

# Falling between the chairs or too many chairs to fall on?

A Narrative Policy Analysis of outdoor recreation in Swedish policymaking

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Lund University Centre for  
Sustainability Studies



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## **Abstract**

*Friluftsliv*, Swedish for outdoor recreation, is a relevant concept for sustainable development, yet as a political objective, *friluftsliv* is struggling to gain a foothold in Swedish public policymaking. To generate knowledge of how *friluftsliv* is used in policymaking, and to address the growing demand for *friluftsliv* by the public, I explore visions of *friluftsliv* as articulated in the Swedish Parliament Chamber between 2010-2021. Utilizing an interpretive approach to the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF), I identify and analyze four dominant policy narratives of *friluftsliv*: the Multi-use forestry, Profitability, Affordability, and Municipality narratives. My analysis adds to literature stating that *friluftsliv* as a political objective lacks its own platform and rests on a merger with external values, which largely depends on definitions of public interests. The narratives manifest juxtapositions of public and private interests and central and local mandates. Hence, *friluftsliv* as an objective risk getting increasingly polarized and invokes consensus-making approaches.

**Keywords:** outdoor recreation, narrative policy framework, Swedish politics, sustainable development, public policy making, resource management

**Wordcount:** 11998

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## **List of Abbreviations**

CAB – County Administrative Board

MP – Member of the Parliament

NEQO – National Environmental Objective

NFO – National Friluftsliv Objectives

NPF – Narrative Policy Framework

ORVA – Outdoor Recreational Voluntary Association

SAMWM – Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management

SDG – Sustainable Development Goal

SEPA – Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

SFA – Swedish Forestry Agency

SPHA – Swedish Public Health Agency

SS – Sustainability Science



## 1. Introduction

Outdoor recreation is in the western urbanized society the dominant activity in which humans interact with nature in a non-formal or work-related manner (Blahna et al., 2020). Many politicians view outdoor recreation as vital to meet policy objectives regarding both human wellbeing and environmental citizenship (WHO, 2010). As such, outdoor recreation poses as a cross-dimensional and transdisciplinary topic for research, and as an important concept for sustainable development policies (Dinica, 2006; Morse, 2020; van den Berg et al., 2007). The many benefits of outdoor recreation are well-documented and span across human and environmental dimensions (Beery, 2013; Rosa & Collado, 2019). Although typically framed as a win-win concept for human-environment relationships (Blahna et al., 2020; WHO, 2010), the way to increase opportunities for outdoor recreation is often fraught with conflicting interests (McCullough et al., 2018). Meanwhile, most adolescents worldwide are not spending sufficient active time outdoors (Guthold et al., 2020), and valuable relations with nature are lost alongside vitality (Maas et al., 2009).

In 2010, Sweden started its biggest commitment to date to increase the status of outdoor recreation as a national objective. *Friluftsliv*, Swedish for outdoor recreation, gained its official definition as “an outdoor visit in the natural and cultural landscapes for the purpose of well-being and nature experiences, without the need for competition” (Prop. 2009/10:238, p. 10, my translation). Yet, the interpretations of *friluftsliv* varies among actors in the dispersed management (Hudson et al., 2019; Persson, 2013) and by international comparison the institutional practice of *friluftsliv* in Sweden is weak (Bladh et al., 2013; Holmgren et al., 2017; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014). The Swedish Parliament decided on ten National *Friluftsliv* Objectives (NFOs) to be implemented by 2020, linked to Agenda 30, numerous Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the National Environmental Quality Objectives (NEQOs) (SEPA, 2014; Skr. 2012/13:51). The nation's work with *friluftsliv* is described as the means and the ends of sustainable development (Emmelin et al., 2010; Wolf-Watz, 2011). However, both implementing and interpreting the NFOs have been challenging and most of them are not met (SEPA, 2019). Furthermore, recent reports show that the Swedish public is not practicing *friluftsliv* to their desired extent (Fredman et al., 2019), while the demand for *friluftsliv* is growing (Hansen et al., 2021).

The Swedish setting with both a consensus and a science-oriented decision-making process (Larsson & Emmelin, 2016) puts a lot of expectation on the collaborative structures that administrate *friluftsliv* when interests are to be balanced, both within national administration and within the Parliament. The plurality of interpretations of what *friluftsliv* is or should be, require diverse resource allocations (Gerber et al.,

2009; Lindström, 2006; Morse, 2020), and the arguments for the distribution of these resources, makes friluftsliv subject to competing interests (McCullough et al., 2018; Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010). As a valuable tool for sustainable development (Mann et al., 2010; Winter et al., 2020; WHO, 2010), the position of friluftsliv in public policymaking is in this thesis regarded as increasingly significant (Ascher, 2007). Seeing that much research within both the field of policy analysis and friluftsliv has focused on the issues of implementing top-down formulated policy objectives at the local level (Emmelin & Cherp, 2016; Petersson-Forsberg, 2014), I shift the attention to the policymakers at the national level of the Swedish Parliament. By conceptualizing the public policymaking process as an arena where *policy narratives* are constructed for the purpose of mobilizing support for resource allocation, I explore the collective sense-making process (Fischer, 2003; Jones & McBeth, 2010), for friluftsliv as a political objective and the conflicts created in the process (Sandell, 2003). To analyze this process, I draw on the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) (Jones et al., 2014; Jones & McBeth, 2010), and utilize the NPFs systematic content analysis to navigate multiple competing visions of friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell, 2003; Stone, 2012).

### **1.1 Aim and Research Questions**

The problem at hand for this thesis is the gap between the Swedish public demand for more access and opportunities to friluftsliv and the insufficient administration of this demand. As an attempt to generate necessary knowledge regarding friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell et al., 2011; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014), I aim to analyze how friluftsliv has been addressed by the Members of the Parliament (MPs) since the introduction of the NFOs in 2010 until 2021. Using an interpretive approach and qualitative adoption of the NPF, I seek to answer the overarching questions of how the MPs articulate *what the visions of friluftsliv are, how to get there, and what stands in the way?* Given the increasing demand for friluftsliv by the public, and the potential friluftsliv holds for sustainable development (Dinica, 2006; Stenseke, 2018) the knowledge generated by this thesis can foster the progress and stability of the institutional practices of friluftsliv in Sweden. The research questions developed to answer the overarching questions are:

1. Which are the dominant policy narratives of friluftsliv in political debates between 2010-2021?
2. How are these narratives used to mobilize resource allocation for friluftsliv?
3. What competing interests are created in these narratives?

## 1.2 Contributions to Sustainability Science

For Sustainability Science (SS), a crucial task is to provide knowledge to decision-makers of potential solutions to social and environmental issues (Van Kerkhoff & Lebel, 2006). The knowledge I generate in this thesis is no attempt at a solution, rather I strive to inform decision-makers and scholars of the relevance that friluftsliv (Dinica, 2006) and narratives play in public policies and for sustainable development (Paschen & Ison, 2014). I believe this is important to foster the understanding of conflicts in broad concepts such as friluftsliv and sustainability (Bacchi, 2012; Frank, 2017; Kates et al., 2005). Many argue that policy analysis has a lot to offer sustainability sciences (Ascher, 2007; Paschen & Ison, 2014; Rogge & Reichhardt, 2016). I take on a descriptive-analytical format (Clark & Dickson, 2003; Wiek et al., 2012) and argue that to understand the visions of friluftsliv from a public policy perspective, we need to fundamentally understand the meaning of the objective (Yanow, 2000). The normative understanding of how the human-environmental relationship should be organized (Jerneck et al., 2011; Miller, 2013) invokes approaches that allow for interpretations of the plurality of understandings (Beers et al., 2010; Sneddon et al., 2006). As a contribution to SS then, I demonstrate the value of the NPF in mapping and understanding the use of ambiguous objectives such as friluftsliv (Jones, 2014). The concept of sustainability has been studied thoroughly by narrative analysis (Béné et al., 2019; Frank, 2017; Lejano et al., 2019), and policy analyses on sustainable management of natural resources are extensive (Gerber et al., 2009). However, narrative policy analyses of friluftsliv as a political objective from a sustainable development perspective are missing.

## 1.3 Scope

To approach friluftsliv as a research topic within SS and for the results to be transferable to the bigger picture of sustainable development, I limit the scope of friluftsliv to a *political objective and a concept for debate* (Sandell, 2003). Friluftsliv as a political objective and concept for debate is characterized by the necessity to demarcate it as a concept and to classify its meaning for policymaking (Sandell, 2003; Stone, 2012). In the political setting, identifying friends and enemies in these conceptualizations is necessary, when actors motivate, justify, and attempt to mobilize resources for friluftsliv (Sandell, 2003). For the NPF, framing and demarcating concepts from one another creates coalitions and oppositions (Gottlieb et al., 2018), that compete in framing topics in their favor (McBeth et al., 2014; Stone, 2012). Hence, different visions of political objectives are created in the policymaking setting (Fischer, 2003; Sandell, 2003), and it is these I give attention to.

## **2. Setting the stage for friluftsliv**

In this chapter, I present a research summary of friluftsliv benefits to sustainable development (Blahna et al., 2020; Stenseke, 2018). Secondly, I describe friluftsliv's position and administration in the Swedish setting, the limits to friluftsliv experienced by the public, and the challenges friluftsliv in public policymaking holds. The context offered by this chapter is central to my analysis (Ascher, 2007; Weible & Schlager, 2014).

### **2.1 Benefits**

Much research has established the positive effects of friluftsliv on human wellbeing (Hartig et al., 2009; White et al., 2019). Buchecker and Degenhardt (2015) show how psychological resilience is positively correlated with friluftsliv, which necessity in an increasingly stressful climate is overstated (Clayton, 2020). By identifying friluftsliv as a cultural ecosystem service, the concept has gained attention in the ecosystem service literature where co-benefits between wellbeing and societies are strong (Chan et al., 2012; Paracchini et al., 2014; Pröbstl-Haider, 2015). Access to green areas has a significant impact on health (Maas et al., 2009; Mayer et al., 2009) and increased social well-being can also be attributed to friluftsliv, with social integration and a sense of community as outcomes (Gentin et al., 2019; Holland et al., 2018). Participation in Outdoor Recreational Voluntary Associations (ORVAs) strengthens civic engagement, stakeholder relationships, and self-enhancement (Lu & Schuett, 2014; Mann & Leahy, 2010).

Friluftsliv's relationship with national economics is a growing interest (Fredman et al., 2013; Rosenberger et al., 2017), where friluftsliv stimulates employment and business development (Winter et al., 2020). This is much due to trends of increased consumerism and commodification of nature experiences (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017), stimulating tourism, equipment, and transportation revenues (Sandell & Boman, 2013). Visitor expenditures from nature-based tourism are also positively linked to the maintenance of ecosystem protection and rural development (Arnaiz-Schmitz et al., 2021; Hjerpe, 2018). Friluftsliv can stimulate both rural and sustainable development, creating synergies between natural and cultural heritage conservation (Gössling & Hultman, 2006; Muhar & Siegrist, 2017). Moreover, policies for increased physical activity have considerable implications for healthcare costs (McCurdy et al., 2010; WHO, 2010).

Research tied to the positive connections between nature conservation and friluftsliv is plentiful. Restall and Conrad (2015) suggest that environmental management should make use of the public's

connectedness to nature to facilitate support for meeting environmental objectives. Furthermore, the educational and pedagogical aspects of friluftsliv are beneficial to nature conservation projects (Beery, 2013; Gurholt, 2014; Powell et al., 2009), and some claim that friluftsliv can combine values of rural development and nature conservation to meet environmental objectives (Arnaiz-Schmitz et al., 2021). Moreover, a meaningful relationship between a sense of connectedness to nature (Goralnik & Nelson, 2011) and friluftsliv has been established (Beery, 2013; Nisbet et al., 2008). A recent literature review by Rosa and Collado (2019) manifests the strong link between nature experiences and pro-environmental behavior. Others mean that nature-connectedness partly accounts for positive attitudes towards nature but does not cause pro-environmental behavior (Berns & Simpson, 2009; Wolf-Waltz, 2011).

## **2.2 Limitations**

The limits to practicing friluftsliv are unevenly distributed among the Swedish public and the spaces needed to fill the demand are diminishing (Forsberg, 2012; SEPA, 2019). About 54 % claim that they cannot practice certain friluftsliv activities to the desired extent (Fredman et al., 2019) with 80 % stating a lack of time as the biggest reason. 42 % state that they lack company for friluftsliv activities, 39 % state that they lack suitable locations, and 20 % of the public state that they lack the financials (Fredman et al., 2019). Women spend more time on friluftsliv than men and citizens with disabilities spend less time in nature compared to those without (Fredman et al., 2019). Citizens born outside of Europe spend significantly less time on friluftsliv and experience more limits to friluftsliv than citizens born in Sweden (Fredman et al., 2019). The age group that spends the least time on friluftsliv is that of 16-24 years (Fredman & Hedblom, 2015; Fredman et al., 2019) and children and adolescents in urban areas are less active in friluftsliv than those in rural areas (Andersson et al., 2013; Fredman et al., 2019). Over half of urban residents lack access to suitable locations for friluftsliv, compared to 34 % for rural residents (Fredman et al., 2019). 60 % of all green areas in urban areas are private property or in other ways inaccessible to the public (Statistics Sweden, 2019) and SEPA (2019) concludes that the pressure on green areas is growing from increased urbanization, meanwhile much unprotected urban nature is claimed for exploitation. The Covid-19 pandemic has further increased the demand for friluftsliv dramatically, which is expected to grow (Andersson et al., 2021; Hansen et al., 2021). Fredman et al. (2021) conclude that the pandemic emphasized the importance of access to nature, while also disclosing the weak administration of friluftsliv in Sweden.

### 2.3 Unstable Position

Friluftsliv has had an unstable position in Swedish national politics, and until the 70s and 80s, friluftsliv was unpopular as a political objective (Sandell & Svenning, 2011). As definitions of friluftsliv have shifted (Sandell, 2014; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008), the required administration and political relevance of friluftsliv shifted with it (Bladh et al., 2013; Lindström, 2006). Urbanization in the 70s stressed the need for public access to nature, and the decentralization of governance during this time (Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Rhodes, 1996) made the municipalities responsible for ensuring friluftsliv as a welfare concept (Almstedt, 1998; Emmelin et al., 2010). The globalization in the 70s gave friluftsliv new political interest in terms of tourism, shifting the concept of friluftsliv from regional welfare to a national “experience industry” (Emmelin et al., 2010; Sandell, 2014). Friluftsliv also got entwined with nature conservation during the 70s, making the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) the responsible governmental agency for friluftsliv until 1991 (Bladh et al., 2013). Identifying friluftsliv as “the social dimension of nature conservation” enabled a degree of top-down governance. Firstly, the shoreline protection legislation merged with the nature conservation legislation, protecting the right of public access<sup>1</sup> to shorelines and biodiversity by limiting the real estate development prominent from the 30s, (Sandell & Svenning, 2011; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). Secondly, the state declared many areas as National Interests<sup>2</sup> during the 70s and 80s to invest in Swedish landscapes for national welfare (Emmelin et al., 2010).

In the 90s the political interest weakened and between 1992 and 2001 friluftsliv had no formal institutional administration. Aspirations to further involve citizens in planning gave the municipalities the sole responsibility (Bladh et al., 2013; Lindström, 2006), to whom the ORVAs turned for funding, making the administration and economic resources unequal (Sandell & Svenning, 2011). In 1991 the government saw a need to demarcate friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell & Svenning, 2011), as the state funds to friluftsliv had been concealed as funds for nature conservation and sports (Ds. 1999:78; Emmelin et al., 2010). In 2002, SEPA became the governmental agency for friluftsliv again, responsible for distributing the funds to the ORVAs (Ds. 1999:78).

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<sup>1</sup> The Right of Public access or the “right to roam” is a custom protected in the Swedish Constitution that enables friluftsliv to be conducted practically anywhere if private landowners and nature remains undisturbed (Sandell & Svenning, 2011).

<sup>2</sup>The National Interest is an instrument used by the state to toughen requirements for the municipalities planning basis, giving weight to nature conservation, friluftsliv and cultural environments in trade-offs (Emmelin et al., 2010)

## 2.4 The NFOs and the SDGs

In the early 2000s, the political interest in friluftsliv increased (Sandell & Svenning, 2011), which now came to include topics such as public health and economy (Emmelin et al., 2010; Sandell & Sörlin, 2008). In 2008, the umbrella organization for ORVAs in Sweden, Svenskt Friluftsliv, urged politicians to integrate friluftsliv in more areas than nature conservation and sports. This led the government to produce Sweden's first friluftsliv bill "Future friluftsliv" in 2010 (Prop. 2009/10:238). After two years of negotiation and correspondence with the SEPA, the Parliament officially declared the NFOs in 2012. Svenskt Friluftsliv became the administrative organ responsible for distributing the state funds to the ORVAs, which has since tripled, manifesting the growing position of civil voluntary associations.

**Table 1.** The official objectives for friluftsliv developed to be met in 2020. Currently, only objectives 1, 2, and 7 have a positive development, 3, 9, and 10 have a neutral development, 4, 5, and 6 are unclear and 8 have a negative development (SEPA, 2019).

The Swedish National Friluftsliv Objectives (NFOs)
1. Accessible nature for everyone
2. Strong commitment and collaboration
3. Right of public access must be protected
4. Access to nature for friluftsliv
5. Attractive natural areas in urban settings
6. Sustainable regional growth and rural development
7. Nature conservation areas as a resource for friluftsliv
8. Meaningful friluftsliv in school
9. Friluftsliv for public wellbeing and increase in quality of life
10. Spreading knowledge regarding friluftsliv (Skr. 2012/13:51, my translation)

The NFOs were designed to correspond to the 17 SDGs. In particular; *Good health and Well-being, Quality Education, Decent Work and Economic growth, Reduced inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and Responsible Consumption and Production* (One Planet Network, 2021; SEPA, 2019; Swedish Public Health Agency, 2022). The target structure of the NFOs was also designed to overlap with 8 of the 16 NEQOs namely, *Flourishing lakes and streams, A Balanced Marine Environment, Flourishing coastal areas and archipelagos, Thriving wetlands, Sustainable forests, A varied agricultural landscape, A magnificent mountain landscape, and A rich diversity of plant and animal life* (SEPA, 2014). Meeting these NEQOs is said to aid in meeting the NFOs and vice versa (SEPA, 2018), indicating the strong synergy between the environment and friluftsliv. Further, meeting the NFOs and the NEQOs are vital parts of the nation's work with Agenda 2030 (SEPA, 2018; Government Offices, 2021). The concept of friluftsliv in national

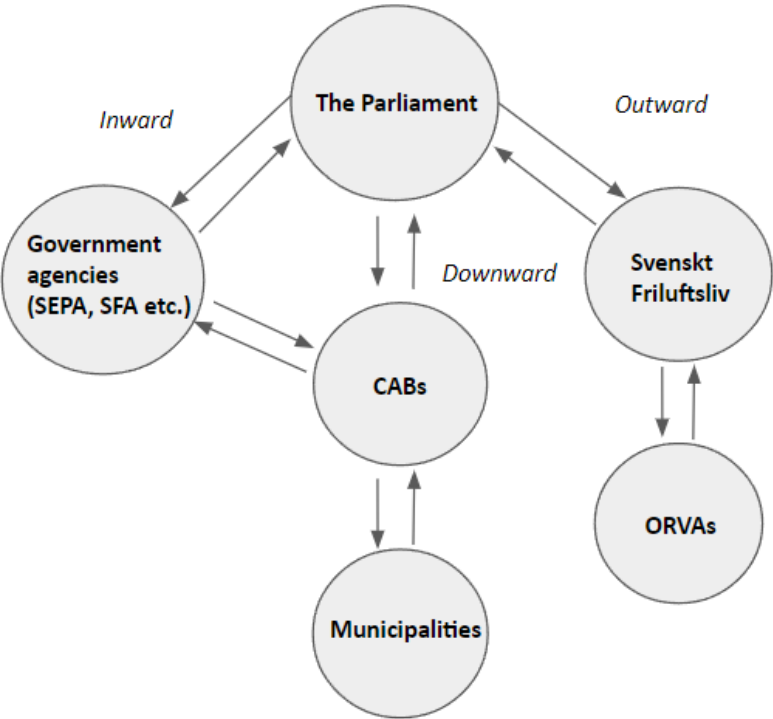
policymaking is thus now seen as a means for sustainable development, bridging the work between the NEQOs, SDGs, and NFOs (SEPA, 2014), and as such the administration is also increasingly complex (Lafferty, 2004; Lemos & Agrawal, 2006). To accommodate the different benefits of friluftsliv, Sweden relies on a shared responsibility through a multi-level collaboration network structure (Figure 1, Table 2) (Folke et al., 2005; Jacobsson & Sundström, 2016). Activities are delegated *downwards* to the municipalities via the County Administrative Boards (CABs), *outwards* to the ORVAs, and *inwards* to the governmental agencies (Figure 1) (Eckerberg et al., 2020; Rhodes, 1996).

**Table 2.** A general summary of the current actors and their responsibility in realizing the NFOs in Sweden.

Actor	Responsibility
<b>The Parliament</b>	The Parliament decides on the funding for the ORVAs, produces policies, and functions as the national primary organ that “create[s] conditions for a rich and varied outdoor life and to ensure access and improve accessibility to nature” (Skr. 2009/10:238, p 11, my translation). There is no cross-sector planning for land on a national level in Sweden, instead, the Parliament decides on national objectives for land-use by identifying areas of National Interest with the help of SEPA, of which friluftsliv is one (Emmelin et al., 2010; Hanssen et al., 2011).
<b>Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)</b>	The SEPA is since 2002 the government agency for friluftsliv. The SEPA's task is to ensure that the conditions for management and organizational operations are preserved and developed. On behalf of the government, they are responsible for coordinating the other government agencies working with friluftsliv, such as Swedish Forestry Agency, (SFA), Swedish Public Health Agency (SPHA), and Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SAMWM). The SEPA also provides guidance support to ORVAs, County Administrative Boards (CABs), municipalities, and private landowners (SEPA, 2022).
<b>Svenskt Friluftsliv, Outdoor Recreation Voluntary Associations (ORVAs)</b>	The largest ORVA in Sweden is Svenskt Friluftsliv. Since 2011 the organization function as the spokesperson towards the Parliament and authorize the distribution of the state funds for the other ORVAs (Svenskt Friluftsliv, 2016). They function as an umbrella organization for the 26-activity-specific ORVAs in Sweden. Their role is to “bring the people outside” and educate citizens about friluftsliv’s customs through campaigns and projects (Skr. 2012/13:51).
<b>County Administrative Boards (CABs)</b>	There are 21 CABs in Sweden that are responsible to support, collaborate and monitor the progress being made in their region, with help from the government agencies (SEPA, 2022). The CABs operate as a regional extension of the state, making their main task to coordinate the implementation of government policies such as NFOs and NEQOs with respect to the specific regional and territorial contexts (Niklasson, 2016).



<b>Municipalities</b>	Responsible for the local implementation of friluftsliv are the 290 Municipalities that have a <i>plan monopoly</i> of land-use jurisdiction (Persson, 2013). They present comprehensive plans reviewed by the CABs which is an overall land-use plan of the municipality's lands and public interests (Niklasson, 2016). This non-legally binding plan describes the use of the land for 4 years at a time, alongside how the Municipality plans to uphold the sites of National Interest including both environmental and friluftsliv interests (Emmelin et al., 2010).
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**Figure 1.** Schematic illustration of the multi-level administrative structure of the work with friluftsliv in Sweden. All actors report their work progress and give feedback upward. The public policymaking of friluftsliv and nature conservation is still centralized at the macro-level of the Parliament, while implementation has been attributed to the meso-level of the state agencies and County Administrative Boards (CABs), and at the micro-level the municipalities. As such, the friluftsliv administration follows that of environmental administration except for the inclusion of Svenskt Friluftsliv (Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Holmgren et al., 2017).

**2.5 The Parliament**

The time of 2010-2021 is interesting to analyze not only because of the introduction of the NFOs (Table 1) but also because of the changes in the parliamentary structures. Sweden has in the past decade moved towards a two-block party system, described as increasingly polarized (Aylott, 2016; Aylott & Bolin, 2015), with a coherent bourgeois center-right coalition, the *Alliance*, and a less coherent socialist block, the red-greens (Bäck & Erlingsson, 2016; Persson, 2016). The Alliance consist of the Moderates, the Liberals, the

Christian Democrats, and the Center Party and governed between 2010-2014 yet remained a coalition until 2019. The red-greens consist of the Social Democrats and the Greens with support from the Left Party, called *Löfven I* who governed between 2014-2019, and *Löfven II* governed between 2019-2021, now with support from the Center Party and Liberals. Since 2010, all governments have been coalition minority governments, meaning albeit not having a majority in the Parliament, they governed via passive support if reconciling with opposition parties on certain issues (Persson, 2016; Pierre, 2016). The last decade has seen numerous internal parliamentary agreements trying to uphold a consensual budget and prime ministerial positions, much to minimize the influence of the right-wing populist Swedish Democrats (Aylott, 2016; Persson, 2016). This has increased the need for compromise and negotiations between the parties (Aylott, 2016; Pierre, 2016), and the collaborative requirements in managing friluftsliv are thus prevalent in the national as well as in the Parliamentary structures (Hall, 2016; Mattson, 2016).

## 2.6 Challenges

Friluftsliv has been embraced in the socio-ecological system framework (Morse, 2020) and land-use management literature (Thomas & Reed, 2019). However, typically concerning protected areas, this literature does not grasp the complexity of friluftsliv as a political objective in Sweden, where the right of public access enables friluftsliv to be practiced almost everywhere (Andkjaer & Arvidsen, 2015). Thus, in this section, I turn to Swedish literature where the implications of friluftsliv's historically weak position in policymaking have been a prominent research topic in recent years.

Friluftsliv is said to navigate a gray area between two scientific and jurisdictional traditions. These are planning for public interests from the bottom-up and conserving nature from the top-down (Emmelin & Cherp, 2016; Emmelin & Lerman, 2008; Forsberg et al., 2013). Generally, the bottom-up decision-making process is oriented around negotiation and consensus, and the top-down approach sees scientific facts as the basis for decision-making (Emmelin & Cherp, 2016). The diversity of interests and benefits to friluftsliv (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010), and the dispersed administration (Figure 1, Table 2), have thus constructed a complex policymaking climate for friluftsliv in Sweden.

By defining friluftsliv as a public interest, the administration falls on the municipalities' plan monopoly who many argue is too weak to administrate friluftsliv (Pettersson-Forsberg, 2014; Forsberg et al., 2013). Here friluftsliv is one public interest among many, where social values often lose against economic values (Sandell & Svenning, 2011; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014). By defining friluftsliv as a cultural ecosystem service, the same challenges persist; social values are struggling to compete with the more easily valued

regulation and provisioning services (Pröbstl-Haider, 2015; Small et al., 2017). Leaving the municipalities to interpret friluftsliv creates challenges in the trade-offs between private and public interests (Eckerberg et al., 2020; Forsberg, 2012; Forsberg et al., 2013). Even though held as the pinnacle for friluftsliv, the right of public access might be limiting it as municipal officials claim, “there is so much green everywhere”, to favor exploitation in planning (Pettersson-Forsberg, 2014). Currently, the integration of friluftsliv in nature conservation and spatial planning relies on individual efforts and local decision-makers (Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Mann et al., 2010; Pettersson-Forsberg, 2014), and many emphasize that the municipalities have unequal resources (Forsberg et al., 2013; Sandström, 2008). By this definition, friluftsliv also lacks legally-binding instruments (Table 2) (Emmelin & Lerman, 2008).

The definition of friluftsliv as the “social dimension of nature conservation”, has seemingly prohibited the development of institutional competencies of friluftsliv, granting environmental objectives mandate in policymaking (Emmelin et al., 2010; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014; Wolf-Watz, 2011). The dichotomized logic of separating culture and nature in Sweden (Benessia et al., 2012), has further debilitated friluftsliv integration into nature conservation (Bladh et al., 2013). In its efforts to become an international forerunner in environmental work since the 1990s (Matti, 2009) the Swedish administration has downgraded friluftsliv as a political objective (Bladh et al., 2013; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014; Wolf-Watz, 2011). By this definition the administration of friluftsliv has been controlled top-down, causing conflicts between local decision-makers' interests and conservation interests (Eckerberg et al., 2020; Matti, 2009). The decentralization of nature conservation to increase local support and legitimacy (Berkes, 2002; Lemos & Agrawal, 2006) has also been slow by international comparison (Holmgren et al., 2017). Consequently, the Swedish administration of protected areas for friluftsliv fails to meet international standards (Borgström et al., 2013; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014; Stenseke, 2012).

Many scholars now wonder how friluftsliv as a political objective will demarcate with its own conceptual logic (Bladh et al., 2013; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014; Wolf-Watz, 2011). The definitions of friluftsliv in public policymaking are poorly studied (Sandell et al., 2011; Stenseke et al., 2013) and Stenseke and Hansen (2014) conclude that how friluftsliv is framed in policymaking has fundamental implications for the administration. To understand what decision-makers mean when ambiguous concepts such as sustainability and friluftsliv are promoted (Frank, 2017; Persson, 2013), more research that explores these different understandings are needed (Fredman et al., 2012; Stenseke et al., 2013).

### 3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I describe and motivate my theoretical approach and conceptualizations to friluftsliv via the application of an interpretive adoption of the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF). I also describe how this theoretical framework culminates into my research model (Figure 3).

#### 3.1 Interpreting Friluftsliv

My research is grounded in the epistemological stance that the knowledge researchers produce is not an accurate reflection of the world, but rather a lens through which it can be viewed (Crotty, 1998). I trust that the implications of the social construction of scientific knowledge are offering possibilities for developing research approaches rather than restricting them (Dodge et al., 2005; Miller, 2013). Taking a social constructivist stance on knowledge, means I also assume that reality is constructed by actors (Crotty, 1998; Yanow, 2000), who attach meaning to phenomena through social interactions (Putnam & Banghart, 2017; Fischer, 2003). Thus, I approach friluftsliv as a social phenomenon constructed through the interactions between humans and the environment (Blahna et al., 2020), and consequently, the *meaning* of friluftsliv is also a social construction of interactions between actors in the policymaking process (Putnam & Banghart, 2017; Wagenaar, 2011).

To explore how this social phenomenon of meaning-making is created (Rhodes, 2018; Yanow, 2000), I take an interpretive approach. I define interpretations as the *meaning-making* and meanings as to how actors in the policymaking process make sense of friluftsliv (Putnam & Banghart, 2017). I define policymaking as “a constant struggle over the criteria for classification, the boundaries of categories, and the definition of ideals [...]” (Stone, 2012, p13), where language is a form of argumentation (Fischer, 2003; Wagenaar, 2011). Viewing language as a subjective expression of reality (Fischer, 2003), problems and solutions are not given but rather constructed in policymaking (Bacchi, 2012; Stone, 2012), which also is true for me as an interpreter. Hence, limiting the scope of the topic is a necessity to avoid abstraction in the search for meaning (Rhodes, 2018; Wagenaar, 2011); I need to define *what* I aim to interpret. Given that friluftsliv is a broad topic, I limit the scope by interpreting the meaning of friluftsliv as a political objective (section 1.3) (Sandell, 2003). This is necessary as an interpretive approach explores social realities as embedded in a social setting, allowing me to interpret this reality via the sensemaking process (Putnam & Banghart, 2017; Rhodes, 2018; Yanow, 2000). The sensemaking process for this thesis is the public policymaking process (Matti, 2009).

### 3.2 The Narrative Policy Framework

To interpret the sensemaking of friluftsliv in public policymaking I apply the NPF. The NPF was developed as a tool for analyzing the role of policy narratives in the policy process (Jones & McBeth, 2010). Intended to bridge the constructivist approach to policy analysis (Fischer, 2003; Roe, 1994) and the positivist approach to policy processes (Jones & Radaelli, 2015; Shanahan et al., 2013), the NPF has received skepticism (Dodge, 2015; Miller, 2020). To refrain from mixing ontological and epistemological approaches, I apply the NPF in an interpretive qualitative manner (Dupuis, 2019; Jones & Radaelli, 2015; Palm et al., 2022). By doing so, I adopt the logic of qualitative epistemology of *content analysis* (Gray & Jones, 2016; McBeth et al., 2005) and the stance that narratives in policy processes have a crucial role in shaping opinion (Jones, 2014; Jones & Song, 2014; McBeth et al., 2007). The NPF believes that narratives are constructed in policymaking deliberately and strategically by actors to frame problems and solutions to their benefit (Fischer, 2003; Jones, 2014), with the use of the *narrative elements: settings, heroes, villains, and victims* (Table 3) (Jones, 2014; Shanahan et al., 2018; Stone, 2012). Following Stone (2012), the NPF suggests that policy processes thus can be analyzed as *struggles over narratives* (Jones et al., 2014; Jones & McBeth, 2010), where the role of the narrative is the focal point (McBeth et al., 2007). Identifying and analyzing the narrative elements have proven useful for navigating and mapping complex environmental policy challenges (Gottlieb et al., 2018; Shanahan et al., 2013). The content analysis of the narrative elements (section 4.3) brings systematization and structure to my method (Gray & Jones, 2016) and confirmability, credibility, and transferability to my analysis (Bryman, 2016; Jones & Radaelli, 2015; Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

### 3.3 Conceptual Framework

As mentioned, the Swedish state's responsibilities regarding friluftsliv are to “create conditions for a rich and varied outdoor life and to ensure access and improve accessibility to nature” (Table 2) (Skr. 2009/10:238, my translation). This statement is largely uncontested, yet I assume that the perceptions of what the best conditions are and the ways to get there must vary (de Vries & Petersen, 2009; Elander & Gustavsson, 2019), given the dispersed administration and the many definitions of friluftsliv. Synonymous with sustainable development, friluftsliv as a political objective will inevitably describe how resources should be distributed to facilitate these conditions (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Gerber et al., 2009; McCool et al., 2013). These descriptions are conceptualized here as a *struggle for resource allocation* (Heikkila et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2014) and the resources may vary from cultural, economic, normative, natural, social, etc. (de Vries & Petersen, 2009; Selin et al., 2020).

Exploring friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell, 2003), means I conceptualize the MPs in the public policymaking process that by constructing narratives, attempts to *mobilize support for resource allocation* (Sandell, 2003; Stone, 2012), that would facilitate the favored conditions for friluftsliv. Consequently, the favored conditions and the mobilizations of resource allocation are suggested to reveal what the MPs perceive the *visions of friluftsliv* to be and *how to get there* (Beers et al., 2010). This focus shifts the attention from the issues of implementing top-down formulated objectives at the local levels (Forsberg, 2012; Hudson et al., 2019; Persson, 2013), to the national policy processes controlled by the MPs at the macro-level (Figure 1, Table 2). This is an unexplored research field regarding friluftsliv in Sweden (Stenseke et al., 2013), yet policymaking at this level has large implications for the future of friluftsliv (Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Hall, 2016; Mann et al., 2010).

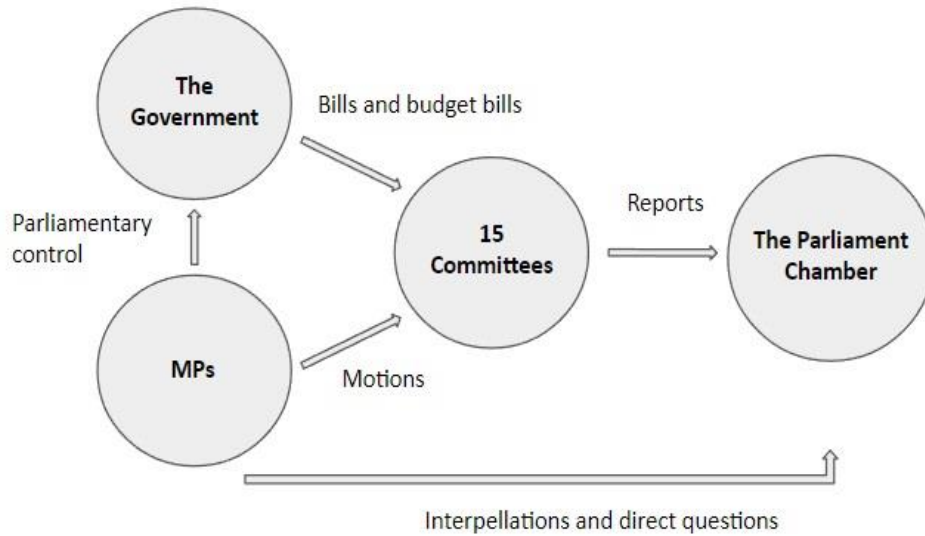
This focus assumes that albeit the decentralized governance, the top-down mandate still has a “steering role” (Jessop, 2012; Lafferty, 2004) which largely influences sustainable development (An et al., 2021; Elander & Gustavsson, 2019; Galland, 2012). The steering role that the MPs have, is to motivate different policy approaches (Rogge & Reichardt, 2016), with the use of narrative elements (Table 3). Conceptualizing the public policymaking process as a struggle over narratives (Jones & McBeth, 2010; Jones et al., 2014) further implicates the plurality of visions for friluftsliv (Polk, 2010; Sneddon et al., 2006). In the policymaking process of the Parliament, the MPs construct narratives with problem definitions and policy approaches (Bacchi, 2012; Fischer, 2003), in a persuasive act of attempting to mobilize support for their visions (Beers et al., 2010; Jones, 2014) of friluftsliv. These policy narratives constitute my focal point, and by analyzing them I propose conflicting interests (Eberlein & Radaelli, 2010; Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010) can be disclosed i.e., *what stands in the way* of the visions of friluftsliv to develop.

#### **4. Methodology**

This chapter first describes my selected materials and the policy processes in which it was produced to add contextuality to the policy analysis (Weible & Schlager, 2014). Secondly, the methods used for collecting, coding, and analyzing the material are described, followed by my research model which summarizes my theoretical framework, method, and research questions.

## 4.1 Material

The content analysis from the NPF (Table 3) was conducted on protocols from the Swedish Parliament Chamber. In Sweden, the Parliament consists of 349 chairs occupied by MPs that gather in the Chamber to debate and vote, and the protocols are the official transcribed documents of these debates. These protocols consist of statements from MPs that all represent a political party (section 2.5), and the issues debated are in turn based on items for debate (Figure 2). These protocols are the most representative published material of the Swedish public policymaking (Mattson, 2016), and were chosen first as it is public and uncensored. The MPs know that the protocols are open data, meaning they are not only trying to mobilize support within the Parliament but also among the public. Secondly, it is ideal for both narrative policy analysis (Kear & Wells, 2014; O'Bryan et al., 2014; Palm et al., 2022; Radaelli et al., 2015) and for the scope of friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell, 2003; Stone, 2012). Given the coalition minority governments' dominance where compromises and negotiations are necessary, the policymaking is influenced equally by the opposition and the government (Bäck & Erlingsson, 2016; Persson, 2016). Although the government has the executive power, the MPs monitor how the government is executing the Parliament's decisions. All bills and motions must also undergo review by one of the 15 topic-specific Committees, in which all parties are represented by 17 chairs, reflecting the distribution of chairs in the Parliament. The Committees submit reports with proposals for decisions, and both Ministers and Committees rely heavily on subject-specific expertise for their arguments (Andersson, 2016; Swedish Parliament, 2021). The policy process of the Parliament is hence characterized as being both consensus and "matter of fact" oriented (Larsson & Emmelin, 2016; Mattson, 2016).



**Figure 2.** Schematic illustration of the items debated in the Swedish Parliament Chamber concerning friluftsliv. The MPs raise concerns and disclose government actions via interpellations and questions. Questions are asked directly to Ministers and interpellations are written questions to Ministers. Interpellations get debated in the Chamber where other MPs also voice their opinion. The MPs also submit motions, many of which are counter-proposals to bills and budget bills submitted by the government. The government bills consist of proposals and adjustments for legislations, or commissioned activities to government agencies. The government also presents the budget bill which gets debated in the Chamber and the Committees. Figure adapted from the Swedish Parliament (2021).

## 4.2 Selection of Material

The selection of protocols was made based on the presence of [friluftsliv]. By using the search function on the Parliaments database for protocols (Riksdagen.se), all protocols containing the word “friluftsliv” from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, were downloaded, generating a total of 167 protocols. After this, I searched for the presence of [friluftsliv] within the protocols. Each paragraph mentioning friluftsliv was transferred into an Excel sheet, along with the name of the MP, party, and the item of debate category (Figure 2). Each protocol is organized by date on the Parliaments database, which allowed for the paragraphs to be organized by date in Excel accordingly. I collected the data between February 25<sup>th</sup> and March 29<sup>th</sup>.

As friluftsliv relates to a variety of topics (section 2.4) and is affected by and affects numerous policies (SEPA, 2019), attending to these different contexts were necessary (Weible & Schlager, 2014). Hence, I collected the paragraphs either before or after the paragraph where friluftsliv was mentioned, if these were in direct association with the statements of friluftsliv or were deemed necessary for contextualization. This decision was influenced by previous studies (Radaelli et al., 2015; Wagenaar,



2011). In these instances, the “context paragraphs” and the “friluftsliv paragraphs” were put in two different columns. In some protocols, the items debated concerned friluftsliv directly, for example when the MPs debated the bill “Future friluftsliv” (Prop. 2009/10: 238). In these instances, I transferred all text regarding the item of debate into Excel by paragraph. In total, the arrangement of paragraphs in Excel generated 754 rows.

### **4.3 Content Analysis and Coding**

The method for the coding process was adopted from the general rules proposed by Shanahan et al. (2018) and Bryman (2016). For a policy narrative to be identified as such, the NPF maintains that it must offer a stance on an issue and contain at least one character identified as a *villain*, *victim*, or *hero* (Shanahan et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2014). Furthermore, the NPF recognizes the *narrative elements of setting, plot, and moral* as generalizable components of a policy narrative (Roe, 1994), and argues that these are strategically used to persuade and create opinion (Jones & McBeth, 2010). All narrative elements and the codes I used to identify and analyze them are described in Table 3.

I chose an inductive approach for the coding procedure, guided by previous policy scholars (Miller, 2020), meaning that the narrative elements and policy approaches were not pre-given but discovered during the coding. The coding was conducted at the paragraph level (Heikkila et al., 2011), which means I coded my Excel sheet by row. To keep the coding uncolored by my political bias (Bryman, 2016), and to maintain a “clear understanding of my lens” (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Van Kerkhoff & Lebel, 2006) the coding was conducted in two steps, one blind and one sighted. First, all narrative elements were coded while concealing the column that contained the MPs' names and parties. All 754 rows were coded in this manner. Secondly, the rows were coded once more with the speaker's name and party unconcealed. This generated two types of heroes: self-proclaimed, and non-self-proclaimed. Since the MPs are explored as mobilizing support for resource allocation, they themselves are the decision-makers capable of realizing the suggested approaches through persuading other MPs and gaining voters. Hence, this self-proclamation of the hero was not deemed an issue (Pierce et al., 2014). The two-step coding maintained my reflexivity as an interpreter (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Rhodes, 2018; Wagenaar, 2011) and was deemed necessary to increase the credibility of the coding and coherence of the codes (Bryman, 2016). Coding large datasets usually require independent coders (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Shanahan et al., 2018), however, coding in the two steps described was deemed sufficient to overcome the disadvantages

of coding solo. The coding procedure generated a total of 541 rows in Excel that according to Shanahan et al. (2013) and Jones et al. (2014) can be characterized as policy narratives.

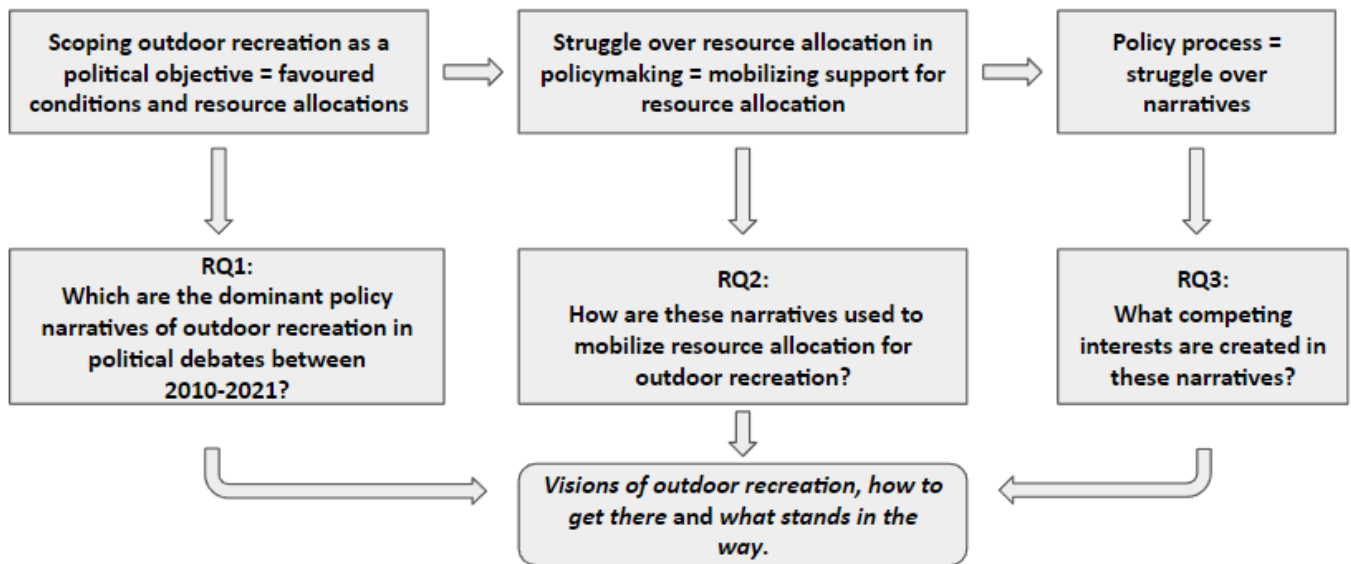
To identify the most dominant policy narratives out of the 541 identified, I applied a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014) in the sense that I analyzed the frequency of reoccurring narrative elements. For this step of the content analysis, I used the filter function in Excel and sorted the 541 rows per the *setting*. After the most common settings were identified and sorted, narrative elements were filtered by *characters*, and the frequency of each narrative element was counted. Those narratives that used the same combination of narrative elements, the most frequently in the most common settings, were identified as dominant. This approach was inspired by previous implementations of content analysis (Heikkila et al., 2011; McBeth et al., 2014; O’Bryan et al., 2014).

**Table 3.** Description of the narrative elements and their corresponding codes used to identify policy narratives.

Element	Description	Code
<b>Setting/ Context</b>	The setting is the narrative interpretation of policy context and attaches the narrative to referents that a meaningful portion of the public accepts (Shanahan et al., 2018).	I coded for setting by identifying the legal, institutional, juridical, political, or geographical context in which the problem definition takes place (Phelan & Rabinowitz, 2012).
<b>Characters</b>	Characters are either causers/contributors of the problem ( <i>villains</i> ), those harmed by the problem ( <i>victims</i> ), or fixers of problems/proposers of solutions ( <i>heroes</i> ) (Jones et al., 2014; Jones, 2014).	Entities were coded as characters if they were described with personified characteristics or possessed intention/and or agency (Heikkila et al., 2011). Additionally, I coded for <i>victims</i> if entities were framed as specifically <i>benefiting</i> from the solution, inspired by McBeth et al. (2007).
<b>Problem definition/ Plot</b>	The policy problem/plot is often introduced in the setting, which provides the relationships and causal mechanisms between the characters (Stone, 2012). The main form of problem definitions in policy narratives is to assign blame, hence villain and problem are often correlated (Stone, 2012).	The coding of the problem was done by identifying the characters and their relation to the setting and each other (Palm et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2014). Hence, the problem was described lastly after each paragraph had been coded for setting and characters.
<b>Moral</b>	The moral of the story is where a policy solution is offered. Here the policy narrative moves beyond argument and culminates in a solution (Jones, 2014; Shanahan et al., 2018).	As these narratives are conceptualized as mobilizing support (Stone, 2012), for resource allocation for favored conditions for friluftsliv, I coded the moral by the suggested policy approaches from the heroes (Rogge & Reichardt, 2016).

#### 4.4 Research Model

My research model included three steps. First, by coding for narrative elements according to the NPFs content analysis (Gray & Jones, 2016; Jones & McBeth 2010), the dominant policy narratives were identified, which answered the first research question. The next step was to systematically analyze the identified dominant policy narratives, i.e., make sense of them (Wagenaar, 2011; Yanow, 2000) in correspondence to my conceptualizations (section 3.3). Accordingly, by analyzing these narratives by the NPFs central question of what the role of policy narratives is (McBeth et al., 2017), in tandem with the scope of friluftsliv as a political objective (Sandell, 2003), means I analyzed the policy narratives as mobilizing support for resource allocation (Stone, 2012), which answered the second research question. Lastly, acknowledging the competing interests that these narratives construct when aiming to realize the favored conditions for friluftsliv (Fredman & Tyrväinen, 2010), the third research question was answered by analyzing the narratives as a struggle over narratives (Heikkila et al., 2011; Jones & McBeth, 2010). Collectively, these questions answered what the visions of friluftsliv are, how to get there, and what stands in the way.



**Figure 3.** Model of my developed conceptual framework and its relation to my scope, theoretical framework, and formulations of the research questions.

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1 Which are the dominant policy narratives of friluftsliv in political debates between 2010-2021?

The content analysis generated four friluftsliv policy narratives that according to the NPF can be considered dominant (Jones et al., 2014; McBeth et al., 2014; Shanahan et al., 2013). These are the *Multi-use forestry narrative*, the *Profitability narrative*, the *Affordability narrative*, and the *Municipality narrative* (Table 4). Together they constitute roughly 32 % of the 541 policy narratives generated. The other policy narratives each constituted between 1-3 % of the total 541 rows. As I first identified the most common settings, those settings that were too “narrow” did not qualify for dominant. For example, the Swedish Democrats brought up friluftsliv as a victim of growing wolf populations in a few protocols, and the Greens brought up friluftsliv as a victim of increased military practices, yet friluftsliv in this context did not reoccur in any of the other MPs’ statements. In the budget debates, essentially all MPs claim that their party allocated the most funds for friluftsliv and the ORVAs, yet the compositions of narrative elements were not consistent and did not qualify as dominant according to my method for analysis.

**Table 4.** Summary of the four dominant policy narratives of friluftsliv, their narrative elements, and policy approach, in the Swedish Parliament Chamber debates between 2010-2021. The narrative elements are in no specific order. Inspired by Palm et al. (2022). Abbreviations: Christian Democrats (ChrDem), Moderates (Mod), Liberals (Lib), Greens (Grn), Social Democrats (SocDem), Swedish Democrats (SweDem), Left Party (Lft), and Center Party (Cen).

Narrative	Setting and problem	Villain	Victim	Hero	Moral	Policy approach
<b>Multi-use forestry</b> (≈9%)	Forestry, Nature Conservation, Environmental quality	The <i>Alliance</i> , Mod, Lib, unmodern forestry,	Biodiversity, private forest owners, environment, friluftsliv, tourism, rural development	Government agencies (SEPA), forest owners (private and public), <i>Löfven I-II</i> , Grn, SocDem	The state needs to be pioneering in the development of multi-use/alternative forestry where more values can coexist and phase out clear-cutting, forestry industry and private forest owners need to implement NEQOs and NFOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase state funds for research and development of multi-use forestry methods</li> <li>▪ Stimulants and incentives from the state</li> <li>▪ Balance social and environmental values to production values in legislation and regulation</li> <li>▪ Collaboration between forest owners and government agencies</li> <li>▪ Increase funds to manage forests</li> </ul>
<b>Profitability</b> (≈8%)	Public health, Labour market, Economy	<i>Löfven I-II</i> , Lft, Grn, SocDem, top-down governance	The economy, employment, tourism, business, friluftsliv, environmental quality, public health	The <i>Alliance</i> , Mod, Lib, ChrDem, SweDem, Nordic council	The state needs to value and prioritize the market for friluftsliv and let the development of friluftsliv be independent of the state, fiscal values of good environmental quality, tourism, and increased physical activity mean more economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connect nature conservation with the labor market</li> <li>▪ Collaboration with Nordic countries and international advertisement</li> <li>▪ Development and investments in nature tourism</li> <li>▪ Reduce state interference</li> <li>▪ Reduce taxes for gas, income, and ORVAs</li> <li>▪ Develop airport and car infrastructure</li> </ul>

<b>Affordability</b> (≈7%)	Income inequality, Leisure time, Public health	The <i>Alliance</i> , Mod, Lib, ChrDem, advocates of reduced income taxes	Children/ adolescents, financially vulnerable families/citizens, friluftsliv, public health	<i>Löfven I-II</i> , SocDem, Lft, ORVAs	The state needs to ensure equal accessibility to friluftsliv for all children and reduce the social inequalities, segregation, and exclusion, through politics that grant everyone the same benefits from friluftsliv no matter their income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Raise income taxes</li> <li>▪ Increase employment</li> <li>▪ Increase unemployment grants, child benefits, social security benefits</li> <li>▪ Make friluftsliv activities free of charge/cheaper</li> <li>▪ Grant more state funds to schools and ORVAs</li> </ul>
<b>Municipality</b> (≈7%)	Rural development, Nature conservation, Municipalities	The state, CABs, <i>Löfven</i> <i>I-II</i> , SocDem, Grn	Municipalities, rural development, friluftsliv, tourism, business, democracy	Municipalities, Cen, Mod, ChrDem	The state needs to trust municipalities, respect the local self-government, plan monopoly and local decision-makers prerequisites regarding both friluftsliv and environment, contextual knowledge is best	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reduce state interference</li> <li>▪ Less state acquisition of land for National Interest for friluftsliv and nature conservation</li> <li>▪ Reform shoreline protection legislation and National Interest legislation</li> <li>▪ Give municipalities the possibility to grant shoreline protection dispensation for building permit applications</li> </ul>

### **5.1.1 The Multi-use forestry narrative**

“Using the forest without clear-cutting does not only benefit biodiversity.” - Stina Bergström (Prot. 2015/16:77, p. 117, my translation).

The policy narrative which constitutes the majority of narratives is the Multi-use forestry narrative at roughly 9 %. Nature conservation, environmental quality, and forestry construct the *setting* in which this narrative gets its foothold, and this policy narrative is the only one that exclusively has an environmental context. This narrative frames the Swedish forestry policies as being too focused on producing timber. The *problem definition* here is that too many forests in Sweden are managed inadequately for the purpose of friluftsliv, and citizens would benefit from forest management that ensures varied forests with accessible trails. According to this narrative, this type of forest management goes hand in hand with increasing biodiversity. The main drama is revolving around the clear-cutting methods of the forestry industry. This is said to be unmodern and has negative consequences for the nation's ability to meet the NEQOs as well as the NFOs (Table 1). The *villains* are depicted as the Alliance, the Moderates, and the Liberals along with those in favor of continuing clear-cutting. The Alliance is said to be unwilling or unable to see how environmental and social values of forestry can coexist with the production goals. The *victims* of the Multi-use forestry narrative are the environment, biodiversity, along with friluftsliv, tourism, and rural development. Notably, the private forest owners are also framed as victims here, this is due to two things. Firstly, they are viewed as meaning no ill intent by continuing the unmodern forestry methods, they only lack stimulants and incentives for phasing out clear-cutting. Secondly, they are said to not get enough compensation for when their felling permissions get denied or when their land is acquired for protective reasons, hence increasing the state expenses on forest management will thus benefit forest owners.

The *heroes* are forest owners (both private and public), government agencies, especially SEPA for their work on research and advising forest owners, alongside the Löfven I-II government, the Social Democrats, and the Green Party. All heroes besides the forest owners are self-proclaimed. Here, forest owners are both victims and heroes, meaning they are framed as valued actors in realizing the *policy approaches*, should they have the right state-supplied tools. Overall, this narrative sees research and development as the major policy approach to commence the transition from production-focused forestry. The state needs to be leading in this aspect, and the state-owned forests should set an example for how multi-use forestry can be conducted that does not limit either opportunities for friluftsliv, biodiversity, or timber production.

Moreover, regulations and legislations regarding forest management need to include and integrate the environmental and social values more specifically, ensuring that friluftsliv and biodiversity get protection in practice and not just in theory. Increased state funds for forest management, stronger collaboration between agencies and forest owners, and state stimulants towards forest owners are further used as policy approaches to the issues of excessive clear-cutting.

### **5.1.2 The Profitability narrative**

“Friluftsliv feels the best when it gets to be truly free.” - Christer Nylander (Prot. 2010/11:25, p. 61, my translation).

This narrative makes up approximately 8 % of the total 541 policy narratives and is centered around the economic benefits that more participation in friluftsliv would deliver. The *setting* in which the Profitability narrative takes place is in public health, the economy, and the labor market. More than any other, this narrative begins with a frame of increased sedentary lifestyle and obesity, generating unnecessary healthcare costs for the society, which would be spared if the friluftsliv politics took a more liberal turn. The *problem definition* of the Profitability narrative is that friluftsliv as a political topic has been neglected due to the lack of attention by other politicians in terms of public health benefits and business sector potential. Should friluftsliv be considered a market opportunity, its values would increase and friluftsliv would gain more funding and become more popular among citizens who would suffer less from a sedentary lifestyle. The Löfven I-II government and the Greens, the Left Party, and the Social Democrats are framed as the *villains*, as they fail to connect nature conservation, friluftsliv, and the labor market in their politics. Additionally, the Löfven I-II government, the Left Party, and the Greens are pictured as juxtaposing economic growth with nature conservation and are blamed for making the politics on friluftsliv too focused on nature conservation in general, overlooking economic profitability. The Profitability narrative describes the Löfven I-II government as trying to conduct “political engineering” for friluftsliv. The policies that the villains promote, raising taxes on gas and income, along with overly strict top-down regulation regarding nature conservation and management of friluftsliv, are framed as harming the potential of friluftsliv’s market opportunities. Public health, the economy of the state, environmental quality, economic growth, and employment are framed as *victims*, along with the more specific groups of tourism and business. The *heroes* in this narrative are the Alliance, the Moderates, the Liberals, the Christian Democrats, the Swedish Democrats, and the Nordic council, where all but the Nordic council are self-proclaimed.



The solution to the problems created in the Profitability narrative is to integrate fiscal values from friluftsliv, such as tourism, saved expenses from healthcare costs, and better environmental quality, more in politics in general and in business sectors. The specific *policy approaches* to realize the profits are to open up for more international collaboration, primarily with the Nordic nations; to increase tourism but also to develop more networks for the development of friluftsliv. This narrative also sees environmental quality as a premise for all the policy approaches to have results, without a good quality environment, the other values decrease. Furthermore, this narrative sees reduced state regulations and top-down land-use mandate as a solution to improve tourism opportunities and the development of friluftsliv's employment and business. Better infrastructure for national airports and cars in rural areas are featured as solutions for increasing participation in friluftsliv, coupled with reduced taxes on gas and income. The ORVAs are further proposed to get a tax relief in the form of a social-fees exemption, meaning they get more freedom and more revenue.

### **5.1.3 The Affordability narrative**

"We [society] can't afford politics that does not give everyone the same conditions." - Peter Johnsson (Prot. 2012/13:122, p. 63, my translation)

The third dominant policy narrative regarding friluftsliv is the Affordability narrative, which makes up about 7 % of the total narratives constructed in the Chamber. Here the *setting* brings attention to the individual level, where income inequality, individual leisure time, and public health are the contexts. The Affordability narrative is commonly initiated with the statement "not all children can access friluftsliv" and the *problem definition* is anchored in the unequal distribution of financial resources among individuals which is limiting the public from the wellbeing brought by friluftsliv. This inequality in participation of friluftsliv leads to increased segregation, exclusion from society, and a lack of sense of community, which creates a negative feedback loop where accessing benefits from friluftsliv is further restrained. The *villains* are described based on their inclination to policies that reduce taxes and are framed as seeing tax reductions as "the solutions to everything", leaving out the unemployed citizens. The villains are the Alliance, the Moderates, the Liberals, and the Christian Democrats. These parties are further described as pinning people against each other in their efforts to increase economic growth and competitiveness, contradicting the social inclusion that friluftsliv should be associated with. The *victims* are mainly financially vulnerable families and citizens dependent on social security benefits and sick pay, where children and adolescents are described as taking the most harm. The consequences are reduced public health and less participation in the ORVAs.

The *heroes* of this narrative are the Löfven I-II government, the Social Democrats, and the Left Party which all are self-proclaimed, and the ORVAs. These are the parties and actors that can enable equal accessibility to friluftsliv participation which is the general solution in the Affordability narrative. The *policy approaches* are to increase the state funding to the ORVAs so that they can reduce their entrance and membership fees and that way enable easier access for the financially vulnerable. This narrative sees the participation in friluftsliv as a crucial element in the large-scale efforts to increase the civil voluntary association movements in Sweden, and the public health aspect thus transcends beyond physical health for this narrative. The ORVAs are further framed as being the heroes in the aspect that they, besides generating participation in friluftsliv, also increase a sense of community and faith in society. Further policy approaches are projects and initiatives that invite children and adolescents to friluftsliv and sports events that are free of charge. Moreover, an increase in income taxes will enable better social security benefits, sick pay, and child benefits, where the state has the ultimate responsibility regarding the equal distribution of financial resources. The Affordability narrative also pictures schools as having a crucial role to play, as it is here that many children in financially vulnerable situations can share friluftsliv experiences across financial statuses. The schools' financial resources are described as the culprit of the failed implementation of uncharged friluftsliv activities, hence more state funding to schools is an additional policy approach.

#### **5.1.4 The Municipality narrative**

“Friluftsliv is not worth much in a dead countryside.” - Kjell-Arne Ottoson (Prot. 2020/21:112, p. 90, my translation)

The fourth dominant policy narrative is the Municipality narrative. The *setting* here is rural development, municipalities, and nature conservation. The *problem definition* is something along the lines of “protected land legislations are like a wet blanket over development”, which has detrimental effects on development for residential areas and friluftsliv. The rural areas are said to be “dying” from depopulation. About 7 % of all narratives are composed according to this rhetoric, with the issue described in terms of a jurisdictional power struggle between the state and the local decision-makers. In particular, the legislations of National Interests and shoreline protection (Section 2.3, Table 2) are said to limit the much-needed housing and real estate development, and the narrative frames these legislations as being inflexible to local prerequisites. The *villains* are the state and by extension the CABs, along with those that support stronger state interference in protecting land for public access and environmental protection; the Löfven I-II government, Social Democrats, and the Greens. The *victims* are municipalities, rural development,

friluftsliv, tourism, and business, which all are framed as suffering from the strict state protection legislations and would benefit from a power shift in the municipalities' favor. Here, friluftsliv is framed as dependent on a thriving rural landscape, which can be realized by local decision-makers and real estate agents. The last of the victims is the democracy, as the state and CABs when claiming land for National Interests are said to be disrespecting the municipal democratic process and plan monopoly (Table 2).

The *heroes* in the Municipality narrative are the Center Party, the Moderates, and the Christian Democrats that are all in favor of decentralizations of National Interests and shoreline protection legislation. Furthermore, similar to the framing of private forest owners in the Multi-use forestry narrative, the municipalities are both framed as victims and heroes here. This is due to the idea that local decision-makers have the best knowledge of how to protect their nature, ensure rights of public access, and develop friluftsliv meanwhile supporting citizens' needs for housing development. The relationship between these characters provides the moral of this narrative, which overall is more trust, recognition, and respect from the state and CABs towards local self-governance and expertise. The specific *policy approaches* that will realize this solution are for the state to reduce their interference with local decision-making regarding planning, and to acquire less land of National Interests for friluftsliv and nature conservation. The legislation of National Interests implementation is also suggested to be reformed to ensure the democratic process in the municipalities. The shoreline legislation should be reformed to give municipalities a larger mandate in granting dispensation for building permit applications. Currently, and when this narrative was constructed, the shoreline protection reform was still underway<sup>3</sup>, and the CABs have the final say in the dispensation of building permits.

## **5.2 How are these narratives used to mobilize resource allocation for friluftsliv?**

The following sections include both the results from my analysis and a joint discussion of these in relation to previous literature. As an introducing observation, all the dominant policy narratives have general claims for what friluftsliv *needs* to develop. This implies that friluftsliv indeed has not reached its full potential in any of the MPs' eyes and naturally requires resource allocation. Moreover, friluftsliv was used as a victim in the absolute majority of the 541 policy narratives, which further suggests that the MPs agree that the status of friluftsliv in politics is weak (Bladh et al., 2013; Stenseke, 2012). Overall, the narratives

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<sup>3</sup> However, according to the Government's office website, a new shoreline protection legislation will come into power by July 2022. This reform will increase local influence in the planning process of housing development permits, while simultaneously strengthening the shoreline protection for some areas (Government Offices, 2022)

propose that friluftsliv needs to be supported by land-use management research, profitable, equal, and administrated bottom-up.

### ***5.2.1 State Funds for Research***

The Multi-use forestry narrative implies a vision of friluftsliv as dependent on sustainable natural resource management, and better environmental quality is hence the means for friluftsliv. Here friluftsliv needs state interference in the form of legislation, guidance, regulation, and stimulants for the forestry sector. Friluftsliv is used as a victim of unmodern forestry that creates undesirable environments for citizens to visit, and hence this narrative argues for the allocation of state funds for research on alternative forestry methods. This narrative is in line with the top-down nature conservation in Sweden that uses hard scientific facts to gain legitimacy (Emmelin & Cherp, 2016). Here the quality of the landscape is in focus, and the victims can become heroes with the aid of the state funding and initiatives to reduce clear-cutting methods. This narrative includes friluftsliv as a victim to expand the scope of victims and bring more players into the policies (McBeth et al., 2007) of the unmodern forestry, meaning they are aiming to situate friluftsliv as a beneficiary to a largescale project which likely is aiming for biodiversity more than anything else. In the Multi-use forestry narrative, friluftsliv is seen as “the social dimension of nature conservation” (Emmelin et al., 2010; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014; Wolf-Watz, 2011), and a byproduct together with rural development and tourism. Bringing the social values of friluftsliv into forestry politics is a popular approach since the 2000s (Espmark, 2017; Hoogstra-Klein et al., 2017), which is beneficial in the sense that it increases public participation and stakeholder engagement in policymaking yet implies more challenges for decision-makers when trade-offs are to be negotiated (Bowen et al., 2017; Persson, 2013).

### ***5.2.2 Private Income for Liberty***

The Profitability narrative argues for deliberation in an economic sense and portrays a win-win-win story (Béné et al., 2019; Polk, 2010) which integrates personal wealth with the job market and environmental quality. This narrative relates to the concept of neoliberal environmentalism (Fletcher, 2010), where market rationalism guides the arguments for better management of natural resources. The vision of “neoliberal friluftsliv” then implies that the resources needed to develop friluftsliv in society lie in the hands of the individual, which currently are limited due to high taxes and regulations that restrict commercial use of the Swedish landscapes’ high quality. This narrative uses friluftsliv as a victim to mobilize support for politics that gives citizens more freedom to do what they want with their income by

reducing taxes and by creating a job market for nature conservation. Seeing as the problem definition lies in friluftsliv being too connected with the regulations of nature conservation, what friluftsliv needs according to this narrative, is to be associated with more market-oriented politics, such as economic growth. As such, the state should not interfere with friluftsliv's development except for advancing infrastructure and advertisement to increase citizens' mobility and freedom to enjoy nature and reduce taxes. If a policy is bad for the freedom of individual choice, it's bad for friluftsliv, meaning this narrative is capitalizing on the industry benefits of friluftsliv (Hjerpe, 2018; Rosenberger et al., 2017). The resources that the Profitability narrative is aiming to allocate is hence individual income but mainly individual liberty (Harvey, 2005), which further explains the narrative's connection to public health which both are limited should individuals not be able to work. This makes increased individual incomes both the means and the ends with friluftsliv.

### ***5.2.3 State Funds for Solidarity***

The Affordability and the Profitability narrative share similarities in that they both focus on individual financials and see friluftsliv as something that is bought which relates to the consumptive trend that friluftsliv has taken over the recent decade (Margaryan & Fredman, 2017). However, in the Profitability narrative, increased private income is viewed as a resource for the vision of friluftsliv, while in the Affordability narrative, excessive private income is framed as the problem limiting the vision of friluftsliv. Seeing reduced income taxes as counteractive to the policy approach of increased unemployment grants, child-, and social security benefits, this narrative strives to allocate more state funds through taxes. In this narrative, friluftsliv and its benefits are used as a type of common-pool resource (Sandström, 2008; Ostrom, 1990) that the financially vulnerable are being excluded from (Drahos, 2004). By framing financially vulnerable and children as victims, this narrative denies these groups agency to access friluftsliv by their own means and are picturing friluftsliv as something costly. Here, these groups need the state to function as a protector of their rights, and it is the state's job to ensure that friluftsliv stays clear of entrance fees, private interests, and competition. The means to do this is by distributing the state funds equally to the financially vulnerable and to those institutions that are framed as having ambitions of equality, such as schools and ORVAs. This narrative makes friluftsliv a question for social justice and capitalizes on the recent reports that show how socio-economics and demographics have a clear impact on access to friluftsliv (Fredman et al., 2019; Gentin et al., 2019; Suárez et al., 2020). The Affordability narrative hence argues that if a policy is bad for equality and solidarity it's bad for friluftsliv, making solidarity and equality both the means and the ends to friluftsliv.

#### **5.2.4 Local Mandates for a Living Countryside**

The Municipality narrative and the Profitability narrative are both aiming for independence from the state but in different settings. The Municipality narrative with its framing of municipalities and rural development as victims of the top-down control of land-use management is attempting to deliberate local decision-makers and citizens. Here friluftsliv is used as a victim along with democracy to expand the scope of victims (Jones et al., 2014; McBeth et al., 2007) to allocate more support for their policy approaches. The resources this narrative is aiming to allocate are local decision-making mandates. In this sense, friluftsliv needs local knowledge and commitment, but mostly friluftsliv needs a living countryside. The policy approach promoted in the Municipality narrative is in line with numerous studies claiming that strong local governance and participation are imperative for sustainable development policies to be successful (Evans et al., 2006; Holmgren et al., 2017), at least for economic development (Hanssen et al., 2011). This implies a view of rural development as both the means and the ends with friluftsliv, as friluftsliv will not be enjoyed should rural depopulation continue. Should the housing development get more priority, the local population will increase, as will development, and consequently, friluftsliv would gain in value. The consequences this has on the right of public access are not deemed an issue and will be ensured by using local knowledge, suggesting the view of “there is so much green everywhere” (Petersson-Forsberg, 2014). The Municipality narrative is hence centered around the idea that if a policy is bad for rural development, it's bad for friluftsliv.

### **5.3 What competing interests are created in these narratives?**

By analyzing the narratives in the argumentative policy setting as *struggles over narratives*, four conflicts of interests regarding friluftsliv as a political objective were identified (Figure 4). The overarching theme of these conflicts can be described as juxtapositions of private and public interests and central and local administrations.

#### **5.3.1 Private and Public Interests**

The first conflict identified is the one between the monetary values and the social values in the Multi-use forestry narrative. Here the conflict is described by framing the Alliance as villains based on their incapacity to combine the monetary values from timber production and the social values from friluftsliv in their politics, being too focused on economic growth. The way forward for this narrative is to mobilize more research that can bridge these values (Hoogstra-Klein et al., 2017; Hopkins et al., 2021). This narrative aims for a win-win-win story between the environment, the human wellbeing, and the economy,

and argues that all these values can coexist without a trade-off and that all we lack is knowledge of how. The second conflict is the one narrated in the Profitability narrative, which argues that the Lövfen I-II parties are juxtaposing economic growth with nature conservation and being too focused on friluftsliv as a “social dimension of nature conservation” definition (Bladh et al., 2013) in their politics. Hence, they fail to see the possibilities of integrating friluftsliv in the business sector and the market, which would according to this narrative, merge these two values. Like the Multi-use forestry narrative, this narrative argues that their solution will create win-win-win scenarios (Polk, 2010) between economic growth, public health, and friluftsliv and hardly acknowledges any trade-offs in this process. The conflicting interests are hence appropriated to the oppositions’ politics.

Common for the Multi-use forestry narrative and the Profitability narrative is that both are motivating the need for friluftsliv to be integrated into other political areas, in an attempt to expand on the conflict (Jones et al., 2014; McBeth et al., 2007). They seem to add various values of friluftsliv to the discussion to support their political agenda. Similarly, these narratives also share the common strategy of framing the *villains* based on that group's incapacity of integrating friluftsliv into the political areas which would benefit their vision of friluftsliv. Often the villains are said to “not being able to hold two thoughts in their head at the same time” limiting them from seeing the “whole picture”. According to Stone (2012), framing your opponents as having narrow special interests, and your own as the broad public interest, is the goal for winning arguments. Yet as a public interest, friluftsliv competes with many others as has been explained (section 2.6). The strategy in these two narratives then is to turn the values of friluftsliv into the political agenda’s definitions of public interest, which for the Multi-use forestry narrative is defined as environmental quality, and for the Profitability narrative is defined as economic growth. Conclusively, both these narratives claim that both definitions of public interests can be achieved simultaneously, albeit with different approaches. This analysis invokes methods for trade-off and co-benefit assessment, which many have argued should be the central element in planning and policymaking for sustainability (Béné et al., 2019; Bowen et al., 2017) and in friluftsliv administration (Pettersson-Forsberg, 2014).

The conflict between both economic growth and nature conservation and between social values and monetary values relates to the problematic position that cultural ecosystem services have in terms of valuing and measuring (Pröbstl-Haider, 2015; Small et al., 2017). It appears that friluftsliv needs to be integrated into other objectives to have meaning and value as a political objective (Sandell & Svenning, 2011), either it being scientific research to legitimize forestry reform, or the logic of economics to

legitimize market development. Here then, the disagreement between the interests of the economy and the interest of the environment is resolved by introducing “matter of facts” rather than political opinions, something Sweden is particularly fond of (Bäckstrand, 2004; Matti, 2009).

### ***5.3.2 Central and Local Administration***

The third conflict is that of the Affordability narrative. Here the conflict in interests is evident; the equal distribution of shared state capital is juxtaposed against the private-owned capital. Both the Profitability narrative and the Affordability narrative are also arguing that their politics is for the broad public interest (Stone, 2012), yet the definition of the broad public is what creates the economic conflict between the private capital and the public capital. Affordability advocates are however in contrast to the other narratives, not aiming for a win-win-win story. Rather, by framing financially vulnerable children as victims, they are creating a scene in which a trade-off must be made between private income and equal access to friluftsliv, for the interest of solidarity and the public.

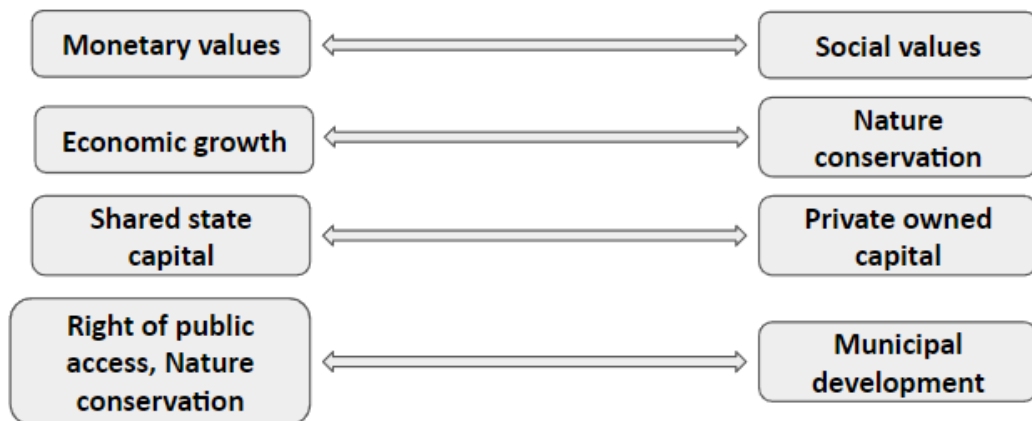
The fourth conflict identified is the right of public access and conservation legislations that stands in conflict with the vision of friluftsliv as dependent on the right for municipalities to develop. The Municipality narrative and the Affordability narrative share similarities in the sense that the conflict is based on juxtapositions between local and central mandates. The Municipality narratives solution to this conflict similar to the Affordability narrative, argues that a trade-off is necessary, the state must delegate some of its mandates to the local decision-makers. This narrative does not acknowledge the limits to the right of public access that increased housing development on shorelines would imply (Forsberg et al., 2013; Petersson-Forsberg, 2014), and rather claims that this development is imperative for friluftsliv. This narrative, like the Multi-use forestry and Profitability narrative, is aiming for a win-win-win story (Polk, 2010), but between local development, nature conservation, and friluftsliv, and frames the villains based on their lack of trust in the municipalities' capacity in achieving all three.

The broader conflict that defines the Affordability and the Municipality narrative provides an example of the discussion of whether access to friluftsliv should be managed top-down or bottom-up (Hanssen et al., 2011; Larsson & Emmelin, 2016). The requirements of the collaborative network structure (Folke et al., 2005) are increasing in the decentralized friluftsliv management (Lafferty, 2004), and even if the visions of what friluftsliv should be differs, the means to get there requires consensus regarding the roles of the different levels of administration (Dinica, 2006; Persson, 2013). Those politicians in favor of a more top-



down regulation for ensuring the public access to friluftsliv, often argue that the management is too dispersed, and lacks strong common visions, coordination (Hudson et al., 2019; Lafferty, 2004), and legally binding commitments (Mann et al., 2010). Some MPs stated that “friluftsliv is falling between the chairs” (i.e., slipping through the cracks), to which other MPs responded that quite the opposite, friluftsliv has many chairs to land on. These statements refer to the many levels of administration, sectors, and agencies working with friluftsliv, and here turned the problem statement of the lack of top-down control, into a strength for the benefit of the local decision-making mandates. Different from the conflicts of interests created in the Multi-use forestry and the Profitability narrative, the conflicts created in the Municipality and Affordability narrative are more ideological in the sense that they relate to injustice, democracy, and governance mandates in their definitions of problem and solution. Creating consensus and common visions regarding such fundamentally different visions of administration are challenging (An et al., 2021).

In summary, the conflicting interests are of both economic and social nature and not so much of environmental nature as one might assume given Sweden’s strong synergy of friluftsliv and environmental politics. Perhaps this indicates that the MPs are in agreement that environmental quality is important and have more consensus on how to manage it as a political topic, in contrast to the trickier conflicts of social, economic, and jurisdictional character. This further implies that the “matter of facts” oriented decision-making regarding environmental problems does not leave much room for debate (Bäckstrand, 2004), in contrast to the more consensus-oriented decision-making where motives such as social integration (Gentin et al., 2019) have a harder time finding its balance.



**Figure 4.** Competing and conflicting interests created in the policy narratives for friluftsliv in the Parliament Chamber between 2010-2021.

## 6. Conclusions and Reflections

To conclude on such a broad topic and an analysis that uncovers a wide range of policy approaches, visions, and conflicts, is not easy. In this thesis, I have shown how friluftsliv as a political objective is prone to many of the same challenges faced by sustainable development policies (Bowen et al., 2017; Hopkins et al., 2021; Polk, 2014). Both these concepts permeate nearly all political fields and thus require effective integration and collaboration (Dinica, 2006). This is clear from the dominant policy narratives' common argument that the neglect of friluftsliv as a political objective can be blamed on the opposition parties' narrow interests and failure to "see the whole picture". The need for friluftsliv to be integrated into more political areas is in line with previous conclusions (Eckerberg et al., 2020; Stenseke & Hansen, 2014). Moreover, my analysis adds to previous findings suggesting that friluftsliv does not have a clear platform in policymaking (Sandell & Svenning, 2011), and whether having multiple chairs and interpretations is beneficial or detrimental for friluftsliv as a political objective, time will tell (Kates et al., 2005). What is clear, however, is that as politicians' interest in friluftsliv seems to increase in response to the public's demand (Hansen et al., 2021), the decentralized administration ultimately depends on the Parliament's capacity to apply policies and distribute resources in an even broader manner.

The main takeaway that I want to end on is that how friluftsliv gets used as a political objective largely depends on definitions of public interests. These findings are prevalent in my analysis and are in line with previous conclusions (Forsberg et al., 2013; Larsson & Emmelin, 2016). The collaborative structures of the national administration and the arrangements within the Parliament (Persson, 2016), need to allow for different visions of friluftsliv to coexist, and if not, friluftsliv as a political objective risk getting stuck in debates when definitions of public and private interests are contested. The definitions of what constitutes as a public interest and as a public resource (Sandström, 2008) have implications for what values friluftsliv gets accompanied by. This implies that friluftsliv is lacking its own concrete measurable value which ultimately needs to be addressed by the administration of friluftsliv (Lejano et al., 2019; Small et al., 2017), without it, friluftsliv does not seem to have any foothold in politics. By adding concrete values to friluftsliv to strengthen the arguments for friluftsliv in negotiations, my analysis shows that besides from being beneficial to wellbeing and the environment, friluftsliv is taking the form of economic growth and development, which also previous studies indicate (Fredman et al., 2013; Margaryan & Fredman, 2019). Almost as a response to the social objectives of friluftsliv being too fuzzy to integrate into national policymaking, the MPs evidently cherry-pick among the many benefits and values inherent in the concept of friluftsliv to strengthen their political agenda and stimulate liberalism, solidarity, biodiversity, and local

self-governance. This is useful for the sake of raising friluftsliv's status but creates new challenges in terms of definitions and decision-making. As such, friluftsliv as a political objective risks getting increasingly polarized given the framed juxtapositions between social and economic values and environment and economic growth (Stenseke & Hansen, 2014). The recent development of the two-block system in Sweden (Aylott & Bolin, 2015), where negotiations and compromises of what constitutes as a public interest and if it should be managed bottom-up or top-down, risk catching friluftsliv in a limbo (Emmelin & Cherp, 2016). This calls for more research that can bridge these contesting logics into synergies that meets the public's needs and for more consensus-making approaches in policymaking (Hopkins et al., 2021; Polk, 2010).

The interception of friluftsliv into the sustainable development frame (SEPA, 2019), is not doing friluftsliv any favors in terms of creating consensus or common visions, seeing as also sustainable development has a plethora of contested interpretations (Kates et al., 2005; Miller, 2013; Sneddon et al., 2006). The broadness of definitions of friluftsliv that emerge when integrated into policymaking risks the same fate as sustainable development policies in the sense that the objective risks being hollowed out when applied within pre-existing narratives and motives (Persson, 2013; Polk, 2010). These pre-existing narratives are not rarely driven by economic priorities (Forsberg, 2013; Galland, 2012). Friluftsliv as a political objective thus risks falling deeper between the chairs if framed as something it's not, which corresponds to scholars that argue that friluftsliv when integrated into public policymaking falls flat if not concretized and valued for its core social and ethical motives (Sandell & Svenning, 2011; Stenseke, 2012).

However, for the sake of bridging interests and developing methods for collaboration, trade-offs, and assessment of objectives (de Vries & Petersen, 2009; Gerber et al., 2009; Hoogstra-Klein et al., 2017; Hopkins et al., 2021), the interception of friluftsliv into the sustainable development frame and consequently the sustainability sciences, has tremendous potential for the collaborative network administration of friluftsliv. As a final note, my analysis shows that friluftsliv as a political objective invokes research in multi-land-use management, approaches that enable friluftsliv's profitability, equal opportunities for participation, and finally adaptations to local perquisites. There is no reason to believe that these objectives can not coexist, yet the way to get there requires collaboration and consensus across opinions, and as such, I advocate for friluftsliv's integration into the sustainability sciences, both as a means and as an end to the stability of the administration of friluftsliv.

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