

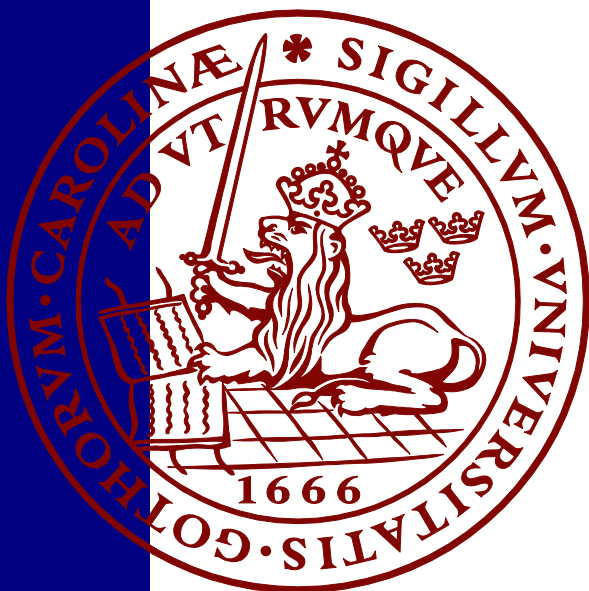
Top-down democratisation or a catalyst for sustainable change?

A Case Study of the Danish Citizens' Assembly on Climate

Josephine Ottesen

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Lund University
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Abstract:

Across the world, there is a call to combat the climate crisis and tackle growing socio-economic inequalities. The Danish Citizens' Assembly on Climate (CAC) is a case of attempted deliberative democracy seeking pathways to this outcome. This thesis asks how the CAC might catalyse a Danish sustainability transition. With democratic discourse theory and the concept of just sustainability, I conduct a critical discourse analysis to examine the CACs barriers and abilities to partake in democratic policy making, and how the sustainability narratives within the CAC affect this ability. The analysis shows that the CAC addresses environmental and socio-economic complexities but faces three barriers: 1) a techno-managerial framing of sustainability, 2) "expertisation" of deliberation, and 3) top-down democratization. By concluding that to catalyse a just sustainability transition, the CAC must overcome these barriers, I suggest a future examination of how the CAC can penetrate political decision-making and the broader public awareness.

Keywords: deliberative democracy, Citizens' Assembly, just transition, sustainability, Denmark

Word count: 11 942

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1 Introduction

1.1 The call for a democratic sustainability transition

The world is facing unprecedented ecological crises and detrimental consequences of anthropogenic climate change (IPCC, 2018). Human activities has pushed the Earth System into a trajectory where bio-geophysical feedbacks are under pressure (Steffen et al., 2015). At the same time, socio-economic (Phillips, 2017; Chmielewski, 2019) and resource inequalities (Dasgupta, 2021) are increasing globally, and distrust in political leaders and government institutions are still more apparent – even in established democracies (van der Meer, 2017). These challenges call for a new paradigm that integrates the development of human societies whilst ensuring a balanced Earth System (Steffen et al., 2018).

Whilst critics have deemed democracy and traditional climate governance ill-equipped to deal with the challenges of climate change, one response to this call is experiments with deliberative democracy (Dryzek and Niemeyer, 2019). Across the world, countries are experimenting with public deliberation to deal with the consequences of environmental challenges and climate change (Fishkin et al., 2017; Tang, Tamura & He, 2018; An Tionól Saoránach, 2018). In 2020, the Danish government established the Danish Citizens' Assembly on Climate (CAC) as an initiative of deliberative democracy to seek pathways to a green transition of Danish society (KEFM, 2020a). Reports of deliberative initiatives reflect the value of deliberative democracy (Baber & Bartlett, 2018). At the same time, deliberative ideals, theory, and practice is correspondingly criticised for being shaped by and reinforcing inequality and contributing to political polarization (Walker, McQuarrie & Lee, 2015).

1.2 Research aim

This thesis finds its relevance in the intersection between deliberative democratic practice and the global crises of climate change, inequality, and democratic legitimacy issues. I address these issues from a national perspective with the overall aim to answer: *In what way the deliberative initiative of the CAC might help catalyse a sustainability transition in Denmark.*

The relevance of this study lies in my critical examination of the CAC's institutional abilities and potential barriers to foster actual change. Thus, my research departs from the claim by Norman Fairclough (1995c), that societal transformations happen in the continuous and mutual influence between discursive practice and socio-cultural change. Therefore my first research question (RQ1) is:

1. How might the sustainability narratives presented (RQ1a), shaped, and reinforced (RQ1b) within the CAC affect the overall ability of the assembly to help catalyse a sustainability transition in Denmark?

A critical element of deliberative democratic practice is the proper institutionalisation of deliberative initiatives. Being the first deliberative initiative of its kind and scale in Denmark, the democratic potential of the CAC is inevitably tied up with a number of democratic barriers. Therefore, my second research question (RQ2) is:

2. What are the abilities and barriers related to the institutional design of the CAC, and how might they implicate the assembly's capacity to actually partake in a democratic climate policy making process?

1.3 Navigating the thesis

I start this thesis with a background section (chapter 2), that introduces the climate crisis and sustainability transition in a Danish context, the challenge of democratic deficiency, the “deliberative turn” and finally the CAC as a response to these issues. In chapter 3 I justify the methodological framework, explaining my use of the ethnographic method, the data constructed and subsequent limitations.

In chapter 4 I present the theoretical foundations starting in chapter 4.1.1 with a conceptualisation of just sustainability – relying on contributions by Amartya Sen (2009) and Melissa Leach et al. (2010). This is followed by democratic discourse theory (chapter 4.1.2 and 4.1.3), where I take my bearings from Jürgen Habermas (1997). I end chapter 4 with an introduction to critical discourse theory (Chapter 4.2.1), including the three-dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA) (chapter 4.2.2) which constitutes the analytical framework of the thesis.

In chapter 5 I introduce, analyse and discuss the findings. Chapter 5.1 answers RQ1a focusing on how sustainability narratives are presented to the CAC whilst 5.2 answers RQ1b addressing how the same narratives are shaped and reinforced within the CAC. Chapter 5.3 answer RQ2 focusing on the institutional design. I conclude by summarising the answers in chapter 6 and by presenting further reflections of the final recommendations in chapter 7 in which I present my opinion on the initial outcome of the CAC.

1.4 Relevance for sustainability science

Whilst the CAC is the first deliberative initiative of its kind in Denmark, it is also part of a broader international phenomenon which makes the study relevant for sustainability scientists in a global context. The critical study of the CAC is relevant to sustainability science as it corresponds to the categorisation of a science that “responds to the needs and values in society” whilst seeking to preserve “the life support systems of planet Earth” (Kates et al., 2001). It is manifested, not only in the overarching objective and subsequent research questions, but also in the methods – e.g. my use of the

ethnographic method is a methodological characteristic of sustainability science (Salas-Zapata, Ríos-Osorio & Cardona-Arias, 2020).

Finally, I apply theories relevant to governance of sustainability, social theory and political ecology. My application of theories such as critical discourse theory, corresponds to Spangenberg's (2011) characterisation of science of sustainability, that investigate discursive processes of decision-making processes – similar to what I set out to do in this thesis.

2 Background

2.1 Small country, global footprint

In a global context of complex geopolitical and environmental agendas, Denmark can seem as an insignificant player. In fact, Denmark accounts officially for 0.1% of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Hjarsbech, 2020). However, calculations that include individual consumption and total footprint suggest that individual consumption in Denmark is among the highest in the world with an individual footprint of 17 ton CO₂-eq emissions per capita (CONCITO, 2010). This is a considerable number in a highly interconnected world, where a complex economic system means that consumption in one country has environmental impacts in another (Tukker et al., 2014). Moreover, as global resource consumption is expected to rise (Wiedmann et al., 2015), the Danish footprint is arguably of relevance even in a global context. Thus, whilst Denmark is perceived as a green frontrunner in the global climate agenda (Burck et al., 2020), an extensive transition of society is still essential in order to ensure a sustainable future (Steffen et al., 2018).

In the past years, Denmark has seen an emerging public awareness of climate change (CONCITO, 2020) and increasingly strong calls for a sustainability transition (DGSB, 2019; FK, 2020). The appeal for political action was manifested in the 2019 parliamentary election, named the “first climate election” in Danish political history (Blach-Ørsten & Eberholst, 2019; Korsgaard & Thomsen, 2019). The election culminated in a broadly endorsed climate law (KEFM, 2019) and a subsequent Climate Action Plan (CAP) aiming to achieve the goal of 70% reduction of GHGs before 2030 and support the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5-2°C above pre-industrial levels (KEFM, 2020b).

However, despite broad political and public support for concrete climate action, The Danish Council on Climate Change (DCCC) is criticising the government for being too hesitant and unambitious with their climate action plan (DCCC, 2021; Almlund, 2019). In turn, the government justify their hesitation with reference to concern for socio-economic inequalities (Hedegaard, 2021; SKM 2021).

2.2 Democratic deficiency

The political hesitation can be seen in the light of a so-called “democratic deficit” in established and new democracies (Warren, 2009). The democratic deficit is manifested as increasing distrust in political leaders and decision makers (van der Meer, 2017), a decline of voter turnout in democratic elections across the world since the 1980s (Siaroff, 2009; Hooghe & Kern, 2017), and overall institutional legitimacy issues (Murdoch, Connolly & Kassim, 2018). In Denmark, political memberships and general support of political parties is decreasing (Stubager, Hansen & Jensen, 2020). Whilst there are arguably other ways for the public to influence the political sphere, such as protests and activism, the development means that citizens have less direct influence on political decision making in Denmark

(DUF, 2020). One response to the dilemma of formulating sufficient climate policies whilst addressing a democratic deficit, has been the initiative to establish a national Citizen's Assembly – the CAC – which has long been pushed for by civil society actors, youth movements, academic scholars and leftist media (Lykkeberg, 2020). Moreover, the initiative springs from a broader phenomenon of deliberative politics which is gaining strength in new and established democracies across the world.

2.3 The deliberative turn: its promise and barriers

Since the 1990s, the phenomenon of deliberative democracy has emerged as a response to a democratic deficit (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2014). The phenomenon – named the “deliberative turn” – has been driven by a growing interest to examine deliberative democracy as a tool to increase citizens' engagement and move away from a low-intensity democracy (Bäckstrand et al., 2010). My conceptualization of deliberative democratic theory takes its bearing from scholars such as Habermas (1997) and Sen (2009) and is thoroughly introduced in chapter 4. In this introductory chapter, however, I define deliberative democracy as democracy where so-called *mini-publics* (a random, but approximately representative sample of the population) deliberate on complex topics relevant to public concern with the aim to guide policy and decision-making processes.

Deliberative democracy has a long history in both western and non-western contexts (Sen, 2009; Patriquin, 2020; Ober, 2009). Today, deliberative theory is seen as an opportunity to challenge elected officials (Parthasarathy, Rao & Palaniswamy, 2019), legitimize political decision-making processes (OECD, 2020), reduce and manage social conflict (He, 2018) and facilitate societal buy-in for complex, normative political decisions (Devany et al., 2020). Within environmental governance, deliberative democracy is perceived as an example of good, reflexive governance (Dryzek & Pickering, 2017) with the promise to “deepen democracy” and make a path towards a sustainable and just society (Wironen et al., 2020).

However, critics of deliberative democracy argue that a taken for granted emancipatory effect of deliberation must be avoided as questions of power, inequality and politics are often overlooked (Lee, 2011). Ganuza, Baiocchi and Summers (2016) claim that deliberative initiatives often have weak or no impact on socio-cultural change and that little power is given to the people. Moreover, many examples of public deliberation are shaped by and reinforce inequality and political polarization rather than close the gap between elite and public (Kreiss, 2015). In some cases, deliberation is accused of *astroturfing* (Lee, McKulny & Shaffer, 2015) – a phrase that refers to initiatives pretending to be driven by grassroots movements – even though many initiatives would often be more appropriately characterized as *democratization from above* – a phrase that refers to government institutions ordering democracy consultants to design deliberative processes (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2015; Walker et al., 2015).

The potential and dilemmas of deliberative democracy evidently pose a paradox to public deliberation on climate change and sustainability transitions. I view this paradox as a timely and relevant justification to conduct a critical analysis of the potential impact and limitations of the CAC.

2.4 The Danish Citizens' Assembly on Climate

The initiative to establish the CAC was officially formulated in the climate law (KEFM, 2019) to later be realized by the Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities (hereinafter referred to as 'the Ministry') as part of the CAP (KEFM, 2020b). The aim of the assembly is to facilitate public deliberation amongst 99 randomly selected citizens on civic dilemmas related to the green transition and propose a set of concrete recommendations to the national CAP (KEFM, 2020b; KEFM, 2020a). The design and facilitation of the CAC is based on the three principles established as an attempt to guarantee legitimacy in accordance with OECD's (2020) principles for deliberative processes. The principles are illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The three deliberative principles guiding the design of the CAC (Author's own creation based on KEFM, 2020a).

The work of the CAC advances through two subsequent phases. The first phase initiated in late 2020 and concluded in April 2021. The second phase began in the fall of 2021, and is thus not considered in this study. The work of the assembly is illustrated in Figure 2, marking the dates for the different meetings. The first weekend meeting refers to the official launch of the CAC where a joint assembly

was presented to the task and the work ahead. The final weekend meeting refers to the official wrap-up, where a joint assembly finalized and voted on their recommendations.

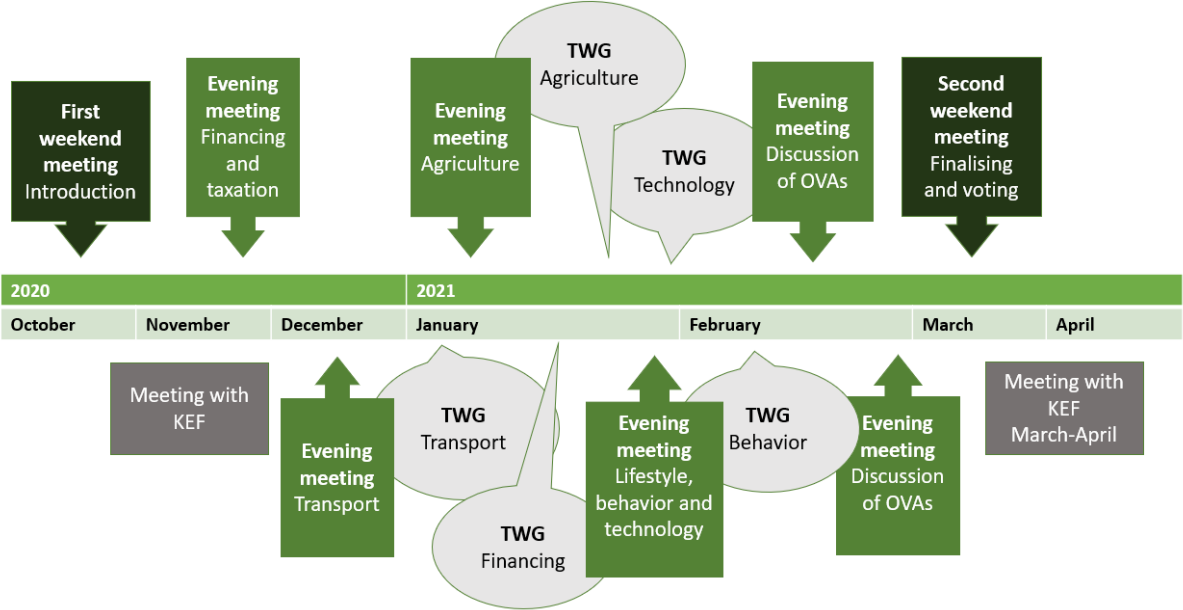


Figure 2. Calendar for the Danish Citizens' Assembly on Climate (Adapted from KEFM (2020d)).

At evening meetings the assembly was introduced to perspectives on a specific topic by key note speakers (KEFM, 2020c). At thematic working group meetings (TWG) 20-30 members continued the deliberation on a specific theme. At all meetings the members worked in groups of five, to deliberate on specific topics and formulate specific recommendations on issues related to the topic.

The first phase initiated and concluded with an official meeting with the parliament’s Climate, Energy and Utilities Committee (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Committee’), where the CAC presented their final recommendations and passed on the responsibility to the Ministry (KEF, n.d.).

3 Methodology

3.1 Strategy and design

This thesis is centred around a qualitative research strategy and a case study of the CAC. Figure 3 illustrates the research design, which is guided by methods of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and ethnographic study, which in turn has determined my data construction and subsequent analysis. I use the phrase “data construction”, as the research is centred around a social constructionist paradigm (Demeritt, 2002; Brinkmann, 2014). I approach the analysis in an interplay between deductive and abductive reasoning (Brinkmann, 2014), where I examine the data through a three-step analytical framework formulated by the CDA and the theories of just sustainabilities and discourse democracy.

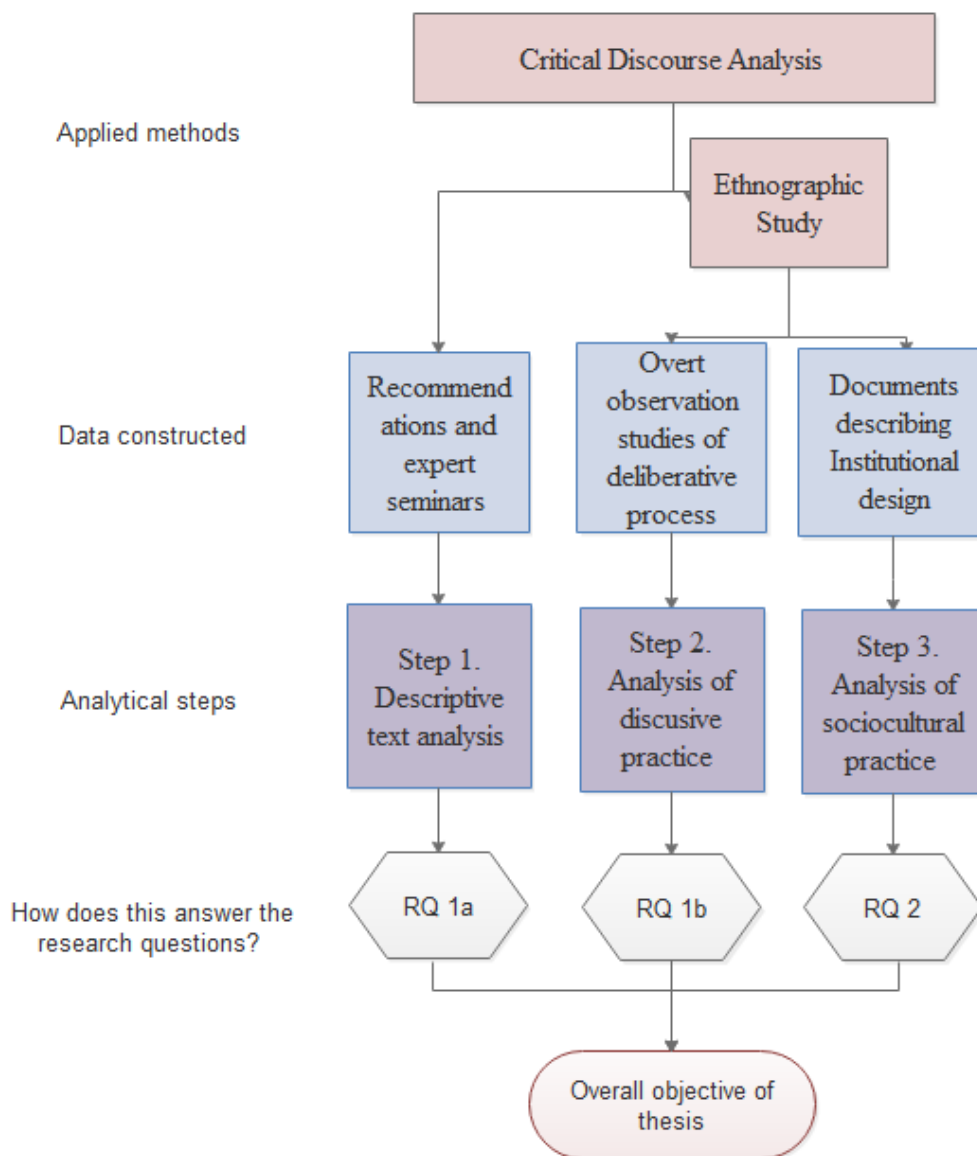


Figure 3. Research design illustrating the different steps of the thesis project and how they answer the RQs ‘s (Authors own creation).

3.2 Data construction

3.2.1 Collection of text

I collected documents describing the institutional design and facilitation process of the CAC. Whilst some documents are available on the official CAC webpage (KEFM, n.d.) others are not publicly accessible and thus, has been requested officially through the Ministry (an example of this can be found in Appendix A¹). The request was done in conjunction with a larger team of researchers and students from different Danish Universities (including Lund University) that are interested in the CAC. Through the research team, I had access to other documents such as a questionnaire distributed amongst the members of the CAC in the beginning and conclusion of the CAC respectively². The expertise was provided in short presentations and an additional Information Material report. The presentations to the CAC are publicly accessible through youtube.com (KEFM, 2020e), whilst the Information Material is available on the CAC webpage (KEFM, 2020f).

3.2.2 Overt observation studies

To examine the deliberative practice, I did overt observation studies of the CAC meetings. The high interest from the team of researchers made it necessary to divide the meetings between us. Thus, I attended seven out of fourteen digital meetings. By taking the role of an *overt* and *complete* observer, I was able to follow the deliberation of different groups closely and without interference (Walsh & Seale, 2012). In consideration of the members, the researchers observing the meetings was not allowed to audio record and, thus, field notes constitutes my recordings (Bryman, 2015). To focus my recordings, I structured the notes based on themes such as “deliberative practice”, “working with expert knowledge”, “facilitation” and “group dynamics”. An example of the recordings can be found in Appendix B³.

3.3 Reflections and Limitations

Some limitations of this research needs closer reflection. First, the fact that I am studying an ongoing initiative of public deliberation means that I had to gather information that is still being produced. In general, this has pushed my research into a more explorative direction.

Deliberative innovations such as citizens’ assemblies are often interactive and dynamic processes, which requires rigorous facilitation and inclusion of social processes (Chwalisz & Česnulaitytė, 2020). However, due to COVID-19 and restrictions on assemblies and public gatherings, the CAC was forced

¹ All files received from the Ministry can be accessed in the attached zip-file

² The questionnaire is available in attached zip-file

³ The entirety of recordings can be accessed in the attached zip file.

to proceed with their program digitally (KEFM, n.d.). For my role as a researcher, this made the observations more accessible. It also resulted in a change in the structure and design of the CAC, which meant that the assembly added more and shorter meetings to accommodate the different needs of the members (KEFM, 2020d). This resulted in a later finalisation of the CAC which means that I was not able to include the final recommendations in the analysis of this research. Instead, I provide a brief review and reflection of the recommendations in chapter 7.

The digital format of the CAC had both its advantages and barriers. On one hand, I was able to participate in a much more intimate way in the sense that I was a wallflower in the digital room. On the other hand, I was not able to observe the interactions that would have occurred in a physical room. Moreover, it was a challenge to follow the progress of work, as I only had access to the working documents on few occasions. This again forced me to focus more on group dynamics and discussions instead of what was written down.

Regarding my positionality, I observed the meetings with the title of “researcher”. And although the observations were not participatory in the sense that I took part in the deliberation nor were present in a physical sense (camera was often off, and microphone muted) the participants often recognized and commented on my presence. Thus, there is a considerable chance that I influenced the group deliberations just by being digitally present.

Finally, whilst it can be seen as a limitation that I only observed half the meetings, my connection to the research team has been able to counter this. Throughout the course of the CAC, I attended recurrent reflection meetings with the team, and thus had access to “second opinions” and reflexions which helped strengthen the validity of my observations.

4 Theory

In order to guide my analysis and support the arguments in this thesis, I have applied two groups of theories that constitute the theoretical framework of my thesis: 1) theory of social change and democratic transition, and 2) the critical discourse theory.

I start chapter 4.1.1 with a conceptualisation of just sustainability. This is followed by a presentation of the process of social change through public deliberation (chapter 4.1.2) including a conceptualisation of what I call ‘the deliberative challenge’ (chapter 4.1.3). The first group of theory is largely used to develop the normative argument for my thesis: why deliberation is a necessary pathway to just sustainability. I also use the first group of theory to evaluate how the following two aspects might influence the CACs ability to partake in democratic decision-making: 1) the sustainability narratives that are produced and reproduced within the CAC (RQ1) and 2) the abilities and barriers related to the CACs institutional design (RQ2).

In chapter 4.2 I present the second group of theory, discourses of sustainability. However related, it must be distinguished from democratic discourse theory presented in chapter 4.1.2. In chapter 4.2.1 I introduce a conceptualisation of discourse and critical discourse theory, followed by an introduction to the three-dimensional CDA (chapter 4.2.2) which constitute the analytical framework of this thesis. The second group of theory is largely applied methodologically as an evaluative framework to structure the three levels of my analysis (text, discursive practice and socio-cultural practice).

4.1 Social change and democratic transitions

The next two sub-chapters establish that deliberation is both central to defining a just and sustainable society and to exercising the social power needed for a transition. As the CAC should ideally accomplish both, I introduce the foundations for these arguments in the following.

4.1.1 *Conceptualisation of just sustainability*

In this thesis, I define sustainability according to the Brundtland definition of sustainable development, “that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 43). To advance this definition I apply two perspectives that complement each other and support the answers to the RQs. The first perspective is by Leach et al. (2010), who challenges the equilibrium thinking that nature would stay in balance were it not for human activities. They argue that static notions of needs and limits are insufficient in the complex and dynamic context of sustainability issues. Consequently, I apply their argument that sustainability is both normative and political. It is normative in the sense that the term refers to a set of social, environmental, and economic values, aiming at ensuring specific

standards of socio-economic equity and environmental quality (Leach et al., 2010). Normative views – being inherently context dependent – requires case-by-case definitions. Thus, it is necessary to place sustainability within the political sphere as the task of defining sustainability will inevitably be subject to political contestation (Leach et al., 2010). Moreover, rather than being a question of managerial solutions, where laws, technologies, infrastructure, and institutions are ends in themselves, sustainability must be recognized as something in need of scrutiny and deliberation. Only then will it enable a formulation of inclusive, sustainable pathways.

The second perspective is that of Sen (2009) who also challenges equilibrium thinking, by arguing that whilst human activities are often causing environmental damages, humans are also capable of enhancing and improving their environments. He too challenges the limited focus on needs, however with a different argument: people certainly do have needs, but rather than being passive patients they are agents with the ability to reason, appraise, participate, and value what reaches far beyond their own needs (Sen, 2009).

Going a bit further into the characteristics of sustainability, a central concept is that of justice. According to Sen (2009), justice can be formulated as evading what he calls “justice in the world of fish”, where bigger fish consume smaller fish without considerable repercussions (p. 20).

Three interrelated aspects of justice are relevant to this thesis: 1) justice must be defined by human lives. Thus, rather than being centred around institutionalized, correct behaviour, justice must focus on the lives that people are able or unable to lead. Having said that, the role of institutions is not irrelevant in the pursuit of justice and they are key in making a less unjust and unfair society. 2) Justice must be defined by substantial freedoms. With substantial freedoms, Sen refers – among other things – to the ability to determine our own paths and pursue different values, including those we have no immediate reason to value (Sen, 2009). Such freedoms have the significant implication, that it makes us accountable for what we do. 3) Justice must be realised by public deliberation. To Sen (2009), this is an important tool to realise the substantial freedoms. Thus, I turn to a conceptualisation of public deliberation now.

4.1.2 Public deliberation and the process of achieving sustainability

In this chapter, I take my bearings from Jürgen Habermas’ (1997) contributions to discourse theory. As a starting-point, it is worth mentioning one significant conflict between Sen’s and Habermas’ contributions to public deliberation. According to Sen (1985), free market and modern capitalism are fundamental to human development and freedom (Grewal & Purdy, 2014). On the contrary, Habermas sees capitalism as central to the legitimization crisis of democracy and something that is necessary to balance with deliberative processes (Müller-Dooch, 2010). However, as I apply Sen primarily to define

just sustainability and Habermas to describe the process of social change, this tension can largely be overcome.

With the argument that politics has become an entity that draws its legitimacy from itself, Habermas (1997) advocates for deliberative democracy by introducing two mutually dependent principles: the democratic principle and the general discourse principle. With the democratic principle, Habermas (1997) makes his key argument for deliberative democracy, as the principle states that legitimacy of (especially normative) politics cannot be claimed until they are met with approval by citizens in a discursive process, in which participants are recognised as free, equal members.

Building on this, the general discourse principle describes how these discursive processes must take place within groups of autonomous people, where all relevant social and subcultural groups are represented. Only then can a rational balancing of competing values take place. Furthermore, to the extent that the deliberative process has been executed within fair and legitimate conditions (such as representation and provision of adequate knowledge), the compromises made must be acceptable to all parties involved. In other words, the deliberating parties must reach consensus (Habermas, 1997). Similar to the argument by Leach et al. (2010) presented in chapter 4.1.1. a deliberation on political subjects inevitably involves a considerable amount of contestation. In fact, Habermas (1997) argues that if we don't "present our different ethical views for discussion, then we cannot *sound out* the possibilities for reaching consensus through discourse" (p. 309). Therefore, the discursive practice must both balance out competing values and cater to public reasoning before they can be broadly accepted (Habermas, 1997).

4.1.3 Challenges and pathways to achieving social change through deliberation

With the argument for deliberative democracy established, I now turn to a conceptualisation of deliberative practice in which I address what I call 'the deliberative challenge'; the risk that the discursive process fails at entering a democratic policy-making process and instead become blind public adaptation (Habermas, 1997) or a way to ensure political status quo (Baiocchi & Ganuza, 2015). To clarify, I illustrate both the argument for deliberative democracy and the three conflicts of the deliberative challenge in Figure 4. In chapter 5 I evaluate how the CAC fares in terms of overcoming these three conflicts.

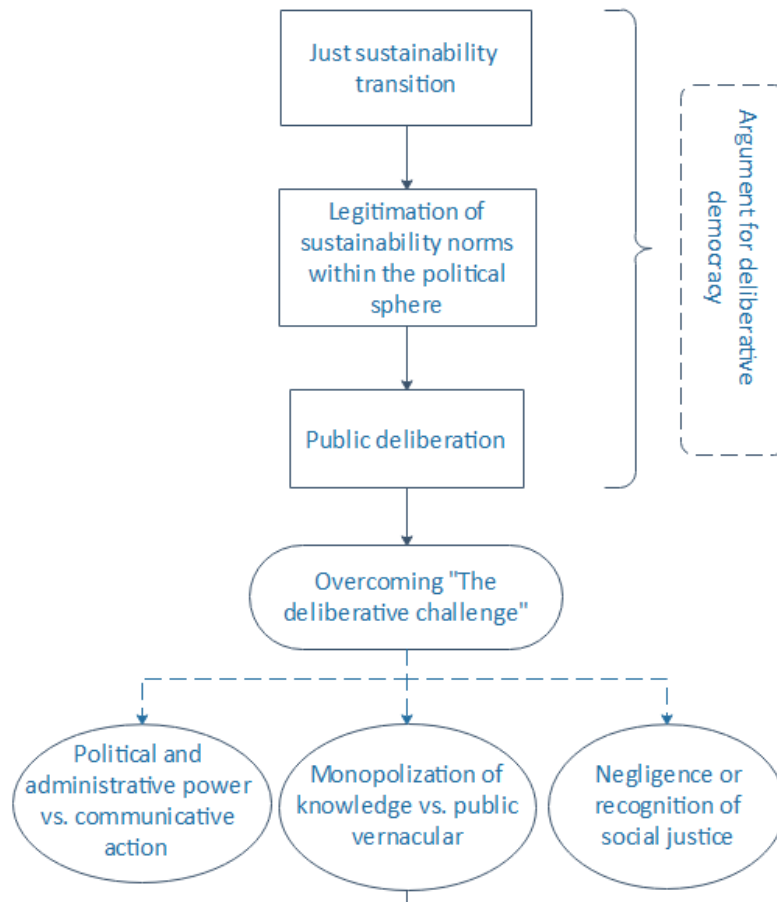


Figure 4. Conceptualization of deliberative practice (authors own creation). The arrows indicate that the text box before necessitates something, i.e. that a just sustainability necessitates a legitimation of sustainability. The dotted arrows indicate the three conflicts of the deliberative challenge.

Three conflicts and subsequent deliberative principles make up the deliberative challenge: 1) the conflict between political and administrative power and the power of communicative action, 2) the monopolization of knowledge countered by inclusion of public vernacular, 3) negligence of social justice versus inclusion of the concept of justice.

Administrative and political power

The result of a discursive practice can be understood as communicatively generated power (Habermas, 1997). This power competes with the administrative and political power of officeholders in its attempt to enter the political sphere and thus, deliberative democracy exists in a place between institutions and informal public opinion-formation (Habermas, 1997). In relation to Sen (2009) institutions can be viewed as a contributing factor to the deliberative initiative if it does not overshadow the individual. The overshadowing of the individual and public is the first conflict in the deliberative challenge.

There are several ways in which administrative and political power can overshadow and limit the deliberative practice. First, as deliberative innovations are a costly burden, they are often met by rigid

administrative systems lacking the resources necessary to execute a legitimate deliberative process (Habermas, 1997). Another limitation is the technocratic, top-down democratisation that is executed by elite-managed (state) institutions that might foster some paths to democratic engagement, but often have little success in contributing to real societal transformation (Calhoun, 2011). Finally, ill-defined and ambiguous institutional arrangements often do nothing but strengthen the voices of those already inclined to participate and thus end up increasing the democratic deficit rather than minimizing it (Swyngedouw, 2005).

Monopolized expert discourse

According to Habermas (1998), constructive opinion-formation can take place when autonomous individuals participate in deliberative processes where relevant information (such as expertise and case examples) and arguments are weighed against each other.

However, scholars and practitioners question whether expert knowledge or “technocratic paternalism” limits the deliberative process (Blue, 2015). On one hand, a so-called “monopolization of knowledge” is viewed as an important bottleneck (Habermas, 1997) with the argument that expert knowledge can compromise the open debate and close down around expert-based framings leaving lay public opinions considered unreasonable (Blue, 2016). On the other hand, to paraphrase Sen (2009), a “plurality of reason” is important for democratic decision making as it cultivates different understandings of a specific problem (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2012). This claim is arguably even more relevant in complex topics such as the climate crisis, that include intertwined socio-economic and environmental problems.

Although Habermas (1997) is not against applying expert knowledge in the deliberative process, he argues that “if the discourses of experts is not coupled with democratic opinion- and will-formation, then the experts' perception of problems will prevail at the citizens' expense” (p. 351). I want to highlight two ways to achieve this. The first is to ensure that deliberative practices reflect a local democratic vernacular that acknowledges the participating members as more than consumers of knowledge (Lee, McNulty & Shaffer, 2015) but citizens and individuals with the ability to reason between competing values. Second, any facilitation of expert knowledge must recognise that politically relevant problems can offset controversies and polarise the experts themselves (Habermas, 1997). In chapter 5.2. and 5.3. I evaluate the conditions for the discursive practice in the CAC and discuss whether it fosters such capacity.

Negligence of justice

I developed a conceptualisation of justice in chapter 4.1.1. Here, I take a further step and introduce the conflict between neglecting or including the concept of justice within deliberative practices.

Habermas (1997) makes it clear that to advocate for more than individual liberties and successfully include a genuine focus on social justice, one must exceed a strict focus on “purposive-rational considerations” (p 295). This is closely related to the conflict between expert knowledge and local vernacular with the addition, that the discursive practice must include a recognition of normative reasons such as ideology and ethics.

4.2 Discourses of sustainability

The second theoretical perspective that guides my analysis is that of discourses of sustainability. Drawing inspiration from theoretical contributions by Norman Fairclough (1995a) and Leach et al. (2010), I give a short definition of discourse before I introduce Fairclough’s critical discourse theory. I define discourse as an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories that gives meaning to social and political phenomena and is produced and reproduced through a set of practices (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2014). Moreover, I view discourse as a conceptual structure of narratives (Fairclough, 1995c), where specific actors frame a story of how problems arise, what their consequences are and how they can be overcome (Stevenson & Dryzek, 2014; Leach et al., 2010).

4.2.1 Critical discourse theory

The justification for critically examining the discourses of sustainability within the CAC stems from Fairclough’s (1995c) argument, that the investigation of social and cultural change should be studied with attention to how discourse is created by change and, in reverse, how discourses also create change. By applying Fairclough’s notion of “critical” discourse theory I allow for a systematic exploration of the connection between discourse practice, wider socio-cultural structures and how these are shaped by existing power structures (Fairclough, 1995b).

4.2.2 Analytical Framework: three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis

I conclude this theoretical chapter by presenting the analytical framework which is based on Fairclough’s three-dimensional CDA. The aim of the framework is to integrate three separate perspectives looking at 1) the properties of text, 2) the discursive practice in producing text, and 3) the discursive event as a sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 1995c). As indicated in Figure 5, each analytical level has a primary focus on a specific conflict of the deliberative challenge described in chapter 5.1.3 – however with some theoretical overlaps in the analysis.

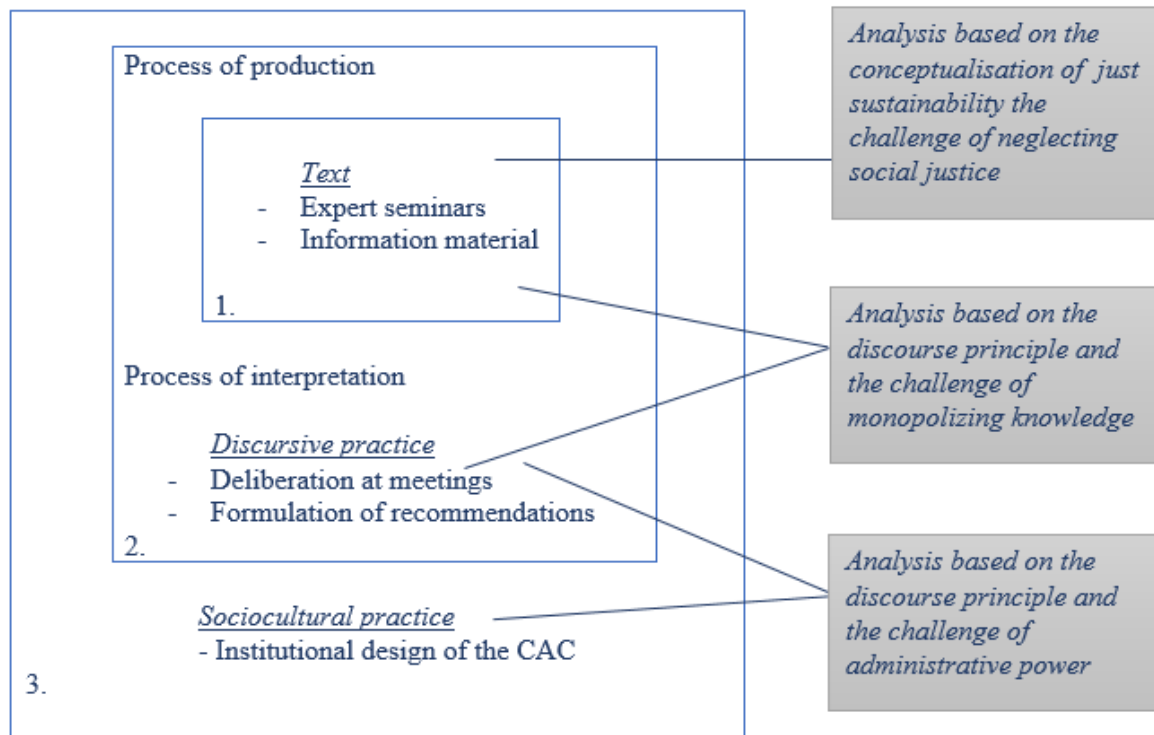


Figure 5. Analytical framework: The three-dimensional CDA applied to the case of the CAC. The grey boxes to the right explain the analytical step and the associated theoretical perspective (Adapted from Fairclough 1995c, p. 98)

As indicated in Figure 5, the first step of the CDA involves a descriptive text analysis. In the case of the CAC, “texts” should be understood in its broad sense and include presentations, supplementing information material. Thus, in this step I analyse the sustainability narratives present in the spoken (presentations on meetings) and written texts (Information Material report). I conduct the analysis in relation to the definition of discourse presented in 4.1.2 by asking: 1) Who are the actors articulating the narrative? 2) What is the framing of sustainability? 3) How are sustainability and climate problems framed? And 4) How is (incomplete) knowledge communicated? (Leach et al., 2010). This way, I can analyse the dominant discourses presented to the CAC and how they frame sustainability (related to RQ1a).

The second step involves an analysis of the discursive practice, which refers to the process of text production, distribution, and consumption (Fairclough, 1995a). In this analysis, I focus mainly on what Fairclough refers to as consumption of text, which are the narratives created and reinforced in the group deliberations. This step later allows me to answer how the members apply and deliberate on knowledge (related to RQ1b).

The third step connects the discourse practice with the wider sociocultural practice within which it occurs. In this case, I relate the sociocultural practice to the institutional design of the CAC. This step

allows me to answer how the deliberative practice of the CAC relates to deliberative practice as presented in chapter 4.1 and how it can contribute to political change more broadly (related to RQ2).

5 Analysis & Discussion

Following the three-dimensional CDA, I start with an analysis of the written and spoken text and a subsequent discussion of the dominant narratives (chapter 5.1.). This is followed by an analysis of the discursive practice, where I discuss the members' utilization of expert knowledge and the process of agreeing and disagreeing (chapter 5.2). Together, chapters 5.1 and 5.2 allow me to answer RQ1. I conclude this chapter with an analysis of the CACs institutional design in a wider sociocultural context where I discuss RQ2, the assembly's ability to affect democratic climate policy making (chapter 5.3).

5.1 Text analysis: dominant sustainability narratives presented to the CAC

The analysis in chapter 5.1.1 and chapter 5.1.2 is centred around coding of the different texts. The coding is based on the questions presented in chapter 4.2.2. I present the highlights of the analysis in Tables 2 and 3 whilst an example of the analysis is available in Appendix C⁴.

5.1.1 Information Material Report

Prior to the commencement of the CAC, the members received the Information Material report composed by the Ministry containing an introduction to the global challenges of climate change, including potential solutions and dilemmas in a Danish context (KEFM, 2020f). I initiate the analysis with a presentation of the main points in Table 1, before I present a detailed explanation of my findings.

Table 1. Highlights: Analysis of narratives present in the CACs Information Material.

Who is the actor articulating the narrative?	The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities as main actor. Figures and evidence from the IPCC, The Danish Meteorological Institute (DMI) and the Danish Energy Agency
What is the framing of climate and sustainability problems?	Natural science based. Emphasis on Earth systems and anthropogenic GHG as roots causes. Articulated consequences of climate change include temperature increase, sea level rise, extreme weather events, and biodiversity loss.
What are the solutions suggested?	A goal of 70% reduction of anthropogenic GHG and compliance to the Paris 1.5°C goal. Tools include taxations, economic incentives, information, nudging, technological solutions, commands, and standards.
How is (incomplete) knowledge communicated?	Communicated through models, illustrations, examples, and text boxes to make the content more accessible. Acknowledges that solutions, challenges, and dilemmas extend far beyond those presented in the report.
What is the framing of sustainability?	Systems-oriented. Local dilemmas with a global outlook. Reflects largely a managerial and technological perspective on sustainability with a few exceptions of individual behaviour.

⁴ The entirety of the coding can be accessed in the attached zip-file

The first point I want to highlight is that the key actor articulating the narrative is the Ministry. As shown in Table 1, the science and evidence are indeed based on independent sources such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the report opens with a disclaimer that is "does not reflect the opinions of the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities" (KEFM, 2020f, p. 3). Nevertheless, the Ministry has composed the report, determined what topics and dilemmas to include, which arguably makes the Ministry the key actor in articulating the overall narrative.

The second point concerns the report's framing of climate and sustainability issues and related solutions. As indicated in Table 1, the framing is largely natural science based, which can seem obvious and relevant in a report that aims at introducing its readers to the fundamentals of climate change and the related global and local challenges. However, it is worth noticing that the report leaves widely recognised causes of anthropogenic climate change such as individual and household consumption (Moberg et al., 2018; Mitchell, 2012) and mobility issues (Banister, 2010) unmentioned. The solutions to a green transition suggested within the report mainly concern tools such as CO₂-eq taxations, economic incentives such as subsidies for green production, information campaigns and utilisation of existing and new technologies.

The third point is the way in which (incomplete) knowledge is communicated. The means of communication listed in Table 1, shows that the Ministry has aimed at making complex climate science and international climate politics accessible to an audience with no prior knowledge to climate change. In terms of recognising incomplete knowledge and limitations, the report briefly acknowledges that the challenges, dilemmas, and solutions presented extend far beyond those present in the report. However, it is not clear to what extent the information is considered robust evidence, as broadly acknowledged by the scientific community or whether it is subject to disputes.

The findings reflects a systems-oriented and largely managerial and technological framing of sustainability that engage with local dilemmas whilst maintaining a global outlook.

5.1.2 Presentations

As described in chapter 2.3, different keynote speakers have presented their views to the CAC members on topics relevant to a Danish green transition. In this chapter I present my analysis of the dominant sustainability narratives. Similar to chapter 5.1.1 I introduce the highlights of the analysis in Table 2 before presenting an elaboration.

Table 2. Highlights: Analysis of narratives dominant in the presentations. The numbers in parentheses in second and third row show 1) the amount of presentations that frame climate and sustainability problems in a certain way and 2) the amount of presentations that propose a specific type of solution.

Who is the actor articulating the narrative?	Independent engineering associations; natural and social science scholars; urban planners; political and environmental NGOs; economic and ecologic think tanks; practitioners such as engineers, urban planners and farmers
What is the framing of climate and sustainability problems?	GHG concentration (16) Global politics and market forces (14) Agricultural practice and land use (8) Structural issues such as mobility issues, the economic system and resource distribution (8) Political indecisiveness (5) and democratic inclusion (6) Individual consumption level of Danish citizens (5) Malthusian perspective (3)
What are the solutions suggested?	Existing and new technological solutions (28) Financial incentives and market regulations (22) Policy and governance (18) Land Use Change and change of agricultural practices (10) Behavioural change (8) Democratic inclusion (8) Improvement of transport sector (5)
How is (incomplete) knowledge communicated?	Technical terminology; illustrations and graphs; communicating <i>objective</i> knowledge. Only 1-2 presenters acknowledge that their perspective might be opinionated and is part of a larger discussion.
What is the framing of sustainability?	Largely managerial and technological oriented. Some presentations recognize the political aspect.

The first point I want to highlight is the actors articulating the narrative. Whilst a wide excerpt of stakeholders with year-long engagement in the climate agenda is represented, the majority of presentations are oriented towards the natural sciences.

The second point is the framing of climate and sustainability problems. The actors quite uniformly articulate the issues of climate change as a global challenge that requires a fundamental transition of society. There are, however, some noteworthy differences concerning the framing of the problem. As shown in Table 2, the dominant focus is the damaging consequences of an increasing anthropogenic GHG concentration in the atmosphere. The second most dominant focus is on global politics and market forces, relating to concerns around Danish GDP, competitiveness of Danish industries and concerns for CO₂-eq leakage. On the other side of the spectrum a handful of presentations frame political indecisiveness and limited democratic inclusion as a fundamental problem whilst others articulate individual consumption levels – and the lack of recognition of this – as a key factor.

The third point is the nature of the solutions proposed. As presented in Table 2, I have detected seven major categories of solutions. The three dominant categories are technological solutions to reduce atmospheric GHG, financial incentives & market regulations, and policy & governance. These can be

viewed as techno-managerial solutions to climate change. Two categories with less significant dominance concern changes in the transport sector and agricultural sector. In these two categories, the focus is divided equally between more techno-managerial solutions and solutions of structural changes. Categories of democratic inclusion and behavioural change are in the other end of the spectrum, and less articulated. These two solutions go hand in hand, and advocate for larger inclusion to decrease public resistance, increased awareness and improving public education.

A final point I want to emphasise is how (incomplete) knowledge is communicated. First, a majority of the knowledge is presented as objective facts. One example of this is apparent in the presentation by the deputy director of the economic think tank KRAKA, who introduces his presentations with the words, that: "We are an independent organisation without a political position that provides facts to help facilitate reasonable decision making" (Hauch, 2020). Other presentations are less categorical, but still include bold projections such as "A green transition will render Denmark richer, not poorer than before" (Lund, 2020). When that is said, a handful of presentations include disclaimers that acknowledge how the topic presented is not merely facts but part of a larger discussion full of disputes, ambiguities, and ideological standpoints. Such a distinction between objective facts and constructed knowledge influenced by power and opinions is important for two reasons. First, to acknowledge the undeniable political nature of these topics and second, to open the discussion in the subsequent discursive practice. I return to an analysis and discussion of this in chapter 5.2.

Together this reflects a largely techno-managerial framing of sustainability where a handful of presentations acknowledge the political nature of the dilemmas and solutions proposed.

5.1.3 Discussion: Limitations to a techno-managerial framing of sustainability (RQ1a)

This sub-chapter provides a partial answer to RQ1 which will be complemented by chapter 5.2.3. The members have been presented with an extensive number of perspectives relevant to the climate crisis and sustainability transition. Going back to chapter 4.1.3, adequate knowledge and a plurality of perspectives are necessary means to enable a satisfactory deliberation (Habermas, 1997; Stevenson & Dryzek, 2012). Thus, it can be viewed as a legitimating factor that the CAC includes perspectives from a variety of actors.

When that is said, the analysis in chapters 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 shows that the presentations largely reflect a techno-managerial perspective, articulated mainly by experts within the field of natural sciences. Naturally, it is relevant to focus on anthropogenic GHGs as the root cause to the climate crisis and techno-managerial solutions as key to reducing the amount of atmospheric GHGs as the climate crisis to a large extent is centred around climate science and the Earth's atmospheric and biogeochemical systems. When that is said, it is valid to criticise the overall course of the CAC of being too heavily fixed on techno-managerial solutions. There are at least two reasons for this, which are related to the

conceptualisation of just sustainability (4.1.2) and the deliberative challenge of recognising social justice (chapter 4.1.4).

The first rationale for critique is related to the argument that managerial solutions of laws, technologies and infrastructure should not be means in themselves but subject to scrutiny and deliberation (Leach et al., 2010). Moreover, deliberation is key in formulating recommendations to diverse, sustainable pathways. Evidently, the CAC can be viewed as an attempt to do just that. However, as established, much of the information provided has been presented as indisputable facts. This is problematic as there is a shift away from the recognition, that to understand the normative issues that exists around techno-managerial solutions, they must be subject to scrutiny.

The second basis for critique is the limited focus on behavioural patterns and individual consumption levels. Based on the Danish average of individual consumption in chapter 2, one might question why unsustainable production and consumption of goods are not among the dominating narratives. In harmony with Sen's (2009) argument, that justice can be understood as a denunciation of justice in the world of fish, it is viable to criticise the sparse focus on Danish consumption level and its environmental implications in other countries. In fact, the techno-managerial overrepresentation and subsequent lower prioritization of issues, such as overconsumption can be viewed as an implicit justification of a world, where "bigger fish can consume smaller fish without considerable repercussions".

To sum up, the CAC is faced by the conflict between recognising and neglecting the concept of justice as an implication of a dominant techno-managerial framing of sustainability. Consequently, the predominant focus on a techno-managerial framing of sustainability risks limiting the opportunity to formulate diverse, inclusive, and just pathways to a sustainability transition of Danish society. Moreover, it can lead to a closing down around technocratic knowledge, neglecting the political nature of the question and thus hamper the discursive process. I further discuss the latter in chapter 5.2.4.

5.2 The discursive practice within the CAC

In chapters 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 I analyse the members' deliberation on expert knowledge and the conflict between reaching consensus or disagreeing. In chapter 5.2.3 I complete the answer to RQ1 by discussing the discursive practice in relation to democratic discourse theory.

5.2.1 *Deliberating on expert knowledge*

As established in chapter 5.1, the members have been provided with wide-ranging perspectives on the dilemmas and solutions to the climate crisis and green transition. Perspectives that are often influenced by political ideologies but presented as indisputable facts.

In my observations, I found three distinct ways in which the members engage with expert knowledge. The first and most dominant is characterized by an emphasis on getting the facts right and ensuring that all recommendations are supported by evidence. Throughout my observations, the members often returned to presentations and material to assess the quality of a recommendation, whilst they rejected recommendations with a perceived inadequate level of expertise. Such instances are recurrent in all of my observations and can be exemplified through comments such as “I think it is difficult to comment on subjects we know nothing about” (Appendix D). Other observations show a palpable awareness of personal lack of expertise, manifested in comments like “We are simply not smart enough” (Appendix D).

The second – less dominant – approach is characterised by an awareness that the CAC members together represents collective know-how. One member articulates that “the experts often speak from their own tiny field, but we can work with the synergy of the collective knowledge that we gain in order to formulate some good recommendations” (Appendix D). Another member points out that they are not supposed “to play the experts – if they want expert knowledge, they have come to the wrong house!” (Appendix D).

The third utilisation was less clear during my observations. However, it became apparent through one of the rare conversations between the group members and researchers observing the meeting. One member commented that it wasn’t the presentations but rather “the other members’ inputs to the discussions” (Appendix D) that shifted his perspective. This comment made me revisit my observation notes, where I found examples of members either drawing on their own professionalism or presenting life experiences as expertise with comments such as “We are citizens and we are allowed to have an opinion [on sorting waste, ed.] as we also sort waste” (Appendix D).

5.2.2 *Consensus and disagreement*

Throughout the course of the CAC, I observed very little dispute in the members’ discussions. Indeed, there have been negotiations on formulations or how to understand the expertise provided in the presentations. However, there have rarely been disputes over ideologies or more fundamental disagreements concerning lifestyle and behaviour. Comments like “I am not married to anything I have written” and “I don’t mind finalising the formulation on my own as long as I know that we agree on the content” (Appendix D) indicates that the members recognise consensus as a necessity for a good process.

Nonetheless, at the final weekend meeting – where the members had to vote on the recommendations in larger groups – disputes on ideology occurred. One example of this is the following excerpt of a discussion concerning regulations on the agricultural industry:

“Member 1: I am unsure [about this recommendation, ed.] because don’t we violate private property ownership of the farmers (...) ? It is a bit extreme that the state should have so much power.

Member 2: I might think it is too diffuse (...) And the element of force is problematic especially in these corona times, where we are subject to many things.

Member 3: I think it [the recommendation, ed.] is outstanding and thorough and hits the nail on the head. And in terms of private property ownership [the recommendation, ed.] addresses an industry that emit pollutions. It is not their private home it is part of Denmark (...) I think it is good that we have reached a point where we disagree.

[Three members vote in favour of the recommendation with no further comments]

Member 4: [addressing member 1] I think you hit the nail on the head. There is nothing in the recommendation that addresses expropriation and impounding private property. It avoids the knotty problems and reasons for why there are no new regulations on agriculture.

Member 1: It is interesting what happens psychologically when people disagree. In the beginning I was unsure, but after listening to your arguments I disagree even more, because as I see it the recommendation is in direct contravention with constitutional rights.”

(Appendix D)

The excerpt might be a case of discussion between people on each side of the political spectrum, and thus not represent the majority. However, it is still noteworthy that such ideological discussions did not occur earlier on in the deliberative process. There can be many reasons for this, which I discuss in chapter 5.2.4 and again in chapter 5.3.

5.2.3 Discussion: ‘Expertisation’ of deliberation or an embracing vernacular? (RQ1b)

Based on the preceding analysis I can answer RQ1b with specific focus to how the sustainability narratives are shaped and reinforced within the CAC.

As shown in chapter 5.2.1 it is possible to view the entirety of the CAC as a process of will and opinion formation, where the members shape and reinforce sustainability narratives based on an accumulation of knowledge from keynote speakers or co-members, whilst considering their own position and attitude to specific narratives. According to Habermas (1997), will and opinion formation happens when autonomous individuals participate in a deliberative process, where relevant information and arguments are weighed against each other. Seen in isolation, the CAC can be viewed somewhat successful, in the sense that the members indeed serves as autonomous individuals that – through an accumulation of knowledge – partake in constructive opinion and will-formation. In these

situations, they not only weigh the expert discourse but seem to consider the total accumulation of new knowledge including their own prior knowledge and personal expertise.

However, as described in chapter 5.2.1, there seem to be a continuous return to expert discourses which indicates that expert knowledge is prevalent in the discursive process. This is not necessarily damaging to the opinion and will-formation (Habermas, 1997), and one can argue that complex topics like climate change and sustainability undeniably requires some expertise. Nevertheless, the CAC can rightly be criticised of risking a monopolisation of expert discourse (chapter 4.1.3) for two reasons.

First, according to my findings concerning the utilisation of expertise in formulating the recommendations (chapter 5.2.1) and subsequent consensus (5.2.3), the discursive practice was often based on a quality assessment of the “professionalism” of the recommendations. Such quality assessment is not surprising, and shouldn’t necessarily be subject to critique, as it seems natural to assess ones work before submitting it to political processing. However, through the perspective that expert discourse must be coupled with democratic will- and opinion formation and inclusion of normative issues to avoid a monopolisation of expert discourse (chapter 4.1.3), it is interesting that professionalism of a recommendation has been a determining factor – a seal of approval – for many of the recommendations.

The second reason relates to the findings of consensus and disagreement. In chapter 5.1.4, I discussed how the presentations and Information Material indeed represents a plurality of reasons, regardless of a predominant techno-managerial framing of sustainability. According to both Sen (2009) and Stevenson and Dryzek (2012), plurality of reason is important for democratisation as it fosters inclusion in different understandings of the climate crisis. Nonetheless, the plurality of reason has in the case of the CAC shown to be rather homogenous (chapter 5.1) as fundamental beliefs and ideologies hasn’t been present in the discursive practice until the final meeting (5.2.3). In fact, as described in chapter 5.2.3, there has been a high level of consensus throughout the course of the CAC. There can be several explanations for this, of which I highlight two: 1) the CAC cater to a specific group of people, that represents the same values and beliefs, and 2) a monopolisation of expert discourse – or an ‘expertisation’ of deliberation – has limited the desired level of plurality, as the members largely deem professionalism more important than lay public opinions.

The first explanation is related to the institutional design and is discussed in further detail in chapter 5.3.4. The second explanation, however, is related to the deliberative challenge concerning conflict between monopolisation of expert discourse and an embracing public vernacular. It is possible to argue, that the lack of normative dispute in the discursive practice has not led to an adequate level of democratic will- and opinion-formation. To paraphrase Habermas (1997), the experts’ perception of climate and sustainability issues, thus, prevail at the expense of the members lay public opinions, which they are there to represent in the first place. Returning to the general discourse principle and

arguments by both Habermas (1997) and Leach et al. (2010), consensus can only be considered legitimate if different ethical views and competing values have been reconciled. Thus, regardless of the explanation, it indicates a weakness in the process that these ideological disputes didn't surface in the deliberations until the end of the CAC's discursive practice.

5.3 Sociocultural practice: analysis of institutional design of the CAC

In this chapter I examine the institutional design of the CAC based on the third step of the three-dimensional CDA. The analysis is conducted with specific attention to the evaluation of the political mandate of the CAC (chapter 5.3.1), member selection (chapter 5.3.2), and selection of experts (chapter 5.3.3). I apply democratic discourse theory (chapters 4.1.2 and 4.1.3) to discuss whether the institutional design actually enables the CAC to partake in a democratic climate policy making process (RQ2).

5.3.1 Political mandate of the CAC

As described in chapter 2.4, the CAC is legally embedded in the climate law, which is endorsed by a majority of the parliamentary parties (KEFM, 2019). Whilst the climate law is binding, the influence and political mandate of the CAC is less clear. The official task of the CAC is to formulate recommendations and inputs to the national CAP, which are to be handed over for scrutiny and discussion by the Committee (KEFM, 2020a). However, the Ministry are not obliged to respond to or act according to the recommendations (KEFM, 2020a). Instead, the CAC Concept Note states that the Committee intends to present their reflections on the recommendations in a subsequent follow-up report (KEFM, 2020a).

Concerns related to the ambiguous political mandate often occurred during the CAC's meeting. And whilst the answer from the DBT was often characterized by understanding, one comment from the lead facilitator sums up the ability of the CAC to actually penetrate the climate policy making process despite its lack of a clear mandate:

"If you just arrive with a slogan on the palace square of Christiansborg [the Parliament, ed.], it doesn't have a big influence on politicians, because they meet that every day. What makes an impression is to argue for a case, your personal experiences, everyday life ... You are not here to be experts, but to tell your everyday stories. In my opinion, this way you have a significantly bigger chance of influencing your politicians." (Appendix C)

Looking at other official Ministry documents, the CAC's mandate remains ambiguous. The Government's Climate Programme 2020 accounts for the yearly responsibilities of the Ministry. As illustrated in Figure 6, yearly recommendations from the DCCC and the parliamentary responsibility to follow up on these recommendations are fully accounted for in the Annual Wheel of the Climate Law (KEFM, 2020h). However, whilst the Climate Program 2020 briefly mentions the CAC there are no details on how their recommendations are to be included in future parliamentary climate policy making (KEFM, 2020h).

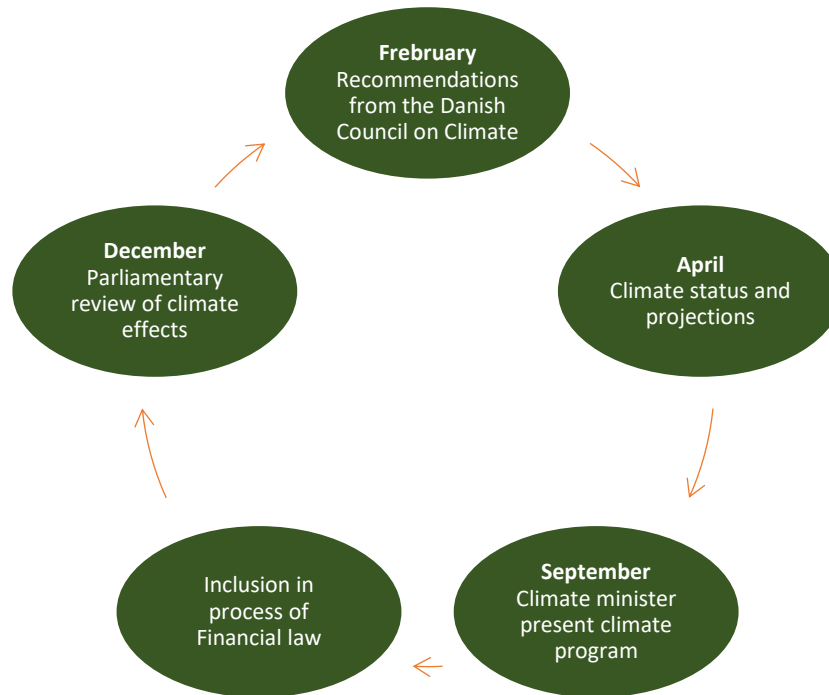


Figure 6. Annual wheel of the climate law. The annual wheel is designed with the aim to hold the government of the day accountable to the objectives of the climate law. (Adapted from KEFM, 2020g, p. 26).

5.3.2 The CAC Member cohort

Selection of members

The CAC member selection was conducted by Statistics Denmark (SD) via a process that advanced through two subsequent steps, as illustrated in Figure 7 (KEFM, 2020h).

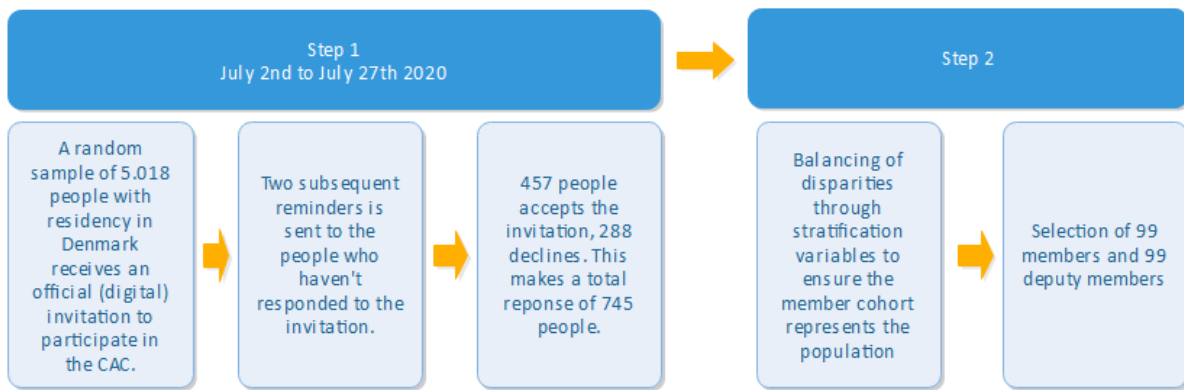


Figure 7. Process of selecting members to the CAC (author's creation based on KEFM, 2020h).

The overall aim of the selection was to construct a member cohort, representing the Danish population, being of people 18 years or older with residency in Denmark. Through the method of random sampling, the SD selected 99 members based on the categories of gender, age, region of residency, education level, income, and socio-economic status.

Four findings of the final member cohort are relevant to highlight in this thesis. First of all, Figures 8 and 9 illustrates two categories comparing the CAC member cohort with the Danish population.

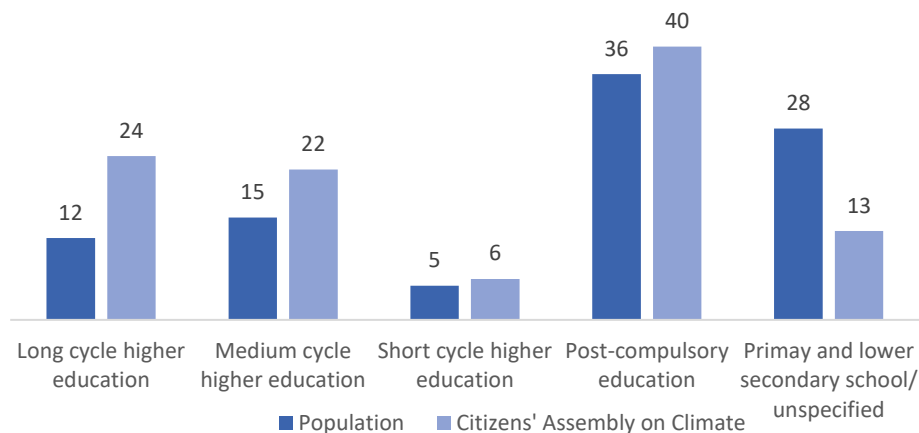


Figure 8. Education level (specified in percentage) of Danish population compared to the CAC member cohort (adapted from KEFM, 2020h).

Figure 8 illustrates the education level of the Danish population compared with the CAC member cohort and Figure 9 illustrates the education level of the Danish population compared with the CAC. The comparison in the two figures indicates that higher educations and high income are considerably overrepresented in the CAC whilst lower levels of education and income level are less represented (KEFM, 2020h).

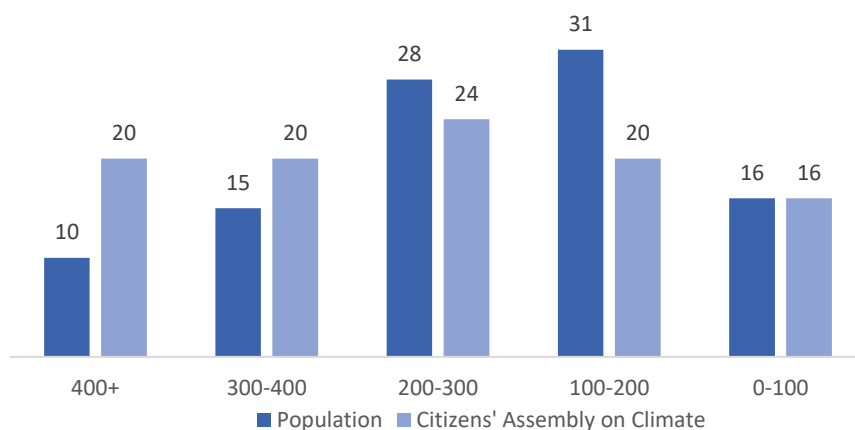


Figure 9. Disposable income level (in thousands DKK, specified in percentage) of Danish population compared to the CAC member cohort (adapted from KEFM, 2020h)

A third finding is the limited representation of ethnic or cultural minorities in the CAC member cohort. And whilst ethnicity was not measured officially, it was addressed at the final weekend meeting by a group of members and problematised with the exclamation that “next time we shouldn’t be this white, it is embarrassing!” (Appendix D).

Finally, the members’ political views should be mentioned. Figure 10 shows that the majority of members highlight climate and environmental policies when asked what would be the determining factor for who to vote on in a coming election.

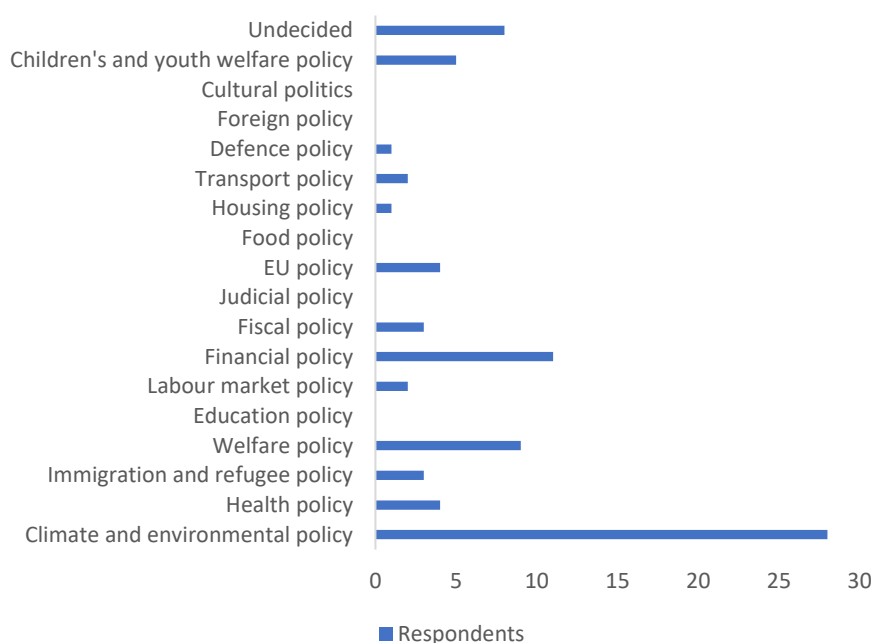


Figure 10. The responses from members of the CAC when asked what policy area will be decisive of their voting at the next parliamentary election (Author’s own creation adapted from questionnaire⁵)

⁵ The questionnaire can be accessed in attached zip-file

This preoccupation with climate and environmental policy has been apparent several times throughout my observations. Members have often emphasised their own commitment to the climate agenda, by statements addressing their personal (vegetarian) diet, their engagement in local forestation projects or minor environmentally friendly changes in their lifestyle such as sorting waste or installing household solar cells.

5.3.3 Selection and influence of experts

In this chapter I examine the process of how the experts and keynote speakers were elected, what knowledge they represent and how this influenced the information that the members received.

Selection

According to the CAC Concept Note (KEFM, 2020a), the institutional design of the assembly should include an independent expert panel. To ensure legitimacy and impartiality, the Ministry appointed the independent Danish Rectors Conference (DRC) to establish a panel of experts to ensure the scientific quality of the CAC and “represent climate scientific, economic, and societal aspects” (KEFM, 2020a, p. 1). The timeline in Figure 11 illustrates the selection process of the expert panel and their subsequent selection of keynote speakers.



Figure 11. Timeline explaining the process of appointing and selecting expert panel and keynote speakers. (Author’s own creation, based on governmental files⁶)

⁶ The files can be accessed in the attached zip file under the following acts: Act 1072226, Appendix 1; Act 1084942, Appendix 1; Act 1084943, Appendix 1.

The process in Figure 11 reflects an autonomy and freedom to select experts with adequate knowledge without interference from the Ministry. Moreover, the process shows that the DRC has managed to elect experts from a broad scientific field, relevant to the climate and sustainability agenda.

Influence

As illustrated in Figure 11, I have found two ways in which the expert panel have influenced the CAC: 1) suggesting relevant topics for deliberation and appointing keynote speakers, and 2) providing input to the Information Material.

When examining the themes and topics presented to the CAC, they were initially determined by the Ministry in conjunction with the DBT and the expert panel. However, as the CAC proceeded the members have increasingly been the ones to decide and prioritize the themes and request further knowledge on a specific topic – this reflects a flexibility in the process. The process of putting together the Information Material report has been less accommodating. Looking closer at the evolution of the report, it has been under much reviewing before reaching its final state. Apart from the expert panel, the Ministry has received expertise from organisation such as the Danish Meteorological Institute and the Danish Energy Agency⁷. An example of how expert knowledge have influenced the report is illustrated in Figure 12 and the subsequent translation of the same paragraph in the final report.

The primary dilemma is that there is a scarcity of space. Every time one hectare of land is converted into forest, the use – often agricultural – of that land must be renounced. Therefore, afforestation can implicate a reduction of the Danish food production with the risk that food production increase in other countries to accommodate the total demand for food. This can lead to an “export” of greenhouse gases to the countries where the production increases, and is especially problematic if the production leads to deforestation in other countries.

Commented [EX 42]: In reality this is not a big dilemma – only because we currently do afforestation without thinking.

Commented [EX43]: Only if afforestation is done on the best land. Absurdly, this is what is happening now, but one could stop that and instead use the more sandy soil for afforestation. The reason is that Danish afforestation projects is executed based on a timber production model and not a climate model.

Commented [EX44]: This is agricultural lobbyist nonsense

Commented [EX45]: And this is quite simply rubbish – I would like to see some data on this. On the contrary, it is the Western worlds’ demand cause 60% of deforestation in tropical forests. It is outrageous to claim that if we maintain Danish agriculture to feed the world we prevent deforestation elsewhere. Moreover, it is not the amount of food production that is the challenge in terms of feeding the world – it is the distribution of food.

Figure 12. Illustration of the contributions from an expert who has commented on and challenged the details on afforestation, deforestation and agriculture in an early draft of the Information Material report (Author's creation).

⁷ See Files 3.1, Act 1167015 and Act 1167011 in attached Zip-file

“A dilemma is that the space in Denmark is scarce. Every time one hectare of land is converted into forest, other usage of that land must be renounced. When agricultural land is converted into forest, this can cause a reduction of the Danish food production. This includes a risk that food or fodder production increases in other countries to meet the total demand. This can lead to an “export” of greenhouse gases to the countries where production is increased. This is especially problematic if the production causes deforestation in other countries. Today, deforestation of tropical forest is among other things driven by increased meat production and demand of fodder in the Western world.”
(KEFM, 2020g, pp. 29-30)

The evolution of the paragraph illustrated by Figure 12 and the quote above is interesting as it shows the conflict between two opposing perspectives of the same dilemma. The expert challenges the considerations for forestry and agroindustry whilst rebutting the view that decreased production in Denmark will necessarily lead to carbon leakage. The paragraph from the final report shows that despite minor changes, it is still influenced by what the expert in Figure 12 criticises as “agricultural lobbyist nonsense”.

5.3.4 Discussion: The CAC as an example of democratisation from above? (RQ2)

In this sub-chapter I answer RQ2 by discussing three elements of the CAC’s institutional design that lead to a form of democratisation from above: 1) participation and the ideal of representation, 2) the role and influence of experts, and 3) the political mandate. Consequently, I argue that democratisation from above risks hampering the CACs capacity to actually partake in democratic climate policy making.

The barrier of political and administrative power

Two arguments for institutionalising deliberative democracy posed in this thesis raise the question of whether the CAC is institutionalised in a way that ensure legitimacy. First, institutions must serve as the foundation for deliberative initiatives without overshadowing the focus on human lives (Sen, 2009). Second, deliberative politics must exist through democratic institutionalised will-formation coupled with informal deliberation (Habermas, 1997).

The answer to these questions can be found by looking at my analysis in chapter 5.3.3, where I show that the CAC lacks a clear political mandate. Through the lens of the conflict between political and administrative power and the communicative power of a citizens’ assembly (chapter 4.1.3), it is clear that the result of the CAC (the final recommendations) has to compete with the administrative power of politicians and office holders. Indeed, like Habermas (1997), one should recognise the barriers that comes with the cost of deliberative processes and the often inadequate resources of administrative

systems. When that is said, there is still reason for critique as a fuzzy institutional arrangement like the lack of a clear mandate makes it difficult for the CAC to break through the political and administrative power wall and become more than a top-down democratisation project with limited political power.

The ideal of representation

Based on the analysis in chapter 5.3.2, it is possible to highlight two legitimating and two problematic elements of the CAC member selection. First, the CAC can – in broad terms – be viewed as an exercise in inviting the public to enter the political sphere and formulate recommendations that aim to improve their environments and reach far beyond each individual's needs and interests. Going back to Sen (2009) this is a central element in his idea of justice and a reason to commend the CAC. The second legitimating aspect is related to Habermas' (1997) democratic principle, which states that legitimacy cannot be claimed until policies are met with approval by citizens in a discursive process. This is arguably the nature of the CAC which – with the broad selection of Danish citizens – has included people who would not otherwise have been engaged in public debate.

Two elements of the member selection are – on the other hand – democratically problematic and risk hampering the discursive practice. First, according to the general discourse principle, discursive processes should take place within groups of autonomous people, where all relevant groups are represented. The challenge is, that the CAC member cohort is characterised by an overrepresentation of high-income groups, people with longer educations, and of people to whom climate policy is the determining factor in a coming election. Representation is arguably one of the main challenges to deliberative initiatives as they are often characterised by a specific demography (white, well educated, above average income) (Lee, 2011), whilst specific minority groups are often harder to reach (Harris, 2019). Nevertheless, it is democratically problematic as the CAC – an initiative supposed to reflect broad public opinion – is based on a confined representation of political interests and a semi-elitist overrepresentation.

The second reason is the lack of contestation in the discursive practice, which I also discussed in chapter 5.2.4. The justification for repeating it here, is that the member selection process has resulted in a somewhat homogenous member cohort, which might have limited the amount of contestation. According to Habermas (1997), consensus is an ideal on the condition that the deliberating parties have been executed within fair and legitimate conditions – such as representation. Thus, with my argument concerning the member cohort, one might ask whether consensus has been reached through elaborate discussion on disputes and competing values, or if it is nothing but a result of a politically uniform member cohort.

The influence of experts

Based on the argument to ensure plurality of reason (chapter 4.2.2), the design of the CAC can be commended for ensuring a plurality of knowledge in written and spoken text. The fact that the knowledge presented has been verified by a variety of stakeholders can be viewed as a legitimating factor and important for the democratisation process. Moreover, the role of an independent educational organ like the DRC and the subsequent selection of keynote speakers, can be deemed successful in the sense, that it provided a diversity to the expert panel and a variety of knowledge represented in the presentations – despite my findings of a largely techno-managerial framing of sustainability and limited political contestations (chapter 5.1.3).

However, the analysis in chapter 5.3.2 shows that the institutional design have influenced the way in which knowledge has been presented and thus the number of political disputes. It is possible to argue that the Ministry – being the key actor in determining the knowledge presented to the CAC – have executed a technocratic steering of knowledge. As presented in chapter 4.1.3 this is an important bottleneck of deliberation, and is proved problematic in the case of the CAC. The example in Figure 12 shows an emphasis on technocratic framings in the final edition of the Information Material despite clear political disputes around the information presented. It is problematic as this resembles a top-down steering of the presentation of knowledge which ultimately endangers the legitimacy of the CAC. Rather, in order to ensure political diversity, the institutional design must dare to include a plurality of reasons – also the ones opposed to mainstream climate politics.

6 Conclusion

The CAC is a ground-breaking initiative in Danish climate politics as it invites the public to enter the political sphere, engage with publicly relevant dilemmas, and propose recommendations to the Danish green transition. For this, the initiative can be viewed as a legitimating factor for climate policy making, and thus should be commended.

Yet, with some scrutiny it is possible to add nuances to this appraisal. Based on the research conducted, I have detected three barriers to the CAC, which answers the questions posed in this thesis: 1) a techno-managerial framing of sustainability, 2) “expertisation” of deliberation, and 3) top-down democratisation.

The influence of sustainability narratives

Starting with RQ1, the answer to the question is twofold. First, the predominant techno-managerial framing of sustainability limits the focus on normative issues within climate and sustainability governance (chapter 5.1). And whilst a techno-managerial focus is indeed relevant, it must not prevail at the expense of concerns around ideology, lifestyle, and behaviour. Rather, to ensure a formulation of inclusive, sustainable and just pathways to a transition of Danish society, these perspectives should have stronger emphasis.

Second, an “expertisation” of deliberation risks rendering lay public opinions irrelevant and limiting disputes around beliefs and ideologies (chapter 5.2). The result is inadequate democratic will- and opinion-formation that is necessary for the members to transcend expert discourse. Instead, emphasis must be put on opening up around public vernacular to ensure an adequate utilisation of the members’ ‘expertise’ as citizens.

The abilities and barriers of the CACs institutional design

The answer to RQ2 is that the institutional design of the CAC risks fostering top-down democratisation. Three factors support this conclusion: 1) the fuzzy institutional arrangement and lack of a clear political mandate makes it difficult for the CAC to penetrate political and administrative power, 2) the somewhat homogenous member cohort lacks representation of low-income and minority groups, which risks limiting the number of contestations necessary to reach consensus that is not just based on ideological uniformity, and 3) the design around experts and keynote speakers is limited by a technocratic steering of knowledge at the expense of acknowledging controversies of politically relevant problems.

In summary, I conclude that the CAC must overcome the three barriers detected in order to penetrate democratic policy making and help foster a deeply, just sustainability transition of Danish society.

7 Further Reflections

In this chapter I present an informed reading of the CAC's final recommendations. I start with some general remarks followed by two aspects I find particularly interesting before I present my reflections on potential future research.

7.1 General remarks

The CAC published their recommendations (CAC, 2021) on April 29th at a meeting with the Committee and the Minister of Climate, Energy and Utilities (Folketinget, 2021). The recommendations include 117 specific proposals distributed on the topics: Public Education, Behaviour & Inclusion; Financing & Taxation; Agriculture, Land Use & Resources; Transport; and Technique in the Landscape.

The recommendations reflect a thoroughness and understanding of the dilemmas and solutions related to a sustainability transition. Generally, the recommendations reflect broad public appeal and include proposals such as long-term investments (recommendation 5), electrification of transport (recommendation 15), and co-ownership of renewable energy (recommendation 17). When that is said, some of the recommendations are more controversial. Of these can be mentioned recommendation 12.2 that suggests forced phase out of low-lying soils (a highly politicised topic in contemporary Danish politics), recommendation 3.1 that suggests a shift away from a dominant growth paradigm, and recommendation 14.1 that suggests a reduction of Danish meat production.

7.2 Emphasising just sustainability and democratic inclusion

The recommendations distinguishes itself from other climate policies in the sense that the first topic includes recommendations such as individual consumption level (recommendation 3.2), the implementation of a permanent, autonomous national CAC (recommendation 2.1), and local climate assemblies (recommendation 2.2). What is more, mentions of public inclusion are recurrent throughout the recommendations – also in places with no obvious connection to democratic inclusion. I find this interesting for two reasons. First, the recommendations can be viewed as a reference to palpable lack of inclusion in contemporary climate policy making and, thus, a clear signal to decision-makers that a broad segment of the public is ready to take responsibility. Second, it can be viewed as a counter-argument to my analysis concerning the risks of relying on a dominant techno-managerial framing of sustainability. Rather than closing down around such framings, it indicates that the CAC has been able to transcend the focus on managerial solutions “where laws, technologies, infrastructure, and institutions are ends in themselves” (chapter 4.1.1). Therefore, despite the fact that the recommendations do not address the lack of political mandate, I find the aspect of democratic inclusion and the recognition of just sustainability to be the biggest strengths of the CAC's final product.

7.3 The influence of experts

Another interesting aspect to point out is that the very first recommendation addresses the significance of independent expert knowledge and that this should be the guiding element in every climate policy and action. The recommendation nearly undermines the work of the CAC by stating that “it is more important to listen to experts – such as the DCCC – rather than lay people (and thus, in a way also the citizens’ assembly)” (CAC, 2021, p. 16). In my opinion this citation reflects one of the greatest paradoxes of deliberation in the complex context of climate change and sustainability. On one hand, I endorse the statement as it recognises the importance of robust knowledge and scientific legitimacy whilst criticising political nit-picking, populist opportunism, and indecisiveness. On the other hand it undermines the need for public inclusion and – as I argued in chapter 5.2.3 – risks closing down around expert knowledge, rendering lay public opinions and emotional engagement in the agenda to be insignificant.

7.4 Future research

The conclusion of this thesis constitutes a future research agenda for how the CAC can penetrate political decision-making processes and the broader public awareness.

If the study had proceeded for another 6-12 months, I would have analysed the final recommendations in order to evaluate the members’ framing of sustainability. Moreover I would have expanded the three-dimensional CDA to include a stronger focus on the process of 1) production of text: the CAC’s discursive practice and production of recommendations, 2) distribution of text: how the final recommendations are handed over to the ministry and the rest of the public, and 3) consumption of text: the political reception, scrutiny and processing of the recommendations and the recommendations’ reception in the public. This way I could have evaluated the CACs ability to penetrate the political and administrative power wall, embrace a local vernacular and thus help foster a deeply democratic sustainability transition of Danish society.

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9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A: Example of governmental documents

The screenshot shows a copy of an e-mail correspondence between the Ministry and experts contributing to the Information Material. The picture below is a screenshot of one page with comments in the Information Material report.



Skovrejsning

Danmarks skovareal er vokset betydeligt over det sidste århundrede efter et historisk lavpunkt omkring 1800, hvor under 3 pct. af landet areal var skov. Skovene har mange funktioner: de er hjemsted for dyr og planter, de er med til at beskytte vores drikkevand, de er vigtige rekreative områder, og de giver mulighed for produktion af trævarer. Flere aktører, herunder Klimarådet og klimapartnerskabet for fødevarer og landbrug, anser skovrejsning som et vigtigt klimavirkemiddel. Når træer vokser, optages CO₂, som efter træernes fældning kan lagres i for eksempel møbler og træbygninger. I skove produceres også træbiomasse, som kan fortrænge fossile brændsler i danske kraftvarmeværker. Derved kan træbiomasse bidrage positivt til CO₂-regnskabet, når det produceres bæredygtigt.

Det primære dilemma er, at pladsen er knap. Hver gang der rejses en hektar skov, må der gives afkald på en anden brug af den samme hektar jord – ofte landbrugsjord. Derfor kan skovrejsning medvirke til at reducere den danske fødevarerproduktion. Dette indebærer en risiko for, at fødevarerproduktionen øges i andre lande for at imødekomme den samlede efterspørgsel på mad. Dette kan lede til en "eksport" af drivhusgasser til de lande, hvor produktionen øges. Dette er særligt problematisk, hvis produktionen medfører øget afskovning i andre lande.

Endelig gør det en forskel, hvilken type skov man rejser. Skovens optag af CO₂ fra atmosfæren pr. tidsenhed er størst ved plantning af hurtigvoksende træarter, for eksempel visse nåletræer. Danske løvskove indeholder til gengæld et højere kulstoflager i jødmassen. Nåleskov er derudover ofte ikke den optimale løsning, hvis man ønsker at fremme biodiversitet, da flere danske arter, har løvskov som habitat. Rene nåleskove har typisk heller ikke samme høje rekreative værdi som løvskove, dvs. som hjemsted for natur- og fritidsaktiviteter.

Commented [CR43]: Det er bare ikke rigtigt at det træ vi brænder af er bæredygtigt. De er stempelt "bæredygtig" af certificeringsselskaber – men det kommer med 50 års time-lag på genoplgrøntingen – så det at brænde af er negativt mhp at nå Paris-aftalen. Her vælger jeg at ignorere at træafbrænding i et excellark tæller nul – al den stund at den virkelige CO₂ udledning er på niveau med afbrænding af kul. DFvs denne udlægning skal modificeres mht teksten. Det er sludder fagligt hvad der står.

Commented [CR44]: Det er i virkeligheden ikke et stort dilemma – kun fordi vi pt laver skovrejsning med hovedet under armen. Gøres det de rigtige steder, så er dette problem ikke særligt stort (se nedenfor)

Commented [CR45]: Sgu da kun hvis man tager og rejser skov på den bedste jord. Det er det man tåbeligtvis gør pt – men det kunne man jo lade være med – og bruge den mere sandede jord til skovrejsning. Årsagen er at danske træplantningsprojekter gøres efter en træproduktionsmodel – og ikke en klimamodel. Det gøres med henblik på at gro træer mht fældning i stedet for at gå mod mere permanent klimalangrigsskov, biodiversitet og sikring af vand. Lagring af CO₂ stopper efter 100-200 år. Så en permanent skov vil hjælpe mod parismålene – og man kan mindske konflikterne med landbrugsproduktionen

Commented [CR46]: Det her er altså landbrugslobby vås.

Commented [CR47]: Og det her er simpelthen noget

9.2 Appendix B: Example of observations notes: structure

Evening meeting 3: Agriculture - Observation

29. december 2020, 10:32

Meta notes:

- Panel debate
- Fourth members in the group
- I already conduct the analysis in the observation
- Difficult to follow the written work, so I have to guess what they are deciding on

Key	Description
-(nr)	Marks when there is a change of topic in the dialogue
--	Pause in observation
❖	Specific OVA
-->	Marks when a dialogue leads to an action
EVA	Evaluating or analysing within the recording
Green	Deliberating on a specific sustainability narrative
Blue	Working with expert knowledge
Yellow	The member as an expert
Red	Group dialogue/ deliberation process
DBT	Danish Board of Technology

Observation 1. runde

Intro fra DBT:

- ❖ Medlemmernes feedback fra sidste gang løs på, at der blev brugt for meget tid på process -> derfor forsøg fra TR om at skære ned
- ❖ Det er vigtigt at jeres diskussion og formuleringer er klart formuleret, så de medlemmer, der skal arbejde i temagrupperne forstår hvad i mener - Hold den gode tone, som vanligt:)

EVA: Gruppen starter med at gennemlæse den nuværende OVA. Gruppen slås lidt med at arbejde med det forskellige OVAer - hopper over de to første, da de finder dem for uhåndgribelige. En i gruppen bemærker, at deres opgave er at gøre dem håndgribelige.

Ingen facilitator i gruppen, hvilket giver en sløv opstart i dialogen, men der er forskellige gruppemedlemmer, der tager teten på forskellige tidspunkter.

EVA: gruppen kæmper lidt med at formulere nogle gode anbefalinger og observationer

- Vi må gøre vores bedste!
- SA: OVA 12 er for roddet --> går videre med næste?
- O: OVA 12 - bioøkonomi? Er vil blevet introduceret for det

- SM: ja, lidt i starten om genanvendelse, men det er evigheder siden

EVA:

Gruppen er meget on their own, de har svært ved at operationalisere den viden, de har fået
Har også flere gange svært ved at samle hinandens pointer op - både når det er relevant og irrelevant for arbejdet med anbefalingerne
Men får dog samlet op på og arbejdet videre med nogle gode ting

EVA: Gruppen genbesøger pointen om kødproduktion og "lækage" princippet

EVA: der er en overordnet tilfredshed i gruppen omkring paneldebatten

- ❖ SM: Tilfreds over, at der var en landmand med for at få et praksisnært syn
- ❖ O: kunne være godt med en konventionel landmand
- ❖ SB: formidling - hvordan får vi resten af DK til at forstå hvad vi lærer?
- ❖ SK: vi skal have solgt budskabet godt, uden udskamning

EVA: O driver dialogen fremad efter at gruppen har været lidt på afveje omkring kinesisk olieproduktion. Gruppen kommer ind på detaljer omkring pyrolyse

EVA: O er i tvivl om hvad det "faktuelle" er omkring lavbundsjord og hvad de kan bruges til --> Spørger gruppen om hvordan de forstod det

- ❖ SA: ja, der var uenighed om lavbundsjordene - det lød som om den ene ekspert sagde at lavbundsjordene ikke kan bruges til noget, fordi de ville blive for våde/ moser
- ❖ SM: fremhæver pointe fra Niels om at det ikke er enten eller med både og - det handler om at indlede en dialog med landmænd

EVA: SK fremhæver Torstens pointe om at kunne brødføde flere mennesker med færre kreaturer.

EVA: gruppen går videre til at diskutere forbrug og omkostninger omkring græsmælk --> Gruppen bliver enig om, at klargøre, hvad der er problematikken om lavbundsjord.

Overall EVA: dialogen går lidt i øst og vest, men handler mest om, hvad gruppen er i tvivl om

Observation 2. runde (OVAer) Tema: Biomasse, bioenergi

OVA14 Skovrydning inden for biomasse

- ❖ SK: "man" er ved at rydde gammel egeskov for at plante noget nyt, der skal passe sig selv
- ❖ SM: spørgsmålet er om man skal undersøge, hvad der giver det bedste klimamæssige udbytte ny skov eller gamle egetræer, der er sat i 1800tallet
- ❖ O: men giver det mening at gå ind i en konkret sag?
- ❖ SM: kan man lave nogle anbefalinger om, hvor det giver mening at lave skovrydning - hvor det har det bedste udbytte
- ❖ SK: hvorfor skal vi have gamle træer til at ligge og rådne, hvis de udleder CO2?
- ❖ O: det er en helt anden snak, men det handler om at øge biodiversiteten. Det er det samme med kokasser på markerne
- ❖ SK: ja, det giver jo steder for biller
- ❖ SM: ja, der er jo forskel på at fælde skoven, og skabe plads til de dyr der bor i skoven
- ❖ O: der er jo en regel om, at for hvert træ man fælder, skal der plantes to
- ❖ SK: men så er spørgsmålet jo om, hvorvidt det sker!
- ❖ O: det må man jo stole på, jeg bor i et område med meget skov, så jeg følger med i det.

EVA: Efter at have været kort omkring OVA13 vender gruppen tilbage til OVA 14

- ❖ O: du sidder der og skriver SA! Curseren flyver rundt, det er godt at se.

- ❖ O: vi skal klargøre at vi taler ikke om skovrydning i DK - I DK fører vi skovdrift. Skovrydningen er fra andre lande til bl.a. soja
- ❖ SK: ja, og fjernvarme
- ❖ SM: Rikke sagde, at det er noget svineri at gøre krav på jord i andre lande, som ikke regnes med i vores CO2 regnskab. (trækker også på en tidligere ekspert omkring verdensmålene) -
-> vi skal have med i anbefalingen, at vi ikke skal bidrage til skovrydning i andre lande
- ❖ SA: er 14'eren så ikke god som den er?

--> EVA: gruppen går videre til OVA 13

OVA 13

EVA: gruppen diskuterer vurderingen: vi står med forskellige valg i hverdagen, og dilemmaer omkring, hvad der er mest bæredygtigt?

Gruppen diskuterer græsmælk, og hvorvidt drøv tykkere skal på græs - de taler om, hvordan alle oplægsholderne var enige om dette. Og de dvæler ved at Torsten nævnte at han kan producere mere med færre køer.

SM tager dialogen videre, og taler om, hvordan en anbefaling/ vurdering kan henvise til at borgeres/ forbrugeres tankegang skal ændres sammen med holdning i landbruget. "Kan man starte med plantebaseret mad?"

EVA: gruppen diskuterer hvor biomassen skal bruges

- ❖ SA: hvor har biomasse værdi for mennesker, miljø og dyr?
- ❖ SM: giver eksempel fra kina og sommerfuglelaver, der bruger spildprodukter, som igen bruges til produktion af medicin (udnytte alle aspekter af produktion)
- ❖ SA: det biomasse vi har skal vi udnytte og bruge optimalt. Som landmanden (torsten) skal vi være selvforsynende med biomasse, bruge mindre, men bedre - et lukket kredsløb af biomasse i DK.

EVA: Gruppen vender tilbage til noter, de har fra tidligere oplæg og materiale fra eksperter. Og O vender tilbage til Jørgens oplæg fra tidligere på aftenen.

- ❖ SA: eksperterne taler ofte ud fra deres lille felt, men vi kan arbejde med synergien af den kollektive viden vi får fra eksperterne til at udarbejde nogle gode anbefalinger.
- ❖ SA: der er jo nogle spørgsmål vi synes er svære, fordi vi ikke kan svare på dem! Derfor må en anbefaling til det videre arbejde måske være, at vi har brug for svar på dem - er spørgsmålene relevante, så må anbefalingen være, at vi vil have svar på de spørgsmål der står?

Afrunding DBT:

- ❖ Det arbejde I har lavet i dag bliver sendt videre til temagruppen der skal arbejde med landbrug i næste uge.
- ❖ Vi laver noget forarbejde/ oprydningsarbejde på de OVA'er I har lavet inden vi leverer det videre til temagrupperne - beslutning er baseret på erfaring fra temagruppemødet i sidste uge, at det var dårlig brug af borgertingets tid, at de skulle lave meget oprydningsarbejde i stedet for anbefalinger
- ❖ Feedback fra borgertinget om brug af tidligere gruppers arbejde med OVA'er - svarer at man gerne må
- ❖ Sidste 10 min bruges på at borgerne udfylder digital evaluering
- ❖ Spørgsmål fra medlem: får vi noget inden vi mødes i temagruppen, så vi kan forberede os?
- ❖ Svar: ja, en dag før

9.3 Appendix C: Example of text analysis excel sheet

9.3.1 Overall text analysis

Theme dominating presentation					
9 Technology					
12 Financing	3 (techno-man)				
8 Agriculture					
5 Behavior & society					
6 Transport	3 (techno-man)				
Presentation/ text	Who is the actor(s) articulating the narrative?	What is the framing of sustainability?	How are climate and/ or sustainability problems framed?	What are the solutions suggested	How is (incomplete) knowledge communicated?
First weekend meeting					
Opening Speech	Minister for climate, energy and utilities, Dan Jørgensen. Member of the social democratic party	Even though the transition is hard – it can benefit a society, as the transition hopefully will lead to a sustainable development of Denmark.	Parallel to the task of the green transition is what JFK said about putting a man on the moon: “Not because it is easy, but because it is hard”. We have given ourselves a difficult task: a transformation of our lifestyle – transport, eating habits and consumption. Clear impacts of climate change around the world: melting glacier in Greenland, permafrost issues in Russia	“We are passed talking about whether climate change exists. We are here to talk about solutions” ... and we need to reflect on how we make democratic decisions. Acknowledges that the climate is a top priority for the public, which is mirrored in “probably the most ambitious climate law in the world”.	The task ahead of you (in formulating recommendations) and for all of us in terms of the green transition, includes several dilemmas: choice between technologies (biomass vs. coal, where biomass should also just be a temporary solution), balance between collective and individual choices, between growth vs. net growth. You have a big influence on the themes that will be addressed, and we (politicians) will be as distant in the process as possible.
Climate, climate modelling and energy	CEO, Energy Modeling Lab, Kenneth Carlsson	Managerial and political Yes, the 70% target is possible, (but not with technological fixes) and it is affordable, especially on the long run	The climate issue is a limited budget, where the atmosphere is like a bathtub that is slowly filling up with CO2 If we were to follow the global distribution of allowed carbon emissions in order to stay within the 1.5° target, then Denmark has 10-12 years The “true” hockey stick/le with the current rate of emissions. early emissions: industry and transport are the biggest emitter of CO2, but agriculture is also anno	Two solutions 1) technology like carbon capture – but slow 2) stop the “water inflow” The governments’ hockey stick versus an opposite hockey stick – we need a rapid transition now (before 2030; phase out use of fossil fuel, transition of heavy transport, electrification and green gas, phase out carbonaceous agriculture) and follow up/ supplement by technological solutions (such as CCS) and long-term plans such as reforestation in order to reach the Paris agreement	any illustrations and visuals - hand drawn visuals --> makes it more accessible/ informal Matter of factly - we can reach the goal through x,y,z... with political support
Achieving the 70% target through smart energy solutions	IDA, The Engineer Association, Prof. Henrik Lund, Aarhus University	Managerial	Global outlook - the climate issue is a global issue and Denmark should work towards achieving the Paris agreement in accordance to the rest of Europe - e.g. international flight and shipping transport is not considered in any measures and goals internationally, which should be the case. Danish CO2-emissions has decreased since 1990 according to FN --> Biomass - the country who produce gets the bill, which gives a unprecise picture as DK import a lot of biomass	The 70% target IS possible, and the transition will make Denmark richer (increased BNP), not poorer. But, we need to speed up the transition, it is not worth it to wait. Existing technology within renewable energy that needs to be prioritized up until 2030. Long term solutions needed -- the steps after 2030 need to be considered. Technologies that should be ready after 2030 needs to be developed already now Solutions include: green taxation, financial incentives to buy electric cars, co-ownership of windmills -- renewable energy	Matter of factly - we can reach the goal through x,y,z... with political support
Agricultural emissions	Aarhus University, Professor Jørgen E. Olesen	Opening disclaimer: Denmark export food 4 times the population in Denmark, and the world food consumption is expected to rise in the coming years - the transition needs to happen with consideration to avoid export of emissions	Global agricultural practices accounts for 24-30% of global total emissions, the same in Denmark where agricultural practices accounts for around 30% of the country's GHG emissions. Changes and transition is not about pushing a button to end emissions, as many emissions within agriculture are closely connect to biochemical processes	We need to be able to control microbiological processes in order to recude the emissions within agriculture: such as change in fodder or fodder additives, implementation of biogas and acidification of organic fertilizer, and phase out carbonaceous agriculture --> would however only lead to max 25% reduction (2,7mio ton) -- but this is optimistic. What else: new agricultural systems (perennial crops, effective animals, meat and dairy substitutes), new technologies, new crops, integrate circular technologies) CO2 storage in the ground by vegetation? On the short run, forestation is not effective Overall, it is difficult! And it takes time to implement, 10 years is not a long time.	Precise in terms of talking about GHGs - distinguished between CO2, Co4, N2O) Use acronyms such as LULUCF (Land Use and Land Use Change F) Very technical Acknowledges the difficulty of working with living organisms - feedback loops and biochemical processes complicates the task Barriers to achieving the goals: technology, economy, environment and health, regulations
Biomass, utilization	Dansk Miljøteknologi, Mette Boye	Biomass is other than wood pellets - Denmark has sustainable biomass resources How do we ensure that biomass is not just food and wood pellets, but can be developed and utilized in a sustainable and climate friendly way Principles for development of biomass supply chains: Global outlook, climate efficiency, sustainability and cascade utilization of biomass.	Fossil plastic - global production of plastic is expected to rise even though the danish consumption is decreasing	Bioeconomy to replace fossil economy: straw, bio-waste, manure, waste water. Disclaimer: Biomass is part of the solution to replace fossil energy, but the biomass can only replace part of the fossil based energy Global solutions - utilization of local biomass resources can adress global challenges Political support lacking? Heavy transport -- biomass can be utilized where electrification is not possible - e.g. in heavy transport.	A lot of photos and illustrations - only technological word is “biomass” which, due to media coverage, has become part of the public vernacular the disclaimer that biomass is only part of the solution.
Transition of transport sector	COWI - strategic transport planning, Jakob Christensen	Climate and economy should go hand in hand	Dilemma/ problem: Transport accounts for 25% of co2 emissions in Denmark --> it requires significant reductions. But it is at the same time a vital part of the competitiveness for businesses. Finally - it is expensive to change and changes can lead to mobility issues Passenger transport: 90 % in private cars --> more electronic cars (most talked about solution), roadpricing (the best means to regulate transport), carpooling (1 person in each car - that number needs to increase), attractiv public transport Freight transport: hydrogen or electrofuels, more train transport and shipping (however, difficult to realise due to less flexibility) International flights: taxation (to reduce demands), electrofuels, short flight travels can be replaced with train and bus, less international holiday travel?	1) Improve existing infrastructure (integration of other means of transportation, information technology) 2) CO2 neutral fuel, 3) shared mobility 4) decreased mobility demand (but in other sectors, so not a big part of this seminar) Roads cannot be free in the future. The solutions will cost money ... but will not be enormous costs	Disclaimer: The transport sector will unlikely reach 70% reduction by 2030 - the rest must be found other places

9.3.2 Analysis of solutions suggested

Presentations: Solutions suggested										
Presentation/ text	Who is the actor(s) articulating the narrative?	What is the framing of sustainability?	What are the solutions suggested	Type of solution suggested						
First weekend meeting				Financial incentives and market regulations	Land Use Change and improvement of agricultural practices	Improvement of transport sector (infrastructure, mobility)	Democratic inclusion	Behavioral change (e.g. consumption and mobility patterns)	Policy and governance	Technological solutions (REs, electrification, CCS)
			Total	22	10	5	8	8	18	28
Opening Speech	Minister for climate, energy and utilities, Dan Jørgensen, Member of the social democratic party	Even though the transition is hard – it can benefit a society, as the transition hopefully will lead to a sustainable development of Denmark.	"We are passed talking about whether climate change exists. We are here to talk about solutions" ... and we need to reflect on how we make democratic decisions. Acknowledges that the climate is a top priority for the public, which is mirrored in "probably the most ambitious climate law in the world".							
Climate, climate modelling and energy	CEO, Energy Modelling Lab, Kenneth Carlsson	Managerial and political Yes, the 70% target is possible, (but not with technological fixes) and it is affordable, especially on the long run	Two solutions 1) technology like carbon capture – but slow 2) stop the "water inflow" The governments' hockey stick versus an opposite hockey stick – we need a rapid transition now (before 2030) phase out use of fossil fuels, transition of heavy transport, electrification and green gas, phase out carbonaceous agriculture) and follow up/ supplement by technological solutions (such as CCS) and long-term plans such as reforestation in order to reach the Paris agreement							
Achieving the 70% target through smart energy solutions	IDA, The Engineer Association, Prof. Henrik Lund, Aarhus University	Managerial??	The 70% target IS possible, and the transition will make Denmark richer (increased BNP), not poorer. But, we need to speed up the transition, it is not worth it to wait. Existing technology within renewable energy that needs to be prioritized up until 2030. Long term solutions needed -- the steps after 2030 need to be considered. Technologies that should be ready after 2030 needs to be developed already now Solutions include: green taxation, financial incentives to buy electric cars, co-ownership of windmills -- renewable energy	1		1				1
Agricultural emissions	Aarhus University, Professor Jørgen E. Olesen	Opening disclaimer: Denmark export food 4 times the population in Denmark, and the world food consumption is expected to rise in the coming years - the transition needs to happen with consideration to avoid export of emissions	We need to be able to control microbiological processes in order to recude the emissions within agriculture: such as change in fodder or fodder additives, implementation of biogas and acidification of organic fertilizer, and phase out carbonaceous agriculture --> would however only lead to max 25% reduction (2.7mio ton) -- but this is optimistic. What else: new agricultural systems (perennial crops, effective animals, meet and dairy substitutes), new technologies, new crops, integrate circular technologies) CO2 storage in the ground by vegetation? On the short run, forestation is not effective Overall, it is difficult! And it takes time to implement, 10 years is not a long time.	1					1	1
					1					1

9.4 Appendix D: Observations notes: excerpts of all utilised quotes

This appendix provides an overview of all direct quotations from my observations utilised in the analysis. The excerpts are listed in the order they appear in the text. The observation notes can be accessed in full length in the zip-file attached.

File 04. Evening 5 - Climate law and OVA's. February 2021.

- MN: skal vi forpligte noget af vores u-landsbistand til grønne løsninger?
- L: jeg synes det er svært at kommentere på emner, som vi ikke ved noget om.
- B: jeg har noteret, at vi godt kunne bruge noget mere viden om emnet, så kan vi jo arbejde videre med det i næste runde (efteråret red.)
- M: ja, så det ikke bare er baseret på, at jeg har hørt en buschauffør sige engang, at gamle busser fra DK bliver sendt til Afrika.

File 06. Weekend meeting: Saturday. March 2021.

- LK: så har jeg et generelt spørgsmål - er der noget I gerne vil sige?

EVA: Gruppen taler om lempelser for pensionskasser og kommer ind på, at det ikke skal være op til borgertinget hvor mange lempelser, der skal forekomme, da "vi simpelthen ikke er kloge nok - selvom det er en svær erkendelse" som et medlem siger.

File 01. Evening meeting 3 – Agriculture. December 2020.

EVA: Gruppen vender tilbage til noter, de har fra tidligere oplæg og materiale fra eksperter. Og O vender tilbage til Jørgens oplæg fra tidligere på aftenen.

- SA: eksperterne taler ofte ud fra deres lille felt, men vi kan arbejde med synergien af den kollektive viden vi får fra eksperterne til at udarbejde nogle gode anbefalinger.
- SA: der er jo nogle spørgsmål vi synes er svære, fordi vi ikke kan svare på dem! Derfor må en anbefaling til det videre arbejde måske være, at vi har brug for svar på dem - er spørgsmålene relevante, så må anbefalingen være, at vi vil have svar på de spørgsmål der står?

File 05. Evening meeting 5 – OVA's. February 2021.

EVA: gruppen taler lidt om, hvordan det skal formuleres, og hvad der er rigtig fakta.

- M: men vi skal jo heller ikke være eksperter - så er det i hvert fald gået galt i byen - (EVA: smiler, mens hun siger det)

EVA: gruppen taler om sojabønner versus græsfoder

- J: kan I huske nogle af de oplæg vi har fået?
- M: hende fra DN sagde, at græs binder CO2

File 06. Weekend meeting: Sunday. March 2021.

EVA: en af medlemmerne spørger om vi kan tage en præsentation af forskerne (vi har alle 4 været mutet og med slukket kamera ind til nu) --> efter vi har præsenteret os selv og hvad vi fokuserer på, spørger medlemmerne og LK (facilitator) ind til vores studie og fokus.

- LK: hvordan ser i medlemmernes input, dem de selv kommer med? Man er jo eksperter på forskellige ting, der er relevante for borgertingets emner og andre har en interesse for det, der giver dem særlig viden?
- Victor (forsker) spørger ind til, hvordan de føler at deres diskussioner har udviklet sig siden de startede
- RS: jeg vil sige at ekspertoplæggene i virkeligheden ikke har gjort den store forskel for mig, fordi jeg allerede vidste meget om de her emner i forvejen. Det der har ændret mine perspektiver er de andre medlemmers inputs til diskussionerne.

File 02. Thematic Working Group – Agriculture. January 2021.

EVA: en fra gruppen stiller et opfølgende spørgsmål om standardiseret affaldssortering

- JM: JB, spørger du også om, hvorvidt vi har fået information fra nogle eksperter om det?
- SV: men vi er borgere, og har lov til at mene noget - og vi sorterer forskelligt alle steder

File 05. Evening meeting 6 – OVA's. February 2021.

EVA: Gruppen går hurtigt i gang med arbejdet - de starter med at gå igennem kommentarerne på første OVA og henviser til LKs opfordring.

- M: det er mig, der har siddet og skrevet - men jeg er ikke gift til noget af det" - så vi kan bare slette løs. Derudover har jeg siddet siden sidst og prøve at blive klog på, hvad vores hovedbudskaber er.
- L: Ja, det er ikke alle steder, vi er helt skarpe
- M: jeg ville have det fint med at sidde og finpudse selv, så længe jeg bare ved, hvad vi vil - og at vi er enige om det.

File 06. Weekend meeting: Saturday. March 2021

- LA: jeg er i tvivl - for taler vi ikke om privat ejendom (for landmændene) hvor vi anbefaler at staten går ind og bestemmer suverænt? Det er lidt voldsomt at staten skal gå ind og bestemme så meget
- AN: jeg synes måske den favner for bredt. En ting er arealbrug, men noget andet er kødproduktion samtidig med at den omtaler verdensbefolkning og underernæring rundt om i verden. Så måske vil den for meget. Og så er der det med tvang, som der jo skurer særligt her i en corona-tid hvor vi er underlagt mange forskellige ting
- RS: jeg synes den er fantastisk og grundig og den rammer hovedet på sømmet - den går ind til benet. Og ift. det med privat ejendomsret, så handler det om en industri der forurener for meget. Det er ikke deres lejlighed, det er en del af DK. Og godt vi er nået til at sted, hvor vi kan være lidt uenige. Og den bærer præg af at være skrevet af nogle, der ved noget om det
- HA: jeg synes den er enormt godt gennemarbejdet.
- J: jeg går også helt ind for den
- JM: jeg har det ligesom AF - der er mange ting, jeg ikke forstår. Men jeg er enig i at den er gennemarbejdet og jeg kan da godt se meningen i det jeg læser
- CK: LA du rammer hovedet på sømmet. Der står intet i OVA'en om ekspropriation, som er når man beslaglægger ejendom og bestemmer, hvad det skal bruges til. Den går udenom de knaster, der er årsag til, at der ikke er kommet nogle reguleringer på landbrugsområdet -- hvem betaler?
- SK: jeg synes den er fornem
- LA: det er spændende, hvad der sker psykologisk, når man er uenige - i starten var jeg lidt i tvivl, men når jeg har hørt jeres argumenter bliver jeg endnu mere uenig, for som jeg ser det går den i direkte strid med grundlovmæssige rettigheder.
- M: men der er allerede så mange retningslinjer for landmænd, hvilket der bliver nødt til at være, for landmænd - især konventionelle landmænd - vil importere soyaen fra sydamerika.
- RS: jeg synes der bliver givet nogle vigtige pointer, og vi skal ikke dæmonisere landmænd. Og jeg mener at CK kommer med en god pointe ift. regningen.
- LA: ja, og der er vel også en pointe i, at vi skal producere mad nok til en stigende verdensbefolkning
- M: men hvis vi skærer ned på kødforbruget er det ikke noget problem.

Medlemmerne diskuterer lidt videre.

- LA: som i jo nok kan fornemme er jeg borgerlig, men jeg spiser altså ikke særligt meget kød - før i kommer efter mig.
- LK: jeg tror ikke der er nogen, der kommer efter dig.... Tak for en god debat. Jeg tror I er klar til at stemme nu.

File 4. Evening meeting 5 – Climate Law and OVA's. February 2021

EVA: LK svarer på en kommentar til spørgsmål om indflydelse og potentiel påvirkning af CAC.

- LK: Hvordan man får indflydelse? Min erfaring fra den branche er, at hvis man bare kommer med et slogan på Christiansborgs slotsplads har det ikke stor indflydelse på politikere, for de møder det hver gang de møder op. Det der gør indflydelse er, hvis man argumenterer for en sag med ens oplevelser som borger, ens hverdag og liv - som politikerne ofte kan spejle sig i - det gør indtryk, og det er den chance i har. I skal ikke være eksperter, men skal fortælle, hvad I oplever i jeres hverdag. I mine øjne har I en betydelig større chance for at påvirke jeres politikere end mange andre - med mine 30 års erfaring som politisk rådgiver

EVA: åbner op for at gå videre med diskussionerne

- LK: I skal ikke lade jer desillusionere af, at I sidder i et lille corona-rum - I får skrevet nogle gode OVA'er i vores øjne.

EVA: Åbner op for, at grupperne kan mødes uden for de planlagte aftener, for at skrive de forskellige anbefalinger færdige

File 07. Weekend meeting: Sunday. March 2021

EVA: Tilbage i plenum taler medlemmerne om demografi. Et par medlemmer taler om, hvorvidt man kan gøre mere for at inddrage personer med anden etnisk baggrund og de problematikker der er omkring det. Og hvorfor danskere med minoritetsbaggrund ikke er repræsenterede. Eller om det er tilfældigt at alle er hvide, for nu er det jo majoriteten i DK. Eller om det er en individuel selektion, der er sket fordi personer med anden etnisk baggrund selv har takket nej til invitationen.

- M: Næste gang skal vi altså ikke være så hvide, det er pinligt det her!

EVA: KEFM giver et bud på frafaldsprocent og repræsentativitet:

- DST: der er nogen i den gruppe som DST udtrak, der havde "anderledes navne" end dansk klingende og som heller ikke havde dansk statsborgerskab. Jeg kan jo af gode grunde ikke sige, hvilken hudfarve de har haft.
- Med corona og det digitale set-up er der en del der sagde fra, så vi måtte sammensætte en ny gruppe på 99 borgere. Og ud af dem mødte 75 op på den første weekend samling.