

A Concept of Convenience?

How the concept of leadership has been used in relation to the EU and climate regime formation.

Abstract

This paper investigates the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regime formation. It investigates how the concept of leadership has been approached in the literature, and looks at statements by the EU and scholars on EU leadership in relation to climate change. The study concludes that leadership can be seen as a concept of convenience. It has often been taken for granted when describing the role of the EU, it has been analysed primarily from a liberal approach, and it has been used to connect EU's ambitious climate policies with its ambition of strengthening its international prestige. The study suggest a more constructivist approach for further investigation of the topic.

Keywords: Leadership, climate regimes, EU, COP-15, constructivism

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Terminology - climate regimes

Regime: "The principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures which form the basis of co-operation on a particular issue in international relations" (Carter 2007:245). Part of the significance of a regime is that, by agreeing to it, a government voluntarily accepts external interference in the way it exploits resources within its own sovereign territory. The growth of MEAs [Multilateral Environmental Agreement] since the early 1970s is evidence of growing international co-operation to deal with problems of the global commons (ibid).

1. Introduction

1.1. Definition of problem and background

In the early 1990s the concept of leadership was introduced in the study of international regimes to describe the strategic behaviour, which negotiating parties sometimes would take on to facilitate agreement. The concept seemed to grasp an essential feature of regime formation, “that parties can be differentiated by the extent to which they are capable of, and willing to, take on a certain leadership role that could lead to joint solutions” (Skodvin and Andersen 2006:13). The characteristics of the concept were later adapted by studies on climate regimes, and leadership became a popular concept to use when describing the EU’s role in climate regime. However, it has, with some notable exceptions, not been subjected to critical analytical and conceptual discussion. Instead, EU leadership in relation to climate change, has to some extent been taken for granted in a number of literary works and indeed by the EU itself.

One key assumption in the literature is, that the EU has since the 1990s increasingly established itself as an international leader in process of climate regime formation. US withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol agreement and efforts by the EU to ‘rescue’ the process signalled that the EU had moved into a global leadership position on climate change. These events have been further fuelled by the EU’s ambitious targets and front-running climate policies. This led to conjectures from numerous scholars and even the EU, that the EU would be able to lead the efforts to secure a global deal on climate change at the fifteenth Conference of Parties (COP-15) in Copenhagen. Instead, the outcome of the COP-15 has questioned the claims of EU leadership made by scholars and the EU itself. This in turn has raised a need to reexamine the claims on EU leadership, leading up to the COP 15, but also a need to explore how, and why, the concept of leadership has been used in the context of climate regimes.

1.2. Approach of study

The study will illustrate how certain aspects of leadership have been taken for granted and some of the implications this has had. There exists an unreflective consensus on the concept of leadership, with most people having an idea of what it means or at least that it is important. Nevertheless there is a certain vagueness surrounding the concept, e.g. what exactly does it entail. The vagueness can give rise to certain aspects of leadership being taken for granted without having been subjected to critical analysis. This study will make a conceptual investigation of the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regimes. It will investigate the common approach to leadership in the literature, but also how leadership has been used and why. The study will explore the concept

of leadership from different angles to get a fuller picture of the concept. It will combine two different ontological approaches and on a whole attempt to look at the topic in a different way than what has been common in the literature. The study will also present the argument that leadership can be seen as a convenient category that caters to the EU's ambition of promoting its international status on climate change, and promotes its front-running policies on climate change. It will consequently argue that COP-15 is likely to influence the way leadership is looked at, in the context of climate regime formation. The overall approach of the study is critical towards the way leadership has been used and studied, but the use of criticism in this study aims to help understand and further develop the concept, rather than 'solely' pointing out its problematic issues.

1.3. Outline of the study

The paper will first outline the approach and method of the study, followed by the main assumptions of the literature. Illustrating the different leadership categories that have become a focal point of leadership analysis in relation to climate regimes. In doing so, it will highlight key limits to the general approach to leadership in the literature. Then it will provide examples of statements on EU leadership on climate change, by the EU and in the literature. The examples of statements will highlight certain assumptions on leadership, which will be argued to have been used to serve a purpose by the 'users'. The paper will then investigate theoretical justification for how concepts can be seen as being part of constructing the 'reality' they exist in, rather than mirroring 'reality'. Finally the paper will include suggestions for further research on the topic, illustrating the benefits of a conceptual historical analysis of the concept of leadership, leading up to how it has been used in relation to climate regime formation.

2. Methodology

The study will analyse the concept of leadership from different 'angles'. The key material to do this will be found in the literature. It will however be combined with statements on EU leadership by the EU and theoretical approaches that have not extensively been pursued in the literature. The study takes on a critical approach to the subject, but the use of criticism in this paper aims to help understand and further develop the concept, rather than 'solely' pointing out its problematic issues, as in the words of Popper, knowledge (in this case about the leadership) is facilitated through criticism (in Shadish and Luellen 2004:82). The study will apply two different ontological approaches to explore the topic. The first conforms with the view that concepts mirror 'reality', while the second view is that concepts take part in creating 'realities'.

2.1. Analysis of leadership categories

The first part of the analysis will consist of a literature review followed by an overview of how leadership is defined and a presentation of the leadership categories, which is the centrepiece of how leadership is approached in the literature. It will point out limitations of the concept including a need to define who is the leader, states or individuals, and how leadership works. This will be followed by a debate on the need to consider alternatives to leadership in explaining the outcome of climate regimes. Lastly, the ideas of leadership, used in the literature, will be analysed through two different theoretical approaches. This will be done to show that a mainly liberal approach to the topic has been used in the literature, and, furthermore, that constructivism in particular has potential to further develop the understanding of leadership. The ontological approach of this analysis will conform with the notion that the concept of leadership should be further developed to make it more precise in reflecting what takes place in climate regime formations. This means that the limits highlighted present a failure to grasp elements that give a more accurate account of 'reality'.

2.2. Collecting EU statements

The second part of the study uses examples of how leadership, in the context of climate regimes, has been presented in the literature and by the EU, during the period between the Kyoto Protocol leading up to COP-15. The exhibit of statements on EU leadership in chapter 4 is used as 'evidence' that leadership is framed in context of leadership categories and that certain assumptions are taken for granted. Statements on EU leadership by the EU include statements from the European Council (Presidency Conclusions) and the EU Commissioners. The European Commission statements, serve to illustrate that even at this highly diplomatic setting there are evidence of the EU portraying itself as a leader on the climate agenda. Statements from Commissioners are used

as they are more politically outspoken, but still represent the direction of the Commission. The quantity of statements from the EU is arguably limited. However, the purpose of the statements is to illustrate that the EU has in fact used the concept of leadership in a certain way. Statements from other EU institutions, such as the Council of Ministers or the European Parliament could also have been included. For example, MEP and Vice-chair in the ENVI Committee,¹ Dan Jørgensen has made several statements on the need for the EU to lead by example on climate change.² Furthermore, the EP is a vocal supporter of an ambitious climate policy for the EU and has strongly supported the need to keep the EU's conditional aim of reducing emission by 30 percent by 2020 (European Parliament 2010). However, the aim of this chapter is to illustrate that statements from EU bodies portray the EU as having a leadership role in relation to climate change and, furthermore, that this leadership is often described as 'leading by example'. The statements presented in Chapter 4 clearly illustrate this.

2.3. Conceptual analysis

The analysis of the concept of leadership using the statements, will turn more meta-physical and presents arguments that the concept of leadership, in relation to climate change, can be shaped by users and that it has been used as convenient framework. In doing so, the the thesis switches its ontological framework to a post-positivist approach. Applying different ontological frameworks can be used to heighten the understanding of concepts. Splitting the world into non-conforming ontological boxes does not heighten one's awareness of the world. Instead this study would argue that theoretical understanding from different ontological boxes can be sampled to get a fuller understanding of a concept. "The task of conceptual analysis is not to resolve the conceptual ambiguities by definitional fiat, but rather to discover the 'grammar' of the concept" (Kratochwil 2006:306) e.g. to explain the nature of leadership.

Hence, the methodological approach of the thesis is two-tracked. Overall it is a conceptual analysis of the concept of leadership, but with two different views on the ontological status of the concept. The first approach sees concepts as mirroring reality and the purpose of investigating aspect of the concept to reach a more precise understanding of the concept that better correspond to reality. The second ontological view sees concepts as not simply mirroring reality, but constructing it. In this sense the shortcomings of the use of leadership reflect that the concept is not objective but can be shaped by users and concepts can change when the context it exists in, changes. Rather than di-

¹ Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

² "The power of the EU on the international scene, in regard to this issue [climate change], is precisely our ability to lead by example" (Jørgensen 2010 - translated by author).

rectly competing with each other, the different approaches contribute to piecing together different parts of the overall puzzle of perspectives on leadership in relation to climate regime formation.³

2.4. Pros and cons

Considering the outcome of the COP-15 and the possible change in perspective on EU leadership on climate change, the timing seems ripe for investigating the use of leadership in relation to climate regimes. The method of investigating looks at the concept from different angles that have not been found to be extensively applied in the literature, and thereby attempts to make a contribution to the analysis of leadership in the context of climate regimes. It also highlights areas where more research can be made to further strengthen the concept in the way it is used in the literature, but also identifies reasons for why leadership can be a concept of some convenience. However, a key challenge concerning the thesis, is that this approach could be seen as lacking operational elements. It highlights critique, but leaves it to others to find better approaches to leadership analysis in the context of climate regimes. However, one has to take a step at the time and the scope of this thesis does not allow for developing an altogether new approach to leadership analysis. Instead it aims to bring forward a much needed debate on the concept of leadership, not to devise a definitional fiat.

Another criticism can be that the angles from which the concept of leadership is viewed can be dismissed as a 'intuitive laundry list' of important areas to research rather than a 'solid' methodological approach (Wæver 2007:199). This study would, however, argue that it deals with central themes of the concept, rather than peripheral ones. It highlights limitations to the predominant theoretical approach to the topic and argues that counter to the predominant belief certain aspects of leadership should not be taken for granted, but needs further investigation. Hence, this is not some 'laundry list' of little relevance, but a paper that deals with fundamental elements of the concept of leadership and aims to highlight areas that can help further develop the understanding of the concept.

Criticising every assumption that is made in the literature can be seen as both counter productive and hypocritical. On a whole, it is arguably not always an issue to use concepts constructed by others without subjecting them to a thorough investigation and reflection. Nor does one need to investigate every concept that he/she writes about. This paper includes assumptions which it has not subjected to an extensive debate, but which is nevertheless a topic of some debate. For example the EU can be labeled as an independent actor. However, the outcome of COP-15, has pro-

³ For other attempts to bring together different theories see Diez and Wiener 2007.

vided a strong motive for re-examining the concept of leadership and how and for what purposes it has been used as a key framework for analysing climate regime formation.

3. Literature Review

This section will identify the key literature on leadership, in relation to international climate regimes, which for the purpose of this thesis can be divided into two categories. The first category (Section 3.1.) consists of authors who pioneered the concept of leadership categories in the context of international environmental regimes. The concepts and ideas they introduced were later used by the second category of scholars (3.2.) writing on the subject of EU leadership in climate regimes. These scholars used the leadership categories as part of their arguments and, broadly speaking, did not pursue to further develop the categories.⁴

3.1. Constructing leadership categories in international regimes

Young (1991), Underdal (1991/1994) and Malnes (1995) were among the first to categorise leadership in the context of international (environmental) regimes. The main focus was to deepen the understanding of international regime formation by pinpointing the role of leadership. Identifying different forms of leadership would give researchers a more precise understanding of how leadership works in the context of international regimes. Each of the categories identify different strategies or behaviour that describe leaders role in international regime formation. Young, however, went a bit further by also formulating specific propositions regarding the relationship between leadership and regime formation (Young 1991). Underdal's (1991) emphasis was on illustrating alternatives to the power-based modes of leadership that had attracted most attention in the political science literature. Malnes researched leadership in international negotiations, and compared it to how leadership was assessed in the fields of economics, psychology and domestic politics. He took a more critical angle and criticised both Young and Underdal for being unable to "draw a clear line between the activity of a leader and that of an agent who engages in ordinary bargaining" (Malnes 1995:106). Thus, highlighting a central limit to the approach of leadership categories, which will be dealt with in greater detail in Section 4.5.

A common theme, among this category of authors, is that they apply a more theoretical approach to the topic of leadership categorisation in international regimes. Young adopted a more theory building approach to leadership categorisation, with the intention of it being able to explain the success or failure of institutional bargaining without falling prey to 'easy post hoc reasoning' (1991:265). Underdal also reasoned his approach from a theoretical view, aiming to break the mo-

⁴ In addition to this review, Chapter 5 will present extracts from the literature on how the concept of leadership is used in the literature.

nopoly of realist theory of viewing leadership predominately through the spectrum of power (1991). While Malnes adopted a more conceptual investigation into leadership comparing leadership research in other fields and reflecting on limitations of the approach of leadership categorisation in the context of international regimes. The different leadership categories formulated by Young and Underdal would become frequently used in the study of climate regimes, as evident in Section 4.2. However, some of the more theory building ideas on leadership presented in Young and to some extent Malnes have been less widely used.

3.2. Applying leadership categories to EU's role in climate regimes

The second category of literary works was written in the 2000s, and primarily in the context of climate regimes. They referred to the 'leadership' role of the EU (and the US) applying the leadership categories presented by the authors in Section 3.1. A general trait of these works is, that the leadership categories have, to a large extent, been taken for granted. They are often presented as elements of an argument and with limited justification for whether or how they are applicable. Thus, the theoretical background for the leadership categories was, to a large extent, not further explored, but taken for granted. Indeed, one could argue that there is an element of path dependency in the literature. The way leadership behaviour was categorised by Young and Underdal laid the foundation of how leadership was portrayed by authors writing on leadership in the context of climate regimes. However, taking the ideas and meanings attached to the leadership categories for granted is key shortcoming of the literature, and a weakness of the claims of EU leadership in relation to climate regimes. The literature could be criticised for being persuaded by the sympathetic interpretation of leadership and how conveniently it fits into certain arguments, rather than testing the validity of the claims on how leadership works (Moravcsik 1999).

Key literature works include: Gupta and Grubb (2000) and Gupta and Ringius (2001) who illustrated the potential of EU leadership for each of the leadership categories (see Section 4.2), concluding that 'leading by example' e.g. directional leadership (see Section 4.2.4.) is the most suited for describing the role of the EU. Indeed labelling the EU as a directional leader is a key assumption of the literature (see Section 5.2). Other texts examine leadership from within the EU. This is done in order to see how EU has been able to act as a leader in climate change. Vogler (2005) claims that strengthening EU's institutional capacities has made it possible for the EU to take on environmental leadership. Schreurs and Tiberghien (2007) illustrate how the structure of EU multi-level governance has created not just multiple veto points, but also numerous leadership points, which have made it possible for the EU to obtain climate policies that are greater than the least common denominator of member states. Andersen, first with Agrawala (2002) and later with Skod-

vin (2006), however, takes a more theory building approach to the leadership categories than is common in this literature category. Andersen and Agrawala (2002) examine specific hypothesis on leadership in relation to climate regime formation. They show how different leadership types are more prominent at different stages of climate regimes and introduce time and context as important variable to the study of leadership. Skodvin and Andersen (2006) argue, that what might seem to be strong leadership performance during negotiations might in fact seem to be the opposite in hindsight, again stating the importance of time and context. They conclude by proposing a need for a stronger emphasis of systematic conceptual and analytical work on the topic (Skodvin and Andersen 2006:25,26) - a message that this thesis can only concur.

4. Leadership Categories

In this chapter, first an overview at how the concept of leadership is defined will be presented, followed by an overview of the different leadership categories. The general ideas of the leadership categories will then be analysed, highlighting limitations that deals with how the concept more accurately reflects the 'reality' of what happens in climate regime formation. This will include illustrating of a key discrepancy in the literature namely who are the leaders - individuals or states? This will be followed by debate on the nature of alternative explanations to leadership, before conclude the chapter with an investigation of the leadership categories from different political theories.

4.1. Leadership

The general approach to leadership in the literature is based on certain assumptions on leadership. From the literature a few general assumptions on leadership can be pointed out to have a broad concurrence in the literature. The first general assumption, is that leadership is able to significantly influence international negotiations (on climate regimes). Young states that, "leadership is a necessary, although not a sufficient, condition for reaching agreement on the terms of constitutional contracts" (Young 1991:302). A second perspective is that leaders hold an esteemed position related to their influence or as Underdal states, "an asymmetrical relationship of influence in which one actor guides or directs the behaviour of others towards a certain goal over a certain period of time" (Underdal 1994:178). A third part is pointed out by Malnes who adds an element of direction, which refers to leaders being able to "shape the collective behaviour and patterns of a group in a direction determined by his or hers own values" or in the general interest of the group (1995:92).

These definitions each highlight key elements of leadership, which have been used in the core literature on leadership in climate regimes. They each represent basic assumptions on leadership, which to sum up can be seen: as essential to the success of negotiations, possessed by actors having an elevated position amongst the participants, and as shaping negotiations according to a predetermined direction. Interestingly scholars writing in the 2000s often do not spend much effort in formulating what is meant by leadership, and if leadership is defined in the text it is often done so by using assumptions from previous literature. This highlights another general limitation of the literature that not only are the assumptions on leadership categories not examined in many of the texts, but the overall concept of leadership is often not adequately defined either.

4.2. Leadership Categories

Different authors refer to the leadership categories using different names. In this thesis the following names will be used: 'power-based', 'intellectual', 'entrepreneurial' and 'directional'. This section will identify the main characteristics of each leadership category, by incorporating the definitions found in the literature, which on a whole are comparably similar.

4.2.1. Power-based leadership

The use of power-based leadership is in broad terms associated with bargaining leverage, maximising self-interest, coercion and capitalising on the difference in power among actors. In describing power-based leadership, Underdal refers to acts "where one or more actor(s) are able to impose their preferences on other actors, relying on their ability to deploy threats and promises, and thereby affecting the incentives of others to accept one's own terms" (1991:144). While Young describes it as the ability to translate power resources into bargaining leverage (1991:288, 289). Actors, essential to the outcome of a negotiation, are able to deploy this type of leadership most effectively. However, power-based leadership requires that leaders must advance the negotiation and not simply advance one's bargaining position or provoke other parties to brake off negotiations (Malnes 1995). Thus, powerful states that use ultimatums, which inevitably break-off the negotiations are not seen as displaying power-based leadership.

The US is often used as the example of power-based leadership, largely due to their power and ability to utilise this power in negotiations (Andersen and Agrawala 2002). On the other hand, the EU is not often singled out, in the same way as the US, for its power-based leadership. For example, Gupta and Ringius (2001) point out that the EU's greatest potential for power-based leadership lies in its influence in G-7 and G-77 summits, and by using economic and material incentives "to foster global industrial transformations" (2001:294). Despite this they conclude that the EU's greatest potential lies in its entrepreneurial and especially its directional leadership capabilities (ibid). This is not to say that the EU would not qualify as a power-based leader, with its economic size and influence it certainly has potential for power-based leadership (Vogler and Brether-ton 2006). However, in the context of climate change it is not often portrayed as realising this potential.⁵

4.2.2. Intellectual leadership

Intellectual leadership is connected to intellectual innovation, and occurs when leaders are "able to shape the thinking or perspectives of other actors, through the power of ideas" (Young 1991:300).

⁵ Elgstrom (2007) reasons that this is in part because of its lack of political vision. While Oberthur and Kelly (2008) claim that the EU simply does not have the economic or political clout to be a power-based leader in relation to climate regimes.

In the context of climate regimes, intellectual leadership could be seen as successfully framing climate change action as a moral and urgent issue that must transcend narrow economic interests. An argument presented, for example, in the Stern Report (Stern 2006). This type of leadership is frequently incorporated into the entrepreneurial or directional leadership category (see for example Zito (2005). A key difference between the intellectual leadership and entrepreneurial or directional leadership is the latter are about getting the ideas or models presented by intellectual leaders onto the political agenda (Young 1991).

Examples of intellectual leaders, in the literature, include individual scientists or networks of scientists who in the 1950s and 1960s institutionalised climate research. International organisations⁶ have also been singled out as intellectual leaders for sharpening the policy focus on climate research (Andersen and Agrawala 2002). The verdict on EU as an ‘intellectual’ leader in the context of climate change is mixed. It failed to convince the US to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, in fact, it accepted the idea of flexible mechanism presented by the US during the Kyoto Protocol negotiation, and has since has made it a fundamental part of its climate policy (Berkhout et. al. 2010, Uusi-Rauva 2010). Furthermore, scholars have highlighted lack of unity within the EU restraining the EU from being an intellectual leader (Elgstrom 2007).⁷ On the other hand, Ian Manners portrays the EU as a ‘normative power’ with its central ability in being able to promote its values in international settings (2002, 2006). Although, not a part of the literature on leadership categories it does serve to illustrate that the EU can be viewed to possess intellectual leadership capabilities. Nevertheless the verdict is still out.

4.2.3. Entrepreneurial leadership

Entrepreneurial leadership is essentially described, as actors who are able to use ‘negotiation skills’ to produce ‘successful outcomes’ of a negotiation (Young 1991, Underdal 1994). They are able to find the means to achieve common goals, and convince others about the substantive merits of a particular problem or ‘solution framing’ (Underdal 1991:145-148). Entrepreneurial leaders are able to bridge contrasting viewpoints and promote new solutions that can move the negotiations forward. They are able to increase the efficiency and facilitate movement in negotiations, and prevent negotiations from getting bogged-down or diverted onto blind alleys (Young 1991). Entrepreneurial leaders are often highlighted for their particular skills which include: being a skilful broker, a shrewd designer of acceptable negotiation solutions, having good knowledge of actors’ preferences and positions, and having an excellent insight into the issues of negotiation (Young 1991, Underdal 1994, Malnes 1995, Ringus 1999). Information and in particular having control of infor-

⁶ Including the United Nations Environmental Panel and its successor the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

⁷ “Thus, there is primarily a lack of intellectual leadership. The reason lies, it is claimed, in a lack of unity within the EU, which results in a need for consultations, to watered-down positions and to inflexibility in negotiations” (Elgstrom 2007:451).

mation is key to entrepreneurial leadership. Moravcsik describes it as having “asymmetrical control over scarce information or ideas to influence the outcomes of multilateral negotiations through initiation, mediation, and mobilization” (1999: 272).⁸ To summarise, entrepreneurial leaders seek to increase the efficiency of complex negotiations by presenting outcomes closer to a “Pareto frontier of interstate negotiation” (ibid). Albeit, also seeking to impose their own preferences on the outcome.

Examples of entrepreneurial leaders include individual actors who have had a formally heightened position in negotiations, such as the chair. Raoul Estrada-Oyuela who chaired the Committee of the Whole in the Kyoto negotiations is one example (Andersen and Agrawala 2002). Concerning the EU, its role in getting a large enough coalition to be able to ratify the Kyoto Protocol has repetitively been a key example of EU entrepreneurial leadership (Oberthur and Kelly 2008). Gupta and Ringius (2001), furthermore, point out that a key potential to the EU exhibiting entrepreneurial leadership would be in building strong coalitions with developing countries.⁹

4.2.4. Directional leadership

The category of directional leadership is about setting an example for others to follow. However, it is not only about being ‘ahead of the crowd’, but also influencing the perceptions, interests, values and beliefs of others, not just by words, but by action - showing that given path is both a plausible and an attractive one (Gupta and Ringius 2001). Schreurs and Tiberghien describe directional leadership as taking the lead in policy innovation, setting examples for others to learn from, and convincing other states of the importance of joining it in international action (2007:24).

A common example of directional leadership in the text is used in relation to the EU and its ‘potential’ leadership role in climate regime. Scholars including: Gupta and Grubb (2001), Vogler and Stephan (2007), Oberthur (unknown) and Oberthur and Kelly (2007), and the EU itself (see Chapter 5) have used this type of leadership to describe the role of the EU in climate regime formation. One of the key foundations of EU directional leadership are its ambitious EU climate policies and in particular the 2008 climate and energy package.¹⁰ The argument is, that by having implemented

⁸ The quote also illustrates the ways in which entrepreneurial leaders can influence negotiations: “The first function is policy initiation, sometimes termed” in-formal agenda-setting, “in which the entrepreneur launches a discussion by highlighting problems, advancing workable proposals, underscoring potential material benefits, or linking the outcome to symbolic values. The second function is mediation, in which the entrepreneur intervenes in ongoing interstate negotiations to propose new options or compromises. The third function is mobilization of domestic social support for an agreement, a particularly important function among democratic polities where agreements must often be ratified publicly.” (Moravcsik 1999:272).

⁹ However, this claim does not seem to apply to COP-15, where a coalition of key developing countries and the US, left the EU and others behind to broker a deal, which eventually led to the Copenhagen Accord (Muller 2010).

¹⁰ Aims to reduce carbon emissions by 20 percent, increase the share of renewable energy to 20 percent, by year 2020. Also known as 20-20 by 2020.

ambitious targets and ‘new’ flexible mechanisms to achieve these targets, the EU has shown the possibilities of reducing CO₂ emissions, through action and not just words.¹¹ Being the first or at the forefront of schemes like the ETS, the EU can also set technical standards, which others would adhere to when implementing their own ETS’s. Furthermore, taking steps in a new direction, it is argued, puts pressure on other states to react. A reaction, which according to the assumptions of directional leadership, will be to follow the footsteps as the leader.

This leadership category has appeared in the literature to be well suited to present the EU with a leadership role in climate regimes. However, several scholars in the literature also point out limitations to the claims of EU’s directional leadership. Key criticism includes: lack of EU coherency and credibility and criticism of the 2008 climate and energy package. This will be pursued in further detail in Chapter 5.

4.2.5. Summary of leadership categories

To summarise, the leadership categories each identify different behavioural or strategic characteristics of leadership. They conform to the notion that leadership is a crucial element of climate regimes and that ‘leaders’ have an asymmetrical role in the regime formation. Leadership categories describe the strategic behaviour actors use to steer the regime formation in a certain direction and aims to increase the understanding of effective leadership. The different categories can briefly be summed up as follows: power-based leadership, as the name implies refers to the relative power of an actor and how the actor is able to transform this into a bargaining advantage. Intellectual leadership refers to the power of ideas. Entrepreneurial leaders are skilled negotiators that are able to use these skills to move the formation of regimes forward. While directional leaders are able to ‘lead by example’ showing the way forward through their actions, such as the implementation of ambitious domestic policies. The chapter will now turn to a more analytical framework and investigate limitations to the ideas on leadership presented in sections 4.1. and 4.2.

4.3. Leaders - individuals or states?

One of the central discrepancies in the way the literature describes leadership, is in defining whether leaders are individuals or states. There are other discrepancies, such as how many or which categories to use and in the finer details of how to interpret or characterise each category. However, the discrepancies between seeing individuals or states as the actor displaying leadership is significant because it highlights a fundamental question of who exerts leadership, and thus what is the nature of leadership?

¹¹ Which is why these mechanism would qualify as directional rather than intelligent leadership.

According to Young (1991) it is individuals, acting on behalf of states, that display leadership in international regimes. It is important that these individuals act in the name of or as an agent of states or international organisations, “but in the final analysis, leaders are individuals, and it is the behaviour of these individuals which we must explore to evaluate the role of leadership in the formation of international institutions.” (Young 1991:265). Thus, Young rejects the idea that states can be described as leaders in international negotiations, however he is one of few to do so. The majority of scholars from the literature including, Underdal (1991), Gupta and Ringius (2001), Vogler and Stephan 2005, Schreurs & Tiberghien 2007 and Oberthur and Kelly 2008 see leaders as states, or in terms of the EU as supranational states. There are some references to individuals acting on behalf of states in this literature, but the general assumption is that leadership is to be found at the state level.

Andersen and Agrawala (2002) find a middle-ground. They claim that both individuals and states can be leaders. It depends on the type of leadership exerted. For each of the categories the actors are either states or individuals. Directional leadership is exerted by states. “A government, not an individual, may set an example on how to deal with the global warming problem effectively” (2002:42). Intellectual and entrepreneurial leadership is usually associated with individuals as it is the skills possessed by individuals that are essential for these categories (Andersen and Agrawala 2002). While for power-based leadership it will still be individuals that act as leaders, but the links to the governments are normally tight - especially if the stakes are high. Thus, “individuals may be the principal players, but they cannot be evaluated properly without considering the role of their home governments” (ibid). Moreover, the authors see the leadership shifting from individuals to states over time. During what the authors describe as the agenda-setting stage of climate regime - from the 1950s until the 1998 Toronto Conference - individuals played a significant leadership role in getting the issue of climate change on the political agenda. However, once the issue was on the agenda, evidence of individuals playing leadership roles during the climate negotiations has been sporadic, which accounts for the second stage - the interstate bargaining stage.

This section highlights a fundamental shortcoming of the leadership categories namely who exerts leadership, individuals or states. In doing so it also highlights a need for further research into how leadership works in practice. This request will be repeated in the following section on the neglect of alternative explanations to the formation of climate regimes.

4.4. Alternative explanations to leadership

The literature on leadership can be said to fail to address a central issue. The focus in the literature is on the characteristics of leaders and their actions, but it fails to address the nature of alternatives

in explaining the outcome of regime formations¹² (Moravcsik 1999, Laitin and Lustick 1974). Leadership in this context assumes a 'natural' link between leadership and the outcome of climate regimes (see Section 3.1.), but without going into great detail in explaining why leadership explains a negotiation's success or failure and not something else. The literature should ask, to what extent and how has leadership been a necessary condition for climate regime formation. Most studies do not establish such causality, but are "descriptive, with prescriptive overtones" (Moravcsik 1999:274). Their arguments may be persuasive through sympathetic interpretations (ibid), yet as argued above it nevertheless provides meaning to some actors. However, the extent to which leadership can influence climate regimes, is often taken for granted in the literature (and indeed by EU policymakers).

Thus, alternative factors to leadership need to be considered in relation to climate regime formation. From this perspective, leadership can be seen to be one of several factors that influence the outcome climate regime negotiations. Indeed climate change is one of the most complex issues confronting policymakers today (Carter 2007), who face several obstacles that have proven hard to overcome.¹³ In this sense, does climate change qualify as a situation in which constraints are so great on leadership that it has little room to manoeuvre and may in fact appear to be wasted (Cox 1974:142)? The negotiations at COP-15 have been described as a 'system overload' where the issues had become far too complex for leaders to conclude on (Kleine-Brockhoff in Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009:2). Hence, the question remains, is it really credible to put the responsibility on the concept of 'leadership' to mend the complexities of climate regimes? Is the importance of leadership exaggerated in order to simplify things, and to explain events in ways that fit with specific assumptions, such as the importance of the EU on climate change, and implicit (liberal) theories? There is clearly a great potential for leadership to solve complex issues. Indeed the complex nature of climate change may be why scholars look to leadership for explanations, because it can simplify complex issues and make them manageable (Elgstrom 2007). However, as argued there are a number of alternative factors that can influence the outcome of climate regime negotiations, factors, which have not been fully incorporated into the investigations of leadership analysis. To illustrate this, the UN procedures¹⁴ have more often been used to explain the outcome of the COP-15 than failed leadership (Drexhage and Murphy 2009, Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009, Muller 2010, Stavins 2010).

¹² "No attempts have been made, however, to set the parameters for the relevance of various leadership maxims or to separate the quality of leadership from the specific kinds of resources and constraints that prevail in any given task environment" (Laitin and Lustick 1974:89).

¹³ Including: veto by powerful states or rogue coalitions, distrust among nations, strongly opposed economic interests or economic models, scientific uncertainty, a multitude of distributional and equity issues, non-appropriability, the unwillingness of citizens to make lifestyle sacrifices, the complexity of the topic and the complexity of UN procedures, even warm temperatures leading up to a convention can have an influence.

¹⁴ Achieving consensus of 196 countries, lack of access and transparency.

The other major question that the topic of alternative explanation raises is how in practice does leadership work in regime formation. How do the leadership categories distinguish themselves from other ordinary negotiation behaviour (Moravcsik 1999, Malnes 1995)? Being able to lead by example is a compelling idea, but often the ones who portray the EU as a directional leader neglect to explain how in practice directional leadership is able to have pulled other actors in the direction of the EU. Furthermore, if the EU is a directional leader, who have followed and what made them follow? Thus, there are several questions that have not been dealt with sufficiently in the concept of directional leadership and reflect a general lack of explaining how leadership works. However, as the following section (4.5.) will show, the reason for this could lie in leadership being used predominately in terms of liberal theory. Explaining leadership in terms of other political theories such as constructivism may pursue these questions in more detail. Liberal theory and the way leadership in relation to climate regimes, has been dealt with focuses on the strategic behaviour of leadership and less on the reasons behind it, which on the other hand is a central focus of constructivism.

This section deals with limitations of leadership analysis in providing alternative explanations to the formation of climate regimes. These limitations are seen as twofold: first in exaggerating the concept of leadership, for the purpose of simplifying how climate regime formation works. However, it is questioned whether in doing so, the capabilities of leadership may be overstretched? The second limitation raised in the section is the neglect in the literature and indeed by EU policymakers in explaining how in practice, for example, directional leadership results in regime formation. If the EU is a directional leader who has followed and why? Furthermore, what makes leadership the best alternative to explain climate regime formation? Perhaps the scope of leadership in relation to climate regimes could in this respect be more restrictive. The influence of leadership in the context of climate regimes could make its marks in inches, rather than miles (Kaufman in Doig and Hargrave 1990). For example, the EU could be labelled as a 'trendsetter' in carbon ETS or a leader in pursuing a global level in carbon pricing (Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009), rather than a global leader on climate change. The outcome of COP-15 further implies a more moderate 'leadership' role of the EU.

4.5. Political theories and leadership categories

This section will investigate how the concept of leadership has been viewed in relation to political theories. The leadership categories (see Section 4.2.) can be seen from the perspective of different political theories. This section will illustrate how the literature views the different leadership categories from different theoretical perspectives and how these perspectives influence the way the cate-

gories are shaped. The predominant theory is liberal theory and as the section will show liberal ideas and assumptions are embedded in the leadership categories. A few authors from the literature have also perceived the leadership categories from other theoretical perspectives. This section will highlight the theoretical perspectives of liberalism, realism and constructivism applied to the leadership in relation to climate change. The theoretical approaches are taken from the field of international relations and will illustrate what the leadership categories seek to explain and understand, but will also highlight critique from the theoretical perspectives.

4.5.1. Liberalism

The majority of the key literature presented in the literature review (Chapter 3) apply liberal theory as a framework for their perspectives on leadership. It is within interstate bargaining that leadership exists.¹⁵ The different leadership categories, refer to structured patterns of interstate cooperation and sees this as the primary cause of climate regime formation.¹⁶ This state-centric view falls well within the 'logics of anarchy' approach adopted by liberal theory. According to this states are the highest entity and the prime actors of international politics. In other words, it is at the state level that climate change will be dealt with. Institutions, however, also matter both in the literature and in liberal theory. The literature singles out the UN as having played a key role in providing a central platform for state cooperation to unfold.¹⁷ Furthermore, institutions such as the Intergovernmental Platform of Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have been portrayed as 'intellectual' and 'entrepreneurial' leaders in the literature (Andersen and Agrawala 2002, Skodvin and Andersen 2006).

Interdependence is another key concept of liberal theory. This concept is central part of the leadership investigations. It allows for a greater 'zone of agreement' between states e.g. greater room for interstate cooperation and thus for leadership to exist in. The whole idea of leadership being able to move climate regimes forward, coincides with another central theme of liberal theory, namely absolute gains. Actors must be willing to be lead.¹⁸ In this sense, believing that they will gain from the outcome of regime formation, and not be bound by thinking in solely terms of relative gains. Thus, liberal theory assumes a certain degree of rational thinking from states. Nevertheless states are strategic actors when it comes to cooperation (Paterson 2006). Indeed looking to leadership roles to explain the developments of climate regimes, assumes that cooperation occurs

¹⁵ Although the 'agenda-setting stage' of climate regime took place outside of interstate bargaining. Most scholars focus on the climate regimes when they occurred at the intergovernmental stage. Furthermore, the greatest achievement of the agenda-setting stage has been described as moving the issue of climate change to the interstate level and indeed the culmination of this stage was the 1988 Toronto Conference which firmly placed climate change on the interstate level (Andersen and Agrawala 2002).

¹⁶ Whether it is states or individuals that operate as leaders within interstate bargaining is a matter of opinion.

¹⁷ Especially UNFCC platforms such as the Conferences of Parties (COPs).

¹⁸ Coerciveness is not enough in itself to qualify as being a leader (see Section 3.2.1).

as part of strategic interaction. This would explain why leadership analysis in relation to climate regimes focuses on strategic behaviour (e.g. leadership categories), rather than social interactions and the importance of identities, norms and interests.

In an overview on theoretical perspectives in environmental regime analysis, Matthew Paterson (2006) gives examples of what liberal theory seeks to understand. He points out that it aims to develop concepts of regime effectiveness (ibid). This clearly is an emphasis of the analysis on leadership in the literature, and leadership categories are examples of leadership increasing the effectiveness of climate regimes. Paterson also states that liberal theory often seeks to identify 'agents who promote cooperation' (ibid). This is indeed another key concept of the leadership categories, in particular entrepreneurial leadership points out leaders as facilitating cooperation amongst states (Section 3.2.3). Moreover according to liberal theory, actors are rational and capable of establishing the most effective and efficient way to realise their interests within the environmental constraints they encounter (ibid). This helps to explain why leadership is looked to in explaining the formation of climate regimes, it allows for an effectiveness and efficiency, as opposed to relying on social constructions to explain how climate regimes are formed.

4.5.2. Realism

Realism criticises the use of leadership in explaining regime formations. A key argument is, that it is impossible to separate leadership capabilities from ordinary bargaining behaviour (Moravcsik 1999, Malnes 1995, Skodvin and Andersen 2006). In this sense, leadership analysis does not produce satisfactory reasoning because interstate bargaining boils down to a matter of rational choice. In fact, claims of leadership leading to regime formation are supported by bias case selections of successful international negotiations where it was already known that leaders were very active (Moravcsik 1999:273). Studies on leadership do not explore cases where leadership did not produce successful outcomes nor relate to other factors than effect of leadership. In his critique of leadership analysis Moravcsik furthermore gives a direct critique of entrepreneurial leadership:

"Why should governments, with millions of diverse and highly trained professional employees, massive information-gathering capacity, and long-standing experience with international negotiations at their disposal, ever require the services of a handful of supranational entrepreneurs to generate and disseminate useful information and ideas?" (Moravcsik 1999:273).

Furthermore, realism argues that demand for cooperation tends to create its own supply and that interstate bargaining is 'naturally' efficient (ibid:298, Tallberg 2006). This means that when states

get together to solve an issue, if the demand for a solution is great enough, cooperation will occur. Leadership is merely a formality or a secondary means to an end.¹⁹

4.5.3. Constructivism

A key critique from constructivism on the way that leadership has been approached by liberal theory would be, that by framing climate change in terms of leadership and leadership categories, one focuses solely on goal-oriented strategic interactions between actors, rather than how preferences of actors are formed and how this shapes the outcome of climate regimes (Risse 2007). Thus, the basis of the analysis is too narrow and self-serving in only explaining factors that are important for liberal theory. Understanding how actors develop their interests is crucial to constructivists and should thus be a central element in understanding climate regimes (Reus-Smit 2005:193). According to liberalist there is no need for a theory of interest formation, as interstate negotiations themselves are enough to explain why certain outcomes occurred. While constructivist seeks to “understand how preferences are formed and knowledge generated, prior to the exercise of instrumental rationality” (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998:910). Thus, constructivist would look at the social identities of individuals or states to explain climate regime formation. “Regime research in liberal institutionalism is unable to account for the specific content of the regimes themselves, and for broad shifts in the norms underpinning environmental governance” (Bernsteing in Paterson 2006:59). Hence, the focus would be on how institutionalised norms shape the identities and interests of actors, whereas liberalists, and arguably most of the leadership literature, treat interests as unexplained ‘givens’ and instead focus on actors pursuing their interests strategically (Reus-Smit 2005:203). Leadership analysis (from a liberal approach) is concerned with the strategic way of pursuing one’s interest, while constructivism primarily investigates how these interests have developed. One could argue for a division of labour, with constructivism dealing with how interests are shaped, and liberalism dealing with how these interests are pursued (in interstate bargaining). However, such a clear division does not exist. According to constructivism, the institutionalised norms that shape actors’ identity help define not only their interests, but also their strategic rationality (Reus-Smit 2005:203; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998:910). This refers to the ‘logics of appropriateness’ or norm-guided behaviour, determining how states act in climate regime formation. This differs from the strategic behaviour assumed by liberal theory. Instead states try to do ‘the right thing’ in a given social situation, rather than always seeking to strategically optimise their interest (Risse 2007). Hence, collective norms and understandings define the basic ‘rules of the game’ and actions of states. One cannot describe the behaviour of actors or leaders without referring to the social structure in which they are embedded (ibid). In this sense the actions of states or other actors are defined by interests and norms, and the social context in which the actions occur in. This,

¹⁹ “only if the complexity and therefore the transaction costs of negotiating efficiently are so high as to preclude efficient interstate bargaining - does a “window of opportunity” exist for [leadership] (Moravcsik 1999).

does not appear to rule out strategic behaviour. In fact directional leadership has been described to be part of EU acting as a normative power (Manners 2002, Oberthur and Kelly 2008). Moreover, to lead or be lead by the 'power of ideas' (intellectual leadership), or by skilled negotiators (entrepreneurial leadership) does not seem to be ruled out by constructivism.

Indeed the leadership categories can be applied by constructivism and can be placed somewhere between 'structure and agent' (Elgstrom 2007). Structure would determine whether an actor qualifies as a certain type of leader, for example whether it does have the political or economic clout to become a power-based leader.²⁰ Furthermore, structure would determine what type of leadership is most needed for the climate regime. For example, Andersen and Agrawala (2002) concluded that intellectual leadership is prominent during the agenda setting phase of climate regime formation. Furthermore, the individual categories of leadership could be used to outline the different patterns available to an actor, when performing a leadership role. What leadership category an actor presumes will be determined by structure and the logics of appropriateness, which would depend upon both the actors' own role conceptions and on the expectations and reactions of other actors (Elgstrom 2007:448).

4.6. Concluding remarks

To summarise, the majority of the literature using leadership categories can be categorised within a liberalist perspective. There are a number of ideas and assumptions that are in line with basic liberal ideas, such as a state-centric view, interdependence, and the focus on strategic behaviour in state cooperations. The primary critique of this leadership approach comes from realism, which argues that the role of leadership is exaggerated, and that the acts of leadership cannot be distinguished from 'ordinary' negotiation behaviour. Indeed, the formation of climate regimes does not depend on acts of leadership, but that the demand of regime formation is great enough to overcome the cost. Constructivism would also criticise the liberal approach to leadership, but the idea of leadership categories does not as such conflict with constructivist views. Instead, the perspective would change, to investigate why leaders act according to the behaviour defined by the categories. Furthermore, it would investigate the norms underpinning environmental governance.

A central issue of the chapter was to highlight a need for more research into the mechanisms of leadership (presented both in Section 4.3. and 4.4.). A recommendation of this chapter is that constructivism has the potential to do so, by investigating the nature of structure and agency in providing explanatory factors to how leadership functions and why. Furthermore being able to account for

²⁰ To which Oberthur and Kelly would answer no (2008:37).

“broad shifts in the norms underpinning environmental regimes” (Bernsteing in Paterson 2006:59), which is a key challenge that will be presented in the following chapter.

The study will now move from analysing the overall framework of leadership (categories) to how the concept of leadership is used in relation to climate regimes. In doing so will adopt a more post-positivist ontology in its analysis, which will be further explored in Chapter 6.

5. Statements on EU Leadership

This chapter will illustrate how key actors of EU policymaking and scholars refer to the concept of 'leadership' when describing the EU's role in climate regimes. Furthermore, in doing so they use the leadership categories, presented in Section 3.2. To illustrate this, statements are looked at from two EU institutions, the European Council and the European Commission. The statements include assumptions made on EU leadership, and as evident below, often refer to the notion that EU exerts directional leadership (see Section 3.2.4.). The chapter will also show that the assumptions on EU's directional leadership have to a large degree been substantiated by the EU's 'ambitious' climate policies. In addition, EU statements from after COP-15 are also looked at. They indicate that the rhetoric on EU leadership has changed. Reasons for why the EU and scholars have used the concept of leadership as a framework to describe the role of the EU in relation to climate regimes are also looked at, and further explained in Chapter 6.

5.1. Statements by the EU

5.1.1. European Council

The European Council is a key part of EU policymaking. Its summits are the focal point for media coverage of the EU. The Presidency Conclusions, made at every summit, provide a good indication of the EU's strategy on a specific issue (Bomberg and Stubb 2008). However, all 27 member states have to agree to the text, which leaves the statements less politically outspoken, and one cannot expect to find a very distinct promotion of EU leadership, when considering the diplomatic nature of the council's statements. Nevertheless, statements from the council are included, given the political weight of these statements, and they show that even at this highly diplomatic setting there are evidence of the EU portraying itself as a leader on the climate agenda. Statements are taken in connection to the following key climate events: adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, the 2007 COP 13 in Bali and the 2009 COP 15 in Copenhagen.

"The European Council is of the opinion that the Rio Process needs to be accelerated to reach a stage where worldwide development is sustainable... There are two objectives of particular importance: the eradication of poverty and the change of consumption and production patterns. The European Union will play a leading role at UNGASS in trying to reach consensus on concrete targets for sustainable development." (European Council, Presidency Conclusion, 16/17 June 1997).

"The European Council noted the agreement which had just been reached at Kyoto on a Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, containing significant undertakings by all industrialized countries which will lead to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of more than 5%. It considers

that this outcome represents an initial step which should be followed by further progress in the future.” (European Council, Presidency Conclusion, 12/13 December 1997).

“We will deliver on our promises and show global leadership in these fields. Yet we know that without major partners tackling with us the challenges of climate change, our efforts would remain incomplete.” (European Council, Presidency Conclusion, 14 December 2007).

“In order to maintain international leadership and credibility the European Union must rapidly reach an agreement on its climate and energy package.” (European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 19/20 June 2008).

“Just weeks away from the Copenhagen Conference, the European Union is more than ever fully determined to play a leading role and contribute to reaching a global, ambitious and comprehensive agreement....Action by the European Union alone will not be enough.” (European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 29/30 October 2009).

Overall, the Presidency Conclusions made in connection to the 2007 COP 13 in Bali and the 2009 COP 15 in Copenhagen appear to have the strongest emphasis on the EU having ‘leadership’ or a ‘leading role’ in developing climate regimes. This is likely to be affected by the implementation of the 2008 climate and energy package. In doing so, connecting the (self-)portrayed EU leadership to its domestic climate policies. Nevertheless, on a whole the statements are cautious and the Council acknowledges a modest role in the development of global climate negotiations, stating that without major partners, EU actions would remain incomplete and that “actions by the EU alone will not be enough” (see statement above - 29/30 October 2009).

5.1.2. European Commission

Statements by individual Commissioners (see below) are more politically outspoken. This could in part be due to the setting in which the statements are delivered. It is more free, often a speech, rather than an official document. Furthermore, Commission statements in general are less binding than that of the European Council. Nevertheless, statements by individual Commissioners are significant as the Commissioners hold crucial influence within the Commission and in particular within their individual director-generals (Bomberg and Stubb 2008). Indeed, the Commission plays an important role in shaping the EU strategy on climate change with: its exclusive rights on legislative proposals, by having a seat at international climate talks (side by side with Member States) as well as the essential knowledge it holds on the topic. The EU’s internet portal ²¹ exhibits statements from Commissioners, and an extract of these statements, dating back to 2006, are presented below:

²¹ www.europa.eu

"The European Union holds the key to the capacity of European states to respond to climate change. Acting as a Union of almost 500 million people and the world's largest economy, European states have the weight to lead by example. The weight to bring others to table." (Peter Mandelson, Commissioner for Trade, 2006)

"Take climate change: Europe was the prime mover in the Kyoto negotiations. It was EU leadership which secured final agreement on multilateral action to tackle the problem. Our Emission Trading Scheme - a vital market based mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - was designed by the European Commission." (Charlie McCreevy, Commissioner for Internal Markets and Services, 2006)

"Europe must continue to lead, and to provide an incentive for others to follow. The leadership comes with the EU commitment now to at least a 20% cut in emissions by 2020; the incentive by making clear that we will go further if others join us. It is, after all, global warming not European warming." (José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission, 2007)

"The second reason is leadership by example. The EU has provided the world with a demonstration of how it is possible for twenty-seven very different countries to act together to reduce emissions and without damaging national economies." (Stravos Dimas, Commissioner for Environment, 2007)

"Concrete legislative proposals will be adopted by the Commission in the autumn. We intend to consolidate the credibility and the leadership that the European Union has been able to establish in the field of fighting climate change." (Margot Wallstrom, Vice president of the Commission and responsible for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy, 2007).

"Yes Europe has passed its credibility test. We mean business when we speak about climate...yes you can, yes you can also do what we are doing. Yes you can achieve the targets we have committed ourselves to achieve. This is the message we want to convey to all our partners. And I will be even more clear, especially to our American partners...we are asking [the US] to join Europe and with us to lead the world on this global effort. We need American support for these initiatives." (José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission, 2008).

"Credible leadership is only won through concrete action.... Concluding an ambitious, global and comprehensive agreement in Copenhagen in December is vital for our climate.... Achieving this goal is going to take strong leadership. The European Union has been providing this for the past decade or more." (Stravos Dimas, Commissioner for Environment, 2009)

"By setting ambitious economic, social and environmental objectives...the EU is providing inspiration and leadership to the rest of the world." (Janez Potočnik, Commissioner for Science and Research, 2009)

From the extracts it can be seen, that Commissioners have in recent years been particularly outspoken about the leadership role of the EU, in relation to climate change regimes. Among the most outspoken on this issue, are: President of the Commission, José Manuel Barroso and former Commissioner for Environment, Stravos Dimas. Furthermore, from the extract it can be seen, that Commissioners frequently refer to EU portraying leadership 'by example' (e.g. directional leadership), while other types of leadership rarely are referred to. Moreover, the EU's ambitious commitments on climate change are perceived to inspire and provide incentive for others to follow

and indeed needed in order to get a comprehensive agreement on climate change. Finally, they concur with the assumption that the EU's (directional) leadership is directly connected to the EU's climate policies and in particular the 2008 climate and energy package. In a noteworthy statement, Barroso said that with the implementation of the 2008 package, "Europe has passed its [leadership] credibility test" (Barroso 2008 - see above).

5.1.3. Leadership promoting policies

Labelling the EU as a leader on climate regimes, can be linked to both external and internal aims of the EU. Externally, being a leader in climate change can build the EU's foreign policy profile as a prominent actor on the international stage. The EU can build 'coalitional' strength with other nations and in the process enhance its strength vis-à-vis the United States (Oberthur and Kelly 2008). The EU already has considerable clout on international trade issues, and climate change could be seen as representing an area where the EU can achieve similar prestige and agenda-setting capabilities. Furthermore, pressing for a global deal on climate change promotes the EU's multilateral approach to foreign policy and deals with securing Europe's energy supply (ibid).

Internally, the climate change agenda is viewed as an issue that unites its members, and in particular the Commission sees climate change as one of the EU's most important and defining issues (Schreurs and Tiberghien 2007). An additional reason to why Commissioners are particularly outspoken in their rhetoric on EU climate leadership, is that the Commission is often pushed into a reactive mode by national leaders in progressive countries on climate change as well as the European Parliament. Thus, the Commission must propose ambitious blueprints in order to retain its agenda-setting role (ibid: 34, 40). Having failed to get a carbon tax through, it was under a great deal of pressure to come up with something new, the result, according to some, was the 2008 climate and energy package (Streck 2006). Furthermore, the Commission has an interest in expanding its area of influence, and has used climate policy as a means to push EU integration forward and empower the Commission with new regulatory tools and monitoring powers (Schreurs and Tiberghien 2007). Moreover, by being seen as a key architect behind Europe's response to climate change, the Commission can show its relevance to the public (ibid). It should, nevertheless, be noted that other EU institutions, leading nations, and other actors have played a crucial role in building the EU's response to climate change.

5.2. Statements by scholars

As stated in the previous chapter, scholars writing on the topic of EU leadership in climate change, have often referred to EU leadership as directional. Furthermore, as in the case of the EU the claims of EU's directional leadership are primarily based on the EU's ambitious policies on climate

change (see statements below). Scholars, as EU policymakers, also highlight that the Kyoto Protocol is a key example of EU leadership and that it signalled the passing of leadership in climate change from the US to the EU (see statements below).

“The EU has been quite successful as an international leader. The Kyoto targets would not have been as ambitious as they are without the EU.” (Gupta and Ringius 2001:294).

“Global leadership’ in environmental and climate change policy are ‘based on willingness to take action at home’ .”(Tony Blair in Vogler 2005:835).

“US abdication and obstructionism serves to accentuate the position of the Union, which by 2000 had, in the words of the President of the CoP held that year in The Hague, become ‘the only game in town’ as far as the climate regime was concerned.” (Vogler 2005:840)

“[The EU] actively set[s] targets, policies and goals that have become the international standards against which other states have had to react. It has taken the lead in policy innovation, setting examples for others to learn from.” (Schreurs and Tiberghien 2007: 24).

“Since the late 1980s, the EU has ‘erected the most comprehensive and strict body of environmental legislation of any jurisdiction of the world and been ‘a key supporter, if not the chief demander, of every major international environmental treaty’ .” (Daniel Keleman in Schmidt 2008: 90).

“Effective domestic climate policies are the backbone of any continued EU leadership strategy on climate change. It is the precondition for the credibility and legitimacy of international leadership. It also provides for first-mover advantages which are an essential basis for the continued EU leadership on climate change. Leading by example needs to be at the core of any EU leadership strategy on climate change also because the EU lacks, and is unlikely to acquire, the “hard” structural power resources otherwise required”. (Oberthur unknown: 8).

In addition to relying on its general political and economic weight, the EU has generally exerted “directional leadership”, primarily based on soft power resources, which means “leadership by example”, diplomacy, persuasion and argumentation” (Oberthur and Kelly 2008:36).

“Since the early 1990s, the EU has increasingly established itself as an international leader in global environmental governance in general,...the EU has, over time, considerably improved its leadership record. This improvement is linked to advances in EU domestic climate and energy policies and recent shifts in the European and international politics of climate change.” (Oberthur and Kelly 2008:36).

5.2.1. Leadership explaining events

As argued in Section 5.1.3. the EU has a self-interest in portraying itself as a leader on climate change, but several scholars have also portrayed the EU as a leader. Furthermore, this section shows that some scholars confirm the link between ambitious domestic policies and being an international leader on climate change (e.g. directional leadership). “Effective domestic climate policies are the backbone of any continued EU leadership strategy on climate change.” (Oberthur

unknown:8). Indeed, as stated in the literature review and evident in the quotes above the EU is frequently pictured as a directional leader on climate change. Looking in the literature for reasons, authors often point to key events in their reasoning for portraying the EU as a leader in climate regimes. First, the US was from the 1970s energy crisis seen as a pioneer of modern environmental policies.²² However, with its withdrawal from of the Kyoto Protocol, the US signalled an abdication of its leading role. This created a leadership vacuum that the EU was able to fill. Second, scholars often refer to a widespread recognition that the EU showed leadership skills in its efforts to gather signatures and in implementing the Kyoto Protocol, especially after the US withdrawal (Gupta and Ringius 2001, Vogler 2005). Third, scholars also refer to the EU's ambitious climate policies as a foundation for its directional leadership credentials. Thus, a culmination of specific events and EU climate policies has given ground for a number of scholars (and EU policymakers) to make assumptions on EU as a (directional) leader in fighting climate change.

The literature is, however, far from homogeneously persuaded that EU unquestionably portrays global leadership in relation to climate regime formation. First, critics have pointed to the convenience of having 1990 as a baseline for the Kyoto targets. In the 1990's the EU was one of few regions to reduce its carbon emissions, but scholars have pointed out that there were some 'fortunate circumstances' (Skodvin and Andersen 2006:22). For example, Germany's reunification upgraded the former East Germany's energy supply and made it more efficient. While the UK switched its energy mix from coal to gas, reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, however, for primarily economic reasons (ibid). Hence, the economic and political costs of an ambitious policy were relatively low especially compared to other regions. In this respect, directional leadership can be seen as a convenient label to place on a mode of behaviour that the EU was likely to have pursued anyway (Uusi-Rauva 2010). Second, even though the US was viewed as a 'laggard' in terms of its rhetoric and negotiation position at the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, its inclusion of flexible mechanisms may have been a better showcase of leadership than the EU's inclusion of emission's targets (Andersen and Agrawala 2002). Thus, EU leadership in relation to the Kyoto Protocol is not unquestionable. Third, the 'ambitious' EU policies on climate change have been criticised, ironically, for lacking ambition. The implementation of the 2008 climate and energy package, was for some observers evidence of a watered-down EU capitalisation to interest of the energy-demanding industries and not the basis of global leadership on climate change (Helm 2009, Uusi-Rauva 2010). In addition, scholars point out that already in 2008 it was widely recognised, by scientists as well as the EU, that 20 percent reductions would not be enough to halt climate change below the critical 2°C increase (Helm 2009, Kilian and Elgstrom 2010, Uusi-Rauva 2010). The slogan of the package '20 20 by 2020' might be more to do with selling the package (to policymakers) than sav-

²² In 1995 the US initiated the world's first ETS for sulphur dioxide, which later became an inspiration for the Commission's carbon ETS program (Vogler and Biretherton 2006).

ing the planet²³ (Helm 2009, Uusi-Rauva 2010). Thus the criticism of the package, is that it remains to be seen whether the package has enabled Europe, as it has so often been claimed, to become an actor that can engage the global community in collective action²⁴ (Uusi-Rauva 2010). Hence, certain scholars are not entirely convinced that the EU portrays directional leadership at all, and question the extent to which the EU's effort of directional leadership can be considered successful in terms of generating followers (Skodvin and Andersen 2006:22). It furthermore indicates that assumptions on the EU as a directional leadership are of some convenience, rather than based on undisputed facts.

Despite this criticism, and as evident in Chapter 3, there exists (existed?) a widespread notion that the EU is a key actor in the field of climate change and that it portrayed leadership capabilities similar to that of directional leadership. The following section will investigate the question of why exactly the EU's leadership capabilities have been particularly prone to be framed in terms of directional leadership.

5.3. Why directional leadership?

This section will look at why, of the different types of leadership has the EU most often been portrayed as a directional leader. The EU could presumably also be portrayed as displaying entrepreneurial leadership. It has an ocean of experience in brokering interstate negotiations, and has an army of skilled negotiators at its disposal. However, the description entrepreneurial leader would arguably not be as unique to the EU. There are other actors that could fit the qualifications, both states and individuals (see Section 4.2.3). More important, describing the EU as a directional leader, accentuates the EU's efforts in implementing 'inspirational' and front-running policies on climate change. Furthermore, in having implemented ambitious targets for emission reduction, the EU has a great interest in seeing other actors following suit, non the least to remain globally competitive (Uusi-Rauva 2010).

The EU's directional leadership has also been explained as a matter of necessity, of preference and of choice:

"On the one hand, the EU does not have the political and economic clout to force others to fight climate change. On the other hand, the EU's leadership approach correlates well with the notion of the EU as a civilian power in pursuit of a rule-based global governance in keeping with its normative preference for soft measures" (Oberthur and Kelly 2008:37).

²³ "Any package with a title of matching 20 numbers has got to be primarily political" (Helm 2009:5). "Thus, in this case, it might well be that the beauty of rhetoric has been achieved at the expense of nature" (Uusi-Rauva 2010:81).

²⁴ As Kumar of the WWF states it: "[climate change] is a flagship EU policy with no captain, a mutinous crew and several gaping holes in it" (in Kilian and Elgstrom 2010:1).

In other words the EU cannot lead by power-based leadership, instead directional leadership is best option to cater the EU's capabilities and normative preferences. Following Manners argument,²⁵ portraying itself as a directional leader is a way for the EU to extend its normative values on to the international system (Manners 2002).²⁶ Through directional leadership the EU is also able to promote itself on the international stage. Being a leader in climate regime formation implies that the EU is able to shape the global response to climate change. However, the "EU has proven highly effective at setting ambitious targets and innovative policies, but struggles to implement them. Just as in other areas of environmental policy, the political rhetoric in 'Brussels' has run well ahead of the reality 'on the ground' in the Member States" (Jordan 2010b:457).

This indicates that directional leadership is used more for its rhetorically role than in acutely describing the role of the EU in the formation of climate regimes. Thus, portraying EU as a directional leadership can be seen to be a matter of convenience. The idea of directional leadership helps to translate the EU's policies on climate into global leadership, at least rhetorically. It also presents descriptive tools for scholars and in particular EU representatives to promote certain assumptions on the role of EU in climate change. "Researchers usually define leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (Yukl 2006:2). In this respect it can be said that scholars use leadership as part of an argument or to describe the EU's action according to a particular conviction (consider the quote of Oberthur and Kelly 2008:37 (Section 5.2.)). Indeed Stogdill concludes, after a comprehensive review of the leadership literature that, "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept." (1974:259). Thus, an unreflective consensus on directional leadership can be used for different purposes. It can be to rhetorically promote the EU on the international stage by promoting its efforts to implement 'ambitious' policies to combat climate change. It can also be used in conforming with existing views on the EU - the EU is a prominent international actor and lead by its normative views. One the other hand, of the reasons directional leadership is so commonly used could very likely be that it offers meaning to the ones that use it. Nevertheless, shaping the meaning of concepts and how they are used will further be debated in Chapter 6. First COP-15 will be looked at and how it has challenged the conviction of EU's (directional) leadership role in climate regime formation.

²⁵ Manners argued that the EU works to extend its norms and values, such as human rights or 'pooling of sovereignty', into the international system (Manners 2002).

²⁶ This may qualify as 'intellectual leadership', but this study argues that because it is based on the EU's domestic climate policies it qualifies as directional leadership.

5.4. Rhetorical repercussions of COP-15

As COP-15 ended on 18 December 2009, it was clear that it had not produced the result, that at least the EU had hoped for. The conference was described as “a disaster” by the Swedish EU Presidency (Vestergaard 2010:1). Although not all participants have been as harsh in their statements,²⁷ there is widespread recognition that the COP-15 did not live up to expectations. One of the key disappointments of the EU was that it did not live up to its (self-)acclaimed leadership, and was not seen as having played a decisive role at the negotiations in Copenhagen (Drexhage and Murphy 2009, Vestergaard 2010, Stavín 2010, Muller 2010). The following examples can be used, to exemplify this: First, the EU’s challenge to other developed regions, that it would increase its carbon emission reduction target to 30 percent if others presented similar targets (see Barroso 2007 in Section 5.1.2.), seemed to have little or no effect (Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009). Second, representatives from the EU did not participate in the decisive meetings where the US, China, India, South Africa and Brazil negotiated the breakthrough, which eventually led to the Copenhagen Accord (Vestergaard 2010:1, Muller 2010:13). Third, the ‘superpower’ dual between China and the US received most of the attention, while the EU and others were largely left to rubber-stamp the final accord (Schmidt in Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009:6).

The rhetorical repercussions of COP-15 may be, to toned down portraying the EU as a directional leader on climate change. The proposition that ambitious targets and front-running mechanisms would automatically inspire the rest of the world to follow in the same footsteps, have been considerably questioned by the outcome of COP-15. Indeed the EU’s leadership role on climate change may be further questioned all together.²⁸ One indication of a changing rhetoric can be seen by statements from the newly appointed Commission for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, downplaying the outcomes of the upcoming COP-16 in Cancun, stating that nothing is likely to materialise before COP17 in 2011 (Phillips 2010, see statement below). This indicates that, although the EU may not have given up on a binding global deal on climate change, it is at least contemplating the current situation.

“Commissioner Connie Hedegaard [Climate Action] warned that while she very much hoped for a legally binding deal to be reached as soon as possible, this was most likely not achievable before the ‘COP-17’, which is to take place in December 2011 in South Africa.” (Phillips 2010).

Second, the European Council has opened up to the possibility of other negotiation forums than the UNFCCC (see statement below). The EU has been a firm supporter of dealing with issues on

²⁷ For example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel described it as a small step on the road to a new global architecture for climate policy (Vestergaard 2010).

²⁸ Claims of EU leadership on climate change was similarly challenged with the publication of the 2008 climate and energy package, for lacking ambition (see section 4.2.1.).

climate change through the UNFCCC, of which the COPs are a part of (Jordan et al. 2010). Considering other approaches, such as the US proposed Major Economic Forum on Energy and Climate, can be seen as a further vindication of EU leadership. This opens up to the US preferred format of voluntary mechanisms based on social control, reputation and group pressure, which is a altogether different route than the more hierarchical approach of the EU, based on specific targets and deadlines and overseen by an international body (Egenhofer and Georgiev 2009, Stavins 2010, Jordan et al. 2010).

“The European Council remains firmly committed to the UNFCCC process. It supports ongoing efforts to make it more effective. Given the short time available before Cancun, this process could usefully be complemented and supported by discussions in other settings and on specific issues.” (European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 25/26 March 2010).

The COP-15 signals a new uncertainty to the claims to EU leadership on climate change and a likely change to the rhetoric on EU leadership. The criticism of perceiving EU as a leader has, thus, presented an inclination to examine the use of leadership in describing the EU’s role in climate regimes, which indeed is a focal point of this thesis.

5.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter has illustrated statements portraying the EU as a leader on climate change. The statements have come from the EU (exemplified here by Commissioners and the European Council) and from scholars. The chapter has included reasons for why leadership and in particular directional leadership can be compelling and convenient framework for the EU and scholars. In the case of the EU, it is argued that it enables the EU to connect its efforts in implementing ambitious climate policies with its aspirations of promoting itself on the international stage. With its 2008 climate and energy package the EU has the potential, as Gupta and Ringius (2001) describes it, to change the incentives of others and to demonstrate by action the feasibility, effectiveness and efficiency of fighting climate change. The ideas of directional leadership thus presents a way for the EU to, at least rhetorically, present itself as a leader on climate change, and promote the EU’s status as an international actor. In particular, the rhetoric of EU Commissioners portrays EU leadership as a ‘given’ and promotes this idea. To rhetorically extinguishing any doubts of EU leadership, President of the Commission, Barroso stated that the EU has passed the credibility test of leadership (Barroso 2008).²⁹ The rhetoric was mirrored by former commissioner Dimas, when stating that, “credible leadership is only won through concrete action...” implying that the 2008 energy and climate package represented ‘concrete action’ that would put EU in the leadership helm on climate change (Dimas 2009). To no surprise, the Commission and indeed the EU seems keen

²⁹ In connection to the official announcement of the EU’s 2008 climate and energy package.

to promote its 'ambitious' climate policies and to link it to international leadership on the climate change agenda. The centrality of the 2008 Climate and Energy Package is also apparent in the European Council statements, stating that the package is essential in order to maintain international leadership and credibility (Presidency Conclusion 19/20 June 2008).

In this sense, it can be argued that the concept of leadership can be shaped by its users. When scholars or Commissioners use the concept of leadership they incorporate a number of 'givens'. For example concerning the types of leadership actors can display and that leadership has a considerable influence on the regime formation. By using certain assumption on leadership as 'givens' users can shape the perception of leadership to include that for example directional leadership is plausible and it can have a significant influence on the formation of climate regimes.

The following chapter will explore theoretical arguments concerning how the concept of leadership can be shaped for specific purposes. It will also explore how concepts can be said to change over time and argue that the COP-15 could become an example of a key event that can influence the use of the concept of leadership.

6. Post-Positivist Exploration of the Concept of Leadership

This chapter will pursue theoretical argumentation for the concept of leadership being able to be shaped by, and in the interest of, its users. Furthermore, it will show that the concept of leadership does not exist independently from its context. To pursue this, the chapter will explore the concept of leadership from a post-positivist perspective. The chapter will also look at the concept of conceptual history and argue for reasons why this method of investigation could provide further understanding of the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regimes.

6.1. Shaping the meanings attached to concepts

Post-positivist justification for the notion, that concepts are subjective entities able to be shaped by users, have been presented by among others, discourse analysis. It argues that concepts can be 'shaped' by language. The concept of leadership in relation to climate regimes does not exist independently of language. When a concept enters into social life, it enters not as a shapeless objective, but as something (Wæver 2007:198). Instead, the argument is, that "through language we create representations of reality that are never mere reflections of a pre-existing reality but contribute to constructing reality... Language, then, is not merely a channel through which information about underlying mental states and behaviour or facts about the world are communicated. On the contrary, language is a 'machine' that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world." (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:9). That does not mean that reality itself does not exist. Meanings and representations are real. Physical objects also exist, but they only gain meaning through discourse (ibid). In other words, concepts do not mirror reality, but are part of constructing the reality we understand and 'see'.

In Section 5.3. it was argued that, when actors refer to directional leadership, it can be seen as a way to use the concept of directional leadership to construct the way leadership and climate regime formation are perceived. Directional leadership has been used to promote the role of the EU in climate change or to conform the role of the EU with specific assumptions on the EU, for example that it is a normative power. Accepting the argument that concepts can take part in shaping 'reality' rather than simply mirroring it, provides explanations of how leadership can be used to shape 'a reality' in the context of climate regimes. According to this understanding the concept of leadership is not necessarily a concept for approximating the 'reality' of climate regime formations, but a concept that is used to construct a reality about climate regimes formations. A reality where

the EU is able to shape climate regimes through its front-running domestic policies. The ‘creation’ of this reality is also shaped by factors, such as the EU being seen as ‘rescuing’ the Kyoto Protocol and that a number of actors have found the ideas of directional leadership compelling in portraying the EU’s role in climate regime formation.

Thus, post-positivist arguments can be used to justify the claim, that the concept of leadership has been constructed and that certain perspectives can be promoted in the interest of certain actors. The argument adheres to a worldview, in which language is accepted to take part in constructing the social world. Hence, the concept of leadership has been used to construct a perception in which the role of the EU, in relation to climate regimes can be explained by directional leadership. Moreover, the concept is not simply used to depict this ‘reality’, its existence makes this ‘reality’ possible to construct. “Our knowledge and representations of the world are not reflections of the reality ‘out there’, but rather are products of our ways of categorising the world” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:5). Thus, the way climate regime formation has been viewed can be argued to be influenced by the concept of directional leadership e.g. without the concept of directional leadership and its widespread acceptance, the notion that EU was leading by example may not have been as tenacious as it arguably was.

6.2. The fluidity of concepts

Another argument presented in Chapter 5 is that COP-15 could be seen as an example of how key events can change the way concepts are used and understood. COP-15 questioned the previous conviction that the EU is a leader in climate change regime formation. Furthermore, it questioned the concept of leadership e.g. how can leadership be (mis)used to proclaim that because the EU was at the forefront of policies and mechanisms to combat climate change, this could be transformed into global influence on how other regions respond to climate change? It could be said to have failed in portraying ‘reality’ if viewed from the ontological approach of Chapter 4.³⁰ However, the outcome of COP-15 can also be seen as an example of how concepts are influenced by the (changing) circumstances they exist in. Thus, the concept of leadership can be said to be fluid as opposed to static. “The way we understand and represent the world are historically and culturally specific and contingent: our worldviews and our identities could have been different, and they can change over time.” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:5).³¹ This presents the argument that, events can have a significant impact on how concepts are used and understood.

³⁰ Meaning the view that concepts mirror reality and should be developed to mirror reality as closely as possible.

³¹ In this view all knowledge is contingent is an anti-foundationalist position that stands in opposition to the foundationalist-view that knowledge can be grounded on a solid, metatheoretical base that transcends contingent human actions.” (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:5).

COP-15 questioned the claims of EU (directional) leadership and illustrated the limits of grounding one's analysis on assumptions that are taken for granted. It also demonstrates that concepts do not exist in a vacuum, but are influenced by the context they exist in. COP-15 does not necessarily put all descriptions of EU as a directional leader on climate change to shame, but may signal a new 'curb' in the concept of leadership. EU as a directional leader could be seen to have been created to cater for, and created by specific circumstances in the period between the Kyoto Protocol and COP-15.³² However, the outcome of COP-15 changed the circumstance and may have paved the way for a new 'understanding' of climate regimes, leadership and the EU's role in relation to this.

This argument further highlights an emphasis for further development of a constructivist approach to leadership in climate regimes. As argued in Section 4.5.3 constructivism is able to account for "broad shifts in the norms underpinning environmental governance" (Bernsteing in Paterson 2006:59). Hence, constructivism would be able to account for when 'things' change and the nature of climate regimes is different from what it was before.

6.3. Conceptual history - a case for further research

Studying the impact of events on concepts has been explored by 'conceptual history', which will be briefly presented in this section to demonstrate how to further increase one's understanding of the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regime. Conceptual history studies how concepts can evolve and change over time, context and social conditions. According to conceptual history the nature of social reality is constituted through language, and therefore it changes with linguistic evolution (Wæver 2002:10). "Thinkers in the past were not thinking about the same things as us today - just worse, but should be assessed in relation to the questions as they were asked at the time" (ibid). Hence what scholars were trying to understand about leadership, in international regimes, during the 1970s, 80s or 90s, could be different from how scholars treat the concept in the 2000s, or possibly in the 'post-COP-15' period. The overall aims of conceptual history are the following: to investigate how a concept has developed over time; to investigate whether key moments have left 'marks' on the concept; to investigate how other concepts have merged with the concept; to increase the understanding of what the concept means nowadays (Wæver 2002:3,18).

To illustrate this, Wæver's account of the conceptual history of 'security', in relation to international affairs (2002), can be used. He argues that over time, the concept of security went from having a small significance in international affairs to become a central theme to the study of international

³² Following the argument, this study is written with the COP-15 fresh in mind and thus the EU is not seen as the leader it was in the pre COP-15 period. Indeed the criticism of EU leadership in climate regimes, presented in the study, could arguably be influenced by the 'new' context in which climate change regimes exist.

affairs as well as for policymakers in the field (ibid). Wæver states that the concept took on a dramatic turn with the entrance of 'national security' in the aftermath of the two World Wars. With the inclusion of the concept of 'national security', the concept of security in effect continued under a new label of meanings and grew in significance to become a central part of international affairs. In this respect, it is possible that the concept of leadership, in the context of climate regimes, has similarly been altered by key events.

Conceptual history could be applied to the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regimes. The following part of this section will illustrate issues that conceptual history analysis could investigate. First, it could investigate how the concept of leadership in relation to climate regimes has evolved.³³ Key conferences such as the 1997 Kyoto Protocol negotiation, or the COP-15 could be investigated to see whether they have left a mark on the concept. In the case of COP-15, further research could investigate whether the conference could qualify as a key event altering the concept of leadership in the context of climate regime. The outcome of COP-15 could see a 'return to realism', with less emphasis on directional leadership and more emphasis on power-based leadership. It could also see, as has been presented in the thesis, that constructivist approaches to leadership in relation to climate change could be further developed, as a result of its explanatory capabilities including being able to account for changes to norms underpinning climate regimes.

Furthermore, conceptual history could investigate whether other concepts, or perceptions on leadership in other fields, could have influenced the concept of leadership in relation to climate change. For example, the skills that characterise entrepreneurial leadership have also been used to describe leadership skills in other fields of study, for example in the field of international organisations (Yukl 2006:444).³⁴ Similarly, Malnes describes how elements of directional leadership echo theories on 'entrepreneurs' in relation to economics (1995).³⁵ While power-based and intelligent leadership seem to draw influence from realism and normative theory respectively. Hence, more research could be done to see where the leadership categorisations have drawn their influence from, and identify what issues there possibly are in adapting ideas cross-sectionally. It would also be interesting to trace back the concept of leadership to see how it has developed from traditionally

³³ The concept of leadership can be traced back in history "to an optimistic impulse, to a conviction that leadership matters because leaders are needed and can change things in desired directions" (Cox 1974: 142).

³⁴ Traits and skills link to entrepreneurial leadership: "cognitive skills: to analyse problem, develop creative solutions, understand complex relations; interpersonal skills: influence people, develop cooperative relationships, networking; technical skills: understand legal/contractual requirements. The relative importance of different skills varies greatly from situation to situation, but some specific skills are probably useful in all leadership positions. Traits: temperament, core values, desire to assume power/leadership, self-confidence, willingness to learn or adapt"(Yukl 2006:444).

³⁵ Entrepreneurs alter the course of history by setting an example to other, less inventive agents (Malnes 1995:88).

being applied to individuals,³⁶ to be used to describe state behaviour (in relation to climate change). This brings forward the debate of personifying state behaviour. Can it be assumed that states can legitimately be attributed anthropomorphic qualities related to leadership, such as interests, identities, rationality, norms and beliefs (Wendt 2004)? When describing states or the EU as leaders, can we simply assume that states can act as persons,³⁷ and what have been the consequences to the concept of leadership in doing so? Has the concept of leadership been overstretched e.g. can the same concept which is applied to executives of international organisations be applied to states?³⁸ If so where are the boundaries as to how far these anthropomorphisms can go? Such a debate highlights a need to investigate the development of leadership to see how it has evolved, in order to better understand the meaning of the concept. It further highlights a lack of theorising about basic objects of analysis, which according to Jackson (2004:256) often occurs in social science and which has been a focus of this study.

6.4. Concluding remarks

This chapter used post-positivism to justify arguments presented in the paper and argues that post-positivist analysis in the shape of conceptual history could benefit the concept of leadership. One of the key arguments presented in the chapter is that language is not 'merely' a channel through which information can be communicated, on the contrary, language is a 'machine' that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). Thus, when describing formation of climate regimes through the concept of leadership, certain meanings are attached and perceptions are shaped in a specific way. These meanings and perceptions, it is argued, do not reflect 'reality', but help to construct 'a reality' in which directional leadership can be used to explain the role of the EU, in relation to climate regimes.

The concept of leadership is also influenced by events in the history of climate regimes. COP-15 is argued to represent such an event. The outcome of COP-15 challenged the dominant view of EU being a directional leader on climate change. This illustrates how our understanding of how leadership works in climate regimes is not a metatheoretical base that transcends contingent human actions (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:5). Instead, our understanding of concepts is foundational and always reflects the often changing context that surrounds it.

³⁶ Leadership research has largely focused on individual leaders instead of more collective forms of leadership (Stodgill 1974).

³⁷ Alexander Wendt would argue yes. A position that he derives from a broad survey of state theory in sociology and political science (Wendt 2004).

³⁸ "States are at most 'as if' persons, conceptual fictions we find useful in making sense of the world. It is a "useful fiction, analogy, metaphor, or shorthand for something else" (Wendt 2004:257)

Lastly the chapter presented conceptual history as a case for further investigation. The arguments were made that conceptual history could develop the understanding of leadership and perhaps answer some of the questions raised in the study. Conceptual history could investigate how the concept of leadership in relation to climate regimes has been constructed. This would enable further investigation whether leadership, on its own, can explain the formation of climate regimes or whether the concept has been overstretched in its transformation from other fields.

7. Conclusion

This study presents an exploration of the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regimes. It highlights specific limitations to the predominately liberal approach to leadership found in the literature. The study raises the question of whether the concept of leadership can carry the burden alone of explaining why climate regime formation have occurred, or whether leadership should be seen as one of several factors that influence the formation of climate regimes. The study further argues that more emphasis should be placed on explaining how leadership works in practice, highlighting a key discrepancy in the literature of whether states or individuals are leaders. The study has illustrated how different political theories view the concept of leadership. It concludes that liberal theory has been the predominant view, and that liberal assumptions are embedded in the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regime formation. The study presents the argument that constructivism has potential in being able to provide explanatory elements that could further develop the approach to the concept of leadership. It would be of a more contextual nature - what makes some states assume a leadership role (and why), and what makes them choose a specific leadership category.

The study has looked at statements on EU leadership and explores how and why the concept has been used by the EU and scholars. The concept is viewed to be used as an active part in constructing 'realities' in regard to climate regime formation. This means that the concept does not 'simply' describe what occurs in climate regime formation. Instead the concept is argued to have been used to construct a specific consensus on what goes on in climate regime formation. Directional leadership has been highlighted as an example of how the concept of leadership has been conveniently used to promote the EU's role on the international stage justified by its 'ambitious' climate policies. There exist(ed) a wide consensus on the notion of EU's directional leadership both in the EU and the literature, albeit with noticeable exceptions.³⁹ However, COP-15 questioned this exiting consensus and in doing so provided a reason for re-examining the predominant approach to leadership, which this study has pursued to do.

In conclusion, the study argues that the concept of leadership in relation to climate regimes can be said to be a concept of convenience. The study shows that the concept both has its limits in depicting reality, as it predominately adopts a liberal approach, thereby neglecting certain aspects of leadership in climate regime formation. The study also demonstrates that concepts are part of constructing 'reality' - a way for us to understand, but also shape the world according to our convictions. What the concept of leadership lacks is a critical analysis and to be further developed. The

³⁹ It should be pointed out that concepts are not only used in a calculated way, but also offer meanings to explain events.

study presents constructivism as holding a key potential to develop an alternative approach to leadership in relation to climate regime formation. In relation to this study it also has the potential to bridge the two different ontological parts of the investigation. In the first part of the investigation constructivism can fill out some of the explanatory gaps left by liberal theory, for example in describing how interest and norms are shaped and why certain actors assume a leadership role. At the same time constructivism (at least certain variants) subscribe to the notion that concepts construct reality, which is adhered to in the second part of the study. Thus, in re-examining the concept, the study argues that constructivism presents key analytical elements to address key limitations embedded in how the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regime formation, is understood and used.

8. Executive Summary

The concept of leadership was introduced in the study of international regimes in the early 1990s. It was seen to grasp an essential feature of regime formation by describing strategic behaviour that actors would take on to facilitate agreement. This strategic behaviour was characterised by four leadership categories, which were later adapted by studies on climate regimes. Leadership became a popular framework to use when describing the EU's role in climate regime. However, it has, with some notable exceptions, not been subjected to critical analysis and conceptual discussion. Instead, assuming that the EU is a leader in relation to climate change, has to some extent been taken for granted by scholars and by the EU itself. The aim of the study is to investigate and explore various sides to the concept of leadership in relation to climate change. This is done to obtain a more comprehensive view and understanding of how the concept has been used and why.

To pursue this the study has applied a conceptual analysis on the concept of leadership, with two different ontological views on the nature of concepts. The first ontological view sees concepts as mirroring 'reality'. Through this view concepts should be developed to increase the precision in how they reflect 'reality'. The second ontological view sees concepts as not simply mirroring reality, but as taking an active part in constructing 'realities'. In this sense, concepts are not objective truths, but can be shaped to construct 'a reality', and also capable of changing when the context in which they exists change. The concept of leadership will, thus, be looked at from two different strands of ontological frameworks. Applying different ontological frameworks is used to increase the understanding of concepts. Rather than splitting the world into non-conforming ontological boxes, this study argues that theoretical understanding from different ontological boxes can be used to get a fuller picture of the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regimes.

The investigation begins by identifying leadership itself and the leadership categories, which can be summed up as followed: The first category, 'power-based leadership', as the name implies refers to the relative power of an actor and how the actor is able to transform this into a bargaining advantage. 'Intellectual leadership' refers to the power of ideas. 'Entrepreneurial leaders' are skills negotiators that are able to use their skills to move the formation of regimes forward. While 'directional leaders' are able to 'lead by example', showing the way forward through their actions, such as the implementation of ambitious domestic policies. The study then highlights a key discrepancy in the leadership literature of whether it is individuals or states that are the leaders. Thereby indicating a need for further explanation into how leadership works. The chapter also argues that the literature on leadership lacks considering alternative explanations, to leadership, in explaining the outcome of climate regimes. This raises the question of, whether the importance of leadership is exaggerated in order to simplify the complex nature of climate change. Again highlighting that fur-

ther explanatory research should go into understanding how leadership works in relation to climate regime formation. This part of the investigation concludes by investigating the approach on leadership from different political theories. This shows how liberal theory has dominated the approaches in the literature. Key elements such as 'state-centric view, interdependence and strategic behaviour in negotiations are embedded in the majority of the leadership literature. Realism provides key criticism to the existing leadership literature. While the study argues that constructivism holds potential in further developing the understanding of the concept of leadership and how it functions. It is able to pursue explanations of what makes some states assume a leadership role (and why), and what makes them choose a specific leadership category.

The second part of the investigation presents evidence on how the concept of leadership has been used by the EU and scholars. It identifies, that especially directional leadership is a common label for portraying the EU's role in climate change. Furthermore, the study explores how the concept of leadership can be said to be a concept of convenient. The argument is that especially directional leadership can be seen as a method for profiling the EU climate policies and at the same time draw attention to its global leadership credentials. While certain scholars and policymakers often have used directional leadership as an unreflected given, the outcome of COP-15 questioned these assumptions on EU leadership. During the COP-15 the EU was not seen as having played a leading role in the final negotiations, but was indeed left to rubber stamp the final accord. The study argues that as a consequence a change in the rhetoric on EU leadership in climate change is likely. The EU has already down-played the outcome of COP-16 and has opened up to dealing with climate change outside the platform of the COP's, of which it has been a firm supporter of.

In the final part of the investigation, the study explores theoretical justifications for how concepts can be shaped by its users and how it changes according to its context. It is argued that language can be seen as a 'machine' that adds meanings to concepts as they enter the social world. This implies that concepts are part of constructing reality, rather than simply mirroring it. In this sense studying the way a concept is used is, in fact, also studying the framework in which the concept was created. Hence, portraying the EU as a directional leader reflects the time period this 'idea' was popular in.⁴⁰ However, a key argument is that concepts do not simply reflect a context, but take active part in constructing it. Constructing the concept of directional leadership is a key function in constructing the 'reality' or understanding of climate regime formation in which states can 'lead by example'. The chapter further argues that concepts change according to the framework they exist within. In this sense COP-15 could be an example of how a key event can change the perceptions on a concept. COP-15 could signal a new context for leadership, in which the role and

⁴⁰ On this note, this paper possibly reflects the despair on EU leadership following the COP 15 and it could be argued, influenced by it in its critical approach to EU leadership.

scope of leadership was down-played and where liberal theory was replaced by realism as the predominant theoretical approach to leadership in relation to international regimes. Alternatively it could also see a larger role for constructivism in providing explanatory elements to describe how leadership functions in climate regimes. The chapter ends by suggesting further areas of study by highlighting some of the issues that a conceptual history analysis could investigate, including how key events may have shaped the concept and how ideas on leadership from other fields may have influenced the concept of leadership in relation to climate change. This would increase the understanding of the concept of leadership.

The study concludes that, the concept of leadership, in relation to climate regime formation, can be seen as a concept of convenience. The study has shown that the concept has been used conveniently both describing 'reality' and in constructing 'reality'. In describing reality, the concept has predominately been approached through liberalism, thus neglecting other ways of viewing the role and nature of leadership in climate regime formation. In constructing 'reality' the concept has been used to connect the EU's efforts in implementing ambitious climate policies with its aspirations of promoting itself on the international stage. What the concept of leadership has lacked is a critical analysis. This study has pursued this and encourages further debate on the topic. More specifically it has highlighted a potential for constructivism to shed light on more explanatory elements and for conceptual history analysis to explore how the concept has been constructed.

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