissions, as the case of the Carbon Disclosure Project (2011) shows the creation of carbon markets across time and space, such as the Clean Development Mechanism (cf. Bumpus & Liverman 2008) and the calculation of personal carbon footprints or even that of particular human activities such as flying or shopping (Paterson & Stripple 2010). Even some of the individual publications which are analysed here value themselves in terms of carbon. For instance, the World Development Report lists the measures which its publishers took ‘to reduce our carbon footprint’ (The World Bank 2010b, 418). Carbon has increasingly become part of the conduct of our everyday personal, social and economic life. Carbonification turns carbon into the main currency through which to express humanity and nature, carbon becomes the main issue of concern. Carbon is everywhere. And hence, the solution is also presented in terms of carbon.
6.2.2 Green Economy

In turn – and this is the crucial move of this problematisation – as climate change permeates the whole globe through the figure of carbon, it also becomes the one-size-fits all solution to other social and environmental problems. A case in point for this is the concept of the *Green Economy*. The Green Economy is one of the main headlines of the upcoming Rio+20 summit in 2012, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the politics of sustainable development, and is a very common notion throughout the whole sample – sometimes also termed ‘green growth’ (*The Guardian*, April 15, 2011). As UNEP puts it:

> The silver – indeed gilt-edged – lining to the climate change cloud is that many solutions already exist or are in the pipeline. Furthermore, it is clear that many of them provide answers to other generational challenges: including reducing society’s inefficient resource use, improving food security, health and livelihoods for the world’s poorest citizens, employment opportunities for 1.3 billion people, and even re-energizing a stagnant global economy. These are not some whimsical Nirvana but real opportunities to deliver a Green Economy. (UNEP et al. 2008)

Climate change is presented as a crisis and a huge opportunity at the same time. This is what the image of the ‘silver lining’ refers to. And what makes climate change so promising is the fact that the fight against climate change does not only avert global warming but also solves a range of other problems far beyond the boundaries of the narrow field of the environment. In other words, climate protection offers the opportunity of a fundamental overcoming of many political problems and cleavages that are present on the planet. It puts out the hopes for

a truly ‘Green Economy’: one which achieves increasing wealth, provides decent employment, successfully tackles inequities and persistent poverty, and reduces ecological scarcities and climate risks.” (UNEP 2010b, 3)

This universalisation of climate change politics is particularly visible in combination with the major financial crisis affecting the world economy in 2008 and 2009. The concept of the *Global Green New Deal*, being closely associated with the *Green Economy*, then, becomes the key issue for solving both economic and environmental problems:

The ‘Global Green New Deal’ (GGND) presented here has three broad objectives. In the short term, it should make a major contribution to reviving the world economy, saving and creating jobs, and protecting vulnerable groups. In the medium term, it should promote sustainable and inclusive growth and the achievement of the MDGs, especially ending extreme poverty by 2025. Also in the medium term, it must reduce carbon dependency and ecosystem degradation – these are key risks along a path to a sustainable world economy. (UNEP 2009c, 4)

In this sense, action against climate change becomes the ‘magic bullet’ (Brand 2009) for the resolution of the wide-spanning and interconnected problematisation of climate change.
In the previous chapter, I introduced the notion of sustainable development as an empty signifier. It promises to overcome both environmental and developmental crises and results in a vaguely defined, somehow better life. Climate mainstreaming effectively draws on such an image and seeks to broaden it through the construction of a chain of equivalence around climate protection: climate protection is supposed to bring about a major transformation of societies around the globe and simultaneously presents a solution to various crises. This image of a Green Economy shares many resemblances with the concept of ecological modernisation which is so characteristic for sustainable development. In climate mainstreaming, though, the empty signifier is further condensed into a particular demand: climate protection alone becomes the empty signifier of the climate mainstreaming discourse.

And although this empty signifier could have potentially entailed a major transformation of social structures – in other words, although it could have been a politicising discursive strategy (see section 5.5) – it actually implies the rather depoliticising mechanisms of carbon governmentality. On the one hand, there is a subtle but all the more prevalent carbonification that underpins the green economy discourse. A striking example for this is the Green Economy assessment published by the UNEP in the run-up of the Pittsburgh G20 summit. The *GND Update for the G20 summit* gives a detailed summary of the progress which is made towards a *Green Economy* by the G20 governments. Amongst others, it estimates that ‘at least 15 per cent of the global stimulus packages to date can be considered green in nature’ (UNEP 2009d, 1). It attributes this figure to a widely cited HSBC Global Research publication. HSBC, however, translates the phrase ‘green’ directly into ‘consistent with stabilising and then cutting global emissions of greenhouse gases’ (HSBC Global Research 2009, 1). When ‘green’ in practice becomes decarbonised, this echoes the carbonification of societies and redirects attention away from social structures to carbon emissions (see chapter 7).

On the other hand, the dominant language of the transformation towards a *Green New Deal* is that of governmental management. When it comes to the political solutions, proposals revolve around the notions of ‘investment’, ‘management’, ‘planning’ and ‘technology’. For example, the *Global Green New Deal report*

identified the international policy architecture requiring attention: trade, aid, carbon pricing, markets for ecosystem services, development and transfer of technology, and policy coordination. (UNEP 2009c, 2)

Language from the toolkit of governmental power, together with the carbonification of environment and economy, displays a strong shift towards carbon governmentality embodied by the notion of the green economy.
6.2.3 Conclusion

The core problematisation of the climate mainstreaming narration is the carbonification of nature and humanity. The story, thus, revolves around how to manage carbon and restore a natural balance within the planetary carbon cycle. Carbon as the governance-object of the climate polity is expanded into other issue areas. At first glance, it might appear contradictory to state that climate change is an external enemy but has to be averted by managing carbon as an internal feature of humanity. However, as Swyngedouw puts it, this relationship is more of a fantasmatic imagination:

The negative desire for an apocalypse that few really believe will realise itself (if we were to believe that the earth is really in the dismal state we are told it is in, we would not be sitting around writing and reading arcane academic journal articles) finds its positive injunction around a fetishist invocation of CO₂ as the ‘thing’ around which our environmental dreams, aspirations, contestations as well as policies crystallize. (Swyngedouw 2010, 219)

In other words, the same way that the Christian apocalypse can be averted by an economy of sin (organised by pastoral power, see chapter 5.3) the climate apocalypse can be at least be deferred by a proper carbon management and conduct.

And if carbon is supposed to be everywhere, as this section demonstrates, this is another strong rationale for including more spheres, actors and institutions into the global climate polity. Carbonification implies climate mainstreaming. Moreover, given the ubiquity of carbon, climate protection is turned into the empty signifier of climate mainstreaming. It promises to overcome not only the climate crisis, but also many other world problems such as economic recessions, poverty, ecological degradation, political instability and the like. This, then, becomes another discursive rationale to broaden the climate polity. If other polities are likely to profit from climate protection, it is more than reasonable for them to become part of the climate polity. This is demonstrated by table V on page 160, which displays the fact that the ‘silver bullet’ storyline is widely shared within the sample.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>‘Green growth is important for both developed and developing countries. [...] For developing countries, green growth must result in poverty reduction. And the international community can provide critical support to make this happen.’ (OECD 2010b)</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>‘Handled correctly, our fight against global warming could set the stage for an eco-friendly transformation of the global economy – one that spurs growth and development rather than crimps it, as many nations fear.’ (UNDP 2008, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>‘In addition there is evidence that more open trade together with actions to combat climate change can catalyse global innovation including new products and processes that can stimulate new clean tech businesses.’ (WTO 2009b)</td>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>‘It now appears that a green economy can generate more and better jobs everywhere and that these can be decent jobs.’ (UNEP 2008b, 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Within the sphere of NGOs, the ‘silver bullet’ problematisation is found in all discourses, obviously in support for their case to take measures against global warming. Yet there are also statements which imply an inverse relationship: such that climate change cannot be tackled without changing basic social structures (for this tension, especially to be found in Greenpeace and Up in Smoke coalitions, see chapter 6.5).</td>
<td>UN-CBD</td>
<td>‘Conserving natural terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems and restoring degraded ecosystems (including their genetic and species diversity) is essential for the overall goals of both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change because ecosystems play a key role in the global carbon cycle and in adapting to climate change [...]’ (UN-CBD 2010)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEF</td>
<td>‘Climate change is not only a challenge, it is also an opportunity. A paradigm shift to a low-carbon economy by 2050 has the potential to drive forward the next chapter of technological innovation. It will require a third - this time a green -industrial revolution.’ (WEF 2008, 7)</td>
<td>Up in Smoke</td>
<td>‘If they are replicated and scaled-up, small-scale renewable energy projects promoted by governments and community groups can help both to tackle poverty and reduce climate change.’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBCSD</td>
<td>‘The pathway toward a more sustainable future presents vast opportunities in a range of business segments as global challenges become the key strategic drivers for companies over the next decade.’ (WBCSD 2010, 43)</td>
<td>GHF</td>
<td>‘Indeed, that transformation is likely to prove the greatest opportunity for new economic growth since the advent of the industrial revolution. Renewable clean energy in particular would benefit the poor most, because of health, social and access reasons. It could also help springboard development.’ (GHF 2009, iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenpeace</td>
<td>‘For the sake of a sound environment, political stability and thriving economies, now is the time to commit to a truly secure and sustainable energy future - a future built on clean technologies, economic development and the creation of millions of new jobs.’ (Greenpeace &amp; EREC 2008, 8)</td>
<td>WRI</td>
<td>‘The increase in “environmental income” that results from ecosystem-based enterprises can stabilize the household economies of the poor, translating into better nutrition and health, greater access to education, more opportunities for saving and investment, and reduced vulnerability to financial shocks.’ (WRI 2008, 15)</td>
</tr>
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6.3 Plot: A tragedy in the making

The third and final aspect of the narrative perspective employed here involves the plot or storyline which turns actants and problems into a ‘meaningful configuration’, as a ‘matrix that endows the narration with meaning, coherence and dynamic’ (Viehöver 2001, 186). In the following I identify the tragedy as the dominant storyline of the climate mainstreaming narration. This plot combines the idea of climate change as an avoidable catastrophe with a severe distrust in political leadership, which results in faith in technology as a *deus ex machina*.

6.3.1 Distrust in political leadership

According to the problematisation of climate protection as a silver bullet, it is obvious that the ‘world lacks neither the financial resources nor the technological capabilities to act. If we fail to prevent climate change it will be because we were unable to foster the political will to cooperate’ (UNDP 2007, 2). In this sense, climate change in principle is a resolvable problem – this is shared throughout the sample. It is, however, the possibility of political failure that turns it into a looming catastrophe:

Such an outcome would represent not just a failure of political imagination and leadership, but a moral failure on a scale unparalleled in history. During the 20th the Century failures of political leadership led to two world wars. Millions of people paid a high price for what were avoidable catastrophes. Dangerous climate change is the avoidable catastrophe of the 21st Century and beyond. (UNDP 2007, 2)

The reference to the inability of ‘political leaders’ to prevent two world wars already indicates that climate mainstreaming is saturated with a severe distrust in political leaders and elites. Whereas there are a lot of small positive examples of governmental action given in the texts, the general discourse seems to be underpinned by a subtle but all the more prevailing distrust in the ability of politicians for changing the course. For example, after giving a list of positive achievements, the UNDP clarifies that

All of this is positive news. Practical outcomes are less impressive. While governments may recognise the realities of global warming, political action continues to fall far short of the minimum needed to resolve the climate change problem. The gap between scientific evidence and political response remains large. (UNDP 2007, 5)

Even more outspoken about this lack of confidence in political leaders are some of the non-state actors, combining the necessity for global action with low expectations from political actors: ‘Weak political leadership as evident today is all the more alarming then. It is not,
however, surprising, since so few people are aware of just how much is at stake’ (GHF 2009, iii). Also the World Business Council on Sustainable Development criticises governments quite clearly:

The governance and policy responses to manage this growth often happen in silos and are limited by short-term, localized political pressures, and thus fall short of the level of commitment needed to make significant progress. In addition, the choices countries, companies, communities and individuals make are often characterised by inertia due to short-term goals and self interest. (WBCSD 2010, 9)

This distrust is a general theme to be found in civil society. Take, for example, the following advert published by Greenpeace and the tcktcktck campaign in the run-up to Copenhagen in various OECD countries (featuring different national politicians, of course).

Figure 2: The Greenpeace and tcktcktck campaign advert

Source: www.greenpeace.org

Before Copenhagen, this message clearly reads as an attempt to convince political leaders to do something about climate change (what that might be goes unstated, though), so as not to end up regretting their inaction in 2020. In light of the failure of Copenhagen, however, this message retrospectively expresses the real distrust in and negative image of politicians.

Along with all the passages that refer to insufficient action of governments and individuals, another comparison at the beginning of the Human Development Report reveals the strange tension between climate change as the avoidable catastrophe and distrust in the ability of politicians to actually solve it:

We are not too pessimistic. In the fight against the much higher inflation rates of the distant past, democracies did come up with the institutions such as more autonomous central banks and policy pre-commitments that allowed much lower inflation to be achieved despite the short term temptations of resorting to the printing press. The same has to happen with climate and the environment: societies will have to pre-commit and forego short term gratification for
longer-term well being. (UNDP 2007, vi, emphasis added)

The introductory ‘not too pessimistic’, from a deconstructivist perspective, reveals that there are obviously many reasons to be pessimistic. And as the last sentence shows, political action indeed seems to be seduced to go astray, strive for short-term benefit and lose track of fighting climate change. What allows the discourse to dismiss pessimism, however, is the possibility of overcoming these problems through limiting the space for political agency. Whereas superficially this statement hails optimism, paradoxically, what makes this optimism possible is the opportunity of ruling out political agency – nothing else is implied by the reference to ‘autonomous central banks’. This subtle pessimism is present throughout the whole sample.

Eventually, this distrust in the problem solving capacity of politicians tends to lead to a general distrust in human agency, since ‘individuals, as citizens and consumers, will determine the planet’s future. Although an increasing number of people know about climate change and believe action is needed, too few make it a priority, and too many fail to act when they have the opportunity’ (The World Bank 2010b, xxi). The World Bank thus situates a distrust in political leaders within a general human condition:

Inertia is also present in the behaviour of individuals and organisations. Despite greater public concern, behaviours have not changed much. Available energy-efficient technologies that are effective and pay for themselves are not adopted. […] Farmers face incentives to overirrigate their crops, which in turn affects energy use, because energy is a major input in water provision and treatment.’ (The World Bank 2010b, 11)

Here, the human being is depicted as irrational and short-sighted individual, as it knowingly steers towards catastrophe.

6.3.2 A human tragedy and the deus ex machina

Human failure in face of the avoidable catastrophe - it is not difficult to discern in this the classic plot of the tragedy. Generally speaking, the tragedy is a form of drama which centres on the question of human suffering, embodied by the fateful conflict of the hero. The course of action unfolds a tragic force, which eventually drives him (in fact, the protagonists of the ancient tragedy were mostly males) towards the catastrophe. The spectator often anticipates the tragic outcome of the plot from the very beginning, while the hero, due to his human fallibility, is unable to see or prevent the tragic ending. In this sense, the catastrophic outcome would be avoidable in theory, which is prevented by the human condition of the actors, though. Thus, throughout the plot, there are often signs of hope, but they soon vanish, just to increase the tension of the play. The appeal of the tragedy, as Friedrich Nietzsche writes, is
the paradoxical combination of joy and horror, ‘whereby pain awakens pleasure while rejoicing wrings cries of agony from the breast. From highest joy there comes a cry of horror or a yearning lament at some irredeemable loss’ (Nietzsche 1999, 21).

The discourse of climate mainstreaming, therefore, contains all the necessary elements for constituting a tragedy. The tragic character of the situation is even explicitly cited within the discourse, which I will quote at length:

The drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were looking back at a human tragedy, the second world war, that had already happened. Climate change is different. It is a human tragedy in the making. Allowing that tragedy to evolve would be a political failure that merits the description of an ‘outrage to the conscience of mankind’. [...] Conversely, preventing dangerous climate change would hold out the hope for the development of multilateral solutions to the wider problems facing the international community. Climate change confronts us with enormously complex questions that span science, economics and international relations. These questions have to be addressed through practical strategies. Yet it is important not to lose sight of the wider issues that are at stake. The real choice facing political leaders and people today is between universal human values, on the one side, and participating in the widespread and systematic violation of human rights on the other. (UNDP 2007, 4 emphasis added)

First of all, it is clear that the tragic course of events is not necessary as economic and technical solutions are available. Yet the arrogance and incompetence of political leaders impedes the solution of the crisis towards a happy ending. What is more, here the Nietzschean combination of joy and horror comes to the fore here. The text does not only refer to the worst possible tragedy, but intertwines it with a second storyline of solution and salvation, which mirrors the silver bullet of the Green Economy. This is what makes climate change ‘different’: while humanity is trapped in a severe crisis, it also holds the key for entirely resolving the crisis for good. Climate change is a question of ‘all or nothing’: catastrophe or universal salvation – once again mirroring the existential antagonism between humanity and climate change. And most crucial, the decision hinges on the ‘choice’ of ‘political leaders’. This idea that climate change has to be resolved by a decisive act on the side of political leaders permeates the whole sample. And given the profound lack of confidence in the ability of political leaders, this statement implies that climate change is likely to become a tragedy.

Put like this, however, it would contradict the silver bullet idea, which links climate protection to the resolution of all other world problems. The key to this disparate situation, however, is what was known in the ancient tragedy as a the deus ex machina. Wikipedia\textsuperscript{85} defines the ‘god out of the machine’ as ‘a plot device whereby a seemingly inextricable problem is suddenly and abruptly solved with the contrived and unexpected intervention of some new

\textsuperscript{85} Wikipedia is often regarded as not being a proper source for academic work. Yet a recent study published in \textit{nature} demonstrated that it matches the standards of established dictionaries such as the Encyclopedia Britannica (Giles 2005).
event, character, ability, or object.’ It appeared most prominently in Euripides’ dramas, where a god appears on the scene through a mechanical crane and brings the story through his judgement to a definite end. And it is precisely this device, couched in terms of technology, which resolves the climate change tragedy.

To start with a very illustrative example, the central role of technology is probably best embodied by the following diagram which is taken from a UNDP handbook on climate change:

Figure 3: Technology and climate change

![Figure 3: Technology and climate change](image)

Source: (UNDP 2009b, 3)

As it is shown here, the whole problem of climate change is boiled down to a question of the right ‘low carbon technology’. While the upper lines represent the tragic course of events which leads towards the catastrophic ending, it is not policy and not action on the side of political leaders, but technology which shifts the development to a safe path, expressed by the lower green line. Technology, then, becomes the key mechanism to avoid ‘dangerous climate change’:

The overall climate change and energy context, as summarised above, has made clear that the identification and development of technologies, practices, and policies, both for mitigating GHG emissions as well as for adapting to the adverse physical impacts associated with climate change, are of key importance to avoid irreversible changes associated with dangerous levels of climate change. (UNDP 2009b, 3)

Technology becomes indispensable, the only possible solution for climate change. It is a theme which is time and again cited throughout the whole sample, be it in the form of ‘clean’
or ‘green technology’, or more detailed listed as clean energy technology, carbon sequestration, biofuels, or nuclear energy. Whatever there is to do for avoiding climate change, ‘technology’ will do the job.

Another picture taken from a UNDP publication visualises this point well (the left picture):

**Figure 4: Technology as the deus ex machina**

![Solar cooker](left) ![Deus ex machina](right)

Source: (UNDP 2008, 12 (left), www.wikipedia.org (right))

In this picture, the solar cooker stands to represent technology. However, the composition and colouring of the picture clearly shows that technology does not belong to the regular setting but is brought in from the outside (in fact, it even resembles the image of a strange object from space which landed somewhere in the desert). Albeit, or perhaps even because, of its externality takes the central position in the picture – people gather around it and and cheer at the event of the strange object. Strikingly, it is inserted into a ‘typical’ setting, which seems to be otherwise unaltered. Put into the language of the classic ancient tragedy, it fits into the scene just as badly as the *deus ex machina* in a stage setting does (see the illustration on the right for comparison). Nonetheless, it bears the brunt of working towards a resolution of the problem – a classic feature of the *deus ex machina.*
6.3.3 Towards carbon governmentality

In the discourse of climate mainstreaming it is the signifier of technology which comes to fulfil that very function of the *deus ex machina*. Ever since Francis Bacon and the Enlightenment idea of instrumental rationality (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002), humanity has been thought of as in control of nature through the proper application of technology. This managerial mentality assumes that the forces of nature can be domesticated as soon as they are fully described and predicted by science (Reith 2004). Accordingly, Barry notes that

> We live in a technological society, I argue, to the extent that specific technologies dominate our sense of the kinds of problems that government and policies must address, and the solutions that we must adopt. A technological society is one which takes technical change to be the model for political invention. (Barry 2001, 5)

The populist discourse of climate mainstreaming takes this deeply rooted discourse to the field of climate governance. A case in point is the IPCC. In its latest report, it deploys technological innovation as a placeholder for technologies that haven’t been invented yet (Keary 2010). It simply assumes that technological innovation will advance progressively and increase, for example, energy efficiency. The centrality of technology within this discourse already indicates the technocratic and depoliticised approach to global warming brought about by climate mainstreaming. It prepares the stage for what has above been called carbon governmentality. This is expressed in three interrelated discursive patterns.

First of all, handing over all responsibility for the resolution of the climate crisis to technology drastically narrows the scope for political action. For example, the UNDP frames the task for politics in the following way:

> The rapid development and deployment of low-carbon technologies is vital to climate change mitigation. Picking winners in technology is a hazardous affair. Governments have at best a mixed record. However, confronted with a national and global threat on the scale of climate change, governments cannot afford to stand back and wait for markets to deliver. […] In earlier periods, major technological breakthroughs have followed decisive government action: the Manhattan Project and the United States space programme are examples. (UNDP 2007, 12)

Here, the task of governments is reduced to the choice of the right technologies. Note that the ‘mixed record’ of governments’ success in this regard refers back to the distrust in politicians. If they are capable of anything at all, however, it is to develop nuclear weapons and send people to the moon – so their main task is to try and organise the right technological breakthroughs. The same idea is reflected in a statement from the World Bank, which argues that

> tackling the immense and multidimensional challenge of climate change demands extraordinary ingenuity and cooperation. […] And ingenuity is the only possible answer to a problem that is politically and scientifically complex—the quality that could enable us to act differently than we
have in the past. (The World Bank 2010b, 4)

It is quite telling that the solution to a ‘politically and scientifically complex’ problem is ingenuity, and not a political answer in whatever form – international negotiations, civil society protest, or domestic elections. Politics is replaced with ingenuity as the capability to invent technical solutions. Resolving climate change is reduced to ‘all the innovation and ingenuity that the human race is capable of’ (The World Bank 2010b, 3).

Secondly, when climate governance is reduced to the choice of technology, it leaves basic social structures untouched. Technology, as understood within the climate mainstreaming discourse, is usually reduced to a replacement of technical devices with those that are more carbon efficient – delivering the same services with less carbon emissions output. For example, the sample frequently refers to ‘renewable energies’, ‘nuclear energy’, ‘biofuels’, ‘carbon sequestration’, ‘electric cars’ etc. What is not at stake, however, is how these technologies are embedded in social practices and structures. The technology discourse does not speak about the organisation of global trade and related transport emissions, about the industrialisation of agriculture, about the ongoing extraction of fossil fuels, or the massively growing energy demand. In this sense, climate protection in terms of technology remains at the surface, but does not touch upon ingrained social and economic practices. It concentrates on managing carbon technologically, as it is generally characteristic for carbon governmentality.

Thirdly, technology has to be understood in a broad and all-encompassing sense. It does not only include technical devices, but also highly technocratic politics and policies in the form of technological arrangements. In this sense, technology becomes sort of a ‘political machine’, which ‘offers a set of skills, techniques, practices and objects with which it is possible to evade and circumscribe politics’ (Barry 2001, 7). It is striking that the whole sample of climate mainstreaming discourses is overly concerned with the implementation of political ‘mechanisms’, ‘policy instruments’, ‘arrangements’ and the like. These metaphors indicate the highly technical understanding of the climate polity. Eventually, it is supposed to be designed in a way that mirrors the precision and determinacy of mechanical devices – hence, the ubiquitous obsession with carbon markets (see next section). This stance is, for example, perfectly embodied by the expectations for the Copenhagen Summit, this time in the words of the World Bank:

The current climate negotiations, to culminate in Copenhagen in December 2009, have been making slow progress—inertia in the political sphere. For all the reasons highlighted in this Report—inertia in the climate system, inertia in infrastructure, inertia in socioeconomic systems—a climate deal is urgently needed. But it must be a smart deal, one that creates the incentives for efficient solutions, for flows of finance and the development of new technologies. (The World Bank 2010b, 26)
Once politics is transformed into the ‘efficient solutions’, ‘finance’ and ‘new technologies’, the omnipresent ‘inertia’ in social and political systems will finally be overcome. The characteristics of this ‘smart deal’ point to the final vision of this type of climate change governance: the death of politics and its replacement with the technical apparatus of carbon governmentality.

6.3.4 Conclusion

The dominant storyline of climate mainstreaming takes the form of a tragedy. In line with the assumption of climate protection as an empty signifier, the crisis is in principle thought to be solvable. But political inability and human fallibility block the solution of the problem. ‘Technology’ emerges as the *deus ex machina* and replaces politics with technical devices and arrangements. Paradoxically, however, it is politics which has to implement technology with a decisive political act; put bluntly, politicians working on their own disappearance. This effectively turns populism into a postpolitical variant of itself, in that it tries to divert attention from fundamental issues and thus turn these floating signifiers into sedimented ones again.

Given the widespread inability of political leaders to act, this storyline provides another reason for climate mainstreaming: the enshrinement of the mechanical and technocratic apparatuses of carbon governmentality into all other relevant polities. If antagonism creates the encompassing climate polity, and carbonification constitutes its main governance object, the tragedy implements governmentality as the dominant model of power. It is this general stance – managing carbon instead of touching upon social structures – that constitutes the third element of postpolitical populism: depoliticisation. And it is also widely shared throughout the whole sample, as table VI on page 170 demonstrates.
Table VI: Tragedy and the Deus Ex Machina

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IOs</th>
<th>Global Economic Polity</th>
<th>Global Social Polity</th>
<th>Global Environmental Polity</th>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>‘It is also my hope that countries will put the trade agenda to the service of climate agenda through one of the most obvious ways possible […]. I am referring here to the opening of trade to environmentally-friendly goods and services. […] We must make this technology more accessible to all.’ (Lamy 2009)</td>
<td>‘Figure 1-1 shows the challenge which the above two developments imply. […] These two developments can only be combined when low carbon technologies (both ‘hard’ technologies such as equipment and ‘non-market based’ technologies such as behavioral change) are successfully implemented.’ (UNDP 2009b, 2)</td>
<td>‘As realization dawns that business as usual is no longer an option, the world’s best minds are working overtime to find creative solutions. Geo-engineers are looking to white roofs to cool cities and algae to absorb carbon. Entrepreneurs are racing to capitalize on the growing demand for clean and renewable energy. Policy specialists are considering the impact of energy subsidies and the potential of carbon markets.’ (Ban 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>‘There was some progress at COP 15, but more is needed. Gradually building-up a global carbon market will be critical to provide incentives for private finance. Market-based instruments, such as carbon taxes and auctioned permits in emissions trading schemes, could also bring significant revenues, some of which could be used to finance climate change action in developing countries.’ (OECD 2010a)</td>
<td>‘Addressing the climate challenge will also require changes in the way governments operate. […] For both mitigation and adaptation, many needed actions require a long-term perspective that goes well beyond those of any elected administration.’ (The World Bank 2010b, 20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Economic NGOs share the tragedy storyline probably most forcefully. However, while all NGOs share the distrust in political leaders, not all do follow down the conclusion towards the political machine (see section 5.5).</td>
<td>Up in Smoke is rather sceptical of technological measures. But it does sometimes rely on the general idea of carbon governmentality, but fuses it with equity (see 5.5). Furthermore, the GHF also does not display a strong commitment to the political machine (although it put all of its hopes into Copenhagen as the ‘big deal’). But it does feature distrust in political leadership: ‘Weak political leadership as evident today is all the more alarming then.’ (GHF 2009, ii)</td>
<td>Greenpeace ‘In order to avoid dangerous climate change, global CO2 emissions must peak no later than 2015 and rapidly decrease after that. The technology to do this is available. […] There are no real technical obstacles in the way of an Energy [R]evolution, all that is missing is political support.’ (Greenpeace &amp; EREC 2008, 6) The WRI contradicts a ‘silver bullet’ storyline explicitly, but goes on to cite only technological solutions: ‘There is no single “silver bullet” solution that can provide low-emission energy for our expanding economies. However, a number of options exist for reducing emissions by managing energy demand and employing low-carbon energy supplies and technologies that can make major contributions to clean economic growth.’ (WRI 2007, 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEF</td>
<td>The WTO can be a model for how the world structures the international effort to address climate change, evolution of the GATT and the move towards the needed conclusion of global agreement on a comprehensive climate treaty.’ (WEF 2010, 7)</td>
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<td>WBCSD</td>
<td>'(Below) Given the scale of the challenge, robust long-term signals, effective regulatory frameworks, supportive market conditions and a value for carbon will be key to encouraging private sector investment. (WBCSD 2010, 7)</td>
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6.4 A complementary plot: Making climate change pay (off)

Climate mainstreaming follows a postpolitical populist logic then, couched in the tragedy storyline. However, one can easily discern a second important storyline, which does not directly contradict or undermine the results of the previous section, but adds another layer to it. This storyline, to be labelled good sense politics, is most prominently displayed in the global economic polity. As table VII on page 175 demonstrates, though, it can also be found in the other two polities.

6.4.1 A different story: Money

Contrasting with what has been said above, the prevalent problematisation in climate change discourses of the global economic polity is that of climate change as a cost-benefit problem. For one thing, it is embodied in the major publications of global economic organisations. The IMF, for example, being closely connected to the World Bank, summarises this logic very well:

Economic estimates of the impact of climate change are typically based on ‘damage functions’ that relate GDP losses to increases in temperature. The estimates of GDP costs embodied in the damage functions cover a variety of climate impacts that are usually grouped as market impacts and nonmarket impacts. Market impacts include effects on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism; damage to coastal areas from sea-level rise; changes in energy expenditures (for heating or cooling); and changes in water resources. Nonmarket impacts cover effects on health (such as the spread of infectious diseases and increased water short-ages and pollution), leisure activities (sports, recreation, and outdoor activities), ecosystems (loss of biodiversity), and human settlements (specifically because cities and cultural heritage cannot migrate). (IMF 2008, chapter 4, p. 4)

This form of problematising climate change expresses every impact of climate change in a monetary equivalent. This passage is not only interesting because it transforms physical and social processes and practices into economic terms. It also expresses the idea that climate change can indeed be couched in economic terms despite its uncertainties. This idea is prominently constituted by the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (Stern 2007), which runs as a common point of reference through most of the sample in global economic governance. It seeks to value most climate change impacts in economic terms. In this sense, monetarising climate change creates a logic of equivalence among its various impacts. While in the environmental polity, equivalence is established through carbonification, an economic logic which links the different climate change impacts here and constitutes them as a problem. It therefore establishes ‘cost-efficiency’ as a core nodal point of the climate change discourse.
6.4.2 Good sense politics

The prevalent interpretation of climate change as a cost-benefit-problem results in a simple rationale for political action. For example, the OECD states that

Considering the costs and risks of inaction, taking action now, even in the midst of a global economic crisis, makes good economic sense. Delaying emission cuts would simply postpone the inevitable and undoubtedly require larger cuts at a later date, thus making it more costly than a more gradual approach. (OECD 2009b, 1)

This statement elucidates how the economic-costs articulation of the climate/economy discourse establishes the idea of ‘good economic sense’. It is a simple matter of prudence to act on climate change. The ‘good sense’, is a common theme which runs through a lot of publications on the economics of climate change – be it the Stern Review (Stern 2007), the OECD’s The Economics of Climate Change Mitigation (OECD 2009c) or McKinsey’s Greenhouse Gas Abatement Cost Curve (McKinsey & Company 2009). All are very influential publications of the global climate polity which display the emergence of an economic rationality in the global climate polity (Wolf 2012). Here, climate protection is reasonable because it simply pays off. It is quite striking that the good sense plot communicates a rather relaxed and unagitated way of justifying action on climate change compared to the all-or-nothing storyline that were expressed in the dominant tragedy storyline. In this sense, it creates a certain tension within the climate mainstreaming discourse.

Yet this does not mean that there is no cause for concern as the prudent good sense principle is all too often violated. This, then, is a second pattern that permeates the economic discourse. Two examples from the texts are emblematic for this tendency. First, the WTO defends free trade against the idea of so-called ‘border tax adjustments’ with the following statement:

In the absence of such parameters [i.e., a global agreement on climate change], the WTO will continue to be pulled from left to right by different players, with only a faint possibility of landing in the center! [...] And I would caution against such an outcome; the world could end up with a real spaghetti bowl of ‘offsetting’ measures that achieve neither trade nor environmental goals. [...] For economists, matters appear to be clearer. (WTO 2007)

It is quite apparent that this statement embodies a contradiction between political disagreement and economic consensus. While in the absence of a global agreement political actors will create a real mess of solutions – expressed through the metaphor of the ‘spaghetti-
bowl’ – the economic treatment of the problem is supposed to lead to a clear-cut solution. This, then, opposes the good sense of economic analysis to the irrationality of political actors. As a second, even more outspoken example, the IMF states in a blog post:

As world leaders gather in Copenhagen, climate change is again in the headlines. The science of the issue can get pretty incomprehensible pretty quickly. And the politics are clearly very ugly. Let’s not forget, however, that much of the economics is simple. It’s an externality, stupid—so price it! (IMF 2009)

This statement draws a clear line between ‘incomprehensible’ science and ‘ugly’ politics on the one side and ‘simple’ economics on the other side. The reference to the famous statement by former US-president Bill Clinton (‘It’s the economy, stupid!’) which labels any doubt about this opposition as ‘stupid’ makes clear that the distinction between politics/science and economics roots in the idea of the good sense as the basic principle of climate change mitigation, which in turn is constituted on the grounds of the economic-costs problematisation. While science and politics are making the matter overly complicated, an economic perspective reveals an easy solution of the problem.

The problematisation of this storyline, however, is that climate politics often is economically inefficient. It does not obey the simple cost-benefit logic. Again, we have a lack of confidence in political leaders which leads to a conclusion that connects perfectly with the deus ex machina of technology again. The only way to avoid this economic inefficiency is to establish a comprehensive carbon market. As the WTO puts it:

In order to be cost-effective, the ‘marginal cost’ of CO₂ emission reductions must be equal for all sources of emissions; [...] The most effective tool for achieving this is to put a price on (CO₂-equivalent) greenhouse gas emission reductions (known as ‘carbon pricing’), measured as the price per tonne of CO₂-equivalent emissions reduced. (WTO & UNEP 2009, 33)

In other words, the good sense storyline proposes to couple the carbonification of the planet with a monetarisation of carbon. Linking the two common currencies will eventually not only result in a solution of the climate crisis, but also make sure that this solution is cost-efficient.

6.4.3 Conclusion

The good sense storyline has a different starting point from the dominant populist storyline. Instead of a fundamental antagonism and the existential struggle of humanity, it promotes a simple good sense logic: it simply pays off to invest in climate protection. In this sense, the good sense storyline is in a tension with postpolitical populism. Yet it arrives at the same conclusion: the establishment of the global carbon markets as a political machine, as this is supposed to result in an efficient way of managing carbon. Both ideas – cost-benefit
analysis and a comprehensive carbon market – imply an enlargement of climate politics towards an encompassing climate polity and thus support climate mainstreaming. Moreover, they complement the postpolitical populist discourse in specifying the particular mode of governing the carbon polity: an advanced liberal governmentality. Again, this is shared by many of the organisations in the sample (table VII on page 175). In the next chapter, I will turn to examining the functioning of an advanced liberal carbon governmentality in the enlarged climate polity. Before, however, I would like to turn to strategies of resistance within climate mainstreaming.
### Table VII: Good sense politics

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<th>Global Economic Polity</th>
<th>Global Social Polity</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IOs</strong></td>
<td>In IOs it is very common to refer to the costs of mitigation and unchecked climate change. The Stern Review is a very salient point of reference.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WTO</strong></td>
<td>‘In order to be cost-effective, the “marginal cost” of CO2 emission reductions must be equal for all sources of emissions; […] The most effective tool for achieving this is to put a price on (CO2-equivalent) greenhouse gas emission reductions (known as “carbon pricing”), measured as the price per tonne of CO2-equivalent emissions reduced.’ (WTO &amp; UNEP 2009, 33)</td>
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<td><strong>OECD</strong></td>
<td>‘The crisis is not a reason to delay action on climate change; delaying mitigation action would mean that larger cuts would be needed later to achieve the same target, and would ultimately be more expensive than taking a more gradual approach. Instead, if well-designed climate mitigation policies are phased-in gradually over the coming years this will avoid unnecessary scrapping of capital, and initial costs should be very low.’ (OECD 2009c, 11)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NGOs</strong></td>
<td>Economic rationality seems to be shared by all NGOs, as the ubiquitous reference to the Stern Review displays. It is sometimes mobilised for different ends, though.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEF</strong></td>
<td>‘The Stern Review tells us that delaying action will only make future action more costly. While some uncertainties remain - applying a risk management perspective to the available information - we conclude that a reasonable approach is for all leaders of business and government to take action now.’ (WEF 2008, 6)</td>
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<td><strong>WBCSD</strong></td>
<td>‘Governments without a comprehensive climate policy may look to a variety of proxy approaches in order to deliver emission reductions across the economy. These will certainly deliver some results, but matching the efficiency and order imposed by establishing a market-responsive approach will be difficult. It will also cost the economy more than is necessary, a difficult route to justify in the current global economic conditions.’ (WBCSD 2011, 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>World Bank</strong></td>
<td>‘When estimating the mitigation costs discussed earlier, modelers assume that greenhouse gas emission reductions occur wherever and whenever they are cheapest. Wherever means pursuing greater energy efficiency and other low-cost options to mitigate in whatever country or sector the opportunity arises. Whenever entails timing investments in new equipment, infrastructure, or farming and forestry projects to minimize costs […]’ (The World Bank 2010b, 12)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNDP</strong></td>
<td>‘Between now and 2030, the average annual cost would amount to 1.6 percent of GDP. This is not an insignificant investment. But it represents less than two-thirds of global military spending. The costs of inaction could be much higher. According to the Stern Review, they could reach 5–20 percent of world GDP, depending upon how costs are measured.’ (UNDP 2007, 8)</td>
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<td><strong>UNEP</strong></td>
<td>For example, justifies the conservation of carbon sinks explicitly with cost-benefit analysis: ‘It is essential that climate mitigation policy is guided by the best available science concerning ecosystem carbon, and decisions should be informed by the overall costs and benefits of carbon management.’ (UNEP 2009c, 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Rio Conventions</strong></td>
<td>do not explicitly calculate the costs of climate change. However, that economisation as such is not uncommon in the global environmental polity is displayed by such reports as ‘The economics of ecosystems and biodiversity’ assessment, conducted by a private initiative in cooperation with UNEP, among others. It states that ‘You cannot manage what you do not measure’ (TEEB 2011).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Up in Smoke</strong></td>
<td>relates costs and inequality (see 5.5): ‘Even though the ultimate consequences on human lives and livelihoods cannot be precisely quantified, they will impose a far greater burden on the poor than on the rich. The Financial Initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) recently calculated that the economic costs of global warming are doubling every decade.’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WRI</strong></td>
<td>‘It is the insight that ecosystems are valuable assets that can be owned and managed for sustained benefits that builds the foundation of ecological resilience [as a response to climate change].’ (WRI 2008, 17)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Greenpeace</strong></td>
<td>also adopts the economic rationality, but mostly in order to push for stronger government action (see 5.5).</td>
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6.5 Variations on a populist theme: Tensions in the climate mainstreaming discourse

The previous sections identified four dominant narrative structures in the climate mainstreaming discourse – humanity vs. climate change, silver bullet, the tragedy in the making and good sense. They reveal that climate mainstreaming, across all different sections of the analysed sample, follows a postpolitical populist logic. In other words, climate mainstreaming counts as a hegemonic strategy in the qualitative sense, and this strategy is hegemonic in the quantitative sense (see chapter 3): it strives for universality, and it is embodied by a broad range of relevant actors. Yet this is not to say that this discourse would be without tensions – especially expressed in the publications of civil society organisations. This section explores these tensions in detail and argues that the dominant mode of resistance in climate mainstreaming is that of counter-conduct.87

6.5.1 Global antagonisms

The first narrative pattern displayed climate mainstreaming as a challenge flowing from the fundamental antagonism between humanity vs. dangerous climate change; creating humanity as homogenous sphere, constituting NGOs and IGOs as important assistants and depicting climate change as an external enemy. In the discourse, each of these three dispositions are contested – however to a varying degree.

The strongest tension is to be found with regard to the idea that there is such a thing as humanity which represents a rather homogeneous and unified actor in the fight against climate change. It was said above that this position nonetheless acknowledges that there are differences within humanity; managed by a logic of difference of carbon footprints, though. The first tension also stresses difference within humanity, but with regard to vulnerability instead of responsibility. The difference flows from the fact that the poor ‘will be the primary victims of climate change’ (The World Bank 2010c, 6). In the deviating parts of the discourse, the globe is thus presented as a fragmented and heterogeneous place. As some analysed doc-

87. When in the following I speak of resistant narrative structures in the publications of international organisations, at first glance this might seem a little strange. Yet in chapter 3 I argued that even hegemonic discourses cannot fully exclude the radical contingency of all social being; that they are not able to completely silence alternative voices (see also Angermüller 2007a). Thus, if institutions are understood as sedimented discourses, it is clear that these tensions also permeate their publications. In this sense, the discourse on climate mainstreaming in IOs can be read like a map of discursive struggles within these organisations or as a virtual debate with other discursive positions.
Variations on a populist theme: Tensions in the climate mainstreaming discourse

...ments note, there are huge disparities among and within nations, most importantly regarding their income, and there are many reasons for conflicts between them. The division of the planet is even aggravated through climate change:

Unlike people living behind the flood defences of London and Los Angeles, young girls in the Horn of Africa and people in the Ganges Delta do not have a deep carbon footprint. As Desmond Tutu, the former Archbishop of Cape Town, has argued, we are drifting into a world of adaptation apartheid. (UNDP 2007, 13)

The image of ‘apartheid’ which is introduced into the discourse in the name of Desmond Tutu is surely a strong metaphor for global cleavages, underpinning the idea of a divided globe and thereby reactivating the deeply ingrained antagonism between North and South. In other words, climate change is presented as a driver which aggravates the inequalities dividing the globe into a rich and a poor part and does even have a racist component. Differences in vulnerability are especially a very salient notion within the civil society discourse. For example, the Up in Smoke Coalition presents the poor as the primary victims of climate change:

Global warming is already happening. The impact of global warming is being felt most by the world’s poorest people, as many of our case studies make clear. Food production, water supplies, public health, and people’s livelihoods are all being damaged and undermined. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 2)

One could read such a statement as a rather strong articulation challenging the populist logic of the climate mainstreaming discourse, indeed. Yet it seems that the opposite is the case. It re-articulates the poor-as-victims as a cause for humanity by virtue of the concept of human security:

Both mitigation and adaptation should be seen as human security imperatives in a broader sense. Dangerous climate change, and the ecological damage that will follow in its wake, threatens to cause massive human displacement and the collapse of livelihoods on a vast scale. The ripple effects would extend far beyond the localities of those most immediately affected. Associated outcomes will extend from the movement of displaced people across national borders to the potential collapse of fragile states. (UNDP 2007, 39)

The concept of human security has its origins in the UNDP (1994). Framing poverty and inequality as a security issue was to increase awareness and political action on poverty. It has, however, become a common point of reference in the global social polity. Also NGOs have adopted that terminology: ‘Climate change in the dry land belt – An ecological time bomb for human security in the Middle East’ (GHF 2009, 56)

Framing the fact the poor as victims within a human security issue has two consequences: On the one hand, the locally different consequences of climate change are aggregated into issues that concern the whole of humanity. If the poor are becoming poorer through climate
change, this might destabilise the whole planet. In this sense, the difference in climate change impact becomes just another reason for treating it as an issue for the whole of humanity (Swyngedouw 2010, 221). On the other hand, this discursive operation does result in a discursive shift, though. From a Foucauldian perspective, the concept of human security implies the adoption of a biopolitical perspective on the problem of development (Duffield & Waddell 2006). Through presenting climate change as a human security issue, the ‘vulnerable are becoming dangerous’ (Oels 2012); that is, in line with the idea of climate change as a master security threat, these differences in the capacity to cope with change are embedded into a ‘climate conflict discourse’ (Trombetta 2008). This then results in employing a dispositif of risk and security. In this sense, putting emphasis on the victims does not question humanity as a unified subject, but establishes a risk governmentality in order to cope with its internal differences. Singling out dangerous populations and subjecting them to apparatuses of security, however, even supports the notion of humanity, as it seeks to biopolitically manage it as one population. We will return to this in chapter 8.

Other tensions regard the role of international organisations as the assistants of humanity in the fight against global warming. Civil society organisations question their role, arguing that they are often part of the problem and not of the solution. For example, Up in Smoke calls for ‘extracting the World Bank from fossil fuels’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 17). Also Greenpeace, commenting on the appointment of a new head of the World Bank, criticises its policy, in particular ‘its support for climate-damaging fossil fuel energy projects’ (Greenpeace 2007b). However, within the sample of analysed documents, these were not as common as the general reference to the fundamental antagonism of humanity and dangerous climate change.

Finally, there are some notable exceptions within the sample that question the antagonist framing and highlighting humanity’s entanglement with global warming. For example, Up in Smoke argues that

Global warming, and its predominant cause - the rate at which humanity is burning fossil fuels - is making us look anew at how the world works. It asks fundamental questions about whether, and how, we will achieve human development; about how the global economy can run within the environmental limits of the planet’s life support system; and about the obligations between rich and poor people, within and between countries. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 7)

Here, humanity is clearly situated as the cause of global warming, which undermines the idea of climate change as an external enemy. While this is quite an obvious insight, it is quite rare in the climate mainstreaming discourse. At times, civil society organisations discuss the social-economic causes of global warming, but they subscribe to the antagonist framing.
6.5.2 Green New Deal as fundamental transformation

The second narrative structure – the problematisation of climate change within the question of a silver bullet – put forth the idea that climate change is the primary global problem, and solving it will contribute to the solution of many other problems – paradigmatically embodied by notions such as the ‘green economy’ or ‘green growth’. Both terms are very salient throughout the sample. Only the Up in Smoke Coalition is rather critical of such a framing. It argues that climate change is rooted in fundamental social and economic structures; for example, in the organisation of world trade:

Fossil-fuel-dependent global transport networks have grown in tandem with the trade they help facilitate. And whilst the benefits to poor countries from trade liberalisation remain the subject of intense academic debate, the economic costs of climate change continue to rise inexorably. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 31)88

Thus, ‘need and opportunity for new models of development must apply in developed countries as well as in less-developed countries’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 4). This articulation reverses the perspective of the silver bullet. Not one solution (climate protection) tackles different problems, but a variety of structures have to be changed in order to solve climate change. Put like this, climate change is embedded within social structures, which have to be changed. And this is a pattern which sometimes even surfaces in the discourses of established international organisations. For example, the UNDP in a notable passage agrees that

Facing up to that threat will create challenges at many levels. Perhaps most fundamentally of all, it challenges the way that we think about progress. There could be no clearer demonstration than climate that economic wealth creation is not the same thing as human progress. (UNDP 2007, 15)

Crucially, actors do not draw on this tension in order to formulate a competing hegemonic project, but try to use it for shifting the discourse from within. A case in point provides the British New Economics Foundation (NEF), one of the initiators of the Up in Smoke Coalition. It seeks to reclaim the idea of a Green New Deal and interpret it in a much more fundamental sense. Its report entitled A Green New Deal thus puts climate change in a wider context. The report acknowledges that a ‘triple crunch of financial meltdown, climate change and “peak oil” has its origins firmly rooted in the current model of globalisation’ (New Economics Foundation 2008, 2). It thus calls for financial regulation and a sustainable investment programme – proposals which are much more transformational than the idea of the Green Eco-

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88. Note, though, that the ‘intense academic debate’ weakens the necessity for new trade structures with reference to a call for scientific uncertainty. We will return to this depoliticising feature of the hegemonic climate mainstreaming discourse in the next chapter.
nomy put forth by UNEP, for instance. Remarkably, it goes as far as citing Cuba as a positive model for responses to the recent crisis, because ‘any politician peering into the future of energy shock, climate change, and rocky economic prospects would be a fool not to learn from how Cuba got it right.’ (New Economics Foundation 2008, 31). Here, the Green New Deal turns into a backdoor through which a socialist country can slip into the climate mainstreaming discourse as a role model. In other words, there are severe differences between a simple Green Economy in the style of the OECD, for instance, and a ‘green new deal’ as presented by the NEF (see also Methmann 2009).

Crucially, though, these proposals are not formulated as a global alternative, but remain within the dominant framework presented above – they stress differences within the hegemonic discourse. The structures of the populist climate change discourse and the NEF Green New Deal discourse are very similar. Also the NEF seeks to create a fundamental antagonism between humanity (here termed the ‘global economy’) and external forces (illustrated with the image of a ‘storm’):

The global economy is facing a ‘triple crunch’. It is a combination of a credit-fuelled financial crisis, accelerating climate change and soaring energy prices underpinned by an encroaching peak in oil production. These three overlapping events threaten to develop into a perfect storm, the like of which has not been seen since the Great Depression. (New Economics Foundation 2008)

And it renders the green new deal as an empty signifier. For the report asserts that a Green New Deal will

lay the foundations for the emergence of a set of resilient low-carbon economies, rich in jobs and based on independent sources of energy supply. This will create a more stable economic environment in which there is a lot more local production and distribution, and enhanced national security. (New Economics Foundation 2008, 3)

In this sense, although the NEF Green New Deal embodies a different conception than dominant approaches of greening the economy, it does not propose a global alternative, but seeks to redefine the content of the hegemonic climate mainstreaming discourse – a typical example of a counter-conduct strategy of resistance.

6.5.3 Not just technology

The third narrative structure of the climate mainstreaming discourse is the tragedy storyline: climate change is presented as an avoidable catastrophe, but the incompetence of political leaders leaves no other option than relying on the political machine as a deus ex machina. It is quite striking that distrust in political leaders and negotiations prevails throughout the sample, especially in the aftermath of Copenhagen. What is more, the institutions of carbon governmentality – the whole apparatus of the UNFCCC – is taken for granted. If there
are tensions at all within this discourse, they relate to the role of technology as a technical
device as well as a political machine. Again, most doubts are expressed by the Up in Smoke
Coalition. First of all, it questions the dominant role of technological solutions:

Recently the role of developing new technology has been strongly emphasised. In particular,
governments have focused on how to improve weather forecasting in Africa. There is a con-
sensus among development groups, however, that a greater and more urgent challenge is
strengthening communities from the bottom-up, and building on their own coping strategies to
live with global warming. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 4).

This quotation obviously puts local empowerment in opposition to the deployment of
ever sophisticated technologies. Accordingly, a strengthening ‘of democracy to improve
recovery planning and efficiency, [...] stakeholder councils, citizens’ juries, and local micro/
small business alliances for participatory planning’ is called for (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004,
21). It is no surprise, however, that this deviation from the hegemonic storyline refers to the
field of adaptation policies. We will return to the implied shift in governmental rationality in
chapter 8, which shows that this is actually not a strategy of resistance, but a different version
of postpolitics.

Apart from that, there are not many statements in tension with the tragedy plot. If at all,
civil society organisations call for the consideration of justice and equality within carbon
governmentality.

To stop it running out of control [...] cuts in emissions of greenhouse gases by industrialised
countries in the order of 60–80 per cent (relative to 1990 levels) by the middle of this century are
essential, far beyond the targets of the Kyoto Protocol. A truly global solution to stop dangerous
climate change is also unavoidable, one that will need to be fair and based on human equality.
(Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 2)

This statement is quite characteristic. It both expresses the widely shared belief of civil
society organisations that carbon governmentality has to be expanded and become more ri-
gid, so to speak, and be based more on equity considerations. Although not explicitly men-
tioned in the sample, such ideas resonate well with recent proposals for equity-based ap-
proaches to carbon trading; put forth, for example, by the German Advisory Council on
Global Change (WBGU 2009) or civil society organisations such as the Greenhouse Develop-
ment Rights Coalition, comprising development NGOs like Oxfam or Christian Aid (Baer et
al. 2008). They do not seek to propose an alternative to the Kyoto system, but provide a ra-
tionale for a more equal and fair design of this system. The failure of the carbon govern-
mentality cure, so to speak, calls for more of the same medicine. Again, the main strategy of resist-
ance is counter-conduct, as it does not call into question the political machine as such.
6.5.4 Costs as pressure

The fourth storyline of climate mainstreaming – politics of the good sense – already represents a tension in the discourse. It partially distances itself from the apocalyptical framing of the antagonist actant structure and argues that acting on climate change is the outcome not of a fundamental threat but of a simple cost-benefit rationale. This provides some leeway for civil society actors to draw on this idea. A very common theme is to demand more ambitious action from political leaders based on this very cost-benefit analysis. Whereas in the dominant storyline cost-benefit is a rationality that legitimises a particular way of climate protection – advanced liberal government – some NGOs use it as an argument in favour of more exceptional measures. For example, Greenpeace uses the Stern Review to push for more fundamental transformations:

As Stern emphasised, inaction will be much more expensive in the long run. We therefore call on all decision makers yet again to make this vision a reality. The world cannot afford to stick to the ‘business as usual’ energy development path: relying on fossil fuels, nuclear energy and other outdated technologies. (Greenpeace & EREC 2008, 8)

The dominant storyline – as, for example, expressed in the McKinsey Abatement Cost Curve (see section 5.4) – draws on cost-benefit analysis to legitimise nuclear energy as a cost-effective technology to fight global warming. Greenpeace, by contrast, advances the entire economic rationale for ruling out nuclear energy and calling for more urgent action, for more fundamental transformations. As was discussed above, this does not leave the basic framing of the political machine, but it creates more pressure for an encompassing technological transformation. Again, this is not creating an alternative hegemonic project, but uses the hegemonic rationale to initiate change.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that the good sense storyline is indeed used to formulate an alternative hegemonic project, although not by actors or institutions included in the sample: climate sceptics. One of the most prominent climate sceptics, Björn Lomborg, is well-known for advancing cost-benefit analysis against action on climate change by arguing that the relationship between costs and lives saved is much higher in other problem areas, such as HIV/AIDS (Lomborg 2004). Climate protection, in his view, is relatively ‘uneconomic’ way of saving lives. This is a perfect example of forming a competing – populist – hegemonic project which identifies the climate change apocalyptics as part of the problem.
6.5.5 Excursus: A politicising take on climate change

The tensions that were previously described all represent examples for a strategy of counter-conduct. This might come as no surprise as the sampling strategy focused precisely on the most established and important parts of the global economic, social and environmental polity. This is justified because the aim is to study hegemony (see chapter 4). However, as kind of a selection bias, this could lead to the wrong conclusion that there are no competing hegemonic projects at all. In the following, I explore a competing discourse. Besides highlighting a different strategy of resistance, this is supposed to show how a politicising treatment of climate change could look like, and this contrast might moreover reveal the peculiarity of climate mainstreaming.

From April 19-22, 2010, 30,000 people from more than 100 countries gathered in the city of Cochabamba, Bolivia, for the The World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth (The Guardian, April 23, 2010). Organised by the Bolivian government in cooperation with civil society organisations and social movements, it was supposed to be civil society’s answer to the failure of climate change talks in Copenhagen. This conference adopted the People’s Agreement of Cochabamba, which is often thought of as the climate change manifesto of the more radical parts of civil society. And it is a case in point for an alternative framing of the climate crisis.

It also creates a fundamental antagonism by stating that ‘our Mother Earth is wounded and the future of humanity is in danger’; the opponent of which is the ‘capitalist system’:

The corporations and governments of the so-called ‘developed’ countries, in complicity with a segment of the scientific community, have led us to discuss climate change as a problem limited to the rise in temperature without questioning the cause, which is the capitalist system. We confront the terminal crisis of a civilising model that is patriarchal and based on the submission and destruction of human beings and nature that accelerated since the industrial revolution.

Very similar to the origins of the environmental movement discussed in chapter 5.1, this turns the postpolitical populist actant structure on its head. Again, it is humanity which is in danger, but this time joined by nature, and both are threatened by the capitalist economic model. The empty signifier for this movement, thus, is not ecological modernisation, but a life in harmony with nature, as expressed in the following quotation:

Humanity confronts a great dilemma: to continue on the path of capitalism, depredation, and death, or to choose the path of harmony with nature and respect for life.

89. This and the following quotations refer to the declaration as presented on the website of the organiser’s of the conference and thus has no page numbers (World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth 2010).
This is paradigmatically condensed in the idea of ‘living well’, ‘recognizing Mother Earth as a living being with which we have an indivisible, interdependent, complementary and spiritual relationship.’ Finally, this goes hand in hand with the rejection of the instruments of carbon governmentality:

The recent financial crisis has demonstrated that the market is incapable of regulating the financial system, which is fragile and uncertain due to speculation and the emergence of intermediary brokers. Therefore, it would be totally irresponsible to leave in their hands the care and protection of human existence and of our Mother Earth.

Instead, the declaration calls for fundamental transformations, for example with regard to structures of production and consumption, or agricultural practices. Moreover, it calls for the establishment of an ‘International Climate and Environmental Justice Tribunal that has the legal capacity to prevent, judge and penalise States, industries and people that by commission or omission contaminate and provoke climate change.’

Already this short summary qualifies the Cochabamba Declaration as a populist hegemonic project aimed at breaking the dominant postpolitical hegemony. It depicts the current organisation of society as the primary enemy, it promotes harmony with nature as the solution to all problems, and all this results in a politicisation of climate change which questions basic social structures, integrating justice and legal concerns. The consequences of such a perspective will be discussed in detail in chapter 9.

It is quite striking, though, that even such a populist challenge to the established version of climate mainstreaming cannot do without referring to the Kyoto Protocol in a positive way. As it reads in the declaration, participants demand that

The next Conference on Climate Change to be held at the end of 2010 in Mexico should approve an amendment to the Kyoto Protocol for the second commitment period from 2013 to 2017 under which developed countries must agree to significant domestic emissions reductions of at least 50% based on 1990 levels, excluding carbon markets or other offset mechanisms that mask the failure of actual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

As it seems, carbon governmentality has become, if not the only game in town, at least the by far most important game in the global climate polity. Even a movement which radically contests its very discursive foundations has to mobilise carbon governmentality as a means of climate protection. Besides the populist framing of the Cochabamba Declaration, this represents more evidence for the claim that carbon governmentality is strongly hegemonic.
6.5.6 Conclusion

The tensions within the discourse of climate mainstreaming analysed in this chapter revealed that climate change is not completely uncontested, but that resistance relies on a strategy of counter-conduct. It does not formulate an alternative political project in order to break the hegemony of post-political populism. Instead, resistance more or less seeks to subvert the dominant narrative patterns in order to refill the postpolitical populist project with a different content. Tensions stress inequality by presenting the poor as victims without, however, leaving the frame of humanity with reference to the concept of human security. They call for more fundamental transformations of social structures, although couched in the hegemonic language of the Green New Deal. They seek to enhance carbon governmentality with notions of equity. And they draw on economic thought in order to create pressure for change. All this, however, does not question the dominant postpolitical populist narrative. It seeks to initiate change from within. How a different strategy of resistance could look like has been explored in an excursus to the Cochabamba Declaration – nonetheless revealing support for the postpolitical populism thesis.

6.6 Conclusion: A climate for populism

This chapter focused on the question of what political logic organise climate mainstreaming. By which discursive strategies does it broaden the global climate polity? The answer to this question can be summarised in four points. First, it creates a fundamental antagonism between humanity and dangerous climate change, presenting the latter as an external enemy, in the face of which humanity becomes a unified and homogenous space. This space becomes the enlarged climate polity. Secondly, this existential crisis is to be resolved by one particular empty signifier: climate protection, which is presented as a solution also to other major international problems. Couched entirely in terms of carbon, this constitutes the major governance object of the climate polity: carbon. Thirdly, given the inability of political leaders, this problem runs the risk of becoming a tragedy – only solvable by the advent of a deus ex machina; a machina in the form of a political machine, both comprising material technologies and technocratic politics. This defines the primary modus operandi in the global climate polity: governmentality. Fourthly, a complementary storyline of good sense politics introduces an economic cost-benefit analysis, further specifying the nature of that governmentality: advanced liberal government. In other words, climate mainstreaming follows a logic of postpolitical populism, and so broadens and intensifies the global climate polity.
A couple of specifications are in order. First, this discourse revealed a fourth facet of postpolitical populism – the good sense politics – which did not flow from the theoretical framework. This chapter, though, has shown that it fits into that framework nonetheless. Populism is conventionally understood as a simplification of political matters. The previous analysis showed how this was accomplished by introducing the rather simple currency of economic cost-benefit analysis. It seems that postpolitical populism, at least in climate mainstreaming, utilises such an additional simplification of politics for a depoliticising end.

Secondly, postpolitical populism is hegemonic both in the qualitative and the quantitative sense. Chapter 3 defined hegemony in the qualitative sense of trying to create a universal discourse. This is clearly the case in climate mainstreaming. Chapter 4 defined hegemony in quantitative terms; as existing when a broad range of actors and institutions adopt a discourse. Postpolitical populism was dominant in the entire sample. The dominant mode of resistance was found to be counter-conduct which, however, does not question the general discourse, but seeks to shift it from within. The postpolitical populist framing of the global climate polity, therefore, is a hegemonic discourse in a double sense: widely shared, and universalist in nature.

Thirdly, the logic of postpolitical populism also explains the ecological paradox found at the heart of global climate politics. Via a postpolitical populist logic, climate mainstreaming starts from an apocalyptic framing and ends with carbon governmentality – mediated by a silver bullet, a tragedy in the making and the deus ex machina. It is precisely this logic which accounts for the paradoxical state of climate politics. In the next chapter, we will see how carbon governmentality, once established through such a discourse, results in a further depoliticisation of the global climate polity.

Fourthly, it should be noted that this chapter displayed the strongest convergence of the three cases in the common discursive logic of postpolitical populism. All three polities, economic, social and environmental, displayed its dominance. A certain deviation was only found in the global economic polity, which added the feature of common sense politics to the picture, which was not as strong in the other two polities.

By way of conclusion, it is worth noting that this general political logic closely resembles many mythical narrations, in which the unification of different groups or actors is the result of the external super-threat as well as the condition of its overcoming. It goes back to exodus of the Hebrews united under Moses, runs through the ancient Greco-Persian Wars, which led the quarrelling Greek city states to enduring unification and today serves as a mythical symbol for the resistance of the occident against the orient, and lives on in modern fiction novels such as the Lord of the Rings, where different races have to stand together in the battle against a superior enemy. And in the same way as Moses (or more precisely, God) divided the red
sea, that Themistokles defeated the Persians in the naval battle of Salamis with a technical trick using his knowledge of the tides, that Frodo was not able to destroy the ring but had to be forced to do so by an alien creature, it is today the simple device of ‘technology’ which manages to resolve the climate super-threat. It is this inherent fantasmatic dimension which probably makes this storyline so compelling.
Mission Creep: Carbon governmentality and the depoliticisation of global warming

‘The world cannot continue with business as usual.’

Pascal Lamy, WTO Director-General (WTO 2009b)

‘The more things change, the more they stay the same.’

Proverb

In his analysis of the prison, Michel Foucault was struck by the constant and significant failure of penal institutions. This seemed to contradict their proliferation as a general technology of power. He concluded that if one asks ‘what is served by the failure of the prison’, one would see that the prison ‘is not intended to eliminate offences, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them’ and constitute them as a ‘general economy’, which would justify the application of disciplinary power throughout the whole society (Foucault 1977, 272). An analogy can be made with the performance of the present day global climate polity. It is widely acknowledged that the institutions of carbon governmentality – embodied by the Kyoto Protocol, its flexible mechanisms and the current post-Kyoto negotiations – are insufficient to deal with climate change (den Elzen et al. 2010), yet the global climate polity seems to stick to this road and intensify and expand carbon governmentality even further. And like the prison, one is compelled to ask: What is served by the failure of the global cli-
climate polity? One could conclude that climate politics is not intended to eliminate carbon emissions, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them and constitute them as a general economy of power. The aim of this chapter is to explore to what extent this analogy is plausible.

Foucault’s understanding of the failure of the prison can be used as a metaphor for approaching the ‘ecological paradox’ (Blühdorn 2011). The previous chapter was interested mostly in the first part of the paradox (Blühdorn 2011); how climate change is mainstreamed into other issue areas and how it expands the global climate polity and endows it with a carbon governmentality; in other words, the success of climate protection in terms of hegemony. In this chapter, I turn to the latter part of the paradox; namely, how this governmentality actually preserves the status quo. Or, in other words (the words of the third research question): what exactly is this carbon governmentality that renders the global climate polity governable and what are its political effects? And how can this explain ‘failure’?

The argument I seek to establish in this chapter is that the failure of carbon governmentality, so to speak, should rather be imagined as a success; more precisely, a success in depoliticisation. The previous chapter already revealed a first dimension of depoliticisation: The apocalyptic framing of climate mainstreaming covers existing problems and cleavages by identifying an external enemy, and hence depoliticising existing social conflicts. Yet in chapter 3 I introduced two further mechanisms of depoliticisation: first, that the empty signifier of postpolitical populism is not only presented as solving all potential problems of the existing order. It also renders the central features of this order as being compatible with this signifier, and hence compatible with the associated political project. Secondly, postpolitical populism employs governmentality as its main modus of power, enacting a logic of difference which manages the status quo in an optimal way – without, however, questioning fundamental social structures. It is these latter two features of postpolitical populism which I turn to in the following analysis. While the previous chapter showed how the empty signifier of ‘climate protection’ and carbon governmentality were established, this chapter investigates how both result in the depoliticisation of climate politics. In a nutshell, I claim that carbon governmentality functions as an empty signifier in the sense that it renders existing social structures as compatible with climate protection; and that it organises the practices of climate protection in a way that these do not touch upon the basic social structures of the world economy. And if these are systematic features of carbon governmentality, one can hardly speak of failure. In other words, what is to be demonstrated is that carbon governmentality is designed in a way that abets the depoliticisation of the global climate polity.

In order to establish this argument, this chapter analyses climate mainstreaming as a dispositif, and subjects it to an analytics of government (Dean 2010, see also chapter 3). In con-
Contrast to the archaeological perspective of the previous chapter, it connects linguistic and non-linguistic practices. Analysis is thus organised in three steps: first, investigating the linguistic discourse of climate mainstreaming reveals the central functions of carbon governmentality and how these features make climate protection work as an empty signifier. Secondly, the practices of climate mainstreaming are analysed through the example of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). As one of the three flexible Kyoto mechanisms, the CDM is a paradigmatic device for mainstreaming climate protection into other issue areas that is cited time and again throughout the whole discourse (e.g. UNDP 2007, VI; The World Bank 2010b, 23; WEF 2011, 12). Finally, I will return to the linguistic level and discuss how these practices are reflected in the discourse of IOs and NGOs. The investigation is structured by an analytics of government, dividing regimes of government into four analytical categories: the fields of visibility; the forms of knowledge; the political technologies; and the involved subjectivities (Dean 2010).

7.1 Carbon governmentality as empty signifier

The claim of this chapter is that the features of carbon governmentality make climate protection function like an empty signifier in the postpolitical populist sense of the term: rendering the established order as something which does not contradict climate protection or which even enhances its very goal. Carbon governmentality provides (linguistic) discursive devices for becoming part of the climate mainstreaming discourse without actually having to alter one’s practices. Evidence for this was found in the climate mainstreaming sample regarding each of the four dimensions of carbon governmentality, which enable international organisations to appear as climate protectors without significantly protecting the climate. The analysis, the results of which are presented in this section, was conducted in two steps: First, from the angle of an analytics of government, I investigated which features of carbon governmentality could be found in the climate mainstreaming discourse. Secondly, I tried to flesh out how these features function as an empty signifier. The results of this analysis are summarised in table VIII on page 205. Each section begins with a brief discussion of the respective dimension, which details the findings of the previous chapters, and then turns to the results of the empirical analysis.
7.1.1 Visibility: Globalism and consensual action

Global warming is rendered as an inherently global problem via the object of carbon, and through knowledge about a global carbon cycle. This global visibility is based on the idea that greenhouse gas emissions and rising temperatures do not stop at national borders and require an international solution. Thus, the various causes and consequences of climate change are transformed from local phenomena into global ones and converge into overall flows of greenhouse gases (Roe 1998). Previous ‘waves’ of global environmental politics dealt with problems which were more local, acute and visible in nature (Bodansky 2001, 23). By contrast, climate change has been constructed as a challenge on a global plane – very much in line with other global environmental problematisations such as the ozone layer or the depletion of biological diversity. Thus, climate change follows the long-standing tradition of environmental politics of framing biospherical depletion as a problem of planetary dimensions (Jasanoff 2001). This flows from the carbonification of the planet and the constitution of humanity facing climate change, understood as a coupled socio-natural system, diagnosed in the previous chapter. And it reflects the green governmentality underpinning the global climate polity (Luke 1999).

Ecological modernisation complements this global perspective by conceptualising the climate as a global public good, which should be managed in an efficient way (Adger et al. 2001). And it calculates the aggregate losses in wealth which are caused by an inefficient use of the atmosphere as a global sink for carbon. The Stern Review, for instance, supports this image of a global problem by stating that it ‘could create risks of major disruption to economic and social activity, later in this century and in the next, on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the 20th century’ (Stern 2007, ii). In sum, the global carbon cycle, understood as a global public good, constitutes the global field of visibility characteristic for global warming. And this global field of visibilities creates the idea that global problems need global solutions. Hence, global climate politics is a matter for the heads of state (or at least, for the national executives), who pursue multilateral negotiations within a big ‘summit theatre’ (Death 2011).

The publications on climate change by IOs render it as such an inherently global field of visibility. Climate change is defined as the ‘single biggest challenge to civilisation as we know it’ (WTO 2009a) or ‘the most serious international challenge’ (WTO 2008). And this also reflects the public good logic of ecological modernisation: Because the ‘costs are lower when more parties participate’ it is a ‘collective-action problem’ (IMF 2009). In effect, the interna-

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90. Recall that since the World Bank is working closely together with the IMF, I occasionally include IMF documents into the analysis.
tional community has to reach an ‘internationalisation of actions’ (The World Bank 2010a). These statements clearly reflect the assumption that climate change is a global problem which necessitates global solutions.

The global ontology of carbon governmentality has an important effect for climate protection being an empty signifier. In chapter 6.1 it was argued that international organisations play the role of assistants for humanity as the hero of the climate mainstreaming narrative. They are assigned a crucial role for solving global warming as they are international organisations and thus have a global reach. The global framing, however, adds a dialectic to this assumption as it integrates international organisations into the climate protection discourse and relativises their own possible contribution at the same time. Organisations appear as willing to act on climate change in principle. However, as any real solution has to be a multilateral one, organisations have to wait for the whole international community to act in concert. They are explicitly described, for example, as awaiting ‘signals that would be sent by a successful Copenhagen Accord’ (WTO 2009a). Interestingly, the Kyoto Protocol has not fulfilled these requirements yet because – pushing the globalism argument even further – it does not represent a multilateral agreement that ‘embraces all major emitters’ (WTO 2008). Subordinating IOs to consensual international action is a recurrent theme in most of the analysed documents. It renders organisations as contributing to climate protection in principle but justifiably hesitating because of international disagreement. In effect, international organisations are part of climate protection today but changing their traditional policies is delayed into the indeterminate future – until a ‘truly international consensus’ emerges (WTO 2007).

A case in point for this articulation is found in the debate on the relationship between free trade and climate change. Whereas it is sometimes acknowledged that free trade might contribute to global warming in some cases (WTO 2008), the idea of constraining free trade is rejected at the same time. For example, the OECD argues that:

Calls for border taxes on imports divert attention from the fundamental issue: the need for everyone to take action on greenhouse gas emissions. [...] the danger is that arguments over border taxes could make an agreement even more difficult to negotiate. [...] Clearly, the best solution is to level the playing field by broadening participation in a climate agreement to include as many countries and sectors as possible. (Gurria 2009a)

Here, the concept of border tax adjustments – compensating domestic producers for higher costs of climate protection by raising import tariffs for foreign producers who do not face the same level of climate protection – is put in opposition to a global climate change treaty. The rationale behind this is clear: climate change is a global problem; it needs a global solution. Anything below this threshold is ineffective or even counterproductive, as it might undermine the trust or reduce the pressure necessary for reaching a global agreement. Hence,
international organisations such as the WTO should not alter their free trade policies – accordantly, the status quo is preserved. Global warming as a global field of visibility provides a logic which enables international organisations to become part of the climate protection discourse without any substantial change in policies. Their traditional policies such as free trade or fossil fuel extraction are excluded from the range of possible problems.

7.1.2 Episteme: Growth greens, green growth

Carbon governmentality is centred upon the assumption that the Earth’s carbon cycle can be modelled and predicted on the basis of environmental and geo-sciences (Oels 2005, 200). This is fuelled by the desire to gather enough solid knowledge about natural and social processes, and once we have that knowledge, it will be possible to predict their future on a planetary scale. Eventually, the idea of ‘Earth system sciences’ puts forth the idea that we can steer the entire planet like a ‘spaceship earth’ (Oels 2005, 198). And as at the bridge on such a spaceship, responsible navigation is based on a profound monitoring of all of the ships systems: ‘Scientific expertise becomes the foundation and guarantee for properly constituted politics/policies’ (Swyngedouw 2010, 217). It is this picture which flows from the political machine of the deus ex machina of the previous chapter, which makes these scientific perspective possible and necessary.

Green governmentality, therefore, draws its authority from science and revolves around the constant need for further research (Adger et al. 2001, 698). Global surveys and satellite surveillance are crucial (Litfin 1998). Large scale computer modelling and data processing are put forward as necessary conditions of any successful action on climate change (Henman 2002). Climate science employs a ‘vast machine’ of models and scientific assessments in order to bring the global carbon cycle into a computable, predictable and hence actionable form (Edwards 2010). Carbon governmentality is based on a comprehensive system of carbon surveillance which provides ‘accurate and transparent carbon budgets at different scales’ – a ‘carbon panopticon’, so to speak, which seeks to get a comprehensive view on carbon stocks and flows (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011). Governing carbon, in other words, requires counting and accounting, modelling and predicting carbon in detail.

The result is a paradox: climate research is always fundamentally flawed with scientific uncertainty (Lutes 1998, 162). Deeper knowledge and more sophisticated computer models increase the degree of uncertainty because an ever more complex set of variables and causalities is taken into account (Lutes 1998, 162). Although both the basic causes of the greenhouse effect and the fact that climate change is man-made are mainly uncontested now, uncertainty remains about time-scale and extent of warming as well as its regional impacts. And the more we know, the more we acknowledge that we do not know enough yet. Hence, our
knowledge is never sufficient. That governing the climate has to be based on sound science is not only reflected in the importance of the IPPC’s work for climate negotiations but also in the public attention given to possible flaws and inaccuracies in climate science which recently entered the news. For example, the flaws regarding the glacier meltdown in the Himalaya (The Guardian, January 20, 2010) document the fact that public perception of climate change still revolves around doubt and the quest for definite knowledge. The episteme of carbon governmentality is based on a contradictory tension between an endless desire for knowledge and the unwillingness to take it for granted unless we really know for sure.

The advanced liberal governmentality of ecological modernisation adds a second layer to the rationality of scientific uncertainty, based on the good sense storyline found in climate mainstreaming above. In the absence of definite and precise overall knowledge, climate protection is only deemed to be feasible to the extent that it can be justified by the logic of economic calculation (Rutherford 1999; Adger et al. 2001, 702). Only if its overall benefits exceed its costs should climate protection be pursued. This narrows the scope for political action to those policies that are economically efficient as such, especially under conditions of uncertainty. Carbon governmentality thus prefers so-called win-win-solutions that are both economically profitable and climate-friendly (Lutes 1998, 165). So it privileges such policies that do not negatively affect economic growth. Moreover, growth often appears as an unquestioned fundamental condition for any policy. The fundamental significance that is assigned to economic growth is even embodied by the UNFCCC Art. 3 (5) obliging parties to ‘to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to sustainable economic growth’. The ‘silver bullet’ of climate protection (see chapter 6.2) establishes a relationship of mutual support between economic and ecologic goals. Carbon governmentality translates this into concrete governing practices.

Both types of episteme – the scientific (un)certainty of green governmentality and the economic rationality of ecological modernisation – are combined in shaping climate protection as an empty signifier. They are a prevalent theme in the climate mainstreaming discourse. For example, the UNEP suggests that

It is essential that climate mitigation policy is guided by the best available science concerning ecosystem carbon, and decisions should be informed by the overall costs and benefits of carbon management. (UNEP 2009e, 6)

The first empty signifier effect flows from the scientific rationality of (un)certainty. On the one hand, the endless demand for knowledge makes providing information an act of climate protection in itself because it contributes to governing the climate. This articulation is often used – in combination with subordinating IOs to an international treaty – to depict an organisation as source of valuable expertise and so crucially contributing to climate protection. The
IMF, for example, as a close partner of the World Bank, defines its primary role in the climate change discourse as ‘evaluating the macroeconomic and financial consequences of climate change’ (IMF 2006). Also the OECD presents itself as indispensable because ‘international organisations have a major role to play by informing the discussions’ (OECD 2009d). Of course, these statements might be explained with reference to conventional language of IOs. Yet analysing discourses from a Foucauldian perspective is not interested in the intentions of the speakers, but takes their statements as ‘simple positivities’ (Foucault 1978, 125). In this sense, these examples show that no policy change as such is necessary: already by providing crucial expertise those organisations become part of the climate protection discourse.

On the other hand, scientific (un)certainty excludes demands for fundamentally changed basic social structures by contesting their causal relationships with climate change. For example, the WTO in principle admits that more free trade might lead to growing carbon emissions. However, it refers to scientific uncertainty to argue that ‘the impact of trade cannot be determined in advance’ (WTO 2011a); that is, there is not enough knowledge yet in order to justify trade-constraining policies. Instead, we need ‘case-by-case analysis and empirical verification’ (WTO 2007; WTO 2008; WTO 2011a).

A similar discursive articulation can be found with reference to economic growth. Rodrigo de Rato, then director-general of the IMF, for example, thinks ‘that we have yet to find out whether there are binding limits to growth. […] economic change and economic growth can surprise us’ (de Rato 2007). This statement again employs the idea of uncertainty so as to put economic growth as such out of the line of fire. And this passage is all the more interesting because it links (un)certainty to economic rationality. As the ‘surprise’ indicates, de Rato refers to positive examples in which companies and individuals can take advantage of the opportunities of climate protection even in the face of uncertainty, and asks:

How then can policy makers channel this effort to overcome the externalities of man-made climate change? I believe that they should look for answers in the same place that the problem originates: in economics. Policy makers around the world need a reasoned assessment of the economic costs and benefits of climate change and of the policies that can be adopted to combat it. These include policies to mitigate climate change—to prevent what can be prevented—and also policies to adapt to climate change—to respond to what cannot be prevented. (de Rato 2007)

In other words, calculating the costs and benefits of climate change can draw a line between what can be prevented and what cannot. Obviously, what measures should be taken refers to what pays off economically. The rest, by contrast, should be regarded as inevitable. It goes without saying that these win-win-situations mostly apply to simple technological fixes but seldom envisage a different economic model. Economic growth thus often appears
as an unquestioned fundamental condition for acting on climate change. The problem is to ‘make a low-carbon society compatible with economic growth’ (Gurria 2009b) or to meet ‘the wider ambitions for economic growth’ (WTO 2011b).

Eventually, growth becomes a prerequisite for achieving climate protection. According to the idea that growth greens, it is argued that ‘wealthier societies demand higher environmental standards’ (WTO 2009b). Moreover, increased economic activity offers countries the opportunity ‘to investing this growth in pollution prevention’ (WTO 2007; WTO 2008). This obviously refers to the standard economic argument of an environmental ‘Kuznets Curve’ which argues that an increase in GDP increases the level of environmental protection in a certain society. It provides a strong rationale for promoting economic growth especially in developing countries. The equivalence between growth and climate protection is further reinforced by the idea of green growth which has in particular emerged during the economic recession at the end of the last decade. Because investing in climate friendly technology can ‘stimulate new clean tech businesses’ (WTO 2009b), ‘we can make going green compatible with increased prosperity’ (Gurria & Leape 2009). In this sense, concentrating on economically profitable areas of climate protection can generate win-win-situations so that ‘green and growth are working hand in hand’ (OECD 2009e). Perfectly compatible with the silver bullet storyline investigated in the previous section, climate protection and economic growth are seen as mutually supportive. The economic rationality thus excludes growth from being questioned.

Another concept from environmental economics is important in the climate mainstreaming discourse. International organisations draw on the idea that the atmosphere is a public good – the global field of visibility – to frame climate change as an ‘externality’ in the economic sense of the term. Externalities are those costs of an economic activity which are not properly priced and thus burdened on the whole society. And also in the climate mainstreaming discourse, the problem structure of climate change is defined as an ‘externality problem’ (IMF 2009). It is one of the ‘tensions that accompany growth’ (de Rato 2007, emphasis added), but obviously is not necessarily linked to it. Rather, economic activity produces a ‘human footprint on the global climate’ (de Rato 2007). The metaphor of a footprint implies that it can easily be wiped away while the object it appears on remains more or less untouched. We just have to make sure that we walk on the ‘low greenhouse gas emission-in-

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92. Although the previous paragraphs use only examples from the global economic polity, because it provides the most pointed instances, it applies equally to the other two cases. For example, UNEP’s Towards a green economy (UNEP 2011) and the World Bank’s World Development Report (The World Bank 2010b) directly connect growth and climate protection.
tensive paths’ (de Rato 2007) in order not to leave footprints on the climate anymore. Being not so much interested in the economic concept as such, one can conclude nonetheless that the metaphorical content of the externality image constitutes climate change as something which is external to growth, which does not necessarily accompany it, and hence prevents it from being fundamentally questioned. Furthermore, it gives way to the standard recipe for tackling externality problems: to internalise them into the economic systems. This is what I turn to now.

7.1.3 Techne: Technology and efficiency

Using carbon as a particular way of seeing and knowing the world is, of course, not naturally given but depends on the appropriate technological devices. Political technologies hence act on ‘reality’ in order to put carbon governmentality into action. The dominant technology for carbon governmentality is the art of commensuration; more precisely, this art of commensuration is in fact accomplished in two steps. The first step involves the technologies of surveillance characteristic of the ‘climate panopticon’ (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011), monitoring and controlling the Earth’s entire carbon cycle and the consequences of its disruption for global ecosystems and patterns of human life (Oels 2005, 200). Satellite surveillance, computer modelling, glaciology and emission inventories form a ‘vast machine’ (Edwards 2010). These technical devices are then used to make a large field of natural (forests, oceans, soil) and social systems comparable in terms of their stocks and flows of carbon and translate them into a global model, couching them into the simple currency of carbon (Lövbrand & Stripple 2011). The first step of commensuration through technologies of surveillance thus results in ‘carbonification’ of women and nature (Mert 2009).

The economic rationality of advanced liberal government, moreover, makes it necessary to put forth an economically efficient management of all these elements which are expressed in carbon. It thus employs a second step of commensuration which translates carbon into the language of the market – money – and so constitutes carbon as a ‘commodity form’ of climate change (Bumpus & Liverman 2008). This makes carbon tradeable – temporally and spatially exchangeable – in order to meet the requirement that carbon should be mitigated whenever and wherever it is cheapest to do so. Accordingly, the second step of commensuration includes technologies of valuation – most importantly market mechanisms (Lohmann 2005). According to advanced liberalism, markets are ‘artificial games of competitive freedom’ (Gordon 1991, 41), which, through social evolution, have turned out to be the most efficient principle for organising society (Dean 2010, 184). It is clear that the atmosphere is not a good that is easily tradable, but that this tradability is the result of the application of political technologies – it is such an artificial market. (Callon 2009).
These two stages of commensuration are expressed by the centrality of the Kyoto mechanisms as well as the dominance of carbon trading schemes in general as the preferred policy instruments for climate protection (Bernstein et al. 2010). These market mechanisms ensure that climate protection is efficient and a win-win-situation. Only when and where mitigating carbon is economically efficient, it is actually done – hence, the dominant concern with the efficiency of climate protection (Lutes 1998, 162) and the dominance of technological solutions for tackling global warming. In sum, the technologies of carbon governmentality strive for efficiency.

The political technology through which carbon governmentality seeks to achieve its ends is centred around the notion of efficiency. This, first of all, affects the understanding of politics in the analysed sample. Mirroring the idea of the political machine introduced in the previous chapter, politics as such is regarded as an ‘ugly’ business (IMF 2009) and should thus be replaced with mechanisms and simple solutions. For example, in the aftermath of Copenhagen, the IMF proposed to introduce a green fund as a technical solution for climate change. This would ‘provide a unified approach to helping developing countries combat climate change, avoiding the alternative—a succession of difficult international negotiations every few years, with uncertain outcomes’ (IMF 2011). The rationale is to replace politics with a mechanism so as to avoid political deliberations. The same perception can be found in the WTO discourse on climate change. Pascal Lamy, its director-general, for example, argues that in the absence of ‘signals’ from an international climate treaty to be negotiated in Copenhagen,

[snip]

Put bluntly, what Lamy describes is a process of (antagonistic) political negotiation and consensus building characteristic for the political as described in chapter 3. However, he equates this process with a ‘spaghetti bowl’ – a metaphor that clearly evokes images of disorder and undesired outcomes. So the only way to bypass the ugly realm of difficult negotiations between differing interests is to rely on mechanical politics based on ‘mechanisms’ and ‘signals’.

Moreover, we should ‘focus on what is immediately deliverable by the trading system’ (WTO 2008). And this, of course, involves the transfer of more efficient technologies. Featuring very prominently in the texts, the key means to tackle climate change is efficient technology because the task is to improve ‘the way resources are used’ (de Rato 2007). However, is
is implied that such technology will somehow emerge in a free market setting since ‘increased competition will foster technological innovation’ (WTO 2011a). For example, throughout the analysed texts this idea is the most common line of defence for free trade. Although we do not know whether free trade does significantly cause climate change (see above), we definitely know that ‘freer trade will increase the availability and lower the cost of environmentally-friendly goods’ (WTO 2011a). Trade thus ‘leads to efficiency gains’ (WTO 2008), which includes it into the climate protection discourse. In sum, climate mainstreaming puts forth a techne which bypass politics and replace structural change with technological fixes.

The empty signifier character of the techne of efficiency is summarised very well by the UNEP:

> Greater efficiency in the use of energy, water, and materials is a core objective. The critical question is where to draw the line between efficient and inefficient practices. A low threshold will define a greater number of jobs as green, but may yield an illusion of progress. (UNEP et al. 2008, 26)

And although UNEP itself acknowledges the ambiguous figure of efficiency, it does not really discuss the question of how to handle this problem. The political technologies centring on efficiency are thus very connectable to a broad range of practices. As the subsequent section on the CDM will reveal, a lot of different practices are rendered as being more efficient; for example, producing steel with natural gas instead of coal (WBCSD 2011, 5). And crucial for this is the technology of carbonification. A process is thought to be more efficient if it emits less carbon and is economically superior in improving the cost-benefit-relationship. However, as will be shown below with some examples, this often results in replacing climate damaging processes with practices that are damaging the climate slightly less – at the cost of neglecting more structural changes. Everything that is just a little better is efficient. This constitutes the empty signifier condition of the technologies of carbon governmentality.

This desire for efficient solutions culminates in the idea of a global carbon market which is mentioned in many texts. It combines all previous dimensions of carbon governmentality into a coherent storyline of climate protection. For instance, it is legitimised by drawing on the problem of scientific complexity and globalism that makes political agreements difficult: ‘The science of the issue can get pretty incomprehensible pretty quickly. And the politics are clearly very ugly. Let’s not forget, however, that much of the economics is simple.’ (IMF 2009) On the opposite, carbon markets appear as smart and easy solutions which complement the technology of efficiency. The main argument, however, for introducing a global carbon market is the rationale that ‘we need to keep the costs of action low’ (OECD 2009e). Hence, the carbon market has to be a global one, ‘this means that all large emitters must co-
operate in global action’ (OECD 2009e). Global visibility, carbon and economic rationality, the techne of efficiency – all these aspects are present in the idea of the carbon market. However, what is, if at all, only implicitly mentioned is that this assemblage also makes climate protection work as an empty signifier. For the logic behind carbon markets is that emissions reduction occur where they are least costly. Apparently, this will likely turn out to be the case in the developing and emerging world but not in OECD-countries (Stern 2007). Although this will result in both a net-transfer of financial resources to and emission reductions in the South, it comes at the cost of unchanged economic structures in the North. Industrialised countries can simply buy out from climate protection, making climate protection an empty signifier that remedies the discursive effect of climate change but leaves basic social structures of untouched. How the depoliticising logic of carbon markets is translated into concrete practices will be discussed in the next chapter with reference to the CDM.

7.1.4 Ethos: Disaggregating the carbon debate

Carbon governmentality on the global level puts forth two types of ethos. The epistemic approach to climate change necessitates that global negotiations are guided by sound scientific findings such as the IPCC reports. This gives particular importance to scientists, or experts in general, who provide the knowledge basis for carbon governmentality. The idea of the rationality of scientific (un)certainty endows ‘carbon professionals’ (Voß 2007) with a particular authority in that their assessment is authoritative for political decisions.

While the first form is rooted in green governmentality, ecological modernisation adds a second type of ethos: carbon footprints. It was argued in the two previous chapters that carbon footprints are the main devices for the disaggregation of the Earth’s carbon cycle into individual contributions. Subjects are thus addressed as optimisers of their own carbon footprint. This establishes a particular form a ‘carbon conduct’ (Paterson & Stripple 2010) which makes individuals comply with the overall rationality of carbon governmentality. Carbon footprints ‘simultaneously totalise (aggregating social practices, overall greenhouse gas emissions) and individualise (producing reflexive subjects actively managing their greenhouse gas practices)’ (Paterson & Stripple 2010, 341) Carbon governmentality thus depends upon the responsible subject constantly optimising its own carbon footprint – the carbon ‘entrepreneur of oneself’ (Oels 2005, 192).

The subjectivity of carbon footprints is also a common notion in the sample of analysed documents. As has already been discussed in the previous chapter, it is a very common way to depict countries in the climate change discourse, for example, by demanding ‘immediate and aggressive action by high-income countries to shrink their unsustainable carbon footprints’ (The World Bank 2010b, 2). For the subjects addressed by the climate mainstreaming
discourse (besides countries having to act in concert), this becomes the object of their governmental action. Each has to work on her own carbon footprint. Furthermore, it also allows for integrating social or economic sectors in the framework of carbon governmentality. For example, UNEP explains that

Industries producing basic materials — iron and steel, chemicals, cement, aluminum, and pulp and paper — are among the most energy-intensive industries. It may be difficult to regard them as ‘green’. However, boosting energy and materials efficiency, curtailing pollution, and enhancing use of scrap for recycling (which offers substantial energy savings over virgin production) are key to bringing these industries’ environmental footprints more into balance with environmental needs. (UNEP et al. 2008, 36)

Crucially, this quotation equates being ‘green’ – the ‘green’ of the ‘green economy’ UNEP proposes as a silver bullet – with an appropriate environmental ‘footprint’. But as it is put here, the environmental footprint is only to be reduced by recycling and efficiency. The overall demand for ‘basic [!] materials’ is not called into question. In a sense, the metaphor of the footprint implies that these economic sectors have a corporal existence. And since one cannot question a material body, the continuation of these branches is not called into question. If the footprint is given, structural change is replaced with the work of optimising one’s own carbon trace.

Another example from global economic polity shows that the subjectivity of carbon footprints may also apply to individual processes of activities. In this vein, the WTO seeks to dissolve questioning trade structures into a case-by-case analysis:

Much is said in the press everyday about the carbon footprint of international transportation. In fact, a new and emerging concept is that of ‘food miles’. In other words, the desire of Western consumers to calculate the carbon emitted in the course of international transportation, with many already drawing the conclusion that it may be better to (quote unquote) ‘simply produce goods at home’ to minimize emissions. But that argument does not always stand up to empirical verification. [...] Studies conducted on the “carbon mileage” of traded goods, have shown that the issue can often be counter-intuitive, if I may say so. For instance, some studies show that a Kenyan flower that is air-freighted to Europe emits 1/3d of the CO₂ of flowers grown in Holland. Now, I am not saying that this will always be the case, but surely this is an issue in need of case-by-case analysis, and empirical verification. (WTO 2008)

Here, carbon footprints of individual products provide the basis on which trade is defended. Whereas one can hardly object to a more differentiate debate as such, which Lamy calls for in this example, this nonetheless shifts the focus from looking on the structural level (how much trade do we want?) to the individual level (should we trade this product?). Abandoning a more aggregate perspective thus excludes the basic organisation of the world economy from the debate.

The general consequences of the carbon footprint subjectivity are perfectly embodied by the case of the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). It puts forth the probably most advanced
conception of the subjectivity of carbon footprints. And although it is not part of the sample in the strict sense, it is mentioned by many IOs as a positive example for business action on climate change (e.g. UNDP 2007, 123; UNEP 2011, 594; Kauffmann & Less 2010, 15). The CDP, in short, is a non-profit organisation that reveals the carbon emissions and climate related strategies of more than 4700 corporations all around the globe on behalf of 551 institutional investors representing more than US-$ 71 trillion of assets under management (CDP 2011). The rationale behind this global survey is that the carbon performance might become a criterion for investors so that transparency, in turn, motivates companies to invest in climate protection:

CDP plays a vital role in encouraging private and public sector organisations to measure, manage and reduce emissions and climate change impacts. [...] To collect and distribute high quality information [...] motivates investors, corporations and governments to take action to prevent dangerous climate change. (CDP 2009, 5)

Crucial in this regard is the fact that every participant is only obliged to publish its current emissions and actions, but no action itself is mandatory for being part of the project. From a governmentality perspective, the CDP thus seeks to govern the conduct of carbon conduct by simply calculating and disclosing the carbon footprints of companies. Rendering subjects in terms of carbon footprints alone is supposed to bring about competition and change. This is a clear example of ‘technologies of performance’ which seek to address subjects as competitive individuals (Dean 2010). The upshot of this, however, is that carbon disclosure – in other words, disclosing a ‘carbon footprint’ – is enough to become part of climate protection as such. For instance, RWE, which is the biggest single emitter of carbon dioxide in Europe and currently constructor of several new coal fired power plants across the continent, has been awarded as the ‘Best in Class’ of the CDP Report 2006 (RWE 2009); simply because it provides a thorough report of its carbon emissions. Displaying and optimising the carbon conduct becomes much more important than phasing out the use of fossil fuels as such. Carbon footprints and not social transformation becomes the aim of protecting the climate.

7.1.5 Conclusion

This section has analysed the linguistic climate mainstreaming discourse regarding the social logic of carbon governmentality and resulting political effects it displays. It revealed that all four aspects of carbon governmentality are dominant in climate mainstreaming. And all of them contribute to the function of climate protection as an empty signifier; that is, they render most elements of the existing order as being compatible with climate protection and thus prevent them from being questioned. This represents a first strong depoliticising com-
ponent: managing the status quo instead of fundamentally transforming it; rendering free trade as a means of climate protection; including growth into the climate protection discourse; addressing subjects as bearers of carbon footprints which can be resized.

Before we turn to the dispositif of the CDM, it has to be made clear that there are, of course, other social logics at work in the climate mainstreaming discourse. For example, in some texts equity issues were implicitly touched by stating that ‘developed countries will have to continue to take the lead’ (de Rato 2007) because they ‘have produced most of the emissions of the past’ (Zoellick 2009) and ‘many developing countries will be hit first and hardest by climate change’ (The World Bank 2009). This idea of geographically differentiated impacts and responsibilities challenges the global visibility which tends to liken all countries instead of highlighting the differences between actors and victims. Scientific uncertainty is sometimes questioned by statements that climate change ‘is a matter of fact rather than of faith’ (IMF 2010). Crucially, ‘the fact that we do not know the probability of such losses or their likely exact timing is not an argument for not taking insurance.’ (UNDP 2007, v). Here, uncertainty is disregarded as a reason for delaying action; more precisely, it is translated into a rationality of risk which seeks to tame insecure futures through governmental practices (see chapter 3). Also the idea of efficiency was contested by the demand for more substantive action as for example through the statement that ‘more ambitious action is needed’ (Gurria 2009b). Moreover, deep emission cuts and a binding ceiling were demanded by stating that ‘declared emission reduction targets are not yet enough’ (OECD 2009d). This contradicts the single focus on efficiency, which is also challenged by a call for ‘fairness’ (de Rato 2006). In sum, these articulations challenge the dominant carbon governmentality to the extent that they focus on the possible consequences of climate change if it cannot be prevented entirely. As chapter 8 explains in detail, however, this does not result in a different hegemonic project within the global climate polity, but in a complementary governmentality of climate risks, which seeks to render adaptation governable also through advanced liberal technologies of government. We will return to this ecopolitics of disaster in the next chapter.
Table VIII: Carbon governmentality functioning as an empty signifier

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<tr>
<th>Field of visibility</th>
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<td><strong>Global Problem</strong></td>
<td>‘the international community has to come together’ (de Rato 2006); ‘need for cooperation’ (de Rato 2007); ‘a binding global agreement’, ‘unified approach’ (IMF 2010); ‘the biggest sustainable development challenge the international community has had to tackle’ (WTO 2011b); ‘collective action is absolutely key’ (WTO 2007); ‘the most serious international challenge, a consensual international accord, embraces all major emitters, a global problem’ (WTO 2008); ‘multilateral cooperation is crucial’ (WTO 2009b); ‘single biggest challenge to civilisation, no form of unilateral action can solve the climate change’ (WTO 2009a); ‘every nation must play its part, the greatest challenge that humanity has ever faced’ (Gurria &amp; Leape 2009); ‘all large emitters must co-operate in global action’ (OECD 2009e); ‘collective international action’ (OECD 2009d; OECD 2010c); ‘internationalisation of actions (OECD 2010c); ‘alone, no country can take the challenges posed by climate change, a crisis of the commons’ (Zoellick 2009); ‘the international community’ (The World Bank 2009); ““Unite to combat climate change”, says that we are all part of the solution’ (UNEP 2009e, 3); ‘no one country can win the battle against climate change acting alone’ (UNDP 2007, 5)</td>
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| **Subordination**   | ‘MDBs were invited, stand ready’ (IMF 2007); ‘until a truly global consensus emerges on how to best tackle the issue of climate change WTO members will hold different views, confusion will consist, it is not in the WTO that a deal on climate change can be struck’ (WTO 2007); ‘trading system needs to respond to the signals that would be send by a successful Copenhagen accord, otherwise an accord in the WTO on the trade measures that may be used will be extremely difficult’, ‘climate first, trade second’ (WTO 2009a); ‘the danger is that arguments over taxes could be make an agreement more even more difficult to negotiate’ (Gurria 2009a); ‘OECD will continue to support’ (OECD 2009e); ‘OECD stands ready’ (OECD 2010c); ‘under the leadership of the UN’ (The World Bank 2009); ‘UNEP is well positioned to step up its support to governments, the private sector and civil society to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the consequences of a changed climate’ (UNEP 2008b, 3) |

| **Episteme**        | |
| **Scientific uncertainty** | ‘consequences of global warming are less certain’ (IMF 2006; de Rato 2006); ‘successive scientific study, spirit of inquiry’ (de Rato 2007); ‘we can just imagine the social and human consequences’ (Gurria 2009b); ‘it is essential that climate mitigation policy is guided by the best available science concerning ecosystem carbon’ (UNEP 2009e, 6), ‘there is an increasing body of scientific literature on global climate change impacts but a dearth of information at the local level’ (UNDP 2009a, 14); ‘climate science does not provide certainties’ (UNDP 2007, 78); |
| **Skepticism**      | ‘we have to find out whether there are binding limits to growth, economic growth can can surprise us’ (de Rato 2007); ‘difficult to predict in advance’, ‘trade does not seem to play a major role’ (WTO 2011a); ‘in need of case-by-case analysis and empirical verification’ (WTO 2007); ‘there is no contradiction between economic growth and effective climate policies’ (UNDP 2009a, 9); ‘climate policy cannot be framed as a choice between growth and climate change’ (The World Bank 2010b, XX) |
| **Green growth**    | ‘decisions should be informed by the overall costs and benefits of carbon management’ (UNEP 2009e, 6): ‘needs of low income countries to sustain their economic development, and to drive these direct investments towards lower carbon technologies (UNDP 2008, 9); the greening of economies has the potential to be a new engine of growth (UNEP 2011, 15); |
| **Knowledge providers** | ‘the Fund can play a role by helping to evaluate, multilateral surveillance’ (IMF 2006; de Rato 2006); ‘contribution toward broader public debate’ (IMF 2010); ‘international organisations have a major role to play by informing the discussions and helping negotiating parties’ (OECD 2009d); ‘International Organisations can also help, providing the analytical evidence’ (OECD 2010c); ‘the World Bank has a responsibility to try to explain’ (Zoellick 2009); ‘share experiences and lessons learned’ (The World Bank 2009) |
| **Climate change as an externality** | ‘tensions that accompany growth’, ‘a clear global externality’ (de Rato 2007); externality problem (IMF 2009); carbon footprints (Zoellick 2009); ‘the threat of environmental bankruptcy’ from decades of profligate spending of our natural capital’ (UNEP 2008b, 25); |
7.2 The dispositif of the Clean Development Mechanism

How is the (linguistic) discourse of climate mainstreaming put into practice? Within the discourse of climate mainstreaming, the CDM is a common point of reference among IOs (and also some NGOs) as the existing mechanism for mainstreaming climate change into other issue areas. For example, the UNDP claims that ‘a major focus of UNDP’s mitigation efforts is on increasing the ability of countries to access carbon markets, in particular the CDM and Joint Implementation (JI)’ (UNDP 2008, 13). The World Bank sees the CDM as ‘the key market-based instruments for mitigation finance in developing countries and are therefore critical in supplementing direct transfers from high-income countries’ (The World Bank 2010b, 23). And even Greenpeace, one of the more critical NGOs in the sample, acknowledges the importance of the CDM for introducing renewable energy in developing countries (Greenpeace & EREC 2008, 20). It thus constitutes a paradigmatic case of climate mainstream-
ing practices. This section uses the four dimensions of the analytics of carbon
governmentality introduced above in order to highlight how through these practices carbon
governmentality is put into practice.

7.2.1 Visibilities: Local projects of global importance

To start with, the CDM bridges the divide between local fields of action and a global field
of visibility. As one of the three flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol, the Clean Development Mechanism establishes a carbon market for emission reductions achieved in the global South, so-called Certified Emission Reductions (CERs), which can be bought by developed countries to offset their greenhouse gas emissions. The CDM is a market based approach – making emission reductions tradable – and works on a project base (for a more detailed overview of the system see Bumpus & Liverman 2008). Project developers, who may be national authorities, business actors, international investors or the like, set up individual greenhouse gas emission projects in a developing country, say a single generator powered by landfill gas. After the project has accomplished a complex registration and validation procedure involving national authorities as well as the international CDM executive board, the amount of abated greenhouse gas emissions is then issued as Certified Emission Reductions (CERs). These are sold to the governments of the developed world, thereby generating an extra revenue which makes the project profitable. Through the EU Linking Directive, however, CERs can be injected virtually directly into the European Emission Trading System (EU-ETS), the world’s biggest carbon market. For instance, a project developer in Manila generates CERs with landfill gas, which she sells to the operator of a coal-fired power plant in Brandenburg/Germany, who can in turn stick to burning coal. In this sense, the CDM creates a transnational carbon market and constitutes (and governs) a particular field of visibility connecting decentralised and distinct locales within the globalised space of carbon governmentality.

 Whereas the other two Kyoto mechanisms (Emissions Trading and Joint Implementation) have not yet experienced much success, the CDM has become the second biggest market in climate certificates, after the EU-ETS with a market volume of US-$ 6.5 billion in 2008 (Kossoy & Ambrosi 2010). Given that most Annex I countries are likely to miss their emission reduction targets, the CDM is arguably the most significant element of the Kyoto Protocol. It is contested, though, whether this remarkable growth should be interpreted as success. From the very beginning of its implementation in 2001, it has come under fierce criticism for its lack of achieving real emission reductions and spurring sustainable development in target countries. 93 Recently, a series of scandals have raised public interest; most notably, they in-

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93. For a review of the critiques see Lohmann 2006; Gilbertson & Reyes 2009; Böhm & Dabhi 2009. Even the
volved CERs generated through the modernisation of refrigerant factories in Asia in order to abate emissions of HFC-23, a very potent greenhouse gas. Here, a relatively low investment can generate high revenues in terms of CERs to be sold at a relatively good price. Accordingly, in 2010 several NGOs have argued that this creates a perverse incentive for producing more HFC-23 in order to generate more profitable CERs, and even accused the operators of these plants of ‘carbon fraud’ (Elsworth & Worthington 2010; Environmental Investigation Agency & CDM Watch 2010). These problems are significant: In 2009, the 19 HFC-23 projects alone generated an amount of offsets for the European ETS equivalent to about €500 million, making it the most important type of CDM offsets – a share of 59% of all CERs used, undermining the whole carbon trading system (Environmental Investigation Agency & CDM Watch 2010, 1). Although eventually the European Union banned HFC-23 CERs from the EU-ETS, a broad range of other highly questionable projects exists involving the mitigation of industrial greenhouse gases such as N₂O or the construction of hydroelectric dams (CDM Watch 2010). What is more, studies found that CDM projects are rarely additional (Michaelowa & Purohit 2007). For example, the WikiLeaks diplomatic cables released recently hint at the fact that Indian authorities never investigated if projects were actually additional (Point Carbon, September 6, 2011). Moreover, several CER auditors have temporarily been suspended, such as the German TÜV Süd, the British SGS or the Norwegian DNV, all being strong players in the market, for inadequate and sloppy reporting (Reuters, March 26, 2010). In this sense, despite the impressive market volume, the CDM can hardly be called a success story. In this sense, the CDM is a perfect symbol for the ecological paradox of the climate polity identified in the beginning: a remarkable growth paired with poor impact.

Its success can thus probably best be understood with reference to the concept of depoliticisation. It is a well-known irony of history that the dominance of market mechanisms became the dominant approach within the Kyoto Protocol due to US pressure, whereas the US eventually rejected to ratify the protocol (Stephan 2010). This is also how the Clean Development Mechanism was born. In the run-up to the Kyoto summit, the initial idea was introduced by Brazil as a Clean Development Fund. The proposal was designed as a financing mechanism to pay for emission reductions and adaptation in the global South, and was supposed to be funded through penalties imposed upon developed countries, which missed their commitments – hence reflecting the carbon debt of the North. Throughout the negotia-

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World Bank, a strong advocate of carbon trading, displays a rather critical perspective on the CDM and focusses on its various shortcomings (The World Bank 2010b).
tions, the original proposal was turned into a highly technical debate, which blurred the underlying equity issues and eventually resulted in the adoption of a technocratic carbon trading scheme.

The historical responsibility issue became stranded on problems of how to correctly represent physical nature in climate models. This marginalised the original intention that equity should be the guiding principle of the North-South interaction. (Friman & Linnèr 2008, 339)

In other word, the issue of historic responsibility had to be situated and calculated within the frame of the global carbon cycle. And according to the economic logic, the focus of the CDM is now to make sure that also the developing countries contribute to emission reductions, as their emission reduction options were deemed to be more cost-effective. Even though it was still designed to achieve sustainable development at the same time, this shift from equity to efficiency, however marks a first depoliticising move.

Figure 5: The CDM projects interactive map

![CDM projects interactive map](http://cdm.unfccc.int/Projects/MapApp/index.html)

In sum, as figure 5 on page 209 displays, the CDM creates a field of visibility that disaggregates the global carbon cycle into particular hot-spots. These local manifestations in everyday life allow for influencing this very cycle directly. It is this visibility that constitutes the ‘project’ as the particular problematisation in this regime of government. Other regimes of government will create other forms of visibility, but it is quite apparent that the CDM, as the most developed flexible mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol, and the most prominent practice of climate mainstreaming, spotlights the global South. Those parts of the globe which are responsible for global warming, remain in the dark. A clear example of depoliticisation.
7.2.2 Knowing the future as future perfect

Carbon governmentality is based upon the assumption that we can gather enough solid knowledge about natural and social processes, and that it is possible to predict their future on a planetary scale. The CDM brings the idea that reality is finally computable and predictable through science and economics down to the individual project level. This is accomplished through the core epistemic figure of ‘additionality’. It is the crucial criterion for a project to be eligible for the CDM, because it assures that a project would not have materialised without additional CER revenues, and that it actually changes the course of carbon emissions. It is crucial to note that this idea is based on ‘counterfactual reasoning’ (Lohmann 2005, 217–8). In order to know whether a project is additional one has to distinguish it from other, alternative futures. Hence, the CDM rationality revolves around finding out what would have happened otherwise – the ‘baseline’ – and it uses the epistemic devices of carbon governmentality to do so. It goes without saying that this is a highly speculative and contingent practice, but it represents a proper translation of the global rationality to the local project. What is more, the whole idea that carbon emissions can be compensated for without ‘leakage’ – i.e., that it is possible to precisely calculate carbon emissions of individual sites and processes both in the North and the South and compensate one for the other so that the carbon cycle remains in balance – is an illustrative instance of the idea of a planetary management. It is the condition of possibility for the CDM to make sense.

The calculative rationality of the CDM is a cause of climate change depoliticisation. First, it makes it necessary to present the future ‘not as indeterminate and dependent on political choice […] but as singular, determinate and a matter for economic and technical prediction’ (Lohmann 2005, 217). In general, the calculation of carbon emission scenarios all too often transforms aspects, events and developments which would make it possible to alter these scenarios into ‘technical and methodological uncertainties’, as they are extremely difficult to calculate (Lovbrand 2004, 451). In effect, human choice and actionability, political intervention, resistance, socio-economic transformation – that is, everything outside the actual CDM project – are excluded from the possible array of options. Second and related, the very methodology of counterfactual reasoning excludes fundamental changes (Lewis 1973, 218), since the principle aim of counterfactuals is comparison. Therefore, scenarios cannot differ too much because otherwise one would end up comparing apples and oranges. This leads to a situation in which only two possible futures are left: with and without CDM project. Both are quite similar, while alternative futures of changed structural conditions, such as patterns of production and consumption, are dismissed. Most of the contentious types of CDM projects reflect these epistemic propositions. For example, a growing number of CDM projects in In-
dia deal with the introduction of the so-called ‘supercritical technology’ in coal-fired power plants (Gilbertson & Reyes 2009, 57). As of September 2009, there were 15 such projects. The supercritical technology, however, only introduces minor improvements in terms of efficiency. The CDM, therefore, has only a relatively low impact in terms of lowering CO₂ emissions of the power plant. And the baseline scenario creates a future in which it is taken for granted that coal-fired power plants will be built. It legitimises sticking to the most carbon-intensive way of generating electricity.

Similar tendencies can be observed in CDM projects involving waste management. As of June 2009, 20 incinerators and 110 landfill gas projects have been approved under the CDM, as compared to 3 composting and no recycling projects, despite the fact that these are environmentally and climatically superior (CDM Watch 2010). This is caused by the fact that most business as usual scenarios are based on the highly disputable assumption that all future waste is going to be collected and disposed in simple landfills, releasing large amounts of methane emissions. Compared to this not-necessarily-realistic worst case scenario, even the relatively inferior solutions of incineration and landfill gas use appear as viable solutions to climate change. But they exclude the preferable options of recycling and composting, which in effect narrows the future to a path close to the baseline scenario.

Thirdly, counterfactual reasoning does not only linguistically and symbolically create these dichotomous but similar futures. It bears the tendency to actually reinforce the business-as-usual scenario in practice and turns them into a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more carbon or greenhouse gas intensive a national development plan, for instance, is designed, the more possibilities there are to generate carbon reductions to be sold as CERs (Lohmann 2005, 217). Again, this tendency is reflected in actual practices. As one study on projects abating N₂O from adipic acid production shows, their inclusion into the CDM creates incentives for factory owners to move even more sites of production from the developed into the developing world (Schneider, Lazarus & Kollmuss 2010). This allows them to register more CDM projects, and generate more CERs. Therefore, the baseline which assumes that a certain amount of adipic acid is produced in a particular area is reinforced through new adipic acid factories.

In sum, the episteme of the CDM seems to employ a strategy similar to what Didier Bigo has termed governing the future as ‘future perfect’ (Bigo 2007, 31). By monitoring what is happening today and entering it into the epistemic machine of natural science and economic calculation, this course of action is prolonged and extrapolated into the future. The future is already determined and complete, it is already here. And we can only attempt to alter it slightly, as the basic parameters are already fixed. In effect, the CDM simply administers a present which has always-already become our future. And in a sense, this is complementing
the emphasis on scientific (un)certainty encountered in the previous section. As it is not possible to calculate the future because there is so much we would need to know, it is necessary to stick closely to what we see today in order to being able to predict at all. In this sense, one could say that the CDM normalises or naturalises a certain dynamic of economic development which is supposed to occur anyway – all by virtue of the rationality of carbon governmentality translated to the local level.

### 7.2.3 Commensuration, carbonification, marketisation

Carbon governmentality, and particularly the CDM, depends on a set of political technologies that constitute a techne of commensuration. This techne consists of two layers, carbonification and marketisation. Also the CDM heavily depends on such a techne of carbonification. Its prime objective is ‘making things the same’ (MacKenzie 2009): rendering individual projects commensurable with the overall carbon cycle of the Earth’s climatic system. It allows for comparing projects focusing on different types of greenhouse gases by translating them into the common reference of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO\textsubscript{2}e). The second layer of commensuration is marketisation, that is, expressing these projects in the language of the market in order to make them temporally and spatially (that is, globally) exchangeable. The same type of operation constitutes the second core technique of the CDM: the trading of emission reductions across time and space. This commensurates the mostly fossil fuel related carbon emissions in the North with a ‘gigantic variety of projects in the global South’ (Lohmann 2009b, 505). Putting a uniform price on carbon emissions and emission reductions allows for comparing two such diverse things as the replacement of a power plant or the reforestation of degraded woodlands. It is a deliberate governmental strategy to make these things the same. Together, the two types of commensuration allow for connecting local projects within a global space, and governing them at a distance.

Not only does the techne of commensuration integrate individual CDM projects into carbon governmentality, it also results in a remarkable depoliticisation of climate politics. For carbonification has to exclude a vast array of aspects from its calculations in order to be feasible (Stephan 2012), and this leads to the exclusion of important structural issues. For one thing, a crucial element not considered in carbonification and marketisation is the question of innovation (Lohmann 2009b, 507). Carbonification does not measure the structural impact of an emissions reduction project, although planting a forest or implementing solar power generators will differ regarding further CO\textsubscript{2} emissions beyond the single project. The latter, for instance, might stimulate the imitation of solar power deployment, which in turn spurs the implementation of this technology, while a forest may degrade later on. In a similar vein, carbon prices can increase path dependency of existing social and economic structures
(Lohmann 2009b, 506). For example, the CDM creates an incentive to focus on cost-efficient projects which immediately deliver large amounts of CERs – the low hanging-fruits – while much more fundamental changes would be necessary. Their initial costs are much higher, though (Driesen 2007; Prins & Rayner 2007). Carbonification and marketisation, therefore, disregard the impact of individual projects on wider social structures. And this is mostly due to the fact that these effects can hardly be measured in terms of carbon emissions (Spash 2010, 176). As Kevin Anderson of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research illustrates in a UK parliamentary hearing with regard to wind turbine projects:

[…] those wind turbines will give access to electricity that gives access to a television that gives access to adverts that sell small scooters and then some entrepreneur sets up a small petrol depot for the small scooters and another entrepreneur buys some wagons instead of using oxen and the whole thing builds up over the next 20 or 30 years, so it is the same thing. The add-on-ality test would be, if you can imagine Marconi and the Wright brothers getting together to discuss where they will be in 2009, easyjet and the internet will be facilitating each other through internet booking. That is the level of […] certainty you would have to have over that period. You cannot have that. Society is inherently complex (cited in Gilbertson & Reyes 2009, 54)

It, therefore, comes as no surprise that important socio-economic structures are often disregarded in real-world CDM projects. First of all, they ignore social and environmental side-effects of project development. A case in point is that of hydroelectric dams. The CDM does not account for the social consequences, often involving the large-scale displacement of local populations (Mate & Yasmin 2009), as well as environmental side-effects, such as decomposition related methane emissions, which can even exceed the purported mitigation of carbon emissions (Graham-Rowe 2005). A large proportion of hydroelectric CDM projects, moreover, also violates international standards for dam construction, as these are not sanctioned by CDM application procedures (Haya 2007). Secondly, CDM projects often focus on narrow carbon emission reductions, but neglect the principle of a long-term ‘sustainable development’ (Olsen 2007). Thirdly, there is a strong incentive to exclude long-term structural issues and concentrate on short-term fixes. Driesen (2007), for example, shows that 61 percent of CDM projects involve the implementation of rather simple end-of-pipe technologies. And these are not only teething troubles. As of October 2011, a rough 70 % of all CDM CERs were generated through minor technological fixes mitigating HFC-23 and N₂O emissions, which are by-products of industrial processes (UNEP Risoe Centre 2011). In sum, the techne of commensuration, which seeks to abstract carbon emission reductions from their social and economic context in order to make them tradeable, in effect leads to the bracketing of this very social and economic context from climate protection decisions – depoliticising climate change.
7.2.4 Professionals at work

With regard to the CDM, carbon governmentality puts forth particularly one type of ethos. It is the ‘project’, not the national policy, which contributes to climate protection in the first place. And this gives rise to a particular form of ethos of local expertocracy, which feeds into the overall depoliticising nature of the CDM. The tremendous technicality of the CDM methodology and application procedure makes sure that projects decisively hinge on the involvement of ‘carbon professionals’ (Voß 2007, 340). Projects could not be realised without the participation of a broad range of specialised actors: project developers, carbon brokers, investors and global corporations, international organisations like the World Bank, consultants, lobbyists etc. Although the CDM is an international mechanism, it could not do without this vast field of mainly transnational actors on the ground (Bumpus & Liverman 2008). In effect, the CDM ‘treats carbon project sponsors and managers as free agents while implicitly demoting other actors into passive objects of deterministic calculation’ (Lohmann 2005, 218). It disregards local participation and political debate and is biased towards technical calculation and specialised CDM procedures. This, in turn, might help to ‘neutralise and hence legitimise politically charged decisions’ (Lövbrand 2004, 451). By contrast, local populations and authorities are reduced to rather passive stakeholders, spectators and bystanders. They become the object of scenario building and calculation – for example through mandatory consultation procedures – but do not have an active role to play in the development of the project. And even if they might have managed a particular natural resource such as an ancient forest for a long time, this achievement cannot be accounted for unless it is turned into a CDM project, which is impossible without the carbon professionals (Bachram 2004, 8). In other words, carbon professionals are the agents of climate protection, while local and national populations and authorities are reduced to objects of CDM procedures.

This tendency characterises even the probably most favourable types of CDM projects, those involving renewable energy. There are a remarkable and growing number of renewable energy projects which spawned conflict at the local level (Böh m & Dabhi 2009). In most cases, this was due to the fact that projects collided with the basic demands and needs of local populations and livelihoods, which were downplayed throughout the design and registration of the CDM project. A case in point is a large-scale wind power project in the Satara and Supa districts of Maharashtra, Western Ghat, India, conducted by the Tata Group. Local villagers lacked information about the project, could not participate in its design, and were eventually deprived of their farming land, while the corporation did not keep its promises about
employment benefits. It is here that the ethos created through the CDM comes into effect, favouring project developers, while local people are even depicted as protesting against ‘climate protection’.

What is more, as the CDM is so attractive in terms of profitability, whenever actors in the South think about climate protection, it is likely that they do so in terms of the CDM. In this sense, it channels existing efforts to reduce carbon emissions into a particular regime of government. On the other hand, this is not to say that the CDM is entirely hegemonic. There might well be resistance and opposition, and actors might prefer to pursue other policies of climate protection. The CDM, however, imposes a particular distinction between more legitimate forms of governing the climate (those eligible for the CDM) and less legitimate ones (those outside the CDM), and so also effects those who would reject it in that it renders them to be ‘radicals’ or not pragmatic enough.

7.3 Reflecting on a failure: The CDM reform debate

Carbon governmentality functions as an empty signifier, and translated into the Clean Development Mechanism, it results in a depoliticisation of social practices. Yet so far the analysis has only been concerned with the (semi-)official policies of states and IOs. The question arises particularly NGOs perceive this way of organising climate change practices. In this section I return to the level of linguistic discourses again and analyse how IOs and NGOs discuss the apparent failure of the CDM (which I interpreted not as a failure but as a success in depoliticisation). How do they interpret the poor record of the Clean Development Mechanism? This question is likely to reveal to what extent the depoliticising functions of carbon governmentality are accepted throughout civil society.

7.3.1 International organisations

To start with, enumeration of the various problems with CDM practices are central to reform debates within international organisations. A case in point is the World Bank’s World Development Report 2010, which intensively discusses the various shortcomings and criticisms of the CDM (The World Bank 2010b, 265-66). Amongst others, it acknowledges that ‘the CDM has been more effective in reducing mitigation costs than in advancing sustainable development’ (The World Bank 2010b, 265). Several studies are cited which underpin this claim and demonstrate that sustainable development is rarely achieved in CDM projects. The cause of this problem, however, is identified within ‘flaws both in the acceptance of certain project types [...] and in implementation [...] as well as] that the treatment of sustainable develop-
ment in project documents is sketchy and uneven and that project developers display only a rudimentary concern for or understanding of the concept’ (The World Bank 2010b, 265). The problem is presented in connection with the inability of individual project developers and the CDM verification system to take sustainable development into consideration. As a first discursive move, thus, CDM problems are attributed to the failure of individuals, whereas the general capacity of the CDM to achieve more than cheap emissions reductions is not touched upon. This could be interpreted then, as supporting an expansion of the ethos of carbon professionals.

These individual failures are nonetheless linked to the general CDM architecture. Most of the problems of the CDM are discusses in terms of bureaucratic barriers, which keep project developers from implementing their beneficial projects (Kossoy & Ambrosi 2010). Quite often, political regulations (such as the need to prove additionality) are rendered as ‘barriers’ or as ‘sticking point’ for the expansion of the CDM (Ellis & Kamel 2007). The problem of the CDM, then, becomes one of bureaucracy:

Complex and evolving regulations, regulatory inefficiencies, and capacity bottlenecks have caused delays that have a negative financial impact on projects. It now takes an average of 572 days for a CDM project to go through validation and registration and another 607 days until first issuance (i.e., over three years in total). Delays and uncertainties lead to higher transaction costs, declining CER volumes, and lower market values. These issues penalise LDCs in particular by making it harder for them to access the carbon market and threaten to erode project sponsors’ interest in carbon finance mechanisms over the long term. (Kossoy & Ambrosi 2010, 47)

Here it is the overall system that makes individuals fail, as it is too complicated and demanding. In this sense, bureaucracy and inefficient procedures call for an increase of the advanced liberal technologies of performance.

Instead of questioning the CDM as a whole, therefore, this serves as a basis for an enlargement of the CDM. The probably most prominent proposal for CDM is that of a ‘sectoral CDM’, which is supposed to overcome the piecemeal approach and the high transaction costs of the project based CDM (Kossoy & Ambrosi 2010, 48; Hamilton & Fay 2009). Instead of generating CERs through particular projects, all of which run through an individual application procedure, the idea is to adopt national plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in complete industrial or commercial sectors. The supposed reductions are then issued as CERs. This is supposed to lift bureaucratic burdens from the individual project developer. The upshot of this, however, is that counterfactual reasoning is applied to a whole branch of a national economy: what would have happened otherwise? This question is probably not only equally difficult to answer on a national basis. It is likely to bear the same problems as at the project level. Even more important, it displays the even more ambitious endeavour to write a baseline future for the whole economy – governing a whole economic sector in ‘future
perfect’. Not only does this naturalise and inscribe a certain path of development on a much larger scale – thereby preventing even more to think about alternative, structural changes of social development and transformation. What is more, the failure of the CDM is used for legitimising its enlargement, and thereby also broadening its depoliticising effect. Far from being a failure, thus, the reform debate reveals the successful nature of the CDM.

7.3.2 NGOs and civil society

Most of this problematisation is shared by NGOs, although in varying degrees. The World Economic Forum, for example, explains that despite its ‘remarkable success’,

the CDM is, however, still likely to experience barriers primarily caused by the uncertainty about global demand for carbon credits. Systemic CDM issues have also prevented progress from the supply side of the market. A constrained CDM governance structure, changing regulation, case by case decision-making, and regulatory and capacity bottlenecks now mean the average CDM project takes up to three years to make its way through the CDM regulatory system and issue its first certified emission reduction credits. Stakeholders have an increasingly difficult task trying to manage and operate in a complex CDM regulatory cycle. (WEF 2011, 12)

Again, the problem is not the missing additionality, but the lack of efficiency and too much bureaucratic regulation. Thus, also the NGOs based in the global economic polity agree with the general propositions of a wider sectoral approach for the CDM. For example, Björn Stigson, head of the WBCSD, supports such ideas:

Such an expansion would allow a “project” to be defined more broadly, for example an overall efficiency or emissions intensity improvement in a given manufacturing sector. Benchmarking would play a role within this. This provides developing countries a one-way “benefits only” approach to industry wide emissions reduction as a step towards intensity targets or cap-and-trade, both of which have up and down side. (Stigson 2009)

Crucially, Stigson introduces the idea of the ‘benchmark’ as an alternative for difficult business-as-usual calculations. The idea is that top 30 percent of an economic sector defines a best practice – a target line of carbon intensity. And every reduction below this target line generates credits. In other words, business-as-usual is defined by what the most climate efficient companies do. In a sense, this is definitely shifting the idea of a baseline as a computable future perfect towards a top-runner principle and thus increasing the reliance on performance technologies of advanced liberal government. However, this would equally legitimise incremental improvements compared to the status quo. Apart from this, however, it is quite striking that the general problematisation of the CDM in the global economic civil society is that of lacking efficiency and bureaucratic barriers. The depoliticising features discussed above, however, are not called into question.
It is quite striking that within the global social polity, NGOs are mostly silent about the one mechanism which is supposed to bring about development. Only a small passage in one report by the Up in Smoke Coalition refers very ambiguously to the CDM. It starts by listing a range of problems to be found in the CDM:

Poor guidelines on what constitutes sustainable development and how it should be measured means that CDM projects with sustainable development ‘frills’ could be priced out of the market. The complexity of meeting sustainable development objectives may chase away potential investors and lead to a ‘race-to-the-bottom’ of standards to reduce barriers to investment. Many of the poorer regions of the world struggle to compete with regions that traditionally receive more direct foreign investment or have large volumes of CERs to sell, like China, India, Mexico, Brazil, and South Africa. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2008, 35)

But then, in a somewhat awkward twist, it proposes the following solutions:

Participants in the CDM process will need strengthened institutional capacity and more training to ensure benefits materialise. Learning-by-doing and sharing information among developing countries will be vital. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2008, 35)

Given the severity of problems that were discussed just one paragraph above, capacity building and training are rather weak proposals for solving them. However, in a sense, they increase the significance of the ethos of carbon professionals. But how is training going to solve poor guidelines, for example? This strange tension reveals how deeply ingrained the general logic of the CDM is, although it is perceived to produce poor results. It is another call for the expansion of carbon professionalism.

The sharpest criticism of the CDM in the sample has been stated by Greenpeace. In a discussion of the flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol it suspects that these ‘mechanisms’ have become potential loopholes that, if adopted, would allow industrialised countries to do very little or nothing in the way of real emissions reduction and still appear to meet their targets. […] The CDM has the potential to assist the start of a transition towards sustainable energy in developing countries and, in the long-term, benefit the climate. However, some of the proposals on the table could result in the transfer of polluting, unsafe and unsustainable technology, including coal, large dams and nuclear power. (Greenpeace 2011)

Again, however, the very general suspicion about flexible mechanisms is only backed up by criticising some of the proposals about what should be included into the CDM. The organisation, however, seems to accept that the CDM in principle is a way to achieve climate protection and sustainable development. Obviously, Greenpeace acknowledges some of the problems discussed in the previous section. As it has pointed out several times, the solution to these problems would be to rule certain types of projects from the CDM. It does, however, accept its general logic.

Even looking beyond the sample analysed here, this seems to be the general tendency. As with IOs, NGOs are mostly aware of the problems of the CDM, but their proposals for reform
basically suggest increasing the scope and scale of the CDM and the prohibition of certain practices. A case in point for this is the CDM Gold Standard, a label developed by business and environmental NGOs (for example, initiated by the WWF, now supported by, among others, Greenpeace and the Rainforest Alliance) for those projects which meet the requirements of a higher standard. The Gold Standard demands, for example, the ‘additionality of emissions reductions compared to the ‘business-as usual’ situation’ or ‘emissions reduction benefits that are real and measurable’ (The Gold Standard 2011). And while it does indeed propose a strict methodology for measuring these requirements, which goes beyond the CDM standard requirements, this faces the same problems of commensuration and counterfactuals which we found in the general CDM.

All this reflects the general fact that the CDM, as well as the other flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol, have become deeply hegemonic in international politics, among international organisations and even among NGOs. It is worth remembering that NGOs have been very critical of the outcomes of Kyoto at the time they were adopted. For example, Greenpeace commented the outcome of COP-3 in catastrophic terms:

Greenpeace has labelled the result of the Kyoto Climate Summit a tragedy and a farce because it is totally inadequate to slow the environmental impacts of climate change. The international environmental organisation estimates that the agreement, when all loopholes are considered, will result in no real reductions from 1990 levels. (Greenpeace 1997)

In 2007, their rhetoric sounded quite different. Greenpeace explicitly acknowledged that there is no alternative to the Kyoto Protocol by stating that:

Kyoto’s detailed mechanisms have already achieved the European Emissions Trading Regime, which allows countries to ‘trade carbon’ as a way of meeting their reduction targets, and the Clean Development Mechanism which allows for the transfer of funding from rich to poor countries for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects whilst setting the resulting emissions reductions against their own targets. It is a complex system which is up and running. [...] It is clear that the Kyoto Protocol is the only game in town for cutting emissions and tackling climate change. (Greenpeace 2007a)

This reflects very well what Gwyn Prins and Steve Rayner have observed – they note a general trend towards the Kyoto Protocol, namely that it became a ‘litmus test of political correctness’. And those who were concerned about climate change, but sceptical of the top-down approach adopted by the protocol were sternly admonished that ‘Kyoto is the only game in town’ (Prins & Rayner 2007, 973). Kyoto, the CDM, and carbon governmentality in general, have become the hegemonic way of dealing with climate change; and with it, its depoliticising functions.
Mission Creep: Carbon governmentality and the depoliticisation of global warming

7.4 Conclusion: Creeping carbon

What can we learn from understanding carbon governmentality, in analogy to Foucault’s analysis of the penal system, not simply as a failure but by asking what this failure serves; by asking not what carbon governmentality fails to do but what it succeeds to do? The answer to this question consists of different layers as presented in table IX on page 221. The first part of this chapter analysed the discourse of international organisations and revealed that carbon governmentality enables international organisations to become part of the climate mainstreaming discourse without actually adapting their practices to the task of protecting the climate. It might not be surprising that the WTO, for example, seeks to frame free trade as a measure for climate protection, or that the OECD seeks to harness climate change for legitimising its focus on growth. However, it is striking that this facilitated by the very way climate protection functions. Carbon governmentality itself systematically provides the discursive devices to become part of climate mainstreaming so easily. This failure of carbon governmentality seems to be a systematic feature. It serves that carbon governmentality functions as an empty signifier.

The second part of this chapter analysed how carbon governmentality is translated into a dispositif; namely, the dispositif of the Clean Development Mechanism. It evinced that the CDM, from its very beginning, filled the global climate polity with a technical understanding of climate protection and so excluded other considerations such as historical responsibility; that its rationality inscribes path dependency as a ‘future perfect’ and so excludes more fundamental transformations; that its technology of commensuration narrows the focus on economic efficiency and carbon emission reductions so that piecemeal solutions are preferred; that it disregards local participation and establishes a certain carbon expertocracy. In sum, carbon governmentality put into practice is more concerned with an optimal management of the status quo, and prevents fundamentally questioning social or economic structures. Also this failure seems to be a systematic feature of carbon governmentality. It serves a depoliticisation of the global climate polity.

The third part of this chapter returned to the linguistic level of discourse and assessed how the apparent failure of carbon governmentality is reflected upon by IOs and NGOs. It revealed that failure is acknowledged, but mostly ascribed to a poor implementation of CDM procedures, lack of expertise and capacities on the side of project developers or the intention of some to use the system as a loophole. Yet the fundamental and systematic logic of carbon governmentality is rarely questioned. Instead, the ills of the CDM are proposed to be cured with more of the same medicine; deepening the logic of carbon governmentality and expanding its scope. For the prison, Foucault stated that the ‘failure’ of the prison (breeding instead
of draining a criminal milieu) provided the basis for its further expansion. It makes itself necessary. This seems to be mirrored by the CDM reform debate: the structural insufficiencies of the CDM are presented as reasons for even expanding its scope and relevance.

Table IX: Carbon governmentality and the depoliticisation of climate politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields of Visibility</th>
<th>Rationalities</th>
<th>Technologies</th>
<th>Subjectivities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbon governmentality</td>
<td>Global Carbon Cycle</td>
<td>Scientific (un-)certainty</td>
<td>Carbon Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global Public Good</td>
<td>Economic efficiency</td>
<td>Commensuration (1st order / 'carbon')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commensuration (2nd order / 'market')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty signifier</td>
<td>Subordinating international organisations under the UNFCCC by arguing climate change is a global problem; no action should be taken until a global consensus is reached.</td>
<td>Questioning the relationship between climate change and growth or trade on the basis of scientific uncertainty; arguing that climate change should be designed in a way that it spurs growth.</td>
<td>Replacing political action with technical solutions; putting politics in the service of technology proliferation; efficiency only measured in terms of carbon emissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depoliticising practices of the CDM</td>
<td>Creation of the CDM as a global regime of practices – in line with the global field of visibilities of the global carbon cycle – has blurring the equity dimension in the initial Brazilian proposal.</td>
<td>Counter-factual reasoning sediments status quo and excludes more radical scenarios; baselines as self-fulfilling prophecies.</td>
<td>Carbonification excludes structural effects of mitigation measures; markets transferring emission reduction commitments from North to South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform debate</td>
<td>Enlarging the field of visibility from the project to the sectoral CDM and thereby increasing its scope</td>
<td>Trying to calculate baselines at the level of sectors or branches, applying counter-factual reasoning to whole societies</td>
<td>Reducing regulations and bureaucratic barriers of additionality tests and thereby increasing the relevance of markets as technologies of performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, it has to be noted that the empty signifier features (section 7.1) were almost equally present in all three analysed cases, with a slightly stronger presence in the global economic polity. This is, for example, displayed in table VIII on page 205, which provides ample evidence from all three cases. It is further supported by the fact that in all three cases the CDM takes a central function for mainstreaming climate protection practices. And it is finally embodied in the reform debate, which is very similar in the global economic, social and environmental polity.

In sum, these three steps give a comprehensive and converging answer to the second research question of this project. It showed that climate mainstreaming enshrines carbon governmentality as the hegemonic way of dealing with climate change into the enlarged climate
polity; more precisely, that global warming is visualised on a global scale; that it follows logics of science and economics, that it employs technologies of commensuration, and that it produces carbon footprints and carbon professionals. And all this has the effect of depolitisation. Carbon governmentality systematically excludes those aspects that were identified in chapter 5.1 as the fundamental causes of the climate crisis – global mobility, fossil fuel dependence, industrialised agriculture, globalised capitalism, and the like. And in this sense, the analysis conducted in this chapter also illuminates the second side of the ecological paradox. If the widespread concern with global warming follows a postpolitical populist logic, it is the power of carbon governmentality which achieves ‘the management of the inability and unwillingness to become sustainable’ (Blühdorn & Welsh 2007, 192) in such a way that fundamental social change is achieved.

The military failures of invasions in Vietnam, in Somalia or in Afghanistan have often been described as a ‘mission creep’: the continuous expansion of scope and ambition of a campaign, which after initial small successes encounters increasing problems, but cannot be aborted and results in a catastrophic outcome.94 Similarly, it seems that the CDM, with its carbon governmentality, reflects the mission creep of the global climate polity.

A continuation of neoliberalism by other means: Governing through climate change

Climate change threatens markets, economies and development gains. It can deplete food and water supplies, provoke conflict and migration, destabilise fragile societies and even topple governments.

Statements like this are often understood as examples for a securitisation of climate change (e.g. Brzoska 2009; Detraz & Betsill 2009). As was demonstrated in the introduction, such a perspective is interested in the implications of understanding climate change as a security issue for global climate politics. Others ask how framing global climate change as an economic or a development issue affects the climate polity, and conclude that such a different framing and the associated political processes result in a ‘fragmentation of global climate governance’ (Biermann et al. 2009). In this sense, most of the approaches discussed in chapters 2 and 7, ask what climate mainstreaming does to global climate politics. In this chapter, however, I seek to reverse the perspective. For the securitisation of climate change, Angela Oels has concluded that ‘what the Copenhagen School analyses as “failed securitisation” of climate change is better understood as the climatisation of defence, migration and development policy’ (Oels 2012, 34). In this sense, I assume that climate mainstreaming is not only an attempt to govern a changing climate by inclusion of other polities into the climate polity but also a way of governing these other polities through the lens of global warming. In the following pages I attempt to reveal the political effects of such a climatisation of the economic, social and environmental polity. In this sense, I address the third research question: how does climate change affect the governmentality of the polities it is mainstreamed into?
Drawing on the governmentality perspective on security that was mentioned in chapter 3, I argue that climatisation frames climate change as a risk and so revitalises core themes of advanced liberal governmentality and the neoliberal hegemony in these polities.

To establish this argument, I draw again on a discursive archaeology. Recall that Foucault’s initial project of the archaeology was to carve out historically different orders of knowledge (Foucault 1972). Not unlike this project (although having a much less ambitious scope) I treat advanced liberal government and ecopolitics of disaster as two (historically) different discursive regimes and seek to highlight not the differences but the similarities of their logics. What does the climatisation of development, for example, bring about that is already entailed in advanced liberal governmentality? The following chapter is organised in three steps. I start by revisiting the governmentality perspective on risk and advance it towards understanding climate as risk. I then turn to examining the shift triggered by the integration of climate adaptation discourses in the global social polity as a paradigmatic case. Throughout the analysis of all three cases, the social polity displayed the strongest evidence for an amalgamation of the two risk rationalities. Thus, I retrospectively chose this case for presenting the general logic of climatisation. Again, I will draw on Dean’s analytics of government – highlighting the governmental rationality, the fields of visibility, the political technologies and the subjectivities95 – and trace how they relate to earlier advanced liberal governmentality.96 The subsequent section transfers these insights to the other two cases in order to assess to what extent these findings apply to them as well.97 The final chapter discusses the tensions and strategies of resistance found in the discourse.

8.1 Governmentalities of climate risks

In chapter 3 it was mentioned that the third usage of the term governmentality in Foucault’s work relates to the operation of the ‘apparatuses of security’ (Foucault 2007a, 108). Historically, these apparatuses have centred on the rationalities and technologies of risk (Aradau & Munster 2007). As was argued in chapter 5, the discourse of adaptation to climate

95. Note that compared to the previous application of this framework the dimensions appear in a different order. This has only presentational reasons.

96. Note that this chapter uses both the terms ‘advanced liberal government’ and ‘neoliberalism’. While the latter refers to the general hegemonic discourse to be found in some polities, the former denotes the more particular governmentality that underpins this discourse.

97. In a personal communication, Delf Rothe has suggested to call such a research strategy a ‘retroductive case comparison’, as it follows the logic retrodution introduced in chapter 4 - generating proto-explanations and test them against a broader empirical context. This makes clear that it fits well into the general methodological framework of this study.
change revolves around risk, too. And we will see below, that this risk framing also comes to
the fore when climate change is mainstreamed into other issue areas. In this section, I thus
delineate the different governmentalities of risk and trim them for the application to global
warming.

The concept of risk governmentalities has recently been used to map a series of discursive
shifts within the politics of security broadly understood, which are also relevant for our un-
derstanding of climate change risks. These shifts are usually contrasted with the traditional
liberal-biopolitical governmentality of risk (Dillon & Lobo-Guerrero 2008). As the terms
suggests, it consists of two components. Biopolitical risk management, in line with biopoliti-
cal governmentality in general, is related to the invention of the population as the historical
terrain of governmentality (Foucault 2008). It was enabled by the development of statistics in
the context of natural and human sciences and turns risk into a calculable entity based on
probabilities (Rose 2001, 7). These techniques allow for identifying particularly risk-prone
groups (e.g., ‘the long-term unemployed’) and activities (e.g., ‘unhealthy diet’), which in turn
make it possible to subject these to governmental treatment. With the rise of liberalism, fur-
thermore, insurance-based risk technologies evolved and crystallised in the institutions of the
welfare states (Ewald 1991, 204). Insurance seeks to socialise risk and draws on the principle
of solidarity. In sum, the traditional liberal-biopolitical risk dispositif centres on two basic
techniques. First, risk individualises and totalises at the same time. Risk translates the struc-
tural dangers associated with, for example, the social division of labour in capitalist societies
to the level of the individual subject, but it seeks to manage these dangers at the social level
of the population (Donzelot 1984). Second, risk is understood as a calculable and eventually
predictable entity, which can be subjected to sophisticated management techniques (Aradau
& Munster 2007, 100). The biopolitical-liberal risk dispositif hence dreams the dream of taming
the contingency of modern social life.

An advanced liberal governmentality of risk departs from the latter of the two basic as-
sumptions of the liberal-biopolitical risk dispositif. It pursues a multiplication, decentralisa-
tion and individualisation of risk management (Dean 2010, 166-9). According to a ‘new
prudentialism’ (O’Malley 1992), individuals are facing a multiplicity of risks – crime, ill-
health, unemployment, mental diseases – and are made responsible for managing these risks
by either avoiding dangerous activities (such as ‘extreme sports’) or being willing to pay for
an appropriate private insurance against possible damages. Furthermore, instead of the so-
cial, the new unit of responsibility is the community. ‘Governing through the community’
(Rose 1996a) harnesses the power of at-risk-groups by addressing their solidarity and collab-
oration and drawing on their local expertise. Also the advanced liberal technologies of
agency and performance apply. Insurance, finally, is privatised or restructured along the lines of an economic business (Dillon 2008). Instead of governing less, an advanced liberal governmentality of risk seeks to govern risk at a distance (Miller & Rose 2008).

The second shift within the risk dispositif is associated with the dislocative moment of 9/11, which undermined the phantasy of completely taming the contingency of life through rationalisation and calculation. Some have called this shift the ‘paradigm of prudence’ (Diprose et al. 2008, 268p.). This paradigm is connected to the assumption that risk has undergone two decisive shifts, which undermine the traditional ways of managing it (Ewald 2002). Risk bears potentially catastrophic consequences, and it becomes increasingly uncertain and hence difficult to calculate. The consequences can be grouped around two different poles: at one extreme, the ‘precautionary principle’ (Aradau & Munster 2007) makes it necessary to avoid or at least minimise risk at all cost, as its consequences are potentially disastrous. If we can’t calculate risk, then we cannot manage it, so we have to eliminate it. Precautionary responses to terrorism, thus, draw on extensive profiling and treat every suspect as a possible terrorist. At the other extreme stands a ‘culture of preparedness’ (Collier & Lakoff 2008). Given the likely failure of completely eliminating risk, the worst case scenario cannot be ruled out, and we have to be able to deal with it at any moment. It is therefore necessary to invest into the preparedness of people, governance mechanisms and critical infrastructures so that they can cope with extreme social, economic or environmental shocks. Particularly the concept of ‘resilience’ has become a prominent concept among security professionals, for example in the US National Homeland Security Strategy of 2002 and 2007, and now even spreads way beyond the security sector (Walker & Cooper 2011, 154; see also Lentzos & Rose 2009). It denotes the ability of social systems to survive extreme stress, without necessarily having to return to its previous equilibrium. Such resilience, as Dillon argues, is achieved if government power adopts ‘lifelike properties’ and puts forth open, transformative and informationally driven systems which are capable of ‘adaptive learning’ and ‘emergence’ (Dillon 2007a, 14). The contingency of threats leaves no other option than relying on the ‘contingency of life’, that is, its ability to deal with external stress in an adaptive and creative process. Instead of trying to govern contingency, power now has to ‘govern through contingency’ (Dillon 2007b).

The different facets of this paradigm of prudence all rely on concepts which are rooted in the scientific discipline of ecology. The precautionary principle can be found in European environmental politics as well as the Rio Agenda 21 of 1992, but can be traced back to the idea of sustainability emerging from 19th century German forest ecology (Aradau & Munster 2007, 102-3). Also resilience is an ecological concept, where it is associated with the shift towards a non-equilibrium view of ecosystems (Folke 2006). Dillon’s concept of contingency, finally,
also relates to innovations in biological thought which can be summarised as ‘informationalising life’ (Dillon & Reid 2009, 61). Life and its evolution is situated within the information exchange within an ecosystem, it is understood as ‘adaptive emergence’ (Dillon & Reid 2009, 61). Given this background, hence, this governmentality can be described as an ecopolitics of disaster: ecopolitics, because its governmental rationality is informed by ecological thought; disaster, because it is invoked in the face of catastrophic or even apocalyptic images, which undermine traditional risk management strategies.

Both shifts are important for understanding the framing of climate change as a risk. Delf Rothe (2011c) and Angela Oels (2011), for example, have used the governmentality perspective on risk and security in order to critique existing accounts of securitising climate change. Rothe (2011b) argues that the securitisation of climate change results in an advanced liberal governmentality of risk, while Oels (2012) diagnoses a shift towards what has been described here as an ecopolitics of disaster. The starting point of this chapter is thus the fact that these two governmentalities, although having different causes and following a distinct logic, have close resemblances. For example, as Dillon argues, risk has ‘always been situated at the intersection of capital and rule’ (Dillon 2008, 320). He points out that the advanced liberal individualisation of insurance technologies, which comes along with an increased financialisation of the insurance industry (e.g. privatised pensions) in particular and the economy in general (e.g. mortgage derivates), draws on the idea of ‘governing through contingency’ (Dillon 2007b) which is characteristic for an ecopolitical rationality. The economisation and the ecologicalisation of risk, so to speak, are parallel developments. Jeremy Walker and Melinda Cooper (2011), secondly, demonstrate the proximity of resilience and neoliberalism genealogically. For example, Friedrich A. von Hayek – one of the intellectual fathers of neoliberalism – indirectly referred to the inventor of ‘resilience’, Crawford S. Holling, and his 1973 paper, which introduced resilience into the academic debate, only one year later and described social systems in terms of biological systems ‘newly defined by scientists as complex, adaptive and non-linear’, endorsing a complex-systems ontology for his own work as well (Walker & Cooper 2011, 150). Holling himself, on the other hand, successively sought to apply his biological concepts to societies so as to understand them as complex adaptive systems, and initiated cross-disciplinary consensus building activities under the umbrella of the Resilience Alliance. In sum, both intellectual strands eventually seek to understand all natural and social systems as non-linear and extremely complex, are highly sceptical of top-down management and central planning, promote the decentralisation of social systems and rely on the adaptive emergence of living beings. Against the backdrop of these theoretical conceptions, I argue that the advent of climate change risks in the global social, environmental and partially
also the economic polity promotes an ecopolitics of disaster. And given the close resemblances of this governmentality with advanced liberalism, it helps to revitalise and support core ideas of a neoliberal discourse which have come into a legitimacy crisis in recent years.

### 8.2 A paradigmatic case: Development, risk and the ecopolitics of disaster

The aim of this section is to analyse the risk governmentality that emerges from the advent of ‘dangerous climate change’ in the global social polity. I begin by outlining the general discursive effects that flow from the postpolitical populist hegemony that was revealed in chapter 6. I then demonstrate how this framing results in a risk rationality which mirrors the paradigm of the ecopolitics disaster. And I trace in the four dimensions of an analytics of government how this shift in governmentality revitalises core concept of an advanced liberalism. Finally, I return to the level of hegemony and discuss how this results in a depoliticisation of recent debates about the legitimacy and efficacy of neoliberalism.

#### 8.2.1 Backdrop: Climatisation and the dangerous Other

Integrating the adaptation to global warming into the global social polity results in, paraphrasing Oels (2012, 3), a ‘climatisation’ of development. As has been argued in chapter 6, climate change is often presented in apocalyptic languages and images; as an existential threat which is likely to result in chaotic and catastrophic consequences as expressed in the opening quote of this chapter. This is turn constitutes humanity as a homogenous and unified actor countering this enemy, thereby covering or blurring existing cleavages across the globe. Or, as the Global Humanitarian Forum states: ‘There are no sides in the fight for climate justice’ (GHF 2009, iv).

This discursive framing has important consequences for the governance-object of the global social polity. The dominant problematisation within the discourse of the global social polity is obviously poverty and development. So how does the apocalyptic framing of climate change affect this problematisation? The answer to this question, when staying at the surface of the discourse, is quite obvious. Climate change ‘exacerbates existing inequalities faced by vulnerable groups particularly women, children and the elderly’ (GHF 2009, 3). That is, climate change is a problem because it feeds on an existing problem – widespread poverty. But why is this? The answer to this consists of two problem-complexes. First, ‘most developing countries lack sufficient financial and technical capacities to manage increasing climate risk. They also depend more directly on climate-sensitive natural resources for income and well-being’ (The World Bank 2010b, xx) In other words, in a more or less circular logic, it
A paradigmatic case: Development, risk and the ecopolitics of disaster

states that climate change increases poverty because of poverty. This statement is particularly interesting when trying to get further down this argumentative chain and asking: why is there poverty? Strikingly, the discourse does neither ask nor tell. Following Foucault (1972), it is often much more revealing what cannot be said in a certain discourse than what is actually said. When it comes to identifying the problem of ‘poverty’, one encounters precisely such a case. Throughout almost the entire sample, poverty does not have a cause. It simply exists. Whenever poverty or inequality is mentioned, they are either described or put in relation to climate change. But there is no single passage that would explore the causes of poverty.  

Secondly, climate change causes a problem for poverty because it adversely affects ‘development’. As the problem is presented here, poverty coming out of nowhere, travels on a teleological track of constant progress called development: ‘Global warming threatens to reverse human progress, making the MDGs for poverty reduction unachievable’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 2). Throughout the sample, this side of the problem appears more salient than the effects climate change would have upon poverty. What really is at stake is a process that would otherwise occur, but now is threatened to be impeded by climate change: ‘In the long run climate change is a massive threat to human development and in some places it is already undermining the international community’s efforts to reduce extreme poverty’ (UNDP 2007, v). To put it bluntly, the problem is not that climate change is making things worse (what it surely does), but that it prevents things from getting better:

After a decade of UN conferences designed to end poverty and save the global environment, disasters - driven or exacerbated by global warming - could spell out the end of human development for the poor majority, and perilous political and economic insecurity for the rest of the world. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 20)

The fact that this statement comes from a coalition of civil society actors, who are usually very critical of the performance of UN conferences, points to the transformative power of the global warming discourse. In the face of climate change as an external enemy, development appears to become a universal human process.

The ubiquitous reference to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is quite telling in this regard. Throughout the various texts, climate change is presented as a threat to achieving

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98 It is well possible that this is due to the fact that the reports analysed were written or commissioned in order to outline the effects of climate change on poverty, and not to discuss the causes of poverty. On the one hand, though, it seems awkward to do the former without the latter if the aim is to highlight their relationship. On the other hand, a Foucauldian perspective on discourse seeks to bracket the individual intentions of authors and speakers and is just interested in the discursive effects of their statements (Foucault 1978, 125) – and clearly, here they are neglecting other causes for poverty.
the MDGs: ‘Climate change could negate decades of progress and undermine efforts to reach the MDGs’ (UNDP 2008, 12). In effect, other reasons for the MDGs to fail fade to the background, and climate change is regarded as the major threat to their achievement:

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) defined a new ambition for 2015. Much has been achieved, though many countries remain off track. Climate change is hampering efforts to deliver the MDG promise. (UNDP 2007, 1)

While the text cannot do without vaguely citing the overall (suboptimal) performance of MDG policies, the only reason which is spelled out clearly is climate change. Again, poverty simply exists, and an otherwise occurring progress is hampered. The very same pattern is displayed in the 2010 progress report on the MDGs, issued by the United Nations. Where, if not here, should the roots of poverty be discussed? In the summary, though, it states right in the beginning:

Perhaps most important, it shows that the Goals are achievable when nationally owned development strategies, policies and programmes are supported by international development partners. At the same time, it is clear that improvements in the lives of the poor have been unacceptably slow, and some hard-won gains are being eroded by the climate, food and economic crises. (United Nations 2010, 3)

Climate change, amongst other international ‘crises’, becomes an outside threat to an otherwise more or less smooth, though slow, progression towards the MDGs. This inscription of development as a natural process is also repeated in other discursive strategies which permeate the sample, for example the comparison of climate change to other world problems:

In many other areas of international relations, inaction or delayed agreements have limited costs. International trade is an example. It is an area in which negotiations can break down and resume without inflicting long-term damage on the underlying system – as witnessed by the unhappy history of the Doha Round. With climate change, every year of delay in reaching an agreement to cut emissions adds to greenhouse gas stocks, locking the future into a higher temperature. In the seven years since the Doha Round started, to continue the analogy, stocks of greenhouse gases have increased by around 12 ppm of CO₂ and those stocks will still be there when the trade rounds of the 22nd Century get underway. (UNDP 2007, 4)⁹⁹

The relationship between trade and climate change is often portrayed as a harmonious one, as the previous chapter revealed. Here, I would like to emphasise the difference between the two which is constructed in this quote (but does not contradict that harmony). This difference is very incisive in that it reveals the supposed peculiarity of climate change: while other problems in international relations leave the underlying structures more or less intact, cli-

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⁹⁹ The text here refers to the “Doha Development Round” of WTO trade negotiations. It was started after the 9/11 attacks in order to bring about development and erode poverty as the supposed basis for terrorism. Due to an ongoing lack of consensus among negotiating parties, so far the round has not been completed.
mate change seems to represent a radical threat of a new dimension. Development might sometimes suffer temporary setbacks, but sooner or later progress will occur, relentlessly. It is only with climate change that the game changes profoundly.

This conclusion has to be seen against the background of the genealogy of the global social polity. Climate mainstreaming externalises the roots of ‘poverty’ and ‘underdevelopment’ for the first time ever in the field of development. Throughout the whole history of North-South relations, the roots of ‘poverty’ and the failure of ‘development’ have always been located inside the developing world. This goes without saying for the period of colonialism, but also applies to the postcolonial times of ‘modern’ development aid and cooperation (Escobar 1995). In all its variants, it diagnoses a ‘lack’ within developing countries (Mehta 1999). The modernisation theory of the 1950s and 1960s saw it as a lack of capital and investment in those countries, and a lack of modern attitude and knowledge. For the basic needs approach of the 1970s, the problem was a lack of social infrastructure, while the 1980s structural adjustment policies replaced this with an obsession with the generally deficient economic environment of developing countries. The good government frame of the 1990s then turned its attention to a lack of political institutions. In sum, all these different schools of thought locate the roots of poverty within the developing world and thereby create particular points of governmental intervention (Rojas 2004). Climate change, in line with the discourse of sustainable development, now reverses this pattern in that it moves the problem to the outside, to the heart of ‘dangerous climate change’.

As a result, climatisation naturalises development. In the face of dangerous climate change, development is turned into a fundamental feature of human beings:

Climate change is the defining human development issue of our generation. All development is ultimately about expanding human potential and enlarging human freedom. It is about people developing the capabilities that empower them to make choices and to lead lives that they value. Climate change threatens to erode human freedoms and limit choice. It calls into question the Enlightenment principle that human progress will make the future look better than the past. (UNDP 2007, 1).

And it is a process that seems to follow a somewhat natural logic. And it is this logic which is increasingly questioned by climate change:

What we know well from successful case studies, and what this volume again argues is that any success in overcoming poverty takes time and persistence; efforts to address rural poverty are linked to natural systems and must abide by natural cycles. Yet time is a growing constraint as the early impacts of climate change emerge and their long-term effects become clearer. (WRI 2008, 10)

This is what is meant by the climatisation of development policies. Climate change becomes the main obstacle to development. It displaces existing problematisations – the postcolonial idea that developing countries lack something as well as issues such as global econ-
omic structures and inequalities – and thus constitutes humanity as a common global collective facing a ‘dangerous climate change’, which threatens to subvert human progress. Development, thus, becomes a somewhat natural sphere – a sphere cleared of all cleavages, contradictions and antagonisms except one. The dangerous Other of development is climate change.

8.2.2 A new episteme: Climate change as game changer

This image of climate change as the dangerous Other of development results in a particular governmentality of development. Approached through the first dimension of the analytics of government, the episteme, climate change is framed as a risk. Even without climate change, development, of course, is not always successful and also confronted with problems and setbacks. Like in Northern societies, risk is one of the main intellectual devices to understand the dislocations of development:

Risk affects everyone. Individuals, families and communities are constantly exposed to risk that can threaten their well-being. Ill-health, unemployment, violent crime, or a sudden change in market conditions can, in principle, affect anyone. (UNDP 2007, 78).

The ‘climate’, here, is understood as a distinct subset of developmental risks (UNDP 2007, 74). In other words, the human way to prosperity and welfare is studded with hidden rusty nails, but these risks can be managed and thus do not pose a fundamental problem:

From the level of the individual, to the community, and to the nation, people have had to cope with climate variability and climate change for centuries. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 16)

In line with the naturalisation of development, there seems to be a natural balance between climate risks and risk management. This closely mirrors the traditional biopolitical or liberal conception of a society, whose risks can be managed, that was discussed above. And this risk governmentality is a common theme in discourses of global social governance (Duffield 2010). Not only is poverty increasingly understood as a risk for global security. Development vice versa becomes increasingly couched in terms of security. A case in point for this tendency is the growing importance of the concept of ‘human security’ (e.g. UNDP 1994), which is usually understood as shifting the focus of security from states to people, particularly towards their welfare and well-being. Within a Foucauldian framework, it can be interpreted as replacing the traditional toolkit of military security with a liberal-biopolitical dis-
positif of security. It allows for global interventions (mostly below the threshold of military intervention\(^{100}\)) in order to sustain the lives of Southern populations (Duffield & Waddell 2006). In this sense, development is a natural global process, and risk is an essential part of it.

‘Dangerous climate change’, however, is a game-changer. It distorts the logic of human development, and so also undermines traditional techniques of risk management. Global warming causes, for example, ‘more volatile weather conditions’ or ‘surprising changes in climate-linked disease patterns’ – governments, thus, are confronted with ‘a riskier and more complex environment’ and ‘imperfect knowledge’ about it (The World Bank 2010b, 88). ‘People’s livelihoods’, concludes the World Bank paradigmatically, ‘need to function under conditions that will almost certainly change but cannot be predicted with certainty’ (The World Bank 2010b, 87).

For example, while traditional means of anticipating the impact of extreme weather events were based on solid socio-economic and physical data, ‘in a changing climate the past is no longer prologue’, so that ‘uncertainty about the future climate’ becomes the dominant concern of risk assessment (The World Bank 2010b, 100). A case in point for the inability of traditional risk management techniques to deal with climate change is the fact that insurance is an inappropriate preparation:

Unchecked climate change could make many climate risks uninsurable or the premiums unaffordable. Insurability requires the ability to identify and quantify (or at least estimate partially) the likelihood of an event and the associated losses, to set premiums, and to diversify risk among individuals or collectives. (The World Bank 2010b, 102)

Insurance could even become counter-productive, because it results in ‘maladaptation (such as continued settlement on a storm-prone coast) – because of the security in an insurance contract’ (The World Bank 2010b, 103). Here, the traditional way of managing risks ceases to be a solution and becomes part of the problem. The unpredictability, the unintelligibility, the radical otherness of global warming disrupts the liberal-biopolitical rationality of risk calculation and risk management. Obviously, there is a shift in risk rationalities triggered by the advent of climate change in the global social polity.

And this changing rationality gives rise to an ecopolitics of disaster. Take for example the following quotation from Holling’s 1973 paper which introduced the concept of resilience into the academic debate – a concept which is representative for the general impetus of the ecopolitics of disaster:

A management approach based on resilience […] would emphasise the need to keep options

\(^{100}\) Michael Dillon and Julian Reid have explored the relationship between liberal biopolitics and war. In a nutshell, they argue that normally life is administered under a biopolitical scheme – until it becomes dangerous. Then, the ‘humanitarian intervention’ takes over (Dillon & Reid 2009).
open [...] and the need to emphasise heterogeneity. Flowing from this would be not the presumption of sufficient knowledge, but the recognition of our ignorance: not the assumption that future events are expected, but that they will be unexpected. The resilience framework can accommodate this shift in perspective, for it does not require a precise capacity to predict the future, but only a qualitative capacity to devise systems that can absorb and accommodate future events in whatever unexpected form they may take (Holling 1973, 21; cited in Walker & Cooper 2011, 146-7).

This passage, which has been dedicated to the understanding of ecological systems, today reads as the perfect anticipation of the climate risk discourse. Risk cannot be calculated, predicted and managed anymore. Instead, it is necessary to make people fit to deal with risk on their own. Acknowledging the fact that climate change is an ‘unknown unknown’ (Aradau & Munster 2011, 21) results in a profound revision of risk governmentality.

8.2.3 Fields of visibility: Vulnerability as the new prudentialism

Vulnerability is probably the most frequent term for making the consequences of climate change for human life visible. There is a long and quite diverse tradition in research on social and environmental systems, the core of which is the ‘degree to which a system is susceptible to and is unable to cope with adverse effects (of climate change)’ (Adger 2006, 269). It has been introduced most prominently by the third IPCC report and, since then, has been thought to be dependent upon three factors: the exposure of a social system to climate change, its sensitivity as well as its adaptive capacity (IPCC 2001, 6). All three take a particular degree of climate change as given. Throughout the sample, climate change is supposed to increase the vulnerability of people, communities and societies profoundly.

As Angela Oels has observed, there are two framings of vulnerability in the adaptation debate on climate change (Oels 2012, 21p., see also chapter 5.2). The first is informed by the traditional liberal biopolitical dispositif of risk. It is thus rather concerned with calculating and predicting the exposure and sensitivity of affected populations that results from climate change. This type of vulnerability framing is also present in the analysed sample here. For example, the following map by the Global Humanitarian Forum displays the attempt to get an exact picture of expected vulnerability.
This is, for example, also mirrored by the UNDP, which asserts that it is crucial to know what kind of climate risks is the region currently facing, who is affected and how vulnerable are they, and how has the region traditionally managed/adapted to these risks? Having precise answers to the above is critical for building resilience to future climate risks. (UNDP 2009b, 63)

Here, vulnerability is mostly a physical fact which can be computed and mapped through risk calculation and results in appropriate response measures by decision makers.

However, there is also a second notion of vulnerability that marks the shift towards an ecopolitics of disaster. This notion of shifts the focus of attention from risk itself to the individual-at-risk. As the UNDP puts it:

‘Vulnerability is different from risk. […] Whereas risk is about exposure to external hazard over which people have limited control, vulnerability is a measure of capacity to manage such hazards without suffering long-term, potentially irreversible loss of well-being.’ (UNDP 2007, 78)

Note that this is slightly different from the IPCC definition of vulnerability. It is not related to exposure and sensitivity anymore, but only about ‘adaptive capacity’. Put simply, the probability with which people are likely to be affected by climate change is not as important
as their general capacity to deal with change. The opposition between risk and vulnerability, which is constituted here, thus perfectly embodies the shift from traditional risk management to the ecopolitics of disaster. Risk is individualised, and the individual-at-risk moves to the centre of governmental attention. People have to be made ‘fit for survival’ in times of apocalyptic climate change.

This second understanding of vulnerability seems to be the dominant one in the adaptation discourse of the global social polity. It situates vulnerability in their economic, social and ecological environment and their related ability to survive external stress. And it ‘seeks to enhance the capacity for adaptive emergence in the face of radical contingency, especially for currently disadvantaged subgroups of the population’ (Oels 2012, 23-24). In this sense, decreasing vulnerability becomes less a physical feature of climate change but rather something which can be attributed to the status of individuals in a socio-economic and political system. As the GHF puts it:

Socio-economic vulnerability to climate change is a measure of how well individuals and communities are able to respond and adapt to the human impacts of climate change. 4 billion people – 60 percent of the world’s population, are vulnerable to climate change today in socio-economic terms. [...] Those relying on natural resources for their livelihoods such as farmers, fishermen and low-wage earners in tourism will be particularly vulnerable to income losses due to climate change. The level of social development and local infrastructure also significantly determines the vulnerability of communities and their capacity to adapt. (GHF 2009, 58)

If vulnerability is not a physical (that is, bound to a particular spatially describable area) but a social phenomenon (that is, bound to particular aspects of a society that affect everyone at least in principle), each and every individual of a society becomes vulnerable to a certain degree. Compare, for example, the map that results from this socio-economic understanding of vulnerability, taken from the very same report:
Note the huge difference: The first map delineates a rather clear set of geographically distinct spots of vulnerability. The second map, by contrast, leaves no blank spots. Each and everyone is a potential victim. Of course, the likeliness to be really affected may vary. But in principle, everyone needs to be prepared to cope with the consequences of climate change.

This resonates well with what O’Malley (1992) has termed the ‘new prudentialism’ as a central characteristic of advanced liberal societies. The new prudentialism breaks with the logic of collective welfare systems and older ideas of the social in the sense that it makes individuals responsible for the government of their own risks instead of collective systems of social security or intervention by public bureaucracies. In this sense, the new prudentialism individualises risk. However, it also breaks with the ‘old’ prudentialism in important ways (Dean 2010, 194-195). In the 19th century, prudentialism was only necessary for a set of particular risks – namely, those mainly related to workplace and income. The new prudentialism expands its scope towards all other aspects of social and individual life – ensuring a high-quality education for one’s own children, avoiding unhealthy activities, not becoming a crime victim, and so on. Thus, risk not only affects particular at-risk groups, it now ‘traverses each and every member of the population’ (Dean 2010, 195). The distinction between normal cit-
izens and at-risk-groups increasingly blurs. Everyone faces risks, and everyone becomes her own entrepreneur of risk management instead of relying on ‘excessive’ welfare state intervention. It is precisely this idea of the new prudentialism as an individualisation of risk management which is enabled by the ecopolitics of disaster. If everyone is – potentially, and only potentially (!) – vulnerable to climate change, risk is spread throughout the whole population. This shift is paradigmatically condensed in the following quotation:

All these factors call fora new model of development in which strategies to increase human resilience in the face of climate change and the stability of ecosystems are central. It calls for a new test on every policy and project, in which the keyquestion will be, “Are you increasing or decreasing people’s vulnerability to the climate?” (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 4)

The question of vulnerability becomes the key cornerstone for all aspects of human development. And this resonates well with the advanced liberal paradigm of prudence.

8.2.4 Techne: Resilience, diversity and technologies of agency and performance

The rationality of incalculable risk and the visibility of socio-economic vulnerability result in two interrelated sets of political technologies. ‘Resilience’ is the headline for the first set of techniques. It is a very prominent concept in the adaptation discourse. In a sense, it can be understood as the positive correlate of vulnerability. In short, the resilience perspective in global environmental change research ‘shifts policies from those that aspire to control change in systems assumed to be stable, to managing the capacity of social-ecological systems to cope with, adapt to, and shape change’ (Folke 2006, 254). It is sceptical of centralised planning and management, and promotes the strengthening of ‘adaptive emergence’ (Dillon 2008, 315). It precisely represents the shift in focus from risk to the individual-at-risk, and it connects well with its socio-economic embedding. Because the poor are more vulnerable, they become subject to enhancing resilience: ‘Climate change impacts are affecting the poorest groups of people the most, so building resilience through community based adaptation in vulnerable and poor communities is crucial.’ (GHF 2009, 70)

Technologies of resilience are, for example, discussed in relationship with disaster prevention. The World Bank argues that ‘the focus [of its policy] is shifting from coping with disaster events to forward looking disaster risk management and toward preventive rather than reactive measures’ (The World Bank 2010b, 99). Resilience, thus, first of all seeks to empower (local) social systems to cope and deal with climate change themselves. Responsibility for disaster prevention is conferred to local communities and households:

Engaging communities in preparedness and emergency communication protects their livelihoods. For example, in Mozambique communities along the Búzi River use radios to warn communities downstream of flooding. (The World Bank 2010b, 100).
This also resonates well with the image of life as information or, more precisely, a complex system of informational exchange. These communities are imagined as a network of micro-units, whose adaptive emergence can be decisively enhanced by established links which enable the flow of information. Information literally becomes the vital sign of life for communities faced with apocalyptic climate change.

Another example for the self-reliance of local communities and households can also be found in the World Development Report:

These many vulnerabilities call for comprehensive improvements in urban planning and development. Government agencies, particularly local ones, can shape the adaptive capacity of households and businesses (box 2.2). But action by community-based and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) is also crucial, particularly those that build homes and directly provide services, as slum-dweller organisations do. (The World Bank 2010b, 92).

Not only does this proposal decentralise the subjects of resilience-enhancing action towards the community or the household (see below on subjectivities), but also makes them responsible for their own adaptation. The fact that the poor are the victims of climate change also turns them into the preferred actors for resilience. The prime task of government thus is to transfer decision-making autonomy to these local actors. For those have the potential for self-management. For example, the WWF (although not part of the sample or the global social polity either) summarises this attitude perfectly with reference to adaptation in the area of the Coral Triangle in Asia:

Build the socio-ecological resilience of coastal ecosystems and develop stakeholder and community engagement processes for communities to improve their ability to survive climate change impacts. Involving coastal people and communities in planning provides greater stability and efficacy for solutions to social and ecological systems within the Coral Triangle. (WWF 2009, 10)

The core of resilience, thus, is to empower the poor to deal with the consequences of climate change. This empowerment of communities and individuals is also a core theme in neoliberal thought. It fits well with what Dean has summarised as the ‘technologies of agency’ of advanced liberal government. One particular element is the ‘technology of citizenship’ (Cruikshank 1993; cited in Dean 2010, 196). It engages us as ‘active and free citizens, [...] as members of self-managing communities and organisations, [...] as agents capable of taking control of our own risks’ (Dean 2010, 196). In radicalising the liberal ambition to govern at a distance, such a strategy seeks to confer agency to individuals and make them capable of governing themselves. And it is precisely this ambition of ‘helping people to help themselves’ (The World Bank 2010b, 87), which is also prevalent in the climate change discourse of global social governance.
The second set of political technologies found in this discourse corresponds with advanced liberal ‘technologies of performance’ (Dean 2010). Dean summarises a bundle of governmental activities under this term which revolve around the idea of competition. While the technologies of agency create new responsible agents, technologies of performance integrate them into a governmental scheme of incentives and indirect intervention (Dean 2010, 198). The latter entail strategies such as ‘the devolution of budgets, the setting of performance indicators, “benchmarking”, the establishment of “quasi-markets” in expertise and service provision’ or auditing systems (Dean 2010, 197). All of them share that they seek to perfect the liberal ambition of governing at a distance by establishing ever softer and more subtle techniques of government.

Technologies of performance materialise, most prominently, in the form of highlighting ‘diversity’ as the most promising preparation strategy for global warming. Given the unpredictability of dangerous climate change, it is necessary to have a wide variety of options in place. For example,

climate-resilient farming requires diverse income sources, production choices, and genetic material. Climate change will create a less predictable world. Crops will fail more often. One way to buffer the uncertainty is to diversify on all levels. (The World Bank 2010b, 151)

In other words, if we cannot predict climate change, we have to prepare different options for adaptation to it. Here, again, we have a quite strong analogy between the ecopolitical resilience and the advanced liberal performance. For the subtext reads quite clearly: we have to provide different solutions, and some of them will evolutionary turn out to be the right solutions, while others will be discarded when faced with climate change. Put simply, only the competition between different solutions will do justice to the unintelligible and unpredictable nature of ‘dangerous climate change’. The contrast to the traditional liberal-biopolitical technologies of risk management is quite apparent:

Lacking access to formal insurance, they [the poor; C.M] develop self-insurance mechanisms. [...] Diversification of production and income sources is another form of self-insurance. For example, rural households seek to reduce their risk exposure by inter-cropping food staples and cash crops, and by engaging in petty trade. The problem is that self-insurance mechanisms often break down in the face of severe and recurrent climate shocks. (UNDP 2007, 83)

Instead of formal insurance, the poor seek to advance ‘self-insurance’ by increasing the diversity of their produce; that is, to become more competitive in their market environment. This quotation, however, also points to the core weakness of this approach: that self-management also means self-management; if resilience fails, this can have disastrous consequences for the individuals. In line with the general idea of the ‘ecopolitics of disaster’, becoming fit for survival in times of dangerous climate change also implies the possibility not to survive –
and this is an essential part of the concept! This Darwinist undertone is sometimes even more explicit in the sample of analysed documents. Anticipating insights from the other two cases, the World Resources Institute, for instance, dedicates a whole report to The Roots of Resilience and argues that ‘properly designed enterprises can create economic, social, and environmental resilience that cushion the impacts of climate change, and help provide needed social stability’ (WRI 2008, 9). Here, the ability to own, manage and market natural resources by communities themselves is key for adapting to climate change. Connecting markets and resilience like this links advanced liberalism and the ecopolitics of disaster: When market competition ensures the survival of the fittest, it is this fitness which ensures that communities are able to deal with the negative consequences of climate change. In a similar vein, the WBCSD promotes a flexible and open market environment in order to single out the fittest participants:

As survivors, these companies are more flexible, more adept at engaging with diverse partners and customers, and more skilled at responding to rapid changes on all fronts. As operations, they have demonstrated a focused and proactive culture of eliminating energy and materials waste. (WBCSD 2010, 13)

In this sense, diversity and competition are crucial for achieving resilience. And this, then, represents a continuation of advanced liberal technologies of performance through the ecopolitics of disaster.

8.2.5 Ethos: Governing through the resilient community

The ethos of the adaptation governmentality is centred upon the community and the household:

‘Reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience to the climate has traditionally been the responsibility of households and communities through their livelihood choices, asset allocations, and locational preferences. (The World Bank 2010b, 88)

Throughout the sample, the prime object and subject of the adaptation to global warming is the community. ‘Poor communities in the South’, for example, are often thought to be the first victims of climate change. And they are, as imagined in the statement above, the ‘traditional’ unit dealing with climate risks. Adaptation to climate change thus is supposed to draw on this established responsibility, so that the task is to build ‘flexible, resilient communities’ (The World Bank 2010b, 87). Strengthening the local level is cited as a key response to climate change throughout the sample of analysed documents. Take the following statement:

Recently the role of developing new technology has been strongly emphasised. Governments have focused on how to improve weather forecasting in Africa. There is a consensus among development groups, however, that a greater and more urgent challenge is strengthening communities from the bottom-up, and building on their own coping strategies to live with global
warming. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 4)

This opposition highlights the relationship between the community and dangerous climate change. The unintelligible and unpredictable character of global warming undermines the capabilities of ‘monitor and predict’ schemes of weather forecasting, characteristic for a liberal-biopolitical risk dispositif. Instead, as every community can be affected tomorrow, we should focus on their capacity to adapt and to react. This, of course, connects well with the technologies of agency found in the concept of resilience.

‘Government through the community’ is also a recurrent theme in neoliberal government- alities (Rose 1996a). Within advanced liberal regimes of power, ‘the community’ increasingly replaces ‘the social’ as the primary territory of governmental intervention. It identifies particular communities – drug-users, HIV infected people, the inhabitants of an urban area as well as ecologically oriented consumers – and makes them responsible for the management of their own risks and problematisations. In line with the technologies of agency and performance, governmental strategies like market mechanisms, information campaigns, harnessing local expertise and creating responsible citizens are central. One particular argument for harnessing the power of communities is that they are active on the ground and much more familiar with the problems at hand. Among others, advanced liberal government hence draws on the expertise of the community. This represents an interesting parallel with the ecopolitics of disaster found in the sample:

In general, communities have better time-, place-, and event-specific knowledge of local climate hazards and of how such hazards affect their assets and productive activities. Communities also have greater capacity to manage local social and ecological relationships that will be affected by climate change. And they typically incur lower costs than external actors in implementing development and environmental projects. (The World Bank 2010b, 106)

The availability of context-specific knowledge marks the advantage of the community over other levels and actors of government. As a result, the two strands of risk management – government through the community and the ecopolitics of disaster – do not only converge conceptually. They also come together practically, as the following quotation from the World Development Report illustrates:

Building blocks of community resilience—the capacity to retain critical functions, self-organise, and learn when exposed to change—are evident throughout the world. In coastal Vietnam storm surges and rising sea levels are already putting stress on coping mechanisms. After cutbacks of many state services in the late 1990s, local collective decision making and credit and exchange networks substituted social capital and learning for government planning and infrastructure. (The World Bank 2010b, 105)

The neoliberal reforms in Vietnam from the 1980s onward – which were, by the way, often triggered by World Bank structural adjustment policy itself (Chussodovsky 1997, 147p.) – are
represented as a forerunner for climate change resilience. Here the dismantling of the state which made it necessary for communities to bridge the emerging gaps in governmental activities—creating social capital—becomes an advantage for the capacity of Vietnamese communities to deal with climate change. In sum, thus, government through the community condenses the ecopolitical movement from risk to vulnerability, to resilience and diversity very well. As the Up in Smoke Coalition puts it:

Every policy decision at every level must pass the test of whether it will increase or decrease vulnerability to the effects of climate change. From now on, planners must view all development decisions through the lens of risk reduction. Crucially, communities at risk must be at the centre of this planning process if it is to succeed. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 4)

There is hardly a better way to express the convergence of the ecopolitics of disaster and the advanced liberal ethos of the community caused by climate change.

8.2.6 From neoliberalism to ecoliberalism

Interpreting these findings against the wider context and history of the global social polity, two things are particularly important. Firstly, it has been argued before that climate change is depicted as the main obstacle for development—as the dangerous Other of a benevolent and natural process. It was mentioned that this, for the first time in the history of development, externalises the lack that impedes this process towards an entity outside the developing world: dangerous climate change. Moreover, it has been analysed in chapter 6 that climate mainstreaming constructs a fundamental antagonism between humanity and climate change, which in turn constitutes humanity as a homogenous and unitary actor.

Both ideas resonate well with a recent shift in the global social polity. Aram Ziai, in a post-structuralist analysis of development discourses of today and the 1970s, argues that today there is a far stronger notion of a ‘one-world discourse’. He observes a shift towards ‘non-antagonistic conceptions of global community’ compared to older conceptions of development (Ziai 2011, 27). Particularly the idea that poverty is a global problem, which affects all people alike—the poor because they are poor, the rich because poverty might cause insecurity—which constitutes the planet as ‘one world’. With reference to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which today seem to be the hegemonic way of rendering the governance-object of the global social polity, he concludes that

A global harmony of interests is seen as a consequence of increasing global interconnectedness and the ensuing mutually reinforcing relationship between ‘development’, ‘security’ and ‘human rights’, leading to a re-conceptualisation of interests and identities— a rather fragile construction downplaying the vast differences in resources and power within the collective actor assumed here (‘humanity’). (Ziai 2011, 41)
Against this backdrop, climate mainstreaming further strengthens this general tendency. In the face of climate change, all other cleavages and differences of interest vanish, because climate change threatens life and stability on the entire planet - it is in the interest of each and everyone to join sides in the fight against global warming. Climate mainstreaming seems to strengthen this ‘rather fragile construction’ with reference to an external enemy. And crucially, this conception of the world as one place differs substantially from older conceptions of development,

a significant shift in discourse that has taken place between 1970 and 2000, a shift in favour of neoliberal, market-oriented measures to counter global poverty and in favour of a non-antagonistic conception of the global community of states which precludes demands for global regulation of trade or redistribution. This must not only be seen as a shift in power relations between North and South after the end of the Cold War. It is also evidence that the prevalent discourse reproduces and constitutes these power relations, providing depoliticised conceptions of poverty and confining poverty reduction measures to those compatible with market-oriented solutions. (Ziai 2011, 41)

In this sense, the mainstreaming of climate change in the global social polity contributes to its depoliticisation. Differences in resources and power are downplayed, and harmony in the face of global warming is supported. And this quotation also points to the second fundamental aspect which climate mainstreaming achieves: supporting neoliberal policies.

It is a well-established argument that since the structural adjustment policies of the 1980s the global social polity is marked by a hegemony of neoliberal political strategies (Harvey 2005). This applies to the classical policies of liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation of the so-called Washington Consensus as well as to the era of the Post-Washington-Consensus, in which the multilateral development banks seek to spur development through so-called Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) (Ruckert 2006). As Arne Ruckert convincingly argues, although some observers interpret the Post-Washington-Consensus as a departure from neoliberalism, this shift is simply a minor modification within neoliberal strategies. This new, ‘inclusive’ neoliberalism

introduces new selectivity and policing mechanisms which tighten the criteria for access to development funds, by linking debt relief (and the promise of inclusion) to ever more stringent conditionalities, while claiming that developing countries now ‘own’ their poverty reduction strategies, and are therefore fully responsible for the implementation and development results of each and every PRSP. (Ruckert 2006, 62)

Nonetheless, in recent years this neoliberal hegemony in the global social polity has seemed to be in crisis. Reinforced through the recent financial and economic crisis, neoliberalism is supposed to be retreating (Chorev & Babb 2009; Peck, Theodore & Brenner 2010). So far mostly on the discursive level, neoliberalism is increasingly perceived as an inadequate or even counter-productive framework for social and economic policy. Paradigmatically,
British Prime Minister Gordon Brown recently declared the death of the Washington Consensus (Painter 2009) – and other major governments around the world have significantly shied away from adopting neoliberal rhetoric. The legitimacy crisis of neoliberalism can only be described here as a very general trend, as neoliberalism is not the actual subject of this chapter. This trend has far more nuances than can be discussed in the context of this work. Nonetheless, these brief remarks provide an important background for understanding the recent shift in the governmental rationality of the global social polity triggered by climate mainstreaming.

For the previous analysis has shown how the ecopolitics of disaster re-vitalises core principles of the advanced liberal governmentality that underpin the neoliberal hegemony: introducing vulnerability as a form of the ‘new prudentialism’ (O’Malley 1992); establishing resilience and diversity as technologies of agency and performance, respectively (Dean 2010); and ‘governing through the community’ as the prime subjects to deal with the consequences of global warming (Rose 1996b). Climate mainstreaming, in sum, actualises the hidden points of contact between advanced liberal government and the ecopolitics of disaster; decentralising, individualising, and privatising the responsibility for risk management and relying heavily on competition. In this sense, dangerous climate change becomes a new argument for an old policy. Global warming serves as a discursive device for dressing core neoliberal policies in green, so that they sediment again in the face of recent politicisation. The political effect of climate mainstreaming is a continuation of neoliberalism by other means. Again, it results in depoliticisation; depoliticising the emerging debate about the viability of neoliberal policies.

8.3 Generalising: Towards a new ecological paradigm

The previous section traced how the mainstreaming of climate change into the global social polity results in a shift in risk governmentality: from a traditional liberal-biopolitical risk rationality towards an ecopolitics of disaster. And this ecopolitics strengthens and revitalises core concepts of advanced liberal government. This section seeks to transfer these insights to the other two polities of the sample: the global environmental and economic polity.

8.3.1 Nature as a natural sphere

Climate mainstreaming in the global environmental polity reflects some of the trends found in the social polity. As the discussion in chapter 6 demonstrated, in the global environmental polity climate change tends to become a substitute for the causes of other environmental problems. For example,
the world’s oceans are already under stress as a result of overfishing, pollution and other environment-damaging activities in the coastal zones and now on the high seas. Climate change is presenting a further and wide-ranging challenge with new and emerging threats to the sustainability and productivity of a key economic and environmental resource. (UNEP 2008a, 5)

However, this is not an articulation as strong as the problematisation in the global social polity. This statement clearly refers to other causes of ecosystem degradation. But although climate change is not explicitly framed as a risk, it is at least presented as a potentially unpredictable phenomenon, as the following quotation reveals:

Copenhagen represents the opportunity to plan the future in a managed and considered way. Otherwise the future will plan itself. And that may well overwhelm the coping capacities of national and global institutions, forcing societies to scramble to deal with events that are already unfolding and challenging the very foundations upon which modern civilization depends. (UNEP 2009b, 5)

The idea of the ‘future that plans itself’ is clearly an indicator for the shift in rationalities that was observed in the social polity. Instead of being able to manage climate change impacts, it is possible that we have ‘to scramble to deal’ with them. In this sense, it is quite clear that we have to be prepared for coping with unanticipated events.

As a result, both resilience and diversity are proposed for dealing with climate change. Particularly the role of ‘ecosystems’ is highlighted in this regard, as they combine both concepts neatly. For example, UNEP argues that

Resilient aquatic ecosystems not only play a crucial role in binding carbon, they are also important to economic development, food security, social wellbeing and provide important buffers against pollution, and extreme weather events. (UNEP 2009a, 11)

Here, resilient ecosystems are framed as an encompassing response strategy to climate change risks – not unlike the ‘silver bullet’ discussed in chapter 6.

As in the global social polity, diversity is the second political technology next to resilience. For example, Greenpeace explains that

Diversity farming is the single most important modern technology to achieve food security in a changing climate. Scientists have shown that diversity provides a natural insurance policy against major ecosystem changes, be it in the wild or in agriculture [...]. It is now predicted that genetic diversity will be most crucial in highly variable environments and those under rapid human-induced climate change. (Greenpeace & EREC 2008, 3)

And is quite obvious that diversity also here resembles the advanced liberal technologies of performance. We have to have a broad variety of options in place in order to facilitate the appropriate response. And resilience and diversity are even more linked than in the global social polity. As the World Resources Institute proposes, the key for resilience through ecosystems is to subject them to a competitive regime:
Resilience is the capacity to adapt and to thrive in the face of challenge. This report contends that when the poor successfully (and sustainably) scale up ecosystem-based enterprises, their resilience can increase in three dimensions: They can become more economically resilient—better able to face economic risks. They—and their communities—can become more socially resilient—better able to work together for mutual benefit. And the ecosystems they live in can become more biologically resilient—more productive and stable. (WRI 2008, 11)

And here we have the same result as in the previous section. Although not as explicit as in the global social polity, climate change is also understood as a game-changer. It makes prediction and management difficult, which is why resilience is a necessary adaptation strategy. And resilience is a function of diversity and competition in a market environment. Again we have a strong case for an advanced liberal government of the relationships between nature and society. As Noel Castree has demonstrated in a remarkable survey of literature, the ‘neoliberalisation of nature’ is widespread practice in the environmental polity, and it is often informed and organised by an advanced liberal rationality of government (Castree 2008a; Castree 2008b). This ‘neoliberalisation of nature’ is not as contested as in the global social polity. This is, for example, demonstrated by the dominance of carbon trading in the global climate polity, which has been found to be deeply ingrained. In this sense, one could not state that climate change revitalises neoliberal policies, as they are actually not called into question. But if climate change has an effect, however, it clearly prevents these advanced liberal strategies from being questioned in the first place. It legitimises the neoliberalisation of nature through the backdoor.

8.3.2 Economy: A bastion of calculable risks

In the global economic polity, or so it seems, the ecopolitics of disaster is far less dominant than in the social or even environmental polity. To start with, the complementary storyline of good sense (see chapter 6.4) is much more characteristic for this polity. Very much in line with the *Stern Review* (Stern 2007), climate change is calculated as a potential loss; that is, in other words, climate change is a calculable and manageable risk according to a liberal-biopolitical rationality of risk. Paradigmatic in this sense is the idea of ‘damage functions’, as put forth by the IMF, ‘that relate GDP losses to increases in temperature. The estimates of GDP costs embodied in the damage functions cover a variety of climate impacts’ (IMF 2008, chapter 4, p. 4). Obviously, the costs of climate change can be estimated with, or at least with some, certainty.

Nonetheless, some of the aspects that were revealed in the previous subsections can also be found in the economic polity. On the one hand, for example, the WBCSD also puts forth an idea that mirrors the basic patterns of resilience:
A global, local and intergenerational integrated closed-loop and efficiency web connects people with each other and with the planet. In schools, people learn more about the importance of well-functioning ecosystems and societies as well as global and local citizenship. They are taught the importance of resilience and future thinking; how to understand systems, complexity and risk; and how to adapt to the changing world. (WBCSD 2010, 21)

Here, ecological problems are framed as complex. Life is understood as comprehensive system of informational exchange. And only such an understanding of life will be able to perform the adaptive emergence that flows from the general idea of complexity and unpredictability. This relates well to life as contingent capable of adaptive emergence. What is more, companies are framed as important for promoting diversity:

The private sector diffuses technology on a commercial basis every day. Technology diffusion takes place through equipment sales, products, partnerships with local companies, joint ventures and other means. High-quality cleaner technologies are being deployed in developing countries continuously. (WBCSD 2010, 7)

The notion of ‘diffusion’ is quite salient here. Usually, this practice is described as technology ‘transfer’ in global climate politics. ‘Transfer’ implies the idea of a sender and a receiver, while ‘diffusion’ seems to express a more spontaneous and unorganised process – like the spread of a disease or a species. In this sense, the idea of diffusion seems to invoke an ecopolitical image – creating a state in which technology can float freely to where it is needed, to where it belongs. The function of this becomes all the more obvious in the following statement:

However, trade can also provide a means to bridge the differences in demand and supply conditions, so that if climate change leads to a scarcity of certain goods and services in a country, it will nonetheless be able to obtain what it needs from countries where these goods and services continue to be available. Thus, beyond mitigation, trade can play a valuable role in helping humankind adapt to the consequences of a warmer future. (WTO & UNEP 2009, 62)

Here, designing the international economic environment in a way that it allows for such a diffusion of goods and services, provides the diversity which is necessary for climate change resilience. In this sense, the need of being able to adapt to climate change becomes another reason for a free trade system. Put bluntly, free trade turns the globe into a comprehensive and interconnected ecosystem which is so diverse that it can easily adapt to climate change. This, again, can be interpreted against a backdrop of a crisis of neoliberalism which also affects global economic governance (Chorev & Babb 2009). Although the ecopolitics of disaster is a rather subordinate discourse in the global economic polity, it is well possible that it is utilised for legitimising the neoliberal order.
8.4 Resistance and strategies of counter-conduct

The shift towards an ecopolitics of disaster, and with it the support for advanced liberal strategies of government, have been diagnosed to a varying degree in the different polities. As the analysis has shown, however, the shift towards an ecopolitics is widely shared, accepted and even very actively promoted also in the civil society organisations included in the sample. For example, chapter 7 concluded that the dominant frames of challenging the empty signifier function of carbon governmentality was precisely centred on notions such as vulnerability and uncertainty as a basis for action (see chapter 7.2.5). In this sense, rejection of carbon governmentality, or so it seems, results directly in a promotion of the ecopolitics of disaster revealed in this section. Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that the hegemonic governmental rationality found in this chapter is much more ingrained within civil society discourses. Throughout the analysis, many of the decisive statements have been put forth by civil society organisations. This is not to say, however, that the ecopolitics of disaster wouldn’t be challenged at all. In this section I trace particularly four strategies of counter-conduct that try to shift the dominant governmentality from within.

8.4.1 Planning is possible

First of all, however, it has to be emphasised that the shift towards an ecopolitics of disaster is only a trend, and not entirely dominant. For adaptation discourses, Oels (2012) has observed that there are two competing ways of framing adaptation in terms of risk (see also chapter 5.2.5). On the one hand, next to the ‘risk management through contingency’ (which corresponds to the ecopolitics of disaster here) there is a traditional liberal-biopolitical dispositif at work, which seeks to calculate and predict the risks that result from climate change. This bifurcation of the adaptation discourse is even explicitly acknowledged, for example by the World Bank:

But as discussed in chapter 2, actively reducing risk will never be enough because there will always be a residual risk that must also be managed through better preparedness and response mechanisms. The implication is that development may need to be done differently, with much greater emphasis on climate and weather risk. (The World Bank 2010b, 12)

101. This mirrors the general tendency that the concept of human security, to which the risk framing of climate change implicitly alludes, is often advanced by civil society actors so as to promote a more emancipatory framing of security (Duffield & Waddell 2006). In this sense, one could speculate that the ecopolitics of disaster is mostly a NGO discourse.
In this sense, the liberal-biopolitical rationality of risk management is also present in the analysed documents and proposed for particularly those risks that can be managed (while the rest is subject to an ecopolitical treatment). For example, contrary to what has been discussed above, the UNDP asserts that:

Understanding the historical interactions between society and climate hazards is a critical step in determining how to build resilience to future climate risks. What kind of climate risks is the region currently facing, who is affected and how vulnerable are they, and how has the region traditionally managed/adapted to these risks? Having precise answers to the above is critical for building resilience to future climate risks. (UNDP 2009b, 63)

Here resilience is articulated as something which can be strengthened with reference to lessons from the past. In this sense, this articulation implies continuity instead of a radical break caused by climate change. In a similar vein, the World Bank claims that ‘assessing risk, a prerequisite for risk management, is the basis for informed decision making’ (The World Bank 2010b, 99). These quotations indicate that despite the centrality of ecopolitical reasoning, a rather strong position remains in the discourse which does not rule out the traditional liberal-biopolitical risk rationality. Yet, the evidence from the study at hand points in the direction that the ecopolitics of disaster represents the dominant framing in the adaptation discourse of the global social polity.

8.4.2 Resilience as democratic empowerment

Apart from this tension, the first strategy of resistance in a stricter sense relates to the idea of resilience. It seeks to advance resilience as a technology of agency for broadening the scope of democratic participation. For example, the Up in Smoke Coalition suggests that ‘resilient, inclusive, and democratic local economies are the best inoculation against the multiple risks wrought by disasters’ (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 21). Here, resilience is articulated with the ideal of democracy. This points to the two sides of empowerment. It has been argued that empowerment is a way of governing at a distance by making individuals responsible for coping with the risks they face – with the aim of governing at a distance. However, governing through freedom always runs the risk that subjects could disobey and use the autonomy granted in order to subvert strategies of governmental power. Obviously, civil society organisations draw on this tension in order to call for a more democratic politics of development which seeks to

Strengthen democracy to improve recovery planning and efficiency, through: stakeholder councils, citizens’ juries, and local micro/small business alliances for participatory planning from the pre-disaster phase through to relief and reconstruction (Up in Smoke Coalition 2004, 21)
Articulating resilience with democracy, this statement, therefore, is an example how actors in the climate mainstreaming discourse can use resilience as a technology of agency in order to politicise the global social polity.

8.4.3 Diversity against neoliberalism

In a similar vein, the technologies of performance are used in order to politicise the global social polity. The Up in Smoke Coalition, for instance, argues that:

As this Report observes, just as an investment portfolio spreads risk by including a variety of stocks and shares, so an agricultural system geared to manage the risks of changing climate requires a rich diversity of approaches in terms of what is grown, and how it is grown. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 4)

This is a clear example of the technologies of diversity discussed in the previous sections. It argues for competition and flexibility in responses to global warming. The conclusion that is drawn from this, however, is surprising. It says that ‘the challenge [of climate change; C.M.] calls for a new flexibility and not a one-size-fits-all, neoliberal-driven approach to development. (Up in Smoke Coalition 2005, 4)

The principle of diversity as core technique of advanced liberal government here is used in order to counter a continuation of neoliberal policies by highlighting the need for diversity in solutions. In other words, even a neoliberal approach has to prove its performance in competition with other approaches. In a sense, advanced liberal government is applied reflexively on itself. Again, such a statement does not counter the need for diversity as such, but draws on its tensions in order to create space for alternative approaches to development. It is quite striking, though, that no real alternative is proposed as a different hegemonic project. Therefore, this discursive intervention also has to be seen as a strategy of counter-conduct.

8.4.4 Vulnerability and equity

The final counter-hegemonic strategy to be found in the sample of analysed documents expands on the notion of vulnerability. For example, the UNDP uses the notion of vulnerability in a much more encompassing sense:

Reactive measures are guaranteed to prove insufficient, as are responses that fail to address transboundary climate change impacts through regional cooperation. But, the greatest transformation is required in planning for human development and poverty reduction. Building the resilience and coping capacity of the poorest and more vulnerable sections of the society will require something more than rhetoric pledges to the MDGs and pro-poor growth. It will require a fundamental reappraisal of poverty reduction strategies backed by a commitment to enhanced equity in tackling social disparities. (UNDP 2007, 173)
In this statement, the poor are not just displayed as a part of society which is ‘in need’ of something, but seen as part of a social disparity. And the fact that disparity is a relation implies that vulnerability is also a question of equity and distributional justice. Here, not only the resilience of the poor becomes part of the solution, but also the responsibility of those who are not poor. Whereas traditional conceptions of development (if at all) seek to reduce inequality through growth (and only to a minor fraction through development assistance), vulnerability here seems to be used for demanding the redistribution of wealth across the globe. It has to be noted, though, that this is not made explicit. And this further underpins the fact that the prevalent form of resistance in the discourse is counter-conduct. This is perfectly demonstrated by the following quotation, which might be seen as a good summary of the points made here:

Human development itself is the most secure foundation for adaptation to climate change. Policies that promote equitable growth and the diversification of livelihoods, expand opportunities in health and education, provide social insurance for vulnerable populations, improve disaster management and support post-emergency recovery all enhance the resilience of poor people facing climate risks. That is why climate change adaptation planning should be seen not as a new branch of public policy but as an integral part of wider strategies for poverty reduction and human development. (UNDP 2007, 172)

This passage contains a range of references to the hegemonic framing of adaptation in mainstreaming climate change – ‘human development’ as growth or ‘resilience’, for instance. However, these are amalgamated with a range of politicising concepts, such as ‘equitable’, ‘social insurance’ etc., which depart from the dominant rationality of the ecopolitics of disaster; counter-conduct resistance trying to shift the discourse from within.

8.4.5 Populist adaptations: De-centring climate change

Beyond that, no competing (populist) hegemonic projects were found in the analysed documents. As in the previous chapters, it is necessary to go beyond the sample in order to get an idea of what a competing hegemonic project could look like. In the Cochabamba Declaration (see chapter 6.5), for instance, it is argued that the inability of many poor people to adapt to climate change is inherently related to the model of industrial agriculture and ‘its social, economic, and cultural model of global capitalist production and its logic of producing food for the market and not to fulfil the right to proper nutrition’ (World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth 2010). If people cannot adapt to climate change, this is because they are put in a difficult situation anyway through established social and economic structures. By linking the problem of climate change to other social and environmental
problems, which are equally caused by what is described as ‘global capitalist production’, it creates a populist equivalence which questions the existing hegemonic order. The declaration thus demands:

a profound shift in agricultural practices toward the sustainable model of production used by indigenous and rural farming peoples, as well as other ancestral models and practices that contribute to solving the problem of agriculture and food sovereignty. This is understood as the right of peoples to control their own seeds, lands, water, and food production, thereby guaranteeing, through forms of production that are in harmony with Mother Earth and appropriate to local cultural contexts, access to sufficient, varied and nutritious foods in complementarity with Mother Earth and deepening the autonomous (participatory, communal and shared) production of every nation and people.

This provides an example for a different model of adaptation which challenges the dominant ecopolitical hegemony by creating an Us vs. Them dichotomy within populist political strategies. In this sense, a politicising take on adaptation would reject the single focus on climate change and articulate it with its wider social and economic context – a strategy, however, that was not found in the analysed climate mainstreaming sample.

8.5 Conclusion: A new climate for development

The aim of this chapter was to assess the political consequences of the climatisation of different global polities. The results of this endeavour are summarised in table X on page 254. Starting from the governmentality conception of security and the literature on critical security studies, it found that the integration of climate change especially into the global social polity follows the logic of the ecopolitics of disaster. And this introduces an episteme, visibility, techne and ethos which re-legitimise an advanced liberal governmentality through the backdoor. The climatisation of the global social polity is a continuation of neoliberalism by other means. And against the backdrop of a crisis of the neoliberal hegemony in precisely this polity, this has a depoliticising effect. Dangerous climate change functions as a discursive device which sediments a neoliberal discourse which has been called into question especially through the latest financial and economic crisis. Generalising from this, traces of the connection between neoliberalism and ecopolitics have also been found in the other two cases. While it is slightly less prominent in the global environmental polity, it is minor pattern in the global economic polity. Here, only the idea of diffusion through an open economic system resembles ecopolitical technologies of performance. Angela Oels (2012), however, in her study of the climatisation of security politics, concludes that what she calls ‘risk management through contingency’ (corresponding roughly to the ecopolitics of disaster here) is the dom-
inant governmentality in the security polity. And although she does not highlight the relationship with advanced liberal government directly, this can be read in support of the thesis advanced here.

Table X: The ecopolitics of disaster and advanced liberal government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episteme</th>
<th>Field of visibility</th>
<th>Techne</th>
<th>Ethos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced liberal government</td>
<td>Critique of welfare-state and centralised planning of the liberal-biopolitical risk-dispositif</td>
<td>‘New prudentialism’; multiplication and individualisation of risk</td>
<td>Governing through the community, which is responsibilised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-invigorated through</td>
<td>Climate change is introduced as an incalculable risk that cannot be governed with traditional mechanisms</td>
<td>Socio-economic vulnerability makes everyone a potential victim of climate change</td>
<td>Resilience as technology of agency; diversity as technology of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence in environmental polity</td>
<td>Climate change as a threat that undermines traditional harmony in nature</td>
<td>vulnerability extended to women and nature</td>
<td>The community as the appropriate level for adaptation due to context-specific knowledge and self-reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence in economic polity</td>
<td>Contradiction: the costs of climate change can be calculated</td>
<td>resilience and diversity as the main technè, survival of the fittest</td>
<td>Diffusion of technology increasing resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>Planning is possible; at least partly one can calculate and prepare for the impacts of climate change.</td>
<td>Vulnerability highlighting the equity dimension in global politics; net-transfer of wealth from rich to poor</td>
<td>Resilience understood as scope for democratic participation; ambiguity of empowerment as freedom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is more, compared to the other two chapters it is remarkable that the ecopolitical framing of climate change is most deeply ingrained within the civil society parts of the sample – even in the environmental and economic polity. This is due to the fact that NGOs embody the humanitarian, biopolitical risk discourse (Duffield & Waddell 2006). Accordingly, only a few strategies of resistance have been found in the sample of analysed documents. And all of them embody a counter-conduct orientation, while there are no competing populist hegemonic projects. At this point I will refrain from providing a detailed discussion of the findings of this chapter against the general background of the previous chapter. Instead, I will turn to a general conclusion to wrap up what has been said so far and move towards some general insights.
Conclusion: Where is the political in global climate politics?

On today’s market, we find a whole series of products deprived of their malignant property: coffee without caffeine, cream without fat, beer without alcohol. And the list goes on: what about virtual sex as sex without sex? The Colin Powell doctrine of warfare with no casualties (on our side, of course) as warfare without warfare? The contemporary redefinition of politics as the art of expert administration as politics without politics?

(Žižek 2010)

At the very beginning, this book set out the task of elucidating the ecological paradox in global climate politics: Obviously, the tremendous attention given to global warming throughout media, politics and society is paired with a persistent unwillingness and political inability to address its fundamental causes and consequences. Put bluntly, it seems that whereas everybody is concerned with climate protection, nobody really protects the climate. In order to explain this paradox, this book opted to focus on a process which increases the political and public attention to global warming in global politics (but seems to bring about equally insufficient solutions): the mainstreaming of climate change in global politics. Now, having analysed various facets of this process, it seems that we can add another item to the list proposed in the epigraph: What about global climate politics without politicising climate change? In this conclusion, I would like to expand upon this diagnosis and then discuss the methodological, theoretical, empirical and practical implications of the previous chapters.


Logics of depoliticisation

The introduction condensed the general interest of this book into one overarching question: What is the ‘climate’ and the ‘political’ of the global climate polity? And it detailed this query in four research questions: how the global climate polity was created in the first place; through what discursive strategies climate mainstreaming (re-)produces, expands and intensifies this polity; what governmentality for rendering this polity governable it entails; and how it affects the other polities it is mainstreamed into. If the task was to answer these questions in one word, it would be: depoliticisation. Mainstreaming climate change in global warming appears as a paradigmatic example of depoliticising global warming. Recall that against a background of a post-foundational notion of the political (see chapter 3), a politicising understanding of global politics would involve highlighting and transforming its structural social and economic causes (such as industrial agriculture, fossil fuel dependency, growth orientation etc.), addressing issues of equity and power (such as the ecological debts of the North, the role of established industries, the imperial lifestyle of the North) or broadening democratic participation (such as a democratisation of energy systems). A depoliticised global climate polity, by contrast, seeks to prevent this politicisation from taking place by blurring causes of and responsibilities for climate change; administering and managing the status quo instead of democratic politics. Depoliticisation, in other words, narrows the scope of the global climate polity.

Broadly speaking, four logics of depoliticisation in the global climate polity have been carved out through analysing climate mainstreaming. First, the genealogy of sustainable development, which was undertaken in chapter 5, demonstrated that it has turned the widespread concern with environmental problems into a global climate polity – a polity, however, that followed the logic of postpolitical populism. It constructs nature out of control as a discursive outside and suggests sustainable development as the appropriate empty signifier, which is capable of defying this fundamental threat. Chapter 6 discussed how this general logic is put to work and refined in the three cases of climate mainstreaming. Here, climate change becomes an external enemy, which in turn constitutes humanity as a unitary and homogenous global actor. Climate protection is framed as an empty signifier, which is supposed to bring about not only the solution of the climate crisis, but also that of many other global crises. And this empty signifier is filled with the idea of a carbon governmentality as a deus ex machina – a bundle of technological, technocratic and techno-political measures for regulating carbon emissions. Therefore, the first logic of depoliticisation in climate mainstreaming is postpolitical populism: it depicts climate change as an external enemy instead of rooting in established social and economic practices; humanity as an essentially homogenous global actor
instead of marked by fundamental inequality in wealth and power; and the climate polity as a case for the political machine of carbon governmentality, in which technology trumps democracy.

Secondly, the genealogy of the climate polity presented in chapter 5 revealed that this very carbon governmentality is by far the dominant way of rendering climate change governable in the global climate polity. As has been demonstrated in chapter 7, carbon governmentality is also the dominant social logic implemented by climate mainstreaming. It serves as a discursive device for actors and institutions to reframe existing and sedimented practices as being compatible with climate protection – fulfilling its function as an empty signifier. For example, carbon governmentality enables an unaltered regime of free trade to become part of the climate protection discourse, whereas it rules out fundamental transformations of this regime at the same time. Moreover, not only the linguistic discourse of climate mainstreaming, but also the dispositif it puts in place renders existing practices as climate friendly and exports carbon reduction commitments from the North to the South, preserving the status quo in those parts of the world which have caused climate change. Therefore, the second logic of depoliticisation can be called carbon governmentality: it combines a sophisticated regime of administering and managing existing carbon emissions with the exclusion of structural causes of climate change as well as issues such as equity and participation.

Thirdly, in chapter 6 it was shown how climate change, bluntly speaking, becomes the dangerous Other of humanity, so that climate protection spurs the hope for an almost universal solution. Humanity vs. Dangerous climate change is the apocalyptic script for the battle for the future of the planet; climate protection becomes a question of either doom or salvation. In Chapter 8 it was asked how this discourse affects the polities it is mainstreamed into. Drawing on the paradigmatic case of the global social polity, it was argued that climate mainstreaming tends to externalise the causes for other social problems and grievances and so becomes the primary cause for all ills humanity faces. Climate protection, in turn, features as the encompassing solution to all these ills. From the perspective of the concept of the social fantasy (see chapter 3), climate mainstreaming thus involves a storyline which externalises the essential lack of the subject towards climate change. In this sense, the third logic of depoliticisation can be called the apocalyptic fantasy: climate change diverts attention away from the systematic causes of poverty and ‘underdevelopment’, as, for instance, the structural asymmetry of global economic relations, or the lack of democratic accountability of global economic actors, to name but a few.

Fourthly, in chapter 5 it was argued that discourses of adaptation to global warming frame climate change as a risk; a risk for development, for instance. In chapter 7 it was shown that the dominant form of rejecting carbon governmentality draws on the notion of vulnerab-
ility and frames the poor as the first and foremost victims of climate change; in other words, that countering carbon governmentality implies precisely such a governmentality of risk. In chapter 8, finally, it was demonstrated that climate mainstreaming in the global social polity results in a new risk governmentality which can be labeled ecopolitics of disaster. In line with the apocalyptic fantasy, it presents climate change as an unpredictable master-threat, which can hardly be averted. Instead, individuals have to be made fit for survival in times of an apocalyptic climate change. And this, in turn, invokes core images of advanced liberal rationalities of government characteristic for the neoliberal hegemony in the global social polity. In this sense, the fourth logic of depoliticisation should be called the eco-liberalism: in times of a severe crisis of the neoliberal hegemony, it reinvigorates core neoliberal themes with reference to a rationality based on biological and ecological thought; hence, eco-liberalism.

In sum, these four features of climate mainstreaming account for the ecological paradox to be found in global climate politics. Increasing awareness and decreasing action are neither contradiction nor accident. They are inherently connected by these logics of depoliticisation. And this apolitical tendency even seems to spill over into the global polities climate change is mainstreamed into. Paraphrasing James Ferguson (1990), it appears that climate change is the global anti-politics machine of the 21st century.

This is the main empirical insight that this book seeks to contribute to our understanding of present day global climate politics, which in my view is so far underdeveloped in other approaches to the topic. In line with the logic of retroductive reasoning, however, it is clear that these insights are more trend than totality. Especially the fourth logic, eco-liberalism, is unequally distributed across the different cases. While it was paradigmatically presented by the global social polity, evidence in the global environmental polity was not as clear, and much less of this was found in the global economic polity. Remarkably, however, it is the storyline which is most strongly shared by the civil society organisations in the sample. The other three logics, by contrast, were found to be similarly characteristic for all three cases, whereas resistance to this storyline was mostly rooted within the NGOs of all three political fields. This is not to say, however, that resistance is widespread within the sample of analysed documents. The dominant strategy of resistance is a strategy of counter-conduct. Instead of formulating a global political alternative, it draws on the basic patterns of hegemonic discourses and seeks to utilise the contingencies, tensions, dislocations and ruptures within this discourse in order to shift the discourse marginally from within. Given the relatively small ambition of this strategy as well as the rather marginal extent to which it is present in the discourse, it is more than plausible to state that the postpolitical version of climate mainstreaming – comprising the four logics of depoliticisation – is hegemonic in all three polities.
Methodological questions

Despite all this empirical evidence, the critical reader is likely to challenge the argument put forth here methodologically. She could, for example, ask: ‘It is all quite interesting what you propose, but at the end of the day you haven’t explained climate mainstreaming at all. Where is the agency in your analysis?’

And I would have to confess: ‘It is absent!’

“But why did actors pursue climate mainstreaming?”

‘Well, I can only speculate, but honestly: I don’t know!’

‘So if you don’t know, how can you rule out that the ecological paradox is not simply the unintended outcome of intentional actions like, for example, the ‘tragedy of the commons’ (Hardin 1968)?’

‘I can’t, a tragedy is possible, indeed. But I think that would be too simple.’

‘So if agency is too simple, you are referring to structures. But why have you been silent on political economy? Is the logic of climate mainstreaming not simply governed by the logic of capitalist accumulation?’

‘Maybe!’

‘So is climate change perhaps just another case of greenwashing capitalism which has been analysed a thousand times before?’

‘For sure it is, but it is also much more than that!’

‘So, look, you are just evading! In the end, you have to confess that you cannot explain climate mainstreaming at all.’

And after a small pause, I would eventually respond: ‘Indeed, I confess guilty to all your accusations. And nonetheless I contend that I do explain climate mainstreaming. But where you demand causal simplification, I champion causal multiplication, as I explained in chapter 4.’

‘What a nice quibble for disguising your fault!’

‘Listen. With causal multiplication I mean that climate mainstreaming is far too complex for being reduced to one single cause such as the rational actor or the capitalist economy. The causes for climate mainstreaming analysed in previous chapters are manifold. For example, already the genealogy of sustainable development, carbon governmentality and apocalyptic fantasy imply that climate change is mainstreamed in a particular way. If it is framed as a
common concern of humanity, as a fundamental threat for the entire planet, it appears only plausible to integrate it into many other issue areas. If carbon governmentality is the dominant problematisation of global warming, it comes as no surprise that it also dominantly characterises climate mainstreaming. If it simulates activity through a sophisticated regime of government but leaves basic social structures untouched, it is a response to climate change that comes at politically low costs. If climate change distracts the attention away from other problems, antagonisms and grievances, it of course appears as an attractive discursive project for political actors. If climate mainstreaming fits well with existing economic and social structures, it is no wonder that it is so successful. And if climate mainstreaming generates widespread public attention and delays action at the same time, it is a systematic explanation for the ecological paradox described in the introduction. If you impose the tragedy of the commons, the rational actor or the capitalist economy on this empirical richness, you neglect the multifaceted nature of climate mainstreaming. In chapter 4, I introduced the idea of retrodution, for which an explanation is something that accounts for a certain phenomenon. In this sense, explanation means rendering a phenomenon intelligible.‘

‘That is all well, but when it comes to explanation, is saying everything not the same as saying nothing? Is your enterprise not simply comparable to what Max Weber has termed ‘understanding’ as opposed to ‘explaining’ – simply making sense of something?’

‘The concept of crystallisation as introduced in chapter 4 – the poststructuralist version of triangulation, so to speak – indeed implies the idea that approaching something through a crystal breaks the light in many facets. But a crystal nonetheless has one or more focal points. In this sense, it is also possible to generalise and abstract without excluding empirical richness. The logics of depoliticisation are such focal points, which transcend the individual cases without denying their varieties.’

‘Given I would accept that you are simply saying something entirely different than standard methodology does: why do you want to call it explanation, though?’

‘Because it plays a crucial role in what you think an explanation is. If, for example, you adopt a neo-Marxist perspective, it is obvious that climate mainstreaming is just some greenwashing. So you can perhaps explain climate mainstreaming with the dynamic of capitalist explanation quite well. But referring it back to an underlying quasi-transcendental “cause” does not tell you anything about how it is achieved. For example, how is it possible that everyone commits to climate protection but basically sticks to business as usual at the same time, and that this appears plausible? The neo-Marxist framework does not tell much about this – and even though you would call it an explanation? Or take a rational choice approach
to climate mainstreaming: Without much empirical analysis I can explain that it is rational for international organisations to become part of a climate protection discourse. But just because it is rational, this does not mean that it is also possible. In this sense, your explanation is as much or as little an explanation as is mine.’

‘Maybe I am convinced. But then your explanation is also incomplete, if it leaves out agency or capitalism, for example. If you aim for causal multiplication, you failed in your own terms.’

‘I am happily willing to confess that. In my view, every study, every book or every research project has to focus on some aspects and leave out others. Take a rather well-known example. Michel Foucault’s analysis of biopower in his The Will to Truth is a profound study of how sexuality and modern life have become the focal point of power relations. And although he claims that this is “an indispensible element in the development of capitalism” (Foucault 1978, 140-41), he almost entirely does without mentioning capitalism (except precisely three times). But only few would question the overall merits of his work – including those primarily working from a Marxist perspective. In this sense, I was eager to highlight those dimensions, namely power and knowledge, which are highly undervalued in present day analyses of global climate politics. But, of course, this comes at the cost of neglecting other factors – yet without being entirely incompatible with these factors! If, for example, someone seeks to highlight the role of rational actors in climate mainstreaming, my analysis demonstrates *why* it is rational for some actors to invest in this process – because, for instance, it has a depoliticising effect. Or, with reference to capitalism, why climate mainstreaming fits so well with the dominant economic model. In this sense, my causal multiplication contributes to explanation. And although I agree that it is not an exhaustive explanation, I hope that it provides a value in itself – especially in light of the fact that academic work on global climate politics is not exactly overcrowded with analyses of discourse and power.’

‘OK, even if you are right, the point remains valid that what I call explanation can be methodologically tested, whereas in your poststructuralist perspective everything seems to be “true”.’

‘Recall chapter 4, where I have discussed the ‘postpositivist paradox’ (Wullweber 2010, 49); namely, that even poststructuralist explanations are only plausible against a certain hegemonic backdrop, and that this backdrop ironically happens to be a positivist one. The methodological contribution my work tried to make is dealing with this problem and asking how core methodological principles of positivism could be interpreted from a poststructuralist
angle; how poststructuralism can increase the plausibility of the explanations it provides without undermining its own theoretical commitments. If you doubt the validity, representativeness or reliability of my explanation, I suggest returning to chapter 4 for a second reading. And after that, I leave it to you if you agree with me and find my analysis plausible – because that is the bottom line: whether or not my research passes the test of the scholarly community and is usefully employed by other researchers. Even the best mathematical test cannot guarantee for that in advance.’

‘Thank you very much for the reminder. But I remember chapter 4 quite well, but I am interested if you really lived up to the standards developed there. What about, for example, the validity of your research?’

‘Well, I am relatively content with my research to the extent that the results of the different methods applied all seem to converge in the diagnosis of depoliticisation and highlight different facets, nonetheless. I am unhappy, however, that the variety of methods prevented me from going into more detail with each method. Given the fact that all seem to converge, less would perhaps have been more. My crystal, it seems, had too many facets and less focal points than expected. Concentrating on one particular aspect and conducting a more in-depth-analysis could have revealed a more fine-grained result.’

‘Hmmm. And you had quite a lot of cases, too.’

‘Yes, that even increased the problem. Again, retrospectively I wonder whether the selection of cases was all too advantageous. Apart from the last chapter, all seem to converge in the same results, so perhaps a more contrasting selection of cases would have been helpful. In sum, I am quite confident that my findings can be generalised legitimately, but more variation, perhaps on different spatial levels, might have turned out to be more interesting.’

‘So would you prefer to start all over again?’

‘No, definitely not! But if I would, I would approach climate mainstreaming differently. I would strengthen the genealogical perspective, because now that I know how the global climate polity works, I want to know more precisely how that came about. I would also focus much more on agency. Not in the sense of individual rational actors, but in the sense of discursive agency. Who put the origins of carbon governmentality in what context on whose agenda? Which actors started to frame climate change as a threat? And in order to make that possible, I would focus on less cases and institutions. I am confident with the rather detailed picture I could paint of a very broad discourse. But having done that, I think there would have been more value in detail.’
‘Let us return to the validity. It strikes the eye that you have conducted what Iver Neumann has termed ‘armchair analysis’ (Neumann 2002, 628) – studying documents and archives, but not going out into the field and investigating actual practices. But these latter could present an entirely different picture.’

‘Yes, of course. This is another reason for my desire to downsize the empirical field. In the beginning, I actually started out with a plan for interviews. But my field trip to the Copenhagen summit was a failure. I managed to interview three persons responsible for climate mainstreaming – one from the World Bank, one from UNDP and one from the CDB. But these interviews mirrored the general character of the Copenhagen summit: it was very difficult to get access at all, and once you were in, not much could be learned, either. That trip and two more telephone interviews taught me that I would not need interviews. The analysis of documents would be fine, because interviewees just summarised their respective flagship publications. Leaving the armchair, in a sense, showed me what I knew before and, thus, had no value in itself, although I agree it is desirable. But the broadness of my study prevented me from adopting other forms of fieldwork, such as ethnographic methods, which would have allowed for connecting speech to practices. The analysis of the CDM based on secondary literature is the attempt to compensate for this problem. But it clearly remains insufficient, nonetheless.’

‘And how do you evaluate your discourse analysis?’

‘Well, I am rather satisfied with the results, but I am not sure if I solved the selection problems. After measuring a rather broad discursive field, it is very difficult to decide what to include in the text. For one thing, it was difficult – and eventually simply a subjective choice – to select a certain focus and disregard other aspects. For these texts spoke of virtually everything. The World Development Report alone counts 417 pages. I am still not sure if I did justice to those texts. Moreover, all the time I had the feeling that I need to present more empirical material in order to be convincing. The tables in chapters 6, 7 and 8 are an expression of this – although some told me that they were not helpful at all. If you work quantitatively, you just present your numbers and make your database available. But with my very qualitative approach, I eventually had to accept that much would simply depend on whether you as a reader trust my analysis. I was not aware that qualitative research is such a subjective thing.’

‘Well, I do trust what you say – at least I have no reason to do otherwise – but at times your results appear to be too smooth.’
‘Absolutely, another problem that concerned me throughout the last year of my work! I myself was struck by the fact that everything seemed to fit so well. An expression of this is the inclusion of the Cochabamba Declaration in order to increase the contrast within the study. And perhaps a different selection of cases would have served this purpose as well – although I could not easily think of a plausible alternative at the moment. In the end, I came to accept that this smoothness was just a very strong support for my thesis – the hegemony of a depoliticising approach in the climate polity. But I agree that those who have not delved into the material as I did would read this as a certain sloppiness, neglecting the varieties in the discourse.’

‘So if I may summarise this, you contend that your work carves out the logic of the general global climate polity very well, but could benefit from more focus on detail, including the study of actual practices, a less subjective judgement, and more contrast within the sample.’

‘No, I disagree with the subjectivity bit: I am convinced now that you can only disguise but not eradicate it. But regarding the other aspects: there is probably always a certain trade-off in them, but in principle your summary is correct. Yet I would like to emphasise again: all this does not make me doubt the validity, reliability or representativity of my research in general.’

And although the conversation could likely go on for a long time, this should suffice for the purpose of this conclusion.

**Theoretical contributions**

I would like to highlight four theoretical debates in International Relations to which the previous analysis speaks, in one form of another. First of all, and most prominently, current debates in IR struggle with how to deal with those parts of global politics which cannot be described in the terms of inter-state politics. Mainstream (Rosenau 1995; Zürn 1998b) as well as more critical scholars (Walker 1993) agree that the traditional model of politics among nations is insufficient for dealing with present day transformations at the global level. However, as Olaf Corry has observed, most calls for abandoning the nation state ‘end up sitting uncomfortably astride concepts and terminology soaked in what Rob Walker has called the “discursive horizons that express the spatiotemporal configurations of another era”’ (Corry 2010b, 2; citing Walker 1993, x). Corry himself has introduced a fascinating definition of the ‘global polity’, which is supposed to exist ‘when a group of units become oriented towards the governance of a common “governance-object”’ that ‘comes to be considered real and meaningful as an object that can and should be operated upon politically’ (Corry 2010b, 3).
Conclusion: Where is the political in global climate politics?

Despite all the innovative power of this conception, it does neither explain how this actually takes place nor does it acknowledge the fact that a relevant number of relevant actors or institutions must accept this polity as legitimate. This book sought to address these shortcomings with the discursive ontology of hegemony. Understanding the global climate polity as a hegemonic discourse and studying the process how this polity is enlarged and intensified, it allowed for analysis of the discursive strategies (e.g., ‘postpolitical populism’) through which a common governance-object is established as well as the extent to which this enlarged polity is hegemonic (that is, accepted by a relevant number of relevant actors). Hegemony so far is strangely underrepresented in International Relations. As has been suggested in chapter 3, this is due to the lack of an appropriate domain, since most analyses of hegemony remain tied to the nation state in one form or the other. In this sense, the concept of the global polity can benefit from a hegemonic reading, the same way hegemony theory can benefit from a closer engagement with the global polity. As a result, the previous chapters suggest that hegemony theory, combined with the concept of the polity, can inform recent debates about the transformation of global politics.

A second debate concerns a notion of power in global politics, which goes beyond the simple neorealist conception of power as (military) capacity (Barnett & Duvall 2005a; Guzzini 2005; Neumann & Sending 2007). In chapter 3 I have proposed to study power in the global polity through the lens of governmentality. While some acknowledge the value of a Foucauldian take on power for global politics theoretically (Barnett & Duvall 2005b; Göhler et al. 2010), and many apply a governmentality framework empirically (for example Lipschutz 2005; Walters & Haahr 2005; Merlingen 2006), only few have investigated the ontological propositions of transferring the concept to the global level; and those who have done so question the applicability of the concept to this very level (Selby 2007; Chandler 2009; Joseph 2009; Joseph 2010b; Joseph 2010c; Joseph 2010a). In particular, it is argued that the global level lacks the appropriate problem space for governmentality to enfold. In chapter 3, I have dealt with these objections theoretically. Especially in chapter 5, and also thereafter, I have sought to demonstrate that in carbon governmentality, the global carbon cycle constitutes a viable substitute for a global population, which indeed does hardly exist. In this sense, I have attempted to guard the emerging research on global governmentality against its critics theoretically and empirically (see also Methmann 2012).

A third debate involves the notion of the political in International Relations. Ole Jacob Sending and Iver Neumann convincingly argue that the work of Hans Morgenthau, one of the most influential theorists of International Relations, was split between two different conceptions of politics: politics defined in terms of ‘intensity’, that is, a feature of all social spheres; and the political as an ‘ideal-typical and semi-autonomous sphere’ (Neumann &
Sending 2010, 50). Eventually, he prioritised the latter over the former and concluded that the proper domain of politics would be restricted to that what happens between nation-states. Crucially, however, he was quite clear that this deliberate bracketing of the political character of other social spheres was due to the specific historic constellation of the time at which he was writing. Other times might need a different account of the political in global politics (Neumann & Sending 2010, 51). Despite that, Morgenthau’s restriction of the political to politics among nations has come to dominate International Relations. And it is poststructuralism, among others, which contributes to a re-interpretation of the political in global politics.

As Jenny Edkins explains, it acknowledges the importance of questions of language, discourse and ideology to a consideration of the political. Much of what we call “politics” is in many senses “depoliticised” or technologised: the room for real political change has been displaced by a technology of expertise of the rule of bureaucracy. (Edkins 1999, xi)

Implicitly, the study of climate mainstreaming undertaken in this book speaks to this debate by contrasting politics with the political and highlighting four logics of depoliticisation. Whereas many observers would contend that the global climate polity is highly politicised – there is intense conflict among states about how to respond to global warming – this ‘post-foundational’ understanding of the political (Marchart 2005) highlights the many ways in which this apparent politicisation is caged into a highly depoliticised discursive framing. In this sense, it contributes to highlighting the difference between politics among nations and the political in global politics.

A fourth debate, far less prominent than the other two, involves what could be labelled an ‘affective turn’ in international relations. As Neta Crawford has observed, emotions and affect are dealt with in International Relations, although only ‘implicit and undertheorised’ (Crawford 2000, 119) – as, for example, the role of fear in Realism. However, in recent years, especially constructivist and poststructuralist perspectives have started to deal with this aspect of global politics (for example Zehfuss 2003; Edkins 2004; Pupavac 2004). Yet as Andrew Ross in a thorough review of literature on this topic explains, constructivist approaches struggle to deal with perceiving emotions due to a lack of proper theoretical concepts (Ross 2006). I have tried to develop a small contribution by highlighting the fantasmatic dimension of climate mainstreaming and so demonstrated the usefulness of the concept of the social fantasy. Although it took comparatively small space compared to hegemony and governmentality, it can fill gaps in both approaches and so increase their explanatory purchase.

In sum, I have demonstrated how governmentality and hegemony can be used for highlighting discourse and power in global politics, which are left unaddressed or dealt with in-
sufficiently in most other approaches. And I have tried to show that although these approaches are often understood as two very different animals in the poststructuralist zoo, they can fruitfully be applied together.

**Empirical speculations**

What can we learn from the results of the previous analysis beyond global climate politics? The insight that climate mainstreaming is a paradigmatic example for depoliticisation concurs, for example, with the observation that climate change has become something like an ‘opium for the masses’ (Žižek 2006b). As geographer Erik Swyngedouw suggests, climate protection in its dominant form represents only ‘a socio-ecological fix to make sure nothing really changes’ (Swyngedouw 2010, 222) – without, however, presenting much empirical material to back up his thesis. The analysis conducted throughout the previous chapters provides ample evidence that supports these speculations. The hegemonic discourse of climate change, which permeates the global climate polity as well as the wider global environmental polity, the global social polity as well as the global economic polity, is designed in a way so as not to protect the climate. Instead, it protects the status quo, the established order of social and economic structures, from climate protection. Climate mainstreaming, or so this book argues, is a political project that prevents major socio-economic transformations. These insights can likely be transferred to other levels and domains of climate politics, for example, the national or regional level. In this sense, one could try to analyse these domains through the lens of the four logics of depoliticisation which were put forth above in order to see if climate change is advanced to prevent change there.

However, some results of the previous chapter go beyond a simple preservation of the status quo, and thus seem to be relevant for other spheres beyond the narrow field of global climate politics. In chapter 8, it was discussed how the emergence of global warming merges advanced liberal governmentality and the ecopolitics of disaster into an eco-liberalism – supporting neoliberal policies with biological and ecological rationalities. In this sense, the results of this project suggest that climate mainstreaming does not only affect global climate politics, but could be read as symbolic for a wider shift taking place beyond this field: the ecologisation of global politics.

In his famous lectures on the genealogy of the prevalent mode of power in modern societies – governmentality – Michel Foucault observed that ‘the transition in the eighteenth century from a regime dominated by structures of sovereignty to a regime dominated by techniques of government revolves around population, and consequently around the birth of political economy’ (Foucault 2007a, 106, emphasis added). In other words, liberal government
was informed by a rationality which rendered the object of government as an ‘economy’. Mitchell Dean has continued on this trail and argued that in an advanced liberal governmentality, the aim of conducting a self-regulating economy has been displaced with a ‘reflexive government’; namely, that the economy has turned from an object of governmental intervention into the yardstick and organising principle of government itself (Dean 2010, 224-26).

And given the crisis of neoliberal regimes around the world, the emergence of eco-liberalism as observed in chapter 8 might mark another displacement: not the economy but ecology becomes the new standard imposed on government. ‘Vulnerability’, ‘resilience’, ‘diversity’ or ‘precaution’ are only some of the concepts that inform government in the face of apocalyptic climate change. In other words, ecological and biological concept substitute the economy as the rationality of advanced liberal forms of government. And if governmentality has gone global, as was discussed throughout the previous section, this turn to eco-liberalism might affect the wider field of global politics.

Although it is only possible to speculate about these wider implications based on the study at hand, such a speculation would not be without evidence in global politics. For example, contributions from critical security studies have demonstrated how the concepts of ‘resilience’ (Walker & Cooper 2011), ‘precaution’ (Aradau & Munster 2007), ‘contingency’ and life understood as ‘adaptive emergence’ (Dillon 2008) have increasingly been loosened from their bio/ecological context and applied to understanding and governing societies in general. The OECD, for example, puts ‘fragile states’ next to ‘resilient states’ and calls for helping ‘national reformers to build effective, legitimate, and resilient state institutions, capable of engaging productively with their people to promote sustained development’ (OECD 2008) – resilience leading to sustainability, but without referring to the environment at all.

Also during the recent financial and economic crisis, much has been talked about notions such as ‘toxic assets’ or ‘sustainable growth’, which clearly have biological or ecological implications – note, moreover, that growth itself is a biological concept. Even the theory of International Relations begins to be recoded in terms of a complexity science, itself invoking concepts such as ‘emergence’, ‘self-organization’, ‘co-evolution’, or ‘fitness/resilience’ (Harrison 2006). In this sense, one could read climate mainstreaming not only as a process through which the climate becomes a widely acknowledged object of government, but through which conceptions of governing a changing climate become significant for global politics in general. Following up on the results of this work, it might be useful to study how a stable and safe environment has turned from an object of governance into a metaphor for organising politics itself.

However, even if these speculations would turn out to be too far-fetched in light of future research, this book at least raises severe questions for the established approaches to global cli-
mate politics and climate science in general. As has been discussed in the first part of this book, mainstream analyses of global climate politics have been busy mapping and explaining the agents and institutions of climate politics – the politics in the global climate polity. But as the second part of the book demonstrated, the political aspects of the global climate polity can account for much of the ecological paradox and other dynamics within this polity. In this sense, I would contend that more attention needs to be paid to this latter dimension. This would involve questions such as: how do agents engage in discursive struggle about the causes of and solutions to climate change? How do institutions (re-)produce and maintain certain images and problematisations of climate change? How have these images historically been constructed and become hegemonic? How do these discourses vary across different spatial levels, how do they differ between North and South? Where is carbon governmental-ity hegemonic, and where not? What are the neglected storylines and representations of climate change? How have the different sub-problematisations within the global climate polity – deforestation, technology transfer, carbon finance, climate wars and refugees (to name but a few) – been constituted and rendered as objects of concern? What solutions does this imply? How do they affect the depth of problem causes to be considered? How does this produce different responsibilities for action? How does this open or close spaces for democratic participation? And what can be learned from this analysis for a different approach to global warming? This list is definitely not exhaustive, nor should it imply that some of these questions are not being dealt with already. The message that flows from it, however, is that a lot of the interesting questions are insufficiently dealt with. 20 years after the adoption of the UNFCCC, new approaches are not only needed in the climate polity (see below), they are equally necessary for the scholar engagement with this polity.

And this holds true especially for the general domain of climate science. The work of most scientists seems to be driven by the assumption that the more we know about the urgency of global warming, the more likely decisive and bold action on its causes becomes.\footnote{A case in point for this tendency is the Copenhagen diagnosis written by 26 leading scientist as an update on the state of the art in climate science before Copenhagen. Hans-Joachim Schellnhuber, one of the lead authors, put the purpose of the report as follows: ‘This is a final scientific call for the climate negotiators from 192 countries who must embark on the climate protection train in Copenhagen. They need to know the stark truth about global warming and the unprecedented risks involved.’ (Reuters, November 24, 2009)} But in light of logics of depoliticisation, the simple equation ‘concern = action’ does not seem to work out. Instead, the strategy of ever increasing problem pressure, of painting ever more dramatic pictures of climate change, might well be trapped in the ecological paradox and further reinforce the politics of unsustainability. In this sense, climate science should be aware that every form of knowledge has certain power effects and that different questions need to be asked
here, too. Of course, it is not wrong to know more about the physical conditions and the impacts of global warming. But climate change is not only a physical, but a social process. In this sense, more knowledge about the interrelationship between social structures and global warming is needed.

**Practical conclusions**

So if one accepts the conclusions drawn from the previous chapters, what does this mean for the prospects of an emancipative and transformative understanding of climate politics? It has been obvious from the very beginning that this research project is underpinned by a certain normative commitment, which can be summarised broadly as the conviction that the climate crisis can only be averted if we substantially transform societies around the world – including the capitalist economy as one of the core drivers of global warming (for this conviction in detail see Methmann, Haack & Eisgruber 2007). Very broadly, this would entail a perspective on global warming informed by the ideal of radical democracy discussed in chapter 4.

In light of the previous analysis, a couple of lessons can be learnt for the global climate polity. To start with, it has become clear that the framing of global warming as a global problem in need of a consensual global response bears an inherently depoliticising tendency. Instead, global climate politics should try to be less global. Not so much hope should be spurred in international negotiations, and local, national or regional action should never be made dependent on it. As Steve Rayner holds, there ‘may well be some aspects of climate policy that require international agreements between many countries […]but] these instances are far fewer than conventional climate policy supposes’ (Rayner 2010, 617). He thus proposes a ‘bottom-up approach’, in which ‘climate change policies should be designed and implemented at the lowest feasible level of organisation’ (Rayner 2010, 617). The analysis of climate mainstreaming supports this conviction. Some issues, such as the historical carbon debt of the North are indeed genuinely international or global issues, and adequate financial compensation should be organised on this level. Apart from that, though, many other issues should not be put under a global framing that tends to depoliticise them.

If some fear the problem of free-riding – although I would guess that the fear of free-riding has caused much more delay than actual free-riding – and hence plead for a global co-ordination of certain issue areas, global politics should be far more concerned with the actual aims and less with ‘smart mechanisms’. For the latter have resulted in the creation of a vast regime of carbon governementality whose impact is little impressive. If the aim is to entirely phase out fossil fuels (as it should be), why not agree on a non-proliferation treaty for fossil
fueals? Or even make sure that the fossils stay in the ground? The government of Ecuador, as an inspiring example, has offered not to drill oil from the Yasuni national park if it receives compensation for the lost revenues (*The Guardian*, October 9, 2008). This is a perfect example of linking the global issue of carbon debt with a much more substantive form of climate politics than the complex mechanisms of the Kyoto-Protocol – although it receives much less support at present.

Scaling down global climate politics to other spatial levels is also the prerequisite for a more democratic climate politics in the sense of the radical democracy presented in chapter 4. Radical democracy allows for a constant questioning of its own social foundations, and fights over contrasting, alternative visions for the organisation of society. In order to bring the political back into climate politics, its scope and scale must be much broadened. Instead of the technocratic management of a very abstract goal - the two degree goal of carbon governmentality – a democratic process should debate about alternative forms of life. If, for example, climate change is deeply rooted in mobility structures, we have to discuss radical alternatives. Why not propose car-free cities and investing the saved money into subventions for bicycle-commuting and free public transport? This might seem far-fetched for many policy-makers, but only if such seemingly utopian alternatives are put on the agenda, it will ever be possible to realise them.

This last example points to another lesson from the previous analysis. It was found that much of the depoliticisation in the global climate polity originates within the tendency to elevate climate change over other grievances and to abstract the carbon content of social activities. Instead, climate change needs to be put back into the socio-economic context from which it comes. Car-free cities, for instance, are not only beneficial because they result in less carbon emissions, but also produce less noise, enable the revitalisation of public life, and increase the quality of living in general. This does not only provide additional good arguments for winning such democratic debates, it also entails a fantasmatic image of a good life, which is essential for making radical change attractive for individual citizens. This holds true for all the other aspects of climate mainstreaming, which were discussed in previous chapter. Instead of reducing free trade to a matter of climate protection, we should ask whether we truly want to buy products from far away, produced under dubious social conditions, which we often do not even need? This would put climate mainstreaming back on its feet: climate change not as the one decisive crisis, but embedded in many other social grievances. In this sense, the best contribution to mitigating global warming is to de-centre it.

I admit that this briefly sketched alternative for the global climate polity is not very likely to be picked by decision makers tomorrow. For it, of course, touches upon questions of power and privileges, and goes beyond the scope of the hegemonic frame. This is why any
alternative vision for a different climate and politics in the global climate polity has to be rooted in a strong social movement and bold civil society. This is not to say that there would not be enough pressure and advocacy groups on climate change. However, as the previous analysis also pointed out, large parts of civil society are severely infected with the logics of depoliticisation. This problem is paradigmatically expressed by the recent prominent case of Greenpeace activists who were sentenced to jail in Denmark in the aftermath of the Copenhagen summit (The Guardian, August 22, 2011). They were accused of gatecrashing a royal banquet of governmental representatives and unfurling a banner. For many, this is a meaningful act of resistance in civil society. Against the backdrop of this book, however, it is symptomatic for how much even civil society is trapped in the depoliticising logic of the climate polity. The banner read: ‘Politicians talk, leaders act.’ Yet it is the political that is missing from climate politics.

In this sense, the outcomes of this investigation also speak to the strategy of NGOs and social movements. We can learn that one should be careful to frame climate change as planetary catastrophe or existential external threat. One should not too easily hold up the Kyoto Protocol as the road to avoiding a ‘dangerous climate change’. In other words, it does not seem wise to join in into the chorus of climate mainstreaming. Superficially, it might contribute to awareness raising and more public and political concern. Yet as was shown, in fact, it feeds the overall depoliticising tendency in global climate politics.

Given the strong hegemony of postpolitical populism and carbon governmentality in the global climate polity, it might appear difficult to adopt such a radical change of course for many active in social movements. But throughout the analysis, also a lot of examples of counter-conduct were revealed, too. For example, linking the idea of a Green New Deal to the instance of Cuba as a radically different form of life, articulating resilience and a focus on communities in favour of localisation and democratisation; speaking of carbon debts with reference to differing vulnerability. All these are not radical alternatives. But loosening them from the dominant discourse of the global climate polity might be a first step, which could be followed by the formulation of a more profound utopia for social life.

In this sense, more boldness of civil society actors is necessary to successively break with the dominant storylines. By way of conclusion, I would suggest a certain analogy with the anti-globalisation movement. When this movement, in the late 1990s started to question the dominant success-story of economic globalisation and pointed to its many downsides, scarcely anyone listened. They were clear outsiders in the dominant neoliberal discourse. In 2011, the world facing major economic and financial crises, this critique eventually has become mainstream. It took more than a decade until leading conservative figures such as Thatcher biographer Charles Moore confess: ‘I’m starting to think that the Left might actually
be right.’ (The Daily Telegraph, July 22, 2011). The making as well as the breaking of hegemony takes much time. But as Foucault once stated: ‘Politics is no more or no less than that which is born with resistance to governmentality, the first uprising, the first confrontation.’ (quoted in Sennelart 2007, 390) Unless the political in global climate politics is regained with such a first uprising, it is never going to come back at all.
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Appendix: List of sources

The following documents were sampled and analysed according to the methodology outlined in chapter 3. Please note that this book is based upon a qualitative discourse analysis of mostly paradigmatic publications, which causes the slight imbalance in the sampling across cases and organisations. All sources are also included in the bibliography.

Global Economic Polity

(3) Gurria (2009a) ‘Carbon has no place in global trade rules’ (Newspaper article)
(4) Gurria, A. (2009b) ‘Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in developed countries’ (Speech)
(7) OECD (2009a) ‘Agriculture and climate change: impacts, mitigation and adaptation’ (Study).
(8) OECD (2009b) ‘Cost-Effective actions to tackle climate change’ (Brochure)
(9) OECD (2009c) ‘The economics of climate change mitigation: Policies and options for global action beyond 2012 (Study)
(10) OECD (2009d) ‘OECD Secretary-General looks beyond Copenhagen’ (Press release)
(11) OECD (2009e) ‘Tackling climate change and growing the economy’ (Website)
(12) OECD (2010a) ‘Climate change and competitiveness’ (Website)
(13) OECD (2010b) ‘Green growth and development’ (Website)
(14) OECD (2010c) ‘The Road to Mexico: Strategies and Vehicles for successful climate change negotiations 2010’ (Speech)
(15) OECD (2010d) ‘Tackling climate change: How to ensure the necessary finance flows’ (Speech)
(18) WBCSD (2011) ‘Carbon pricing. The role of the carbon price as a climate change policy instrument’ (Brochure)
(19) WEF (2008) ‘CEO climate policy recommendations to G8 leaders’ (Open letter)
(20) WEF (2010) ‘From collision to vision: Climate change and world trade’ (Brochure)
(21) WEF (2011) ‘Scaling up low-carbon infrastructure investment in developing countries’ (Brochure)
(22) WTO (2007) ‘Doha could deliver double-win for environment and trade’ (Speech)
(23) WTO (2008) ‘A consensual international accord on climate change is needed’ (Speech)
(24) WTO (2009a) ‘Lamy underscores the urgency of responding to the climate crisis’ (Press release)
(25) WTO (2009b) ‘WTO and UNEP launch a report explaining for the first time the connections between trade and climate change’ (Press release)
(26) WTO (2011a) ‘Activities of the WTO and the challenge of climate change’ (Website)
(28) WTO (2011b) ‘The multilateral trading system and climate change: introduction’ (Website)
(29) WTO & UNEP (2009) ‘Trade and climate change’ (Study)

Global Social Polity

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