

Same world, different worldviews

A comparative discourse analysis of climate change worldviews in European and African Union policies

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Abstract

Climate change has become an increasingly political matter, shaping discursive debates over the different conceptualizations of climate action. Climate policies offer a glimpse of current discursive trends. This research analyzes climate policies by the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU), two Regional Organizations (RO). Both have recently published two comprehensive climate policies to guide their continent's paths toward climate action: the EU's Green Deal and the AU's Climate Strategy. The documents serve as a case study for a discourse analysis. The aim is to understand what discourses do the two ROs present and through which climate change worldviews they conceptualize climate action. The importance lies in understanding how language shapes our interpretations of real-world action. The findings indicate that climate change problems in the EU policy are conceptualized as an issue of resource misallocation, which requires economic solutions. Similar discourses are also visible in the solutions presented by the AU's policy. However, the AU focuses more on encouraging institutional cooperation across the continent, building on principles of climate justice and social rights. Both policies also focus on the need to rethink current unsustainable economic systems, with the EU opting for circular economy solutions to reduce resource extraction.

Key words: Climate policy, discourse analysis, European Union, African Union, climate change, worldviews

Words: 9971

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1 Introduction

Climate change and its effects have become of central political interest globally. Political debates focus ever more on climate mitigation strategies, how to reduce emissions and what steps we should take to protect our environment. How people conceptualize climate problems and solutions is the core of the debate. Should we preserve our societal structures, even if many argue these are worsening environmental crises? Or do we need to build a new type of resilient economy and invest in mitigation projects? These are frequent climate-related discussions, both stemming from conceptual and language debates.

Climate change is a global problem with cross-boundary threats, posing risks for societies from an economic, social and human standpoint (Carter, 2018, pp. 1-2). Major climate challenges are solved through cooperation between international political actors. Regional Organizations (RO) have become among the main policymakers, setting the discourse on environmental change (Carter, 2018, p. 248). The European Union (EU) is a key example, having been historically at the forefront of global climate action in international forums (Rayner & Tyndall, 2016). In 2019, it released its “European Green Deal” (EGD) to guide the continent’s carbon neutrality path. The European Commission (EC) president described this as “Europe’s ‘man on the moon’ moment” (von der Leyen, 2019). At the same time, the African Union (AU) released in 2022 its first ever comprehensive policy document to address climate change; the “Climate change and resilient development strategy and action plan” (CS or Climate Strategy hereafter).

Through this research, I aim to understand what climate change worldviews are visible in the EU’s and AU’s climate policies. Climate change worldviews are different categories used to group the various societal ideas on environmental action (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, p. 3). The investigation will be done through a case study of a comparative discourse analysis of the EGD and the CS. I am interested to uncover how the two continental blocks approach climate action from a discursive standpoint. The principle underpinning the research is that “policies can be understood as discursively produced directions for actions” (Dunn & Neumann, 2016, p. 60). Therefore, comparing discourses of the two continents’ main climate policies can provide an understanding of how these vary in light of the broader political context.

1.1 Specific aims and research question

The research will be in the form of a case study, aiming to analyze language, concepts and keywords within the EGD and CS to understand what climate change worldviews are visible in the two climate policies. In addition, the analysis will also compare the two policies to understand the extent to which the two documents present contrasting or similar viewpoints and conceptualizations of climate action.

Based on the theoretical underpinning of social constructivism (see chapter 2), the research takes the perspective that language produces the world around us (Dunn & Neumann, 2016, p. 2). Therefore, understanding the specific worldviews presented by the EU's and the AU's climate policies enables us to recognize how the two ROs conceptualize environmental action and through which specific lenses.

There are few studies comparing discourses in EU-AU climate policies, which sparked my interest in the topic. Furthermore, there is also a lack of research on the AU's CS, given that the policy was only published in early 2022. Therefore, this research aims to establish a basis for future investigations on the topic of discourses and worldviews related to the CS. However, the findings cannot be generalizable to the entirety of the African continent or to EU-AU relations. Given the nature of case studies, one cannot infer that the same worldviews can be found in other policies, even if originating from the same political actors.

The research aims to understand what prevalent climate change worldviews are visible in discourses in the two climate policies. The findings aim to show how climate change and its related solutions are presented by the EU and the AU. To achieve this aim, the analysis will answer the following research question:

What climate change worldviews are visible in discourses in the AU's Climate Strategy and the EU's Green Deal?

In addition, based on the research question, I aim to compare worldviews visible in the two policy documents. This will aid in mapping possible linkages between the policies and understand whether or not the two organizations share similar perspectives on approaching environmental change.

1.2 Background

This section delves deeper into exploring the EGD and the CS, establishing the background information of the two policies. This will aid in understanding the context in which the two policies have been published and set the scene for the remaining sections.

1.2.1 The EU's European Green Deal

The European Union has been a key climate actor since the 1990s (Rayner & Tyndall, 2016). On the global stage, its environmental policies have been promoted as innovative and are influential in steering action on the climate from other international actors (Rayner & Tyndall, 2016). The EU has historically passed several climate policies to guide member states towards reaching global environmental goals. One of the latest and, arguably, most influential, is the EGD, which will be the focus of this thesis (European Commission, 2019).

The EGD is a comprehensive and legally binding climate policy document published in 2019, with far reaching regulatory effects over member countries (Teewan, et al., 2021). The EGD is supported by more specific policies addressing different economic, environmental and social sectors. Nonetheless, the EGD will be the focus of this analysis given that it is the EU's main climate policy guiding the continent's climate action.

1.2.2 The AU's Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan

Within the African continent, climate policies have been few and with low implementational capacity (Ford, et al., 2015). Up until now, individual African countries have been publishing and implementing their own strategies. In 2022, the AU has brought together a continent-wide strategy to unite the region towards climate action through its CS (African Union, 2022).

While the AU's climate policy comes after several regional and global efforts on the issue, it must be remembered that the continent is not one of the world's major polluters.

Historically, Africa has only emitted 4% of the world's greenhouse gasses (Chevallier, 2022), compared to Europe's figure of 19% (Müller, et al., 2009). Yet, it is currently taking the brunt of the negative effects from climate change. In addition, the African continent's colonial exploitation by some European countries has had visible impacts on present day society and politics, possibly also affecting the formulation of the CS.

The CS is a non-binding policy for member states, in contrast to the EGD. The policy's non-binding nature might deliver different results in the analysis in terms of conceptualizations of climate action in comparison to the EGD. For example, concepts might be more loosely defined and open for interpretation, to suit individual country preferences. The CS is the first policy of its kind in Africa, which makes it essential to study to understand what worldviews the AU presents since this has not been researched previously.

2 Previous research

Research on climate policy discourses has been sporadic, focusing on a limited variety of cases, and concentrated on policy emanating from the Global North. Scholars have been analyzing the topic both from a discourse analysis and a critical discourse analysis (CDA) perspective, uncovering a pattern of similarity across discourses in country policies. Most authors have found that policy discourses focus on economic and technological solutions to environmental change (Andersson, 2021; Bergius & Buset, 2019; Death, 2014; Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021). This is referred to as a market liberalist approach to climate change, or also known as ecological modernization (EM). Literature found a clear prevalence of EM discourses in climate policies in both Europe and Africa, yet with some contrasting findings.

Europe has been a key focus in academia, with scholars analyzing discursive trends in climate policies brought forward by the EU (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021; Ossewaarde & Ossewaarde-Lowtoo, 2020; Samper et.al 20 21; Schunz, 2022). EM, or market liberalist discourses have been found to be the most prevalent, with the EU having a key steering role on climate action (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021). In particular, Samper et.al (2021) found that the EU's "EGD strategy [points] towards the market as a catchall solution" (p.13).

The African continent, instead, has witnessed a more limited academic focus and is underrepresented in literature (Cooper, et al., 2020). Scholars researched how discourses have been appropriated by powerful actors external to the African continent in a neo-colonialist fashion (Joidoin, 2019). Most literature on Africa agrees that the prevailing discourse in climate policies across the continent is based on market liberalist views. However, the continent has contributed with more alternative discourses such as ones sharing social greens principles, entailing a focus on the intersection between social justice and environmental harm (Death, 2016, p. 2).

2.1 The predominance of the market liberalist discourse

The market liberalist discourse in climate policies emphasizes the predominance of market-based and technological solutions to environmental problems. For example, the decoupling of economic growth from environmental harm is considered possible and necessary to face climate change (Carter, 2018, pp. 280-281). European countries have been historically fierce proponents of this view, with most climate policies around the continent being based on market liberalist principles. The EU, through its binding policies, has brought forward a discourse based on the positive impacts of growth, jobs and technology on the environment (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021). Other European countries, such as Italy or Sweden, have also followed suit (Andersson, 2021; Colombo & Porcu, 2014; Natili et,al, 2022). Scholars have found that policies present natural resources as having an economic value, focusing on industry efficiency rather than environmental protection (Colombo & Porcu, 2014).

Similar views were shared across research on African climate policies, where analyses from various countries have found the environment to be conceptualized through an economic value. In South Africa, the green economy is a prevalent discourse brought forward by national institutions to support market liberalist notions of economic growth as solutions to environmental change (Mthembu & Nhamo, 2021). Research on Tanzania found similar views, whereby national climate policies are constructed to reflect prevalent global discourses of EM (Joidoin, 2019). However, Bergius & Buseth (2019) argue that Global North actors have influenced African discourses. Tanzania, for example, had historically been drafting national policies focused on alternative discourses to market liberalism. Global North actors have

influenced Tanzania's recent climate policies, steering these towards hegemonic paradigms focused on economic solutions (Bergius & Buset, 2019).

Lastly, the AU had not published any climate policy before 2022. However, in the AU's regional development policy titled "Agenda 2063", climate change was discussed as needing economic and technological solutions (Nhamo, 2017). Nonetheless, no research has yet been carried out on the AU's 2022 CS. This thesis seeks to fill the gap in literature and provide a basis for further exploration of the continent's climate policies.

2.2 Alternative discourses in climate policy

Previous literature on climate policy discourses has highlighted how alternatives to market liberalist approaches have been more prevalent within the African continent than in Europe. Several African countries have historically conceptualized nature as interlinked with humans and focused on environmental protection (Death, 2016, p. 2; 51). Topics of justice have been the most prevalent in the continent's climate policies, reflecting an anti-colonial struggle to reverse historical oppressions. In Tanzania, past climate policies were directed at protecting nature, embodying discourses of climate justice and rejecting economic approaches (Joidoin, 2019). However, recently, new international actors infiltrated the national discourses, leading to instances of land grabbing and a shift to more market-led approaches (Joidoin, 2019).

Around the continent, African discourses on climate policies have been found to focus more on the relationship between humans and nature. An analysis of political speeches at COP26 found that African discourses present nature as having "human" characteristics (Ahmed, 2022). Thus, entailing a connection between nature and people which is not often visible in market liberalist discourses, which instead build on the economic value of natural resources. In addition, Death (2014) has found that African countries are actively refuting Global North climate discourses, labelling these as "eco-protectionism", where rich countries bring forward protectionist policies justified as climate change solutions.

In Europe, alternative discourses to market liberalism have been less prevalent. Scholars argue that alternative discourses have been co-opted into hegemonic ones focusing on economics (Samper, et al., 2021). Themes of justice, often found in African discourses, have then been sidelined or uninfluential in national policies (Andersson, 2021; Ghinoi & Steiner,

2020; Natili et.al, 2022). However, other scholars such as Schunz (2022) argue that European climate policies are increasingly shifting away from the current economic framing of the environment, towards alternative discourses. However, most of the research still places European climate policies as being market centered (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021; Samper et.al, 2021).

3 Theoretical and analytical framework

This section establishes the foundation for both the theories and the analytical framework that will be used to inform the analysis. The section ends by presenting a series of conceptual assumptions before the analysis.

3.1 Social constructivism

Social constructivism theory forms the theoretical basis of this thesis, whereby discourse is seen to actively shape meaning. As Leipold et.al (2019) presented, language constructs reality and influences action. Language and discourses are “systems of meaning-production [...] to enable us to make sense of the world and to act within it” (Dunn & Neumann, 2016, p. 2). In addition, the way language is used builds specific ideologies and shapes our understanding of real-world phenomena (Leipold, et al., 2019). A social constructivist approach to language considers discourses as a powerful mechanism from which actions derive. Taking a social constructivist stance in this analysis will lead to understanding the actions that derive from language and how specific solutions in climate policy are sought when they are presented with one discourse rather than a competing one. By seeing language as a source of power relations, discourse analysis is well suited to study how language shapes meaning and action and it was chosen as a method of study (see chapter 4).

Discourse analysis is rooted in social constructivism, as the practice itself aims to understand how language shapes the realities we live in. As Dunn & Neumann (2016) state, discourse analysis “constructs what people think about the world” (p.4). In line with social

constructivist thinking, the research aims to understand how language in the two climate policies shapes the way solutions are identified. Discourses are also a key foundation of policymaking. Leipold et. al (2019) explain that policy discourses by political actors give meaning to practices and produce their own “truths” through policy. Using discourse is a means to both understand the reality of environmental problems and initiate actions to solve them. Social constructivism has been applied to environmental issues, such as how “nature” is presented in policy (Feindt & Oels, 2005).

3.2 “Nature” as produced by policy

Stemming from the more general social constructivist approach to environmental and climate change problems, is the idea that concepts of “nature” and “environment” are inherently shaped by policy. This perspective is brought forward by theorists such as Feindt & Oels (2005), who argue that “environmental policy problems are obviously the effect of social constructions although they concern ‘natural’ objects” (p.161). Solutions to environmental issues are constructed through language and discourse, shaping both the understandings of the problems and the subsequent perceptions of solutions.

This research also aims to show that policy discourses have strong effects on the real-world, guiding how solutions to environmental problems are conceptualized. Feindt & Oels’ (2005) theory also touches upon these issues, arguing that: “environmental discourse has material and power effects” (p.161). Therefore, building on the social constructivist view that societal actions are shaped by norms and values. This theory places the meta-paradigm of social constructivism within a more specific frame of environmental policy. Policy in itself is a language tool that influences daily actions. Both the EU and the AU, through their climate policies, use language to shape both how environmental problems are viewed and how solutions are enacted.

A discourse analysis of climate policies brings us to understand how we view the climate around us and helps us uncover what discourses are visible in the EU’s and the AU’s policies. Recognizing “nature” and the “environment” as produced by policy, enables us to understand that the “natural” is linguistically constructed. Understanding environmental discourses as socially produced captures how the discursive dimension influences the material one and what effects does it bring forward.

3.3 Analytical framework: Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) Environmental Perspectives

The analytical framework for this research is based on Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) model for analyzing worldviews on climate change. The authors have created four different categories, which will be used in the analysis to identify the discursive dimensions in the EGD and the CS: market liberalist, institutionalist, bioenvironmentalist and social greens. The following section presents the four different worldviews by Clapp & Dauvergne (2005), which will be used as idealtypes to categorize the discourses found through policy analysis. These are presented as a continuum, starting from worldviews that question the urgency of climate change, arguing current solutions can solve it, and concluding with more radical views on the impact of society on the environment.

Climate change worldviews present a simplified model, where categories are boxed for academic purposes to guide the analysis (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, p. 3). I recognize that the models present a simplified version of reality and cannot represent fully the different nuances in climate policy discourses. However, this model makes climate change conceptualizations visible in discourse to support the analysis. Limitations of this model in the context of the analysis are further discussed in section 4.3. The following sections explore the different worldviews connected to the model. I will also be predicting the prevalence of such worldviews in the material studied, forming some conceptual assumptions.

3.3.1 Market Liberals

The market liberalist view of climate change argues that solutions to environmental problems are available. Economics, science and technology are presented as the most viable and needed policy solutions to climate change. This worldview has a strong economic focus, arguing that free-market liberalism is the solution and more financial investments and research are needed. Growth is the panacea to most problems, not only environmental ones, and policies should focus on solving climate change through economic means. The personal interest of businesses and individuals is seen as tending towards more environmental actions, meaning no climate intervention is needed (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, pp. 4-7).

I expect this view to be the most prevalent within the policies under study. This, because several scholars have argued that current climate policies are for the most part based on market liberalist approaches to climate change, preferring economy-based policy approaches to environmental issues such as carbon trading, financing or investments (Death, 2014; Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021; Ossewaarde & Ossewaarde-Lowtoo, 2020). Some of the keywords I expect to find in the policies are: economic growth, green growth, free-market, technological advancements.

3.3.2 Institutionalists

An institutionalist perspective on climate policy solutions focuses on the need for stronger and broader institutional frameworks. This view shares some underlying traits with market liberals, also arguing for economic growth and technology as policy solutions. However, institutionalists stress the need for shared global norms and cooperation on the climate, rather than solely the market. Environmental problems are seen as a lack of a shared global framework for climate action, where binding norms and enhanced cooperation can solve climate problems (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, pp. 7-9).

Considering the increasing global efforts on climate change such as the yearly Conference of Parties (COP) or the UN Environment Programme, this worldview could be the second most present in the policies studied. I expect this to be even more prevalent in the CS as the AU's policies are not binding and often rely on cooperation mechanisms in policy, which are traits of an institutionalist viewpoint. Some keywords I expect to find are: international cooperation, policy solutions, climate law.

3.3.3 Bioenvironmentalists

Bioenvironmentalist discourses see the planet's resources as limited, arguing that humans are exploiting the world's ecosystems. This worldview stresses the need for a shift in economic thinking, from endless growth to an understanding of the biological limits that our planet has. In addition, bioenvironmentalists argue that free markets cannot solve environmental problems. They propose instead to shift our conceptions of wellbeing, consumption and the economy, for

example through a circular economy, which would eliminate waste and exploitation of natural resources (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, pp. 9-11).

The bioenvironmentalist view has not often been applied in practice, as it is deemed too radical, challenging the status quo (Carter, 2018, p. 68). I do not expect this worldview to be particularly prevalent in the analysis. However, the EU has been recently advocating for a shift towards a circular economy (a distinctly bioenvironmentalist solution), which might arise in the EGD. Some of the keywords expected are: circular economy, new economic models, resource limits.

3.3.4 Social Greens

Climate change, from a social green perspective, is the combination of social and environmental issues. This worldview highlights how social problems, such as labor exploitation, are reflected in environmental problems as well, such as through the exploitation of natural resources. Together with bioenvironmentalists, one of their arguments is a reform of the current economic system and modes of consumption. In addition, there is a clear global inequality reflected in the power structures of society, which is also destroying ecosystems around the world (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005).

Social green ideas might not be as prevalent as institutionalist and market liberal ones in the research. However, notions of social and gender equality are increasingly present in policy documents on the environment. Some keywords expected are: climate justice, citizen participation, vulnerability.

3.4 Conceptual assumptions

Based on previous research and the background of the EGD and the CS previously explained, I have formulated a set of conceptual assumptions previous to the analysis. I expect Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) market liberalist and institutionalist views to be the most prevalent in the EGD. This, because the EU has historically a mandate to liberalize trade within the continent (Carter, 2018, pp. 291-292). Therefore, I expect market liberalist and institutionalist

worldviews to be the most prevalent as these propose solutions that reflect the EU's identity and mission. Based on previous research, bioenvironmentalist and social greens might be less prevalent, nonetheless still present to underpin the principles of the policy.

Regarding conceptual assumptions for the CS, I expect to notice a prevalence of market liberalist and institutionalist worldviews in the policy, given that previous scholars agree on the pervasiveness of economy-related policy solutions (Andersson, 2021; Bergius & Buseth, 2019; Death, 2014; Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021). However, I expect to find a stronger prevalence of social greens principles in the CS than in the EGD. This, because the AU's identity focuses on countering colonial remains, which should reflect on a greater focus on themes of justice (African Union, 2023). In addition, scholars argue that climate policies in the African continent have focused more on topics of nature protection and the coexistence of nature and humans (Ahmed, 2022; Death, 2014; Joidoin, 2019). Therefore, I expect to find more bioenvironmentalist views in the CS than in the EGD.

4 Methodological approach

This section aims to inform the research design and methods used to guide the analysis.

4.1 Research design and methods

The research is a case study of regional climate policies by the EU and the AU. It aims to analyze what climate change worldviews are visible, therefore leading to understanding how the discourses guide real-world action on climate change. The case study approach means that this analysis can only be applied to the EU's EGD and the AU's CS, which are the ROs main climate policies. No claims of generalizability can be made over other EU- and AU-related climate policies. This, because the authors of the policies are often different political bodies, which might take different approaches and perspectives to environmental issues.

The thesis is a discourse analysis, with methods derived from Dunn & Neumann's (2016) topical work. Representations, or the way we perceive the world around us through

language is key to this analysis (Dunn & Neumann, 2016, pp. 34-35). Analyzing specific discourses leads to understanding what representations of climate change we are exposed to. Discourse analysis provides for an in-depth understanding of how language shapes action. In this case, given the clear implications of language on actions, discourse analysis was deemed the most suitable to study how these policies shape climate action.

Discourse analysis can illustrate how climate issues are represented in policy (Feindt & Oels, 2005). As policy is inherently a linguistic phenomenon, discourse analysis aids in understanding how international actors like the EU and the AU view climate solutions and what conceptualizations are visible through the language in policy. The discourses in policy lead directly to visible actions. Therefore, by analyzing policy discourses, we can understand what worldviews are being brought forward.

4.2 Material and limitations

The data analyzed consists of the two leading documents on environmental policy by the EU and the AU: respectively, the EGD and the CS. These two documents can be considered as the guiding policies for continental climate action in both Europe and Africa. The two documents were gathered from the organizations' respective official websites. The EGD consists of 24 pages drafted by the EC, while the CS is 128 pages long. The main reason for this discrepancy is that, while other EU bodies have drafted specific sectorial policies, the AU has opted to create a single comprehensive policy. For the purpose of this research, I will only analyze the first 74 pages, which deal specifically with climate change interventions. The length of the text might deliver more keywords and codes in the analysis of the CS than the EGD. However, the grouping based on Clapp & Dauvergne's (2009) worldviews model will ensure that the findings are comparable.

The two documents under analysis are official discourses, which are understood as being both produced and producing representations of certain policy issues, such as environmental change (Dunn & Neumann, 2016). Being a case study of two specific policies, this research cannot claim generalizability to all EU- or AU-related climate policies as these might be the product of other agencies promoting different discourses. This research aims to analyze what are the discourses present in the two main climate policy documents, as these often inform the regional policy responses in their respective continents. By comparing and

analyzing the two main policies, this research is representative of the two ROs' climate discourses. However, one needs to be wary that these might either be applied differently in practice or changed when reformulated by local actors. This research aims to provide a basis for future work on climate policies, especially in the African continent which has been vastly understudied and no research has yet been carried out on the CS.

4.3 Discourse analysis

Specific techniques for discourse analysis are derived from Dunn & Neumann's (2016) book. These are two and will be carried out in sequence for the analysis of the texts:

1. Identifying discourses: A first reading of the texts will be done to identify prevalent discourses brought forward in the two policy documents (Dunn & Neumann, 2016, pp. 105-106). Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) model of environmental perspectives will be used to code the language according to the visible worldviews (see section 3.3).
2. Mapping discourse: An in-depth reading of the text will follow after discourses have been identified. The purpose is to map the prevalence of discourses and determine how these are being used in the text. This technique will serve to analyze what are the most prevalent discourses and how are solutions linked between the two policies.

Coding is an integral part of discourse analysis and serves to identify the discourses visible in the EGD and the CS. Coding presents the relevant information to guide the discourse analysis. Keywords will be extracted during the first reading of the data according to the different worldviews from Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) model. The keywords will then be categorized into different topics connected to the worldviews presented. Lastly, these will be analyzed and mapped onto a Venn diagram (figure 1) which will render visible the interlinkages between themes and worldviews across the policy documents.

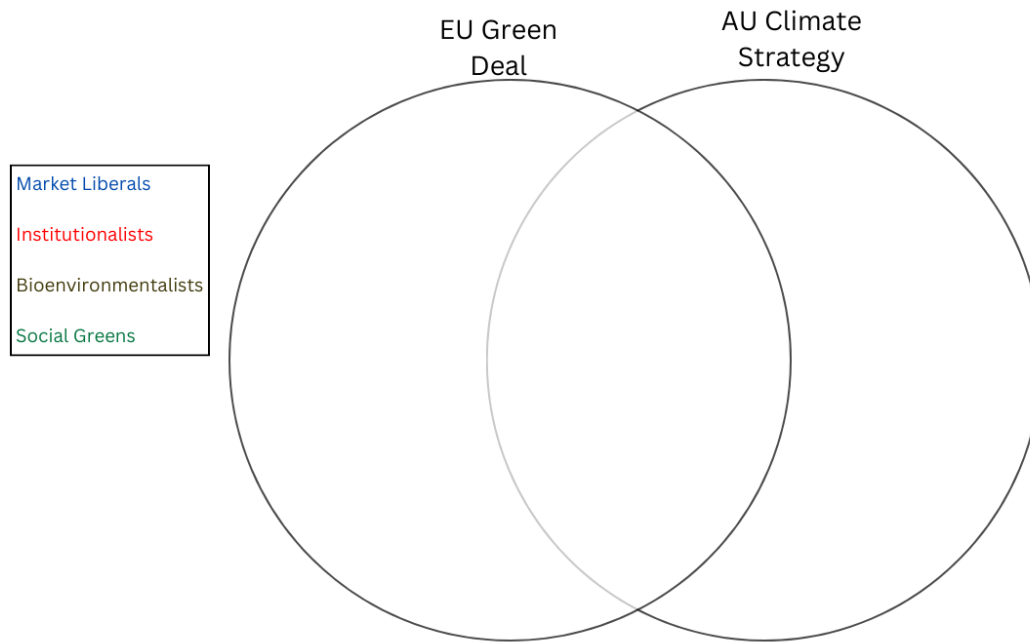


Figure 1: Venn diagram of topics visible in the policies (for filled version see section 5.3)

Using Clapp & Dauvergne’s (2005) model might pose a limitation in that this is only a simplification of reality. Different worldviews have been grouped for the purpose of the study but, often, policies present a mix of different worldviews. This aspect will be taken into account and inform whether the EU and AU bring forward specific worldviews or if these intersect different perspectives. As previously mentioned, institutionalist viewpoints often share similar policy solutions as market liberals, meaning discourses might not be easily confined to one category.

4.4 Reflexivity

Analyzing discourse implies the social constructivist understanding that language has social implications. As this will be the focus of my research, it is important to note that linguistic analysis implies “[interpreting] various interpretations of ‘reality’” (Berger & Kellner, 1982, p. 74). The analysis I will carry out requires my own interpretation of the data’s discursive background. Therefore, the findings of the analysis are the product of personal understandings derived from the material. However, to limit personal bias, I will strictly follow the methods previously described to ensure the highest degree of objectivity possible. As Robson &

McCartan (2018, p.235) argue, my background also has an effect on the findings. Here, I present an assessment of my own positionality in relations to the research topic to limit further biases.

On first note, it has to be noted that research will be conducted on two different ROs, the EU and the AU. I am a citizen of an EU country, conducting a study focusing also on the African region, which has been historically exploited and colonized by European powers. As Lazar (2007) warns, there is a risk of reproducing neo-colonial structures, if “the direction of expertise flows from traditionally privileged groups at the center to subaltern groups” (p.155). However, to limit reproducing hegemonic views, I will actively incorporate previous research and theories from African scholars throughout the thesis (Lazar, 2007). A critical exploration of discourses between the two regions is needed, however this thesis does not aim to analyze the role of power structures in detail (as would be the precondition of a CDA instead), but it will make mention of the historical inequalities that have shaped current structures. It welcomes, however, future research on the topic from a critical perspective.

5 Analysis

This following section aims to present the findings from the discourse analysis carried out on the EGD and the CS to answer the research question: *What climate change worldviews are visible in discourses in the AU’s Climate Strategy and the EU’s Green Deal?*. This section is divided into three major parts analyzing the discursive trends visible in the two policy documents. A comparative analysis of the topics and worldviews found in both policies will follow in the last sub-section. An example of the coding table that informed the discourse analysis can be found in tables 1 and 2. The tables offers a limited example with only a limited number of keywords for each topic and worldview. The full coding table used for the discourse analysis with a list of the keywords and topics discovered through the coding of the documents can be found in Appendix 1.

Example of keywords visible in the EGD	Topics	Worldviews
Economic growth, sustainable growth, industry...	Economics as solutions	Market Liberalist
Resource efficiency, natural capital, resource allocation...	Nature as an economic resource	
Competitiveness, finance, macroeconomy...	Free-market solutions	
Decarbonizing energy, smart infrastructure...	Technology solutions	
International efforts, cooperation, partnerships...	Cooperation solutions	Institutionalists
Policies and legal measures, enforcement...	Policy solutions	
Climate law, regulations, directives...	Rules and regulations	
Climate change risk, water stress, unsustainable extraction...	Risks of climate change	Bioenvironmentalist
Natural environment, waste, environmental harm...	Environmental protection	
Circular economy, unsustainable extraction...	Reforming economic models	
Just/inclusive transition, fair and inclusive...	Climate Justice	Social Greens
Active public participation, citizen's assemblies...	Citizen involvement	
Social rights, no one left behind, energy poverty...	Social rights	

Table 1: Example coding table of the EGD

Example of keywords visible in the CS	Topics	Worldviews
Green recovery, green jobs, green growth...	Green economy as an opportunity	Market Liberalist
Climate finance, growth pathways, investments...	Economics as solutions	
Innovation, green cities, technology...	Technology and innovation	
Lack of resources, natural/human resources...	Nature as an economic resource	
Renewable energies, low emissions...	Energy and industry	

Land management, restoring ecosystems to produce economic benefits...	Resource management	
Continental efforts, international coordination...	Cooperation solutions	Institutionalists
Enhanced governance, governance systems...	Governance solutions	
Policy alignment, policy implementation...	Policy solutions	
Environmental vulnerability, food and water security...	Climate change as security risk	Bioenvironmentalist
Urbanization, environmental pressure (anthropocentrically caused)...	Anthropogenically caused climate change	
Biodiversity loss/pollution linked to economics...	Environmental protection	
Redesigning systems, dependency on resources...	New economic models	
Historical responsibility, historical contribution...	Historical contributions to climate change	Social Greens
Self-driven Africa, African capacity, African-led...	Self-driven action	
Just/inclusive transitions, improving livelihoods...	Climate justice	
People-centered approach, collective development...	Social rights	
Intersectionality, vulnerable communities...	Supporting/including vulnerable groups	

Table 2: Example coding table of the CS

5.1 Discursive patterns in the European Green Deal

From the analysis, it is visible that the EGD presents concepts from all four worldviews by Clapp & Dauvergne (2005). These worldviews are often associated with different functions in the EGD. Market liberalist and institutionalist concepts are visible in both the policy's specific goals and implementation mechanisms. Solutions are also often based on a mix of market

liberalist and institutionalist views, implying economic reform through regulatory, law and policy approaches. The rationale of the EGD often envisages bioenvironmentalist principles, arguing for solutions to reduce biodiversity loss and restore natural systems, recognizing that our current production patterns are unsustainable. The least present worldview is the social green one, which is either sidelined or accompanied by economic principles.

Throughout the EGD, the market liberalist worldview is the most visible. The policy starts by declaring that the EGD is “a new growth strategy [...] where economic growth is decoupled from resource use” (European Commission, 2019, p. 2), embodying strong market liberalist concepts to support environmental solutions driven by economic principles. The perception of the EGD being based on market liberalist views is agreed upon by several previous scholars (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021; Ossewaarde & Ossewaarde-Lowtoo, 2020; Samper et.al 2021). Carter (2018, p.318) also agrees that decoupling the economy from its environmental impacts, which the EU aims to do, is a key aspect of a worldview based on prioritizing economic growth. Climate change is discussed as being fueled by a misallocation of resources which has caused unsustainable practices and environmental degradation. The EGD then calls for a “sustainable use of resources” (European Commission, 2019, p. 4) as a driver of climate action. Climate change is presented as an issue of resource-efficiency, characterized as a material resource rather than carrying intrinsic value on its own. Nature and the environment are commodified in the EGD and are described as economic resources whose use needs to become more efficient. For example, emissions and carbon trading systems are proposed as necessary solutions for both the economy and the environment. The market liberalist rationale is here one that considers environmental problems needing to be solved through market mechanisms, such as by putting a price on carbon. Concepts of “efficiency” are also exemplified by the frequency of the EGD’s reference to technological solutions as a tool to achieve the EU’s climate objectives. Technology, following from market liberalist assumptions, is described as a “critical enabler for attaining the sustainability goals of the Green deal” (European Commission, 2019, p. 9). The combination of technology and economic growth solutions in the EGD exemplifies a clear prevalence of the market liberalist worldview in the policy discourse. However, scholars have questioned the feasibility of an economy-centered approach to climate change (Dietz et. al, 2012; Hajer, 1997). Market-centered approaches perpetrate the same structures that have been unsustainable for the planet and have sidelined social aspects (Hajer, 1997, p. 32). This contradiction is the main object of critique by scholars to a market liberalist approach. To counter this, the EGD brings forward some

aspects of bioenvironmentalist and social green worldviews, which underpin the structural transformation towards climate action and aim to address social and environmental contradictions that arise from only presenting a market liberalist worldview in policy.

Alongside market liberalist mechanisms to achieve the EU's climate goals, institutionalist notions are also prevalent tools employed to kickstart the transition. The most prevalent institutionalist topic in the EGD is the reference to "cooperation" as a key enabler of the climate policy. This prevalence is explained by the EU being an active RO in international climate forums. The EGD makes reference to the EU bringing forward a "green deal diplomacy" (European Commission, 2019, p. 20) to ensure shared commitments to solving climate change. Teevan et.al (2021) have also found the EGD to have an "external dimension" (p.1), whereby the EU actively promotes its climate discourse on both the international and domestic stage. Within the Union, the EGD is a binding policy for its member states and it relies on a functioning EU institutional framework for its application. The EGD therefore has a strong institutionalist worldview in its discourse, often presenting legal and policy solutions to enact the climate policy. Rayner & Tyndall (2016) suggest that the EU has an "institutional strength" (p.2), which bring the EGD to have an institutionalist conceptualization of climate action, based on the idea that effective implementation of policy can provide environmental solutions. Therefore, the EGD places the institutional framework as a necessary tool for climate action, promoting institutionalist conceptions in its discourse.

Concepts linked to the bioenvironmentalist worldview are scattered in the EGD, with the policy often employing these notions in conjunction with the rationale of the EGD. For example, the policy often mentions the risks connected to climate change and calls for increased environmental protection and conservation to preserve our environment, nature and biodiversity. Most bioenvironmentalist notions are often connected to factors directly affecting people such as the European Commission (2019) calling for a "toxic-free environment" (p.14) or "[improving] air quality" (p.11), both of which directly affect the human population. The most prevalent bioenvironmentalist concept is one of "circular economy". The EGD calls for an economic system that reduces waste and environmental harm (European Commission, 2019). As per bioenvironmentalist notions, circular economy acknowledges the limits of natural resources available, promoting production processes that eliminate waste and foster reusing rather than producing (Clapp & Dauvergne, 2005, pp. 9-11). However, not all scholars agree that the EU's view of circular economy is based on bioenvironmentalist notions. Ossewaarde & Ossewaarde-Lowtoo (2020) argue that the EGD promotes a "growth-oriented"

(p.6) circular economy given its emphasis on being a new growth paradigm. Nonetheless, the European Commission (2019) recognizes the need for a new business model that prioritizes “reducing and reusing material” (p.7) and argues for all production to have a “circular design” (p.7). Both of which are linked with the basic notions underpinning a bioenvironmentalist worldview.

The least present worldview in the EGD is the social greens one. Most social greens notions are used to underpin the principles of the EGD. Often, the EGD refers to its policy measures as being based on principles of social and climate justice as well as citizens’ involvement. According to the European Commission (2019), the climate transition needs to be “just and inclusive” (p.2), “ensuring that no one is left behind” (p.4). Overall, economic concepts are however still more prevalent than social ones. Social green concepts are often presented in connection with more prevalent economic and market liberalist notions. For example, the European Commission (2019) presents economic growth as a priority aimed at promoting “a fairer society” (p.17) with “social considerations” (p.17). Therefore, placing market liberalist concepts as essential to provide for the social aspects of the EGD. Social green notions are then subordinated in the EGD to the success of economic growth and transformation. One prevalent social green topic in the EGD is one of citizen’s participation. Citizens are seen both as recipients of the EGD through the need to be “protected” and as “active” participants in the transitions. There is a social green recognition in the EGD that the transition should be “just and inclusive” (European Commission, 2019, p. 2), with citizens being among the main actors. The EGD also recognizes the possible negative effects on citizens from the transition, embodying social green notions in the document even if seldomly.

5.2 Discursive patterns in the AU’s Climate Strategy

As for the EGD, the discourse analysis of the CS found that all four worldviews by Clapp & Dauvergne (2005) are visible in the policy. In the CS, problems are characterized through a bioenvironmentalist lens, recognizing the natural limits posed by the current economic and social systems. The principles underpinning the policy are instead leaning towards social greens conceptualizations, calling for increased inclusion and recognition of vulnerable groups in society. Solutions, instead, are categorized in the market liberal and institutionalist realm,

where the CS presents economic growth and institutional cooperation as the paths to reach climate action goals.

Market liberalist and institutionalist views are repeatedly visible throughout the CS and are often presented as a package of joint solutions to climate change for the African continent. This is visible especially in the overarching goal presented by the CS, which describes the policy as a:

“continental framework for collective action and enhanced cooperation in addressing climate change [...] and achieve [...] sustainable economic growth”

(African Union, 2022, p. IV).

The main goal of the CS is therefore a combination of both an institutionalist and market liberalist conceptualization of climate action. For the first worldview, the CS calls for a continental and cooperative effort to solve climate change. At the same time, this will lead to growth for the continent. Both are seen as catalysts for climate action and as intertwined steps needed to achieve continental sustainable development.

The institutional approach visible in the CS is a stepping stone to ensure Africa's development. The institutionalist worldview is especially prevalent as both an objective and a rationale to the policy document. There is a strong emphasis on continent-wide cooperation and partnership in discourses. This is a turn from the global prevalence of the market liberalist worldview that many scholars argue is dominant (Eckert & Kovalevska, 2021; Ossewaarde & Ossewaarde-Lowtoo, 2020). However, authors like Death (2014) argue that African countries are actively refuting models brought forward by the Global North, in favor of more African-led approaches. In addition, the CS is not a binding policy for the AU's member states, which explains why the discourses focus on calling for cooperation, rather than presenting implementable, but unenforceable, policy solutions. However, this analysis does not aim to explain the reasons behind the prevalence of these worldviews and I encourage further research on exploring the drivers of these discourses within the CS.

Institutionalist discourses are presented in the policy through cooperation, governance and policy solutions to climate change across the whole text. Governance is a topic especially important in the CS and, together with policy, is the first intervention needed for climate action. The CS argues there is a “lack of or limited authority by certain government ministries to implement national climate policy” (African Union, 2022, p. 29). Therefore, placing the need for increased governance capacity as the first step to climate action. Otherwise, solutions, no

matter the realm in which they are found, have limited possibility of success if institutional changes are not implemented. Within the institutionalist discourse, the African Union (2022) also calls for “enhanced climate policy” (p.7), “strengthen institutional structures” (p.30) and “coordinated climate action” (p.31). All are part of an institutionalist discourse that acknowledges the shortcomings of African countries and prioritizes governance solutions and reforming institutional frameworks for effective policy implementation.

Together with institutionalist discourses, a market liberalist worldview is also prevalent within the text. The CS presents the need for climate action as an economic opportunity to be seized to achieve continental development: “the continent’s climate resilience is key to unlocking its development potential” (African Union, 2022, p. 12). Thus, adhering to the market liberalist principle of the environmental Kuznets curve, which implies that increased economic development leads to a reduction in emissions and environmental harm (Carter, 2018, p. 245). The African Union (2022) presents the positive effects that will derive from undertaking economic solutions, such as the “eradication of poverty” (p.2) and “job creation” (p.2). Therefore, the CS takes the stance that environmental issues require an increase in economic wellbeing for all. Following on this principle, the CS presents technology, innovation and industry as the tools needed to achieve sustainable development. In the analysis, some prevalent keywords were innovation, technological development, green industrialization and green infrastructure. All of these present a climate discourse that is heavily reliant on modernization as the main tool to climate action. Nature is then seen as a resource based on the concept that “natural capital [...] supports livelihoods” (African Union, 2022, p. 56). Thus, describing nature as a source of economic value for climate protection. With regards to nature, the CS also calls for a sustainable management of natural/economic resources. Protection and restoration are based on “natural ecosystems on which our livelihoods and our economies rely” (African Union, 2022, p. VII). This is to be done through “sustainable land management” (African Union, 2022, p. VII) of biodiversity and ecosystems. The word management entails a supremacy of humans over nature. This contrasts from the historical pattern of climate discourse entailing a strong human/nature symbiosis in Africa, as scholars have argued (Death, 2016, p. 2; 51). Therefore, the market liberalist worldview has an important prevalence in the CS as a mechanism for African development which will benefit both the continent’s people and its environment.

Within the CS, there is a vast presence of social greens discourses in the principles underpinning policy implementation. Social rights are a key topic found in the text. Often,

social rights go hand in hand with economic ones, referring to “social and economic systems” (African Union, 2022, p. 3). The AU realizes that, while necessary, economic growth also needs to be regulated and accompanied by measures that limit negative externalities affecting society. The CS also brings forward notions of climate justice in the document, focusing on “ensuring equity and fairness in sharing of risk” (African Union, 2022, p. 19) from the environmental transition. Social green principles are frequently reposed throughout the document, to guide social sustainability together with economic sustainability. A social green topic that is unique to the African example is the mention of global historical contributions to climate change as well as the need for self-driven action arising from within the continent. Given Africa’s historical contribution to climate change of only 4% of emissions, the CS argues that polluting countries “have a responsibility to assist us in our efforts” (African Union, 2022, p. III). This is repeated in the text with mentions to unequal global effects of climate change and the responsibility of non-African actors in exacerbating climate change within the continent. In addition, the African Union (2022) refers to its policy solutions as needing to be “African-led and African-owned” (p.V), embodying social green principles of self-determination. This finding is supported by Death’s (2014) arguments that African countries are actively pursuing self-driven policies to counter global inequity. Thus, the AU’s call for global equity in climate action efforts and the need for self-sufficiency are the image of a social green discourse present in the CS.

Bioenvironmentalist discourses are conceptualized in the CS as the threats incurring from lack of action on climate change. There are extensive notions of climate change as a security risk for “biodiversity, human health, food and water” (African Union, 2022, p. 12). In addition, these risks are presented in the CS as anthropogenically caused, or exacerbated by human activity over nature. Visible bioenvironmentalist discourses also include the understanding that solutions need to “go beyond simply reacting to climate change or business as usual” (African Union, 2022, p. 35). This creates a contradiction with more prevalent market liberalist and institutionalist views which stress that we currently are capable of solving climate change if the right economic and institutional measures are implemented. Nonetheless, bioenvironmentalism does not seem to play a vital role in the formulation of policy. Rather, it is used as a call to action and motivation for why climate change is a threat. At the same time, bioenvironmentalist notions are present, yet scattered across the text to support the rationale of the CS.

5.3 Comparative analysis of the EGD and the CS

The analysis of the two climate policies has found both contrasting and similar viewpoints on certain specific issues. The Venn diagram in figure 2 offers the opportunity to visualize what are the most prevalent topics among the different worldviews, also highlighting what topics the ROs shared and what were unique to each policy. However, the amount of topics for each worldview in figure 2 does not reflect the prevalence in the texts. Avenues for further research should include a quantitative exploration of the topic.

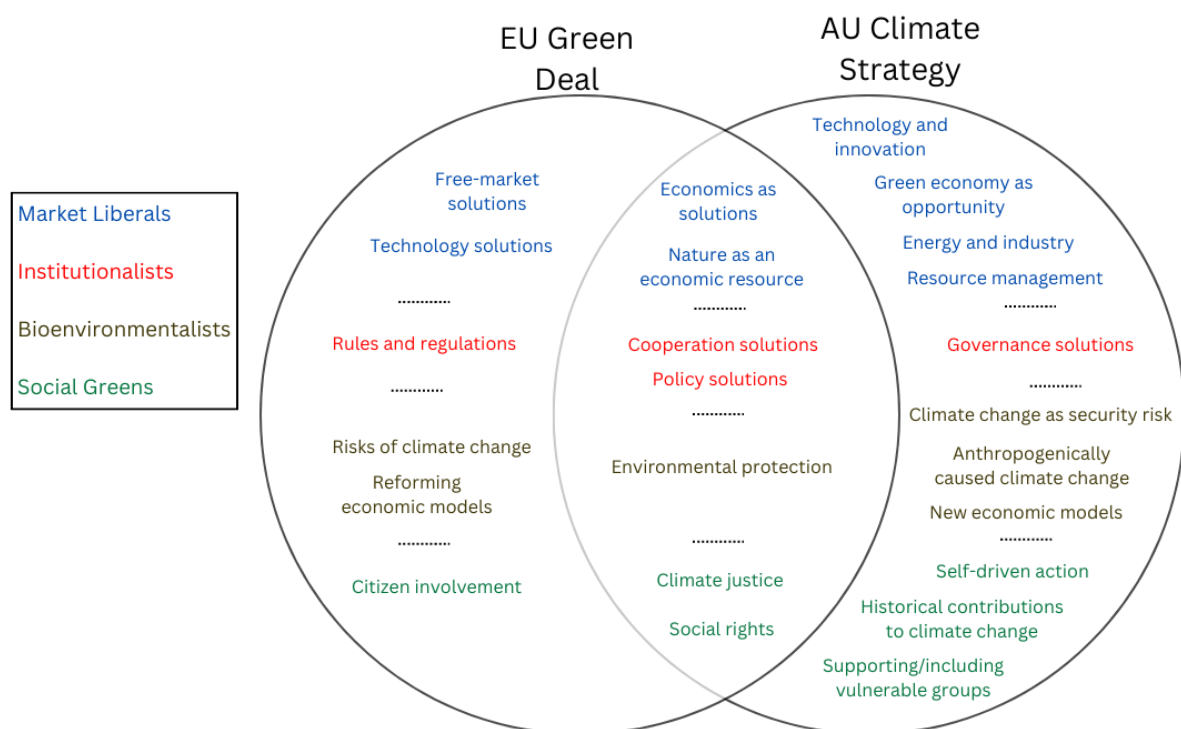


Figure 2: Venn diagram of the topics visible in the policies

Both policy documents share a similar prevalence of market liberalist and institutionalist viewpoints in their discourses, albeit with some differences in the topics they approach. The EGD and the CS focus on at least one shared topic per each of the four worldviews by Clapp & Dauvergne (2005). Nonetheless, the differences are more prevalent when analyzing bioenvironmentalist and social greens worldviews. The CS, given that the text is lengthier than the EGD, presents more varied topics and is more elaborate in its presentation of social and environmental issues.

With regards to a market liberalist worldview, both ROs see climate change as needing economic solutions and both conceptualize nature in economic terms. Both policies share the

same market liberalist understanding that economic growth can solve both social and environmental problems. The issue of climate change is seen as a problem of resource efficiency, whereby the right allocation of all resources minimizes the negative externalities on the environment. However, the two ROs have different perspectives on how effective resource allocation should be reached. The EGD has a stronger focus on market liberalization to ensure that economic actors allocate resources efficiently (Colombo & Porcu, 2014). On the other hand, the CS focuses increasingly on the need to kickstart innovation and industrial production as a driver of economic growth. This difference is reflected in the historical experiences of the two continents. The EU has a drive to liberalize the European economy, therefore pushing free-market also in its climate agenda (Carter, 2018, pp. 291-292). By contrast, the AU has a stronger interest in bringing forward a development-centered goal (African Union, 2023). Thus, explaining the prevalence of solutions of well-being and progress in the CS. The distinct market liberalist perspectives taken by the EGD are also explained by economic approaches being a prerogative of Global North countries (Bergius & Buseth, 2019). In fact, Carter (2018) argues market-centered views have “not yet taken a foothold in less developed economies” (p.236). Thus, explaining why the CS has a stronger prevalence of institutionalist, bioenvironmentalist and social greens discourses than the EGD.

As previously argued, the institutionalist view of climate action is the most prevalent in the CS and plays a major role in the EGD as well. Both policies share most of the topics in common, arguing for international cooperation and policy solutions to solve climate change. The main difference lies in how implementation of such institutionalist policies is brought forward. The EGD focuses on the need for rules, regulations and a strong legal framework, while the CS calls for better governance systems throughout the African continent. This difference can be explained by the EU being an established RO with legislative power over its members. Thus, bringing the EU to argue that laws are the most effective ways of implementing climate action. On the other hand, the AU recognizes the lacking governance frameworks in member countries given that the CS is not binding to its member states (African Union, 2022, p. 29). The CS calls for an improvement of the continent’s institutional framework to be able to implement the desired climate policies.

Notions related to the bioenvironmentalist worldview are present in different forms in the two policy documents. In the EGD, the main focus is still on economics, where discourses argue for a reform of the current economic model towards one that incorporates principles of circularity. On the other hand, discourses in the CS focus increasingly on creating new

economic models, being more attentive to including vulnerable communities and reducing the negative effects of business as usual. On this final point, the CS recognizes that unsustainable models of production are employed in different economic sectors, taking the approach that climate change has been anthropogenically caused. The EGD, instead, does not acknowledge the human impacts to the same extent. In contrast to the EGD, the CS also presents climate change as a human security risk that “challenges to the survival of humans, animals, plant life and ecosystems” (African Union, 2022, p. 3). On the other hand, there is no specific mention in the EGD of “risks” arising from climate change. Instead, risks are seen as solvable through “appropriate management” (European Commission, 2019, p. 17). Thus, highlighting the differences in approach on the same topic by the two ROs. Nonetheless, both the EGD and the CS have a bioenvironmentalist perspective on environmental protection. Both policies focus, among its goals, on preserving ecosystems, biodiversity and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in their discourses.

Among the different worldviews, social greens present the starkest distinction between the notions visible in the EGD and the CS. The EGD presents limited discourses connected to a social greens worldview, while in the CS these underpin the policy’s principles. The EGD and the CS present social greens notions connected to climate justice and social rights in their policies. Both policies call for a “just transition” in their documents, together with a focus on preserving social rights and ensuring social protection in the implementation of climate-related measures. The starkest distinction between the two can be seen in the fact that the EGD mentions few times social greens topic, often connecting these with economic discourses. Instead, the CS builds on the historical inequalities that have characterized the continent and reflect an anti-colonial sentiment. In the CS, topics of self-driven African action are motivated by unequal responsibilities for climate change and by historical legacies of colonialism and apartheid (African Union, 2022, p. 61). The African Union (2022) presents concepts such as “African-led and African-owned” (p.V), arguing that “solutions proposed by exogenous [non-African] industries present [...] challenges for African communities” (p.58). Thus, actively incorporating anti-colonial discourses in policies, connecting social and environmental injustice. Lastly, the CS mentions specific policy solutions targeted towards vulnerable groups such as women, indigenous people, or youth. Social greens discourses are visible in the CS’s targeting of these groups as well as the mention of “intersectionality” as a guiding principle of the policy (African Union, 2022, p. V). The EGD, instead, does not make any substantial mention of policies directly relating to vulnerable groups or women and youth.

6 Conclusion

This research has explored which climate change worldviews are visible in the main climate policy documents of the EU and the AU. The research was carried out through a case study discourse analysis of the EGD and the CS climate policies to answer the research question: *What climate change worldviews are visible in discourses in the AU's Climate Strategy and the EU's Green Deal?* The coding of the data for the discourse analysis was based on Clapp & Dauvergne's (2005) model of four climate change worldviews: market liberalist, institutionalist, bioenvironmentalist and social greens. These were identified in the text and then grouped into different topics on which the policies focused on.

This study found that all four worldviews were present in both policy documents, albeit with some differences in the role these discourses play within the text and the extent to which these are visible in both texts. The findings validate the conceptual assumptions presented in section 2.3, such as market liberalist and institutionalist worldviews being the most prevalent compared to bioenvironmentalist and social green ones. The findings also support previous theory and results by scholars on the topic of climate policy discourses, where market liberalist solutions are the most prevalent globally, while in the African continent notions relating to the interdependence of humans and the environment are widespread.

The most prevalent worldview in the EGD is one of market liberalism, whereby the economy is seen as the main solution to climate change. Scholars like Eckert & Kovalevska (2021) and Samper et.al (2021) agree that the EU takes a definite free-market approach to climate action, seeing the environment as an economic resource to protect. At the same time, the CS presents similar market liberalist discourses in its text, yet with a stronger attention to its effects on the continent's development path. The CS presents market liberalist solutions together with a more marked institutionalist discursive trend. Institutional discourses of international cooperation and governance solutions are the most prevalent in the CS. The document calls for increased integration, given the lacking cooperation frameworks that would enable climate action across the continent. The AU is trying to establish itself as a catalyst for African action on climate change, calling for increased cooperation. Instead, the EU has an established institutional framework that allows the RO to implement binding climate policies throughout its member states. The CS presents an institutionalist framework focused on

drawing states to climate action, while this worldview was present in the EGD to elaborate the binding steps member states should take.

Within the CS, the study found a stronger prevalence of the social green worldview than in the EGD. Most social green discourses in both worldviews underpin the principles of the policy documents and the goals to be reached. The CS focuses extensively on topics of climate justice, historical inequalities and the need to support vulnerable groups in climate action. On the other hand, the EGD offers limited instances in which this worldview is present. These are in regards to climate justice and citizen's involvement into the steps to ensure a just transition. Bioenvironmentalist views are instead among the least prevalent ones in both documents. Discourses related to this worldview focus on conceptualizing the risks deriving from climate change and call for a shift from current unsustainable economic models. The EGD often mentions the need to shift towards a circular economy, which would ensure that production systems stop harming the environment.

The findings from the analysis constitute a basis for further research on the topic of climate policy discourses within and between the EU and the AU. There has been very limited research on African, AU or comparative AU-EU policy and more investigations are needed to understand the drivers of climate action and the reasons behind discursive choices. Through this thesis, I often found myself wanting to ask "why" questions. Why has a certain discourse been used in a specific instance? Why is one worldview more prevalent than another in the policies? Further research answering these broad questions is needed to understand the reasons underpinning policy choices. Quantitative analyses are also needed, to get an image of correlation and quantitative differences between policies. One key difference between the policies is that the EGD is a binding document, while the CS is not. Research should also focus on how this impacts policy formulation. Future research should also explore how do discourses inform real-world action on climate change and whether there is a mismatch between policy agenda and implementation.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Final coding tables

The following codes have been extracted from the EU’s EGD:

- European Commission, 2019. *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: The European Green Deal.* [Online] Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1576150542719&uri=COM%3A2019%3A640%3AFIN> [Accessed 19 04 2023].

Keywords found in the EGD	Topics	Worldviews
Economic growth, sustainable growth, industry, investors, low-cost transition, industry as indispensable, value chains, boost production, opportunities	Economics as solutions	Market Liberalist
Resource efficiency, natural capital, resource allocation, carbon trading, adaptation, waste as economic value, EU emissions trading, ecosystems as resources, bio-economy	Nature as an economic resource	
Competitiveness, finance, macroeconomy, taxation, markets, consumers, investments, corporate governance, transaction costs, acquiring new skills, trade policy	Free-market solutions	
Decarbonizing energy, smart infrastructure, breakthrough technologies, traffic management, sustainable fuels	Technology solutions	
International efforts, cooperation, regional cooperation, global partnerships, mainstreaming sustainability, public-private partnerships, “green deal diplomacy”, diplomatic channels, multilateral framework, bilateral agreements	Cooperation solutions	Institutionalists
Policies and legal measures, enforcement of policies, national contributions, advisory and assistance, subsidies, good practices	Policy solutions	
Climate law, regulations, directives, emission standards	Rules and regulations	
Climate change is a high risk, water stress, unsustainable extraction	Risks of climate change	Bioenvironmentalist
Natural environment, waste, environmental harm, GHG emissions, improving air quality, pollution, biodiversity loss, reduce pesticides, protect	Environmental protection	

biodiversity, nature restoration, reforestation, toxic-free environment, restore natural functions		
Circular economy, unsustainable extraction, green washing, real price reflecting environmental impact	Reforming economic models	
Just/inclusive transition, fair and inclusive, structural change, protect vulnerable citizens, conventional approaches not sufficient	Climate Justice	Social Greens
Active public participation, improve the position of farmers, local communities, citizen involvement, grassroots initiatives, citizen's assemblies	Citizen involvement	
Social rights, no one left behind, energy poverty, basic standards of living, welfare, social objectives	Social rights	

The following codes have been extracted from the AU's CS:

- African Union, 2022. *African Union Climate Change And Resilient Development Strategy Action Plan (2022-2032)*, Addis Ababa: African Union.

Keywords found in the CS	Topics	Worldviews
Green recovery, green jobs, green growth economic development, transition as economic opportunity, poverty eradication, economies of scale, new markets and jobs, reducing youth unemployment, green economy skills, low-emission growth, economic opportunities, economic returns	Green economy as an opportunity	Market Liberalist
Climate finance, growth pathways, investments, increasing production, climate-proofing economy, resource mobilization, financial resources, resource allocation, trade is crucial, economic incentives, value chains	Economics as solutions	
Innovation, green cities, technology, technology transfer, science, technological development, innovation bundles, ICT, transport infrastructure, innovative citizens, technological carbon removal, infrastructure, climate-smart, novel approaches, emerging technologies, digitalization	Technology and innovation	
Lack of resources, natural/human resources, natural capital, exploiting benefits (resources), ecosystem services, economic and biodiversity co-benefits, natural assets	Nature as an economic resource	
Renewable energies, low emissions, green industrialization, transformation of energy and food systems, energy transition, green infrastructure	Energy and industry	
Land management, restoring ecosystems to produce economic benefits, land degradation as a constraint to productivity, sustainable land and water use, livestock management, water resource management	Resource management	

Continental efforts, collaboration, international community, coordination, encompassing partnerships, multilateral approach, trans-boundary response, united voice, collective action	Cooperation solutions	Institutionalists
Enhanced governance, governance systems, implementation, leveraging regional initiatives, governance solutions, governance challenges, institutions	Governance solutions	
Policy alignment, policy implementation, strengthening policy, enhanced climate policy, policy frameworks, regulations, policy makers, climate legislative frameworks	Policy solutions	
Environmental vulnerability, climate change affects human security, human survival in danger, threat for health, food and water security,	Climate change as security risk	Bioenvironmentalist
Urbanization and internal displacement, environmental pressure (anthropocentrically caused), physical threshold, unsustainable economic methods, human cause of climate change, illegal and overexploitation of marine resources	Anthropogenically caused climate change	
Biodiversity loss/pollution linked to economics, support biodiversity, conserving ecosystems, considering ecosystems, ecosystem protection and restoration, avoid further degradation	Environmental protection	
Redesigning systems, dependency on resources, circular economy, going beyond business as usual, inclusion of community in management, unsustainable business models	New economic models	
Historical responsibility, historical contribution, inequitable access, special circumstances of Africa, exogenous industries to African continent	Historical contributions to climate change	
Self-driven Africa, African capacity, African-led, African-owned, citizen-driven, self-determined response, building Africa's capacity	Self-driven action	Social Greens
Just/inclusive/equitable transitions, improving livelihoods, equitable society, climate justice, equitable access, addressing inequality, energy justice, equitable sharing of climate risk	Climate justice	
People-centred approach, collective development, social and cultural values, inclusive participation, social protection programmes	Social rights	
Intersectionality, supporting vulnerable communities, women, youth, indigenous people, vulnerable people as change agents, including vulnerable groups, gender inequality, social marginalization, community engagement	Supporting/including vulnerable groups	