



Advancing the multiple streams framework for decision-making: the case of integrating ethics into the Norwegian oil fund strategy

Camilla Bakken Øvald¹

Accepted: 15 November 2023 / Published online: 12 December 2023
© The Author(s) 2023

Abstract

This article applies a modified Multiple Streams Framework (MSF) to an in-depth case study of the contentious issue of integrating ethics into the Norwegian oil fund strategy. By exploring how ethical investment guidelines evolved from a discredited and allegedly unrealistic idea into policy consensus and, ultimately, a global exemplar, the study contributes to the literature in two ways. First, it contributes to the ongoing theoretical refinement of the MSF perspective by illustrating how the framework proves valuable in examining both agenda-setting and decision-making processes. Specifically, it confirms the relevance of a two-phase model for a more rigorous analysis of the decision-making process. Second, while prior literature defines the output of agenda-setting as a ready proposal, it is demonstrated that this outcome may not necessarily signify a fully developed policy proposal. To account for a broader range of scenarios, this article suggests redefining the output of the agenda-setting process as a policy commitment, rather than a worked-out proposal ready for negotiations in the political stream. Acknowledging the uncertainty and ambiguity in the decision-making process highlights the significance of developments in the problem and policy streams that past literature has not given due attention. Consequently, the article proposes a revised two-phase model to enhance the conceptualisation of decision-making within the MSF.

Keywords Multiple streams approach · Decision making · Agenda-setting · Responsible investment · Norwegian pension fund global

Introduction

The Multiple Streams Framework (MSF) is a widely cited and recognized theoretical framework for analyzing agenda-setting within policy process research (Kingdon, 1984, 2014; Zahariadis, 1995). Rather than studying policymaking as a linear process where rational politicians solve problems as they appear, Kingdon assumes that decisions are

✉ Camilla Bakken Øvald
camillabakken.ovald@kristiania.no

¹ Kristiania University College, Norway, Kirkegata 24-26, 0153 Oslo, Norway

often made in an unpredictable and chaotic manner (Kingdon, 1984, 2014). The MSF offers a theoretical lens that gives order to this process by explaining how policymakers are more likely to pay attention to a policy proposal if it is linked to a recognized problem and presented within a conducive political context.

Although the MSF is considered to have high potential as a policy theory, critics have pointed out that the wide application of the framework has been mostly heuristic, with key concepts being used as conceptual tools rather than applying a theory to explain causal mechanisms (Ackrill et al., 2013; Cairney & Jones, 2016; Herweg et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016). However, the complexity of today's political and social problems has promoted a resurgence of the MSF perspective, as the conditions policymakers operate under increasingly resemble the framework's core assumptions of politics as a process of ambiguity and uncertainty (Herweg et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016; Zohlnhöfer et al., 2016). The MSF is being applied in a wide variety of issue domains, countries, and government levels, triggering subsequent debates about potential theoretical refinements (Jones et al., 2016; Zohlnhöfer & Rüb, 2016). A central theme in these discussions is whether the framework can be expanded to include both the agenda-setting and decision-making stages of the policy process (Herweg et al., 2017; Howlett et al., 2015; Koebele, 2021; Zahariadis, 1995; Zohlnhöfer et al., 2016). Specifically, Herweg et al. (2015) propose a theoretical adaptation of the MSF to better suit parliamentary systems and suggest a two-stage model to more rigorously analyze decision-making. The output of the first stage of agenda-setting is presented as a worked-out proposal ready to be adopted before political negotiations in the political stream in stage two generate policy change or not.

The present study contributes to this literature by applying the modified approach suggested by Herweg et al. (2015) to an in-depth case study of the controversial issue of integrating ethics into the strategy of the Norwegian Government Pension Fund (commonly known as the oil fund). Today, the fund's responsible investment policies are regarded as a global example and enjoy widespread political support, although this was not always the case. For years, the idea of including ethical concerns into the investment strategy was rejected by a political majority and economic experts who believed that this could potentially diminish returns and thus harm future generations and fund beneficiaries. By examining the transformation of ethical investment guidelines from a discredited and allegedly unrealistic idea into becoming an agenda priority, this study explores the process in which some ideas out of many are elevated into policy proposals and foster political change. The empirical research relies on official reports, transcripts, news articles, and 26 in-depth elite interviews with key political and technocratic agents.

This article offers two theoretical contributions. First, it demonstrates how the MSF concept can serve as a theoretical framework for comprehending the processes of both agenda-setting and decision-making. Specifically, it discusses the relevance of a two-phase (or two-stage) model for a more rigorous analysis of the decision-making process. By examining two distinct yet interrelated processes, this approach enables a more thorough inquiry into how institutional structures and decision-making mechanisms influence, constrain, and facilitate issues and solutions (Herweg et al., 2015; Koebele, 2021; Zohlnhöfer, 2016).

Second, by applying a two-phase model to an MSF analysis, this article contributes to the ongoing theoretical discussion and refinement of the framework, exploring the usefulness of the suggested model and whether it needs further modification (Herweg et al., 2017; Koebele, 2021; Zohlnhöfer, 2016). While acknowledging the value of a two-phase model, this article proposes to conceptualize the decision-making process in a way that is more closely aligned with the MSF's original assumption that policy processes are permeated by ambiguity and unpredictability. Rather than considering the output of the agenda-setting

as a worked-out proposal ready for negotiations in the political stream, it is argued that the issues on the political decision agenda may be less established than assumed in Herweg et al.'s modified model (2015). This could be relevant in scenarios where policy issues are especially intricate and complex (Bache, 2013; Boswell & Rodrigues, 2016), or when there is an agreement to take action, but where there are varying interpretations of the scope of the policy solution required, as evident in issues such as climate change (Normann, 2015; Wang et al., 2021). Hence, it is suggested to redefine the output of the agenda-setting process as a policy commitment rather than a worked-out proposal prepared for negotiations in the political stream. Furthermore, acknowledging the inherent uncertainty within the decision-making process underscores the significance of both the problem and policy streams in MSF analysis of decision-making. While prior literature has predominantly concentrated on the bargaining dynamics in the political stream, it is suggested to pay more attention to the theoretical aspects of developments in the problem and policy streams. This is illustrated in a revised two-phase theoretical model which builds on the framework by Herweg et al. (2015).

The paper is organized as follows: First, it introduces the fundamental elements of the MSF framework, followed by a review of recent theoretical refinements, and suggests a revised two-phase theoretical model. Second, it presents the case study design and empirical data, before applying the modified MSF model and analyzing the findings in light of the theoretical framework. The final section encompasses a discussion of the results and their implications for both academic and political practitioners, along with concluding remarks and notes regarding the limitations of the study.

The multiple streams framework

The multiple streams framework (MSF) originates from the seminal book *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (1984) by John Kingdon. The framework offers a set of theoretical and structural concepts to explore why policymakers prioritise certain subjects over others, how their agendas evolve, and how they narrow down their options from a large set of alternatives. The MSF perspective is based on a modified version of the garbage can model of organizational choice (Cohen et al., 1972). A fundamental premise of this model is that policymakers operate within complex and shifting environments characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty. The process of decision-making is conceived as a fluid and often chaotic process wherein various streams of problems, solutions, participants, and opportunities are thrown into the metaphorical “garbage can” of the organizational setting. Within this context, the MSF explains how policymakers are more likely to take notice of a policy proposal if it is associated with a recognized policy problem and presented within a conducive political context. According to Kingdon, a convergence of these aspects, conceptualized as streams of problems, policies, and politics, increases the chance of policy change (Kingdon, 1984, 2014).

The problem stream refers to the numerous societal policy concerns potentially requiring attention. The extent to which policymakers take notice of a problem depends on several mechanisms. These mechanisms involve elements such as focal events, indicators influencing how a problem is perceived, and feedback from the operation of existing programs. *The policy stream* encompasses the multitude of ideas and proposals, aptly described as the “policy primeval soup” (Kingdon, 2014, 19). These ideas and proposals are developed by various policy communities and specialists both within and outside government. However,

only a few ideas gain serious consideration. The MSF posits that enduring ideas usually align with specific criteria, including technical feasibility, acceptability in terms of value, manageable budgetary implications, and the anticipation of political endorsement. Lastly, *the politics stream* incorporates factors that form the institutional and cultural context surrounding the policy agenda or output of interest. Within this stream, various elements play a role, including the government, the parliament, national mood, and influential interest groups.

The coupling of streams is a fundamental element within the MSF. While the three streams operate independently, each following its unique dynamics and rules, Kingdon emphasized that at certain critical junctures these three streams might converge, resulting in significant policy changes emerging from the coupling of problems, policy proposals, and politics (Kingdon, 2014, 19). The dynamics that hold the potential to drive policy change are initiated by a *policy window* opening in the politics or problem streams. These occurrences encompass both foreseeable events, such as elections or budgetary processes, and unexpected crises or incidents. In the politics stream, a newly elected political administration might be interested in new ideas and open to policy proposals, resulting in advocates putting forward numerous alternatives. While the nature of the problem and the array of solutions might remain unchanged, the political initiative generates a coupling process with the policy stream, potentially leading to policy change. Alternatively, a window of opportunity could open within the problem stream. This could happen when decision-makers become convinced of the pressing nature of a particular problem, prompting them to delve into the policy stream in search of a solution.

The policy window provides as an opportunity for advocates of proposals to promote their solutions to certain problems. This creates a setting in which *policy entrepreneurs* can seize the opportunity and attempt to link problems to their favored policy solutions while seeking politicians who are receptive to their preferences. Kingdon conceptualized policy entrepreneurs as “people who are willing to invest their resources in pushing their pet proposals or problems” (Kingdon, 2014, 180), located both outside and within a government. The efficacy of their endeavors relies on various factors. These include factors such as having access to influential decision-makers, possessing skilled negotiating abilities, and displaying resolute determination to invest time, effort, and resources into an issue. Much like surfers, these entrepreneurs are ready to paddle, and their readiness, combined with their ability to ride the wave and harness external forces beyond their control, contribute to their attainment of success (Kingdon, 2014, 181).

Theorizing decision-making within the MSF

The theoretical concepts within the MSF were originally developed to explore agenda-setting dynamics within the context of US policy, specifically in the domains of health and transportation (Kingdon, 1984). Although Kingdon himself never attempted to formulate a more general framework (Sætren, 2016; Zohlnhöfer & Rüb, 2016), the empirical application of the MSF has expanded significantly in terms of issue domains, political systems, and phases of the policy process (Cairney, 2009; Herweg et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016). In terms of theory, a central point of discussion revolves around whether the framework can be generalisable to the process of decision-making (Herweg et al., 2017; Zahariadis, 2003; Zohlnhöfer & Rüb, 2016). This discussion covers three primary aspects. First, does the MSF approach inherently limit its applicability exclusively to agenda-setting? If not, how

can the process of decision-making be conceptualized within the framework? And, notably, what additional value does deviating from the original framework provide?

Is the MSF limited to agenda-setting?

A fundamental rationale for the relevance of the MSF perspective to decision-making is based on the premise that the garbage can model, which the MSF explicitly draws upon, was initially developed to explain decision-making dynamics (Mucciaroni, 1992; Sætren, 2016; Zahariadis, 2003). Revisiting the source of the MSF and examining Cohen, March, and Olsen's original work, Sætren (2016) reveals how the elements of the decision stream got "lost in translation". Specifically, the original streams of choice opportunities and participants are not explicitly outlined within the MSF. The choice opportunities stream referred to the institutional contexts where organizational and political decisions take place, while the participants stream included decision-makers and other individuals involved in the policy process (Cohen et al., 1972; Sætren, 2016). Kingdon chose to consolidate these streams into a single concept known as the "politics stream" (Sætren, 2016, 24). Consequently, the comprehensive institutional settings encompassed within the choice opportunities notion are implicit in the simplified MSF framework. Additionally, the MSF does not encompass the dynamic impact of the engagement of new participants and the potential consequences this may have on how problems and solutions are approached and defined (Sætren, 2016, 26).

Nevertheless, despite the original elements of decision-making not being explicitly emphasized in the MSF, its close resemblance to the garbage can model implies that there are no inherent limitations within the framework that hinder its application to other stages of the policy process (Mucciaroni, 1992; Sætren, 2016; Zahariadis, 1995, 2003). Furthermore, the distinction between issues designated for active decisions and the subsequent selection of an issue lacks empirical and theoretical imperative. Research has demonstrated the continuity between agenda-setting and policy formation (e.g., Leppänen & Liefferink, 2022; Zahariadis, 1995), and within the domain of public policy, these two processes are often examined as integral components of the same overarching process (Sætren, 2016; Zahariadis, 2003).

Conceptualizing two phases in the framework

The second point of consideration involves how to theorize the extension of the MSF to include decision-making. In this context, the approach advanced by Zahariadis (1995, 2003) carries substantial influence (Herweg et al., 2015). He proposes considering agenda-setting and decision-making integral components of the broad policy formation process, where policymakers make authoritative choices from a limited set of previously generated alternatives (Zahariadis, 2003, 10). Although this approach is appealing by virtue of its theoretical simplicity, it can be argued that it makes it difficult to analyze developments in the problem stream and does not explain why some issues generate policy change and others do not (Herweg et al., 2015; Howlett et al., 2015). Hence, scholars have developed more elaborate models, suggesting various theoretical refinements to the framework, including adding one or more streams (Howlett et al., 2015; Teisman, 2000), separating stages or phases (Herweg et al., 2015), or theoretically refining the politics stream (Boswell & Rodrigues, 2016; Sætren, 2016).

Specifically, Herweg et al. (2015) propose a theoretical adaptation of the framework to parliamentary systems and suggest a second coupling process to further investigate decision-making. The first coupling process is characterized by a policy window (defined as an agenda window) opening in the political or problem stream, identical to agenda-setting in the original MSF. The key character at this stage is the policy entrepreneur. The output of this process is conceptualized as “a worked-out proposal ready for decision” (Herweg et al., 2015, 444). This proposal opens a new window of opportunity in the second coupling process, defined as a decision window. Subsequently, negotiations in the political stream determine the details of the proposal and whether it will in fact generate a policy change. The decision coupling process is driven by political entrepreneurs and their capacity to ensure that a policy is adopted (Herweg et al., 2015; Roberts & King, 1991). While policy entrepreneurs are predominantly involved in the initial agenda-setting phase and can be found in various sectors of the political system, the political entrepreneur is defined as an individual in an elected leadership position working to secure the political majority. In parliamentary systems with a governing majority, this task is relatively uncomplicated; however, if support from opposition parties is required, the process becomes more intricate. Herweg et al. (2015) put forth several bargaining instruments relevant to the political entrepreneur, such as offering concessions to gain support or creating package deals combining various policy projects. Alternatively, they might employ manipulation techniques and bias policymakers to adopt the proposed solution.

The modified model suggested by Herweg et al. (2015) has several advantages and has proven its usefulness in recent studies (e.g., Koebele, 2021; Zohlnhöfer, 2016). As this model retains the original structure of the MSF intact and incorporates the role of parliamentary institutions within the framework, it becomes more suitable for application by other scholars as it is rendered simpler and more flexible. Furthermore, by including the decision-making stage of policy processes, it enhances the MSF’s explanatory capability as it is able to offer a more comprehensive account of how policies are formed. Moreover, the authors formulate hypotheses to elucidate the likelihood of adoption and the potential modifications of the proposal, addressing the criticism that the MSF lacks clear hypotheses and is too flexible to be disproven.

However, some of the operational definitions have been criticized for being too strict (Zohlnhöfer, 2016). According to Herweg et al. (2015), the politics stream during the agenda-setting phase is considered ripe and favorable for policy change when the majority party or the governing coalition endorse a proposal (Herweg et al., 2015, 439). In some cases this assumption is too absolute, as the necessary majority can be organized in the decision-making phase, or political entrepreneurs fail to form majorities for policy proposals that made it onto the governmental agenda (Zohlnhöfer, 2016). Moreover, as the present study illustrates, a policy issue might attain governmental agenda status even if the majority party or the governing coalition do not embrace the proposal.

A further constraint on the revised model originates from defining the outcome of the agenda-setting process as a worked-out proposal ready for decision-making (Herweg et al., 2015, 444). Thus, it follows that the decision coupling largely entails negotiating the specifics of the proposal among the agents within the political stream. These constraints could potentially lead to scenarios characterized by higher levels of ambiguity and uncertainty than is accounted for in the theoretical framework being overlooked. In such cases, issues might enter the decision agenda as a policy commitment, rather than a fully prepared proposal. Such a situation could evolve in the case of intricate and complex policy issues (Bache, 2013; Boswell & Rodrigues, 2016; Herweg, 2016), diverse institutional contexts (Cairney, 2009; Koebele, 2021), or when faced with divergent risk perceptions

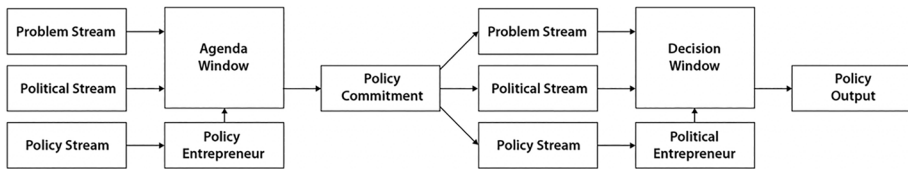


Fig. 1 Revised two-phase framework (building on Herweg et al., 2015)

and problem interpretations, as seen in matters concerning sustainable energy transitions (Normann, 2015; Wang et al., 2021). Including scenarios characterized by higher levels of ambiguity and uncertainty enhances the advantages of integrating a secondary coupling process into the analysis (Cairney & Jones, 2016). When a policy commitment is on the agenda but has not yet taken the form of a concrete proposal, the decision coupling process plays a greater role in shaping the characteristics and eventual outcome of the final policy output (Howlett et al., 2015).

Consequently, this article proposes refining the framework originally suggested by Herweg et al. (2015). To accommodate a broader range of scenarios, the output of the agenda-setting process is conceptualized as a policy commitment that could become subject to substantial changes in the process of decision coupling (Fig. 1). This indicates that during the initial coupling process, the policy entrepreneur does not need to present a fully matured proposal. According to the MSF, enduring ideas that are selected typically align with expectations of political and public support, as well as budgetary and technical feasibility. However, there is not necessarily imminent or broad agreement on whether a policy proposal is feasible enough to be realized, even if it has made it to the decision agenda. Recognizing the uncertainty and ambiguity inherent in decision-making underscores the significance of the coupling process. Hence, in the proposed model, the second coupling process comprehends the potential dynamics in all three streams. In cases where the policy commitment is already a fully developed proposal ready for negotiations, the political stream is of prime importance. However, in cases where the output of the first coupling process is a more ambiguous policy commitment, a comprehensive analysis of all three streams in the subsequent phase becomes necessary. Furthermore, the impact of new participants in the decision-making process may potentially change the perception of a problem, influencing the policy stream and proposal design (Howlett et al., 2015; Sætren, 2016).

The role of agency in decision-making commonly includes the political entrepreneur negotiating proposals in the politics stream; other participants are described in less detail or conceptualized as “collective entrepreneurship” (Herweg et al., 2015; Herweg et al., 2017; Koebele, 2021; Roberts & King, 1991). Although one could argue that everyone contributing to new policy developments fosters innovation, this does not necessarily classify them as entrepreneurs (Brouwer & Biermann, 2011; Gunn, 2017). One way to address this perspective is to focus on behaviors and processes rather than formal positions. Ackrill et al., (2013, 882) propose understanding entrepreneurship as a broad category of behaviors in the policy process, rather than a permanent characteristic of an individual or a role. Consequently, the challenge lies in distinguishing policymakers performing their institutional role from those who qualify as entrepreneurs in specific contexts. In this study, an analytical distinction is assumed between intellectuals and experts who offer alternative policy solutions and the political entrepreneurs, who actively participate throughout the decision-making process and work actively for the adoption of proposals (Brouwer & Biermann, 2011).

According to Herweg et al. (2015), the main instruments of the political entrepreneur include creating package deals, making concessions, and manipulating policymakers. While these activities are primarily employed in the politics stream, others have highlighted the strategic use of framing as a manipulation tactic that shapes the perception of issues and problems (Knaggård, 2016; Leppänen & Liefferink, 2022; Zahariadis, 2003). The concept of framing rests on the notion that humans need to make choices on how to structure their social world (Rein & Schön, 1993). Framing entails highlighting a specific aspect of a given issue, which not only entails an understanding of the problem but also implies a potential path forward (Zahariadis, 2003). This strategy may prove particularly relevant when policy commitments are transformed into concrete policies in scenarios where the policy solution is not readily apparent.

Analytical value of expanding the MSF to decision-making

The final consideration regarding expanding the MSF to decision-making is the fundamental question of whether it adds analytical value, especially given that Kingdon himself intentionally concentrated on the early stages of the selection process (Kingdon, 2014, 3). While the original framework aims to explain why certain issues garner attention from policymakers and find their way onto the decision agenda, it does not explicitly address how some issues on the decision agenda generate policy change and the degree to which these proposals differ from the original issue: “Agenda-setting, the development of alternatives, and choices among those alternatives seem to be governed by different forces. Each of them is complicated by itself, and the relationship among them add more complications” (Kingdon, 2014, 230). Hence, expanding the scope of the framework facilitates a more thorough exploration of the underlying causes of why and how certain issues enter the governmental agenda but face subsequent challenges in achieving adoption (Herweg et al., 2015; Zohlnhöfer, 2016). This aligns with Kingdon’s own discussions, wherein he acknowledged the significant role of the decision-making stage in transforming an idea into a public proposal (Kingdon, 2011, 242).

Another significant value added by integrating a second coupling process is the ability to account for various institutional contexts within the scope of the MSF. This integration further enables a thorough analysis of how institutional structures and decision-making mechanisms influence, limit, and facilitate both problems and solutions (Herweg et al., 2015; Koebele, 2021; Zohlnhöfer, 2016). Moreover, it facilitates a more comprehensive analysis of new arenas and participants in the subsequent phase, as well as diverse forms of entrepreneurship across different phases (Ackrill et al., 2013; Cairney & Jones, 2016; Sætren, 2016). While the role of the entrepreneur remains crucial in both coupling processes, there is a distinction: the policy entrepreneur focuses on devising viable alternatives during agenda-coupling, whereas the political entrepreneur’s emphasis lies in seeking majorities during decision-coupling. These differences underscore the significance of analytically differentiating between the stages of agenda-setting and decision-making processes (Zohlnhöfer, 2016). The following sections exemplify the relevance of this perspective through an exploration of the case involving the integration of ethical investment guidelines in the Norwegian oil fund strategy.

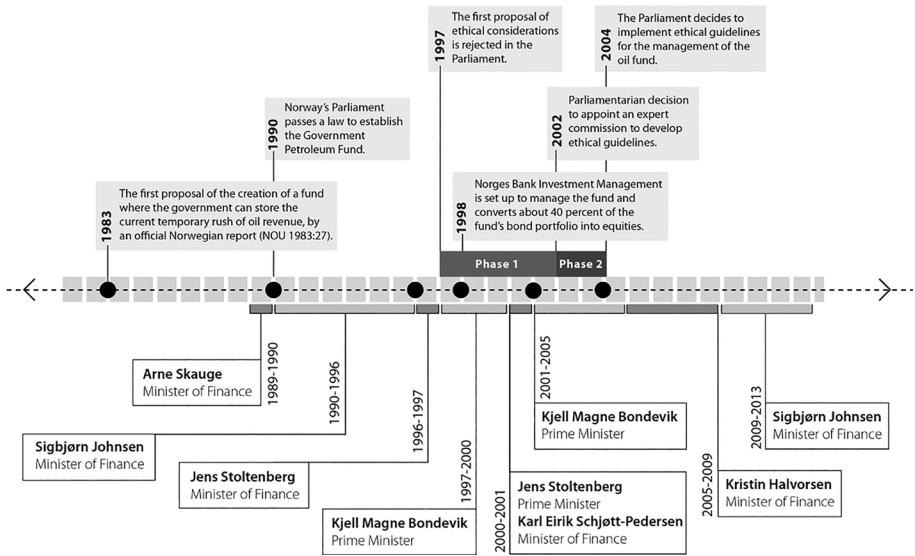


Fig. 2 Case study timeline

Methodology and research design

The empirical research relies on a longitudinal in-depth case study of the inclusion of ethical investment guidelines in the Norwegian oil fund strategy (George & Bennett, 2005; Yin, 2014). While the oil fund’s current policy for responsible investment represents a model of best practice enjoying broad political support, the issue remained highly controversial for many years and offers a useful illustration of how some ideas are elevated from obscurity to the top of the agenda. First, the issue of ethical investments represents a case in which policy entrepreneurs sought to turn radical ideas into reality. Although its context-specific features are considered, the case exemplifies a typical case of agenda-setting in terms of the multiple streams approach. Secondly, by showcasing the importance of decision-making, it demonstrates the significance of incorporating decision coupling into the analysis of why and how certain ideas generate policy change. Third, the oil fund embodies a dynamic case of multistage institutionalization, providing an opportunity to study the policymaking process as the policy regime evolves, as well as the consequent feedback effects.

The study began with examining the case utilising a variety of data sources such as media coverage, political biographies, white papers, and other relevant reports. This preliminary step helped create a chronological narrative, using a temporal bracket strategy and identifying main events in the process (Langley, 1999). The timeframe of the study is 1990–2013, with an emphasis on two main phases: *Agenda-setting* (1997–2002), and *Decision-making* (2002–2004) (Fig. 2). The main empirical source for this study is 26 interviews¹ with key political agents at a national level (Table 1). Interviews are a conventional method within qualitative research, but the accounts obtained are, by their nature,

¹ A segment of the interviews was conducted in conjunction with associate professor Ketil Raknes, associate professor Helene Tronstad Moe and professor Bent Sofus Tranøy.

Table 1 List of interviewees

Ref	Actors	Relevant role
	<i>Politicians</i>	
#1	Jens Stoltenberg	Minister of Finance 1996–1997 Prime Minister 2000–2001 and 2005–2013
#2	Kjell Magne Bondevik	Prime Minister 1997–2000 and 2001–2005
#3	Arne Skauge	Minister of Finance 1989–1990
#4	Sigbjørn Johnsen	Minister of Finance 1990–1996
#5	Karl Eirik Schjøtt -Pedersen	Minister of Finance 2000–2001
#6	Kristin Halvorsen	Minister of Finance 2005–2009
#7	Øystein Djupedal	Member of the Standing Committee on Finance 1997–2005
#8	Kari Elisabeth Kaski	Member of the Standing Committee on Finance 2017–present
	<i>Ministry of finance</i>	
#9	Svein Gjedrem	Director General 1986–1996 and 2011–2014 CEO Central Bank 1999–2010
#10	Tore Eriksen	Director General 1996–2011
#11	Martin Skancke	Deputy Secretary 1990–2001
#12	Employee 1 (anonymous)	Various positions in the Ministry of Finance
#13	Employee 2 (anonymous)	Various positions in the Ministry of Finance
	<i>Norges bank investment management (oil fund)</i>	
#14	Knut Kjær	CEO 1997–2007
#15	Yngve Slygstad	CEO 2007–2020
#16	Trond Grande	Deputy CEO 2011–present
#17	Sung Cheng Chih	Adviser and Member of the Expert Panel 2011–present
	<i>Others</i>	
#18	Hans Petter Graver	Chairman of an influential white paper on ethics and the oil fund
#19	Thomas Ergo	Journalist with influential articles regarding ethics and the fund
#20	Employees in the oil fund	Finance managers and others (anonymous), 5 informants in total
#21	Representatives from NGOs	Directors of two NGOs (anonymous), 2 informants in total

not neutral (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007; Gioia, 2021; Gioia et al., 2013; Langley & Meziari, 2020). Especially when interviewing elites, it is important to bear in mind the ways in which the interviewees position themselves with respect to the moral and political legacy they wish to construct (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002; Alvesson, 2003). In accordance with Gioia's assumption of people as *knowledgeable agents*, multiple interviews were conducted and systematically triangulated with other evidence (Gioia et al., 2013).

All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using NVivo software. Following Gioia et al. (2013), the first interviews were subject to an open coding, contributing to a wide range of first order concepts. These concepts were further developed during the interview process before reducing them to a more manageable number, looking for explanatory concepts and moving the analysis to a more theoretical level. The second order themes included topics such as transparency and access, Conceptualizing risk, consequences, examples, framing, power, and coalitions. The second-order analysis confirmed that the MSF is indeed a relevant analytical approach in both the agenda-setting and decision-making stages.

Table 2 Data sources

	Interviews	Reports	Transcripts	Articles
Government (Prime ministers and ministers of finance)	6	4		
Ministry of Finance (bureaucrats)	5	29		
Parliament	8	23	24	
Norges Bank/oil fund	9	24		
Media	1	1		126
Other stakeholders	4	17		

The second empirical source is official reports, correspondence between relevant institutions, transcripts from debates in Parliament, and newspaper articles (Table 2). Furthermore, a systematic search of the news archive Atekst (Retriever) for newspaper articles about the oil fund in general and more particularly about ethical concerns, resulted in 1130 relevant articles. A further selection yielded 126 articles that broadly represented the nature of the discussions about the fund and the ways in which different key players publicly communicated in the media. Finally, since Norwegian policymakers' historical context was salient, the overall political and economic context was evaluated by including seminal historical research on Norway's politics and economy (Hanisch & Nerheim, 1992; Lie et al., 2016; Lie & Venneslan, 2010).

The case of integrating ethics in the oil fund strategy

Established in 1990, the Norwegian oil fund was designed as a financial instrument to mitigate the adverse impact of unpredictable petroleum revenue streams and excessive political expenditures. The initial capital transfers were allocated to low-risk bonds, but prospects of significant growth in petroleum revenue stimulated debate on the investment approach. While investing in bonds was a safe strategy involving minimal risk, the expected returns were low. In 1997, the government proposed a new strategy to optimize the ratio between expected return and risk, with the aim of generating greater financial returns. Norges Bank was tasked with managing the portfolio and given a mandate to invest 40% of the portfolio in international equity markets.

Phase 1: agenda-setting (1997–2002)

The involvement of the Norwegian state in international equity markets was unprecedented, leading to several politicians expressing ethical concerns about these activities. In a hearing of the parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, the Center Party argued that “this resembles colonial ventures and could cause reactions in countries where Norwegian extractions of returns could increase poverty”.² However, proposals to

² Recommendations from the Finance Committee to the Revised National Budget for 1998 (St.meld. nr. 2 (1997–1998)).

incorporate ethical and environmental guidelines in the oil fund's investment strategy were rejected, with reference to the apolitical virtues of the fund strategy.³ According to one of the main advocates for ethical screening Øystein Djupedal (#7), a parliamentarian from the Socialist Left Party, it was difficult to even get the issue on the agenda of public debate. Although a new minority government explicitly included ethical guidelines in its government policy statement, the technocrats' objections ended up overruling the political intentions. As the then prime minister Kjell Magne Bondevik put it:

Within the Christian Democratic Party, we were working hard with other NGOs to establish ethical guidelines (...) but when the fund entered the financial markets in 1998, the strategy was to maximize return. They even gave a moral reason; the fund is for future generations, and we should not do anything that could diminish returns. (Bondevik #2).

In terms of the MSF this refers to the *problem stream* and the process of shaping the public's perception of a problem and whether it requires resolution. In the 1990s, the political majority and the economic experts effectively argued for a "purely financial" strategy for the fund. The goal was to maximize profits and diversify the investments according to a benchmark set by the Ministry. Norges Bank cautioned that any deviations would potentially harm the profitability and increase administrative costs.⁴ Furthermore, the parliamentary majority argued that the fund was set up to act as a financial investor and that political interference might alter its status as a financial instrument,⁵ echoing the message from the Ministry of Finance: "The fund is a tool to handle the governmental financial savings and should be managed according to financial concerns (risk and return). Other issues should be dealt with through foreign policy, aid, or environmental policy."⁶

In the *policy stream*, policy entrepreneurs suggested various policy solutions, which comprised an environmental fund, development fund, or mechanisms to exclude tobacco and other products. The main advocates for ethical investment guidelines were representatives from the Christian Democrats and the Socialist Left Party, and a coalition of NGOs. However, there was no coherent, technically feasible idea:

We proposed several political suggestions on implementing ethics in the strategy in this period, but the proposals were not concrete enough and easily rejected by the political majority. (Djupedal #7)

Additionally, while the Christian Democrats' minority government had the intention to reform the investment strategy, they lacked the political power in the *politics stream* (#2).

However, policy entrepreneurs kept on pushing the problem onto the agenda, working to find concrete evidence of problematic equity positions of the fund (#2, #7, #17). Through persistent efforts within the problem stream, they repeatedly succeeded in raising awareness about the ethical issues among the public. In 2001, the disclosure of investments in a Singaporean tech company involved in the production of landmines triggered a significant

³ National Budget for 1998 (St.meld. nr. 1 (1997–1998)). Ministry of Finance, Oslo.

⁴ Submission to the Ministry of Finance, 22nd of April 1998 from Norges Bank.

⁵ Recommendations from the Finance Committee to the Revised National Budget for 1998 (St.meld. nr. 2 (1997–1998)).

⁶ National Budget for 1998 (St.meld. nr. 1 (1997–1998)). Ministry of Finance, Oslo.

shift in public opinion. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo in 1997, and Norway had previously signed the international convention to ban land mines. Against this backdrop, accusations of hypocrisy and failure to uphold international obligations were leveled against the government.

While the authorities held out against the idea of general ethical guidelines, they created an exclusion mechanism to bar certain investments from the fund if these would violate Norway's obligations under international law, as defined by the Petroleum Fund Advisory Board on International Law.⁷ Given that anti-personnel mines were the single focus of the proposal, Norges Bank and the Ministry of Finance set aside their concerns. The exclusion mechanism had a restricted scope but strengthened the narrative in the problem stream and re-enforced a sense “that something had to be done” within the Ministry of Finance (#18).

At the same time significant developments occurred in the politics stream. A new Labor government, led by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg, took office with no intentions of implementing general ethical guidelines. Stoltenberg, himself an economist and a strong advocate of the “do not politicise the fund” position, argued that it was impossible to prohibit everything the socialists do not favour.⁸ Minister of Finance Karl Eirik Schjøtt-Pedersen elaborates:

It is essential that the fund is considered as a financial tool, not political. It is a difficult balance; how will a strategy change be perceived in the market, as a political act or a financial decision? (Schjøtt-Pedersen #5).

However, following a substantial defeat in the 2001 elections, the Labor Party became more open to considering new ideas. In the winter of 2002, several local branches of the Labor Party argued in favour of ethical considerations and came out in support of Norway's largest Labor union, which emphasized ethical responsibility in the fund's investments.⁹

Thus, there was a gradually solidifying *problem* and an emerging *political* opening, but no coherent proposal in the *policy* stream. In the winter of 2002, this was about to change. Several NGO-funded reports revealed practical examples of ethics in finance (Tørres, 2002; Bay, 2002), and the rise in media attention was pushing parliamentarians to comment on the matter (#17, #18). The Labor Party, now in opposition to a minority right-wing government coalition headed by the Christian Democrats, decided to support a proposition to develop ethical guidelines. “Of course, it is possible to implement ethical guidelines. We not only should but must have an investment strategy that does not violate our foreign policy”,¹⁰ stated Trond Giske, former Minister of Education from the Labor Party. In June 2002, the deputy leader of the right-wing Progress Party; Siv Jensen, argued that “we cannot accept these scandalous reports”,¹¹ referring to media articles presenting the oil fund's position in companies with an unethical conduct. After surprisingly aligning with the Socialist Left Party, a proposal to appoint an expert commission with a mandate to develop ethical guidelines won the support of a political majority in the Parliament.

Hence, there were significant developments in both the problem stream and the politics stream. The landmine case changed the public's perception of the seriousness of the

⁷ Revised National Budget for 2001 (St.meld. nr. 2 (2000–2001)). Ministry of Finance, Oslo.

⁸ Parliament transcript, 30th of March 2001, Jens Stoltenberg.

⁹ Oslo Arbeiderparti 2022, LO 2001.

¹⁰ Dagbladet 5th of May 2002.

¹¹ Dagbladet 16th of June 2002.

issue, prompting political action and contributing to new political coalitions. Alongside the Labor Party's new orientation, these events created a window of opportunity, and an effective coupling process involving all three streams positioned the issue on the government's decision agenda. However, even if the parliamentary majority agreed, there could be no guarantees of a definitive political decision to change the investment strategy.

Phase 2: decision-making (2002–2004)

Despite the widespread political support for ethical guidelines, the official position of the minority government continued to be to reject the notion. The then Minister of Finance Per Kristian Foss was one of the sceptics, arguing that "Ethical guidelines will leave it open to chance. Unfortunately, in the global world it is impossible not to be in contact with things that are gloomy and sad."¹² In his first period in office, Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik had once before been convinced to drop the issue. This time he did not. A few days before the vote, the parliamentarians from the parties in government were instructed to vote in favour of the nomination of an expert commission (#2, #7).

Regardless of the consensus in Parliament, several NGOs expressed concerns that the final proposal could be curtailed (#21). The existing Petroleum Fund Advisory Board on International Law had stated that "states are only responsible for fulfilling human rights where they themselves have jurisdiction",¹³ constraining the scope of their recommendations. This concern gained further traction when the new commission was formalised, with none of the NGOs being represented.¹⁴ The mandate involved drawing up specific guidelines grounded in international practices while examining the implications of including ethical considerations in the investment strategy. The commission was led by professor of law Hans Peter Graver:

The commission had a relatively broad representation, and the presence of Norges Bank's deputy CEO was particularly important. The commission's final conclusions, which included the deputy CEO's signature, conferred legitimacy to the report and made it difficult to contend that the proposals were unfeasible. (Graver #17)

In terms of the expanded MSF model, the issue of ethical regulations progressed to the decision agenda, leading to the engagement of new participants. Notably, the commission included individuals who had previously opposed the establishment of new guidelines, and its secretariat was staffed by Ministry of Finance bureaucrats. Consequently, their role extended beyond assessing implications and devising solutions to align with political directives; they also had to address concerns related to the fund's political autonomy (#16; #18).

A key issue was the concept of risk and how ethical guidelines could potentially reduce the diversity of the fund's investment and thus increase financial risk. To address this concern, the commission included several academic appendices featuring complicated economic models that demonstrated the minimal adverse impact of excluding a small fraction of companies from a portfolio.¹⁵ According to Graver, this had an important effect on the sceptics:

¹² Dagbladet 5th of May 2002.

¹³ Revised National Budget for 2002 (St.meld. nr. 2 (2001–2002)). Ministry of Finance, Oslo.

¹⁴ NTB 18th of October 2002.

¹⁵ Norwegian Official Report (NOU 2003:22) Management for the future—Proposed ethical guidelines for the Government Petroleum Fund, Oslo.

The numbers helped countering critics, illustrating that minor changes in the portfolio had little effect on return. The economic analysis contributed to making ethical screening seem less dramatic. (Graver #17)

Furthermore, the concept of risk was redefined from a purely quantifiable and mathematical definition, to include risk factors such as company misconduct under common ethical standards. This revised notion of risk was harmonised with the changes in the mandate, safeguarding continued political autonomy. The strategy continued to be to maximize financial returns and secure savings for future generations while mitigating various risk factors, hereunder ethical considerations. Hence, the two objectives of maximising returns and addressing ethical concerns were no longer in conflict. “The expert commission led by Graver helped us define the boundaries,” explains one of the then top bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance (#18).

Corporate governance was a priority in finance, so we designed a policy aligning with this issue to better integrate the new policy with a familiar approach. Furthermore, to address the accountability concerns, we suggested a new institution, the Council on Ethics. This institution would assess the companies in the portfolio independently of Norges Bank. (Graver #17)

By consolidating the new policy within the existing policy regime, the changes never challenged the fundamental strategy of the oil fund. On the contrary, the new strategy of responsible investment and ethical guidelines was presented as a revision of the existing strategy. The commission’s recommendations were submitted to the Minister of Finance in June 2003.

However, there are numerous examples of expert reports that never set the agenda nor change policy, a reality very much known to Prime Minister Bondevik:

There must be a political will to follow up if expert report is to become something more than an investigation that is put in a drawer. And it was. I, as Prime Minister, was active and said that we must get this done. It is important for the government, and it is important for the Christian Democrats. Furthermore, there was a strong political will within the government, and political pressure from several parties in the Parliament. (Bondevik #2)

The commission’s recommendations were adopted by a unanimous parliament in June 2004, with an extended statement on the fund’s mandate: “The fund’s mandate is to ensure future generations a fair share of the country’s oil wealth. This financial wealth must be managed so that it provides a good return in the long term, which is dependent on sustainable development in an economic, ecological, and societal sense.”¹⁶ Øystein Djupedal, one of the key policy entrepreneurs in the process, remembers this as one of his proudest moments—in the words of Kingdon: it was “an idea whose time had come”.

It shows that an idea can move mountains. They said it was impossible, all of the political majority and the establishment, but we did it anyhow. (Djupedal #7)

¹⁶ Revised National Budget for 2004 (St.meld. nr. 2 (2003–2004)). Ministry of Finance, Oslo.

According to the two-phase model of Herweg et al. (2015), the political stream is of prime importance in the decision-making process. In this case, the political stream and activity by Prime Minister and political entrepreneur Bondevik was indeed decisive, but the dynamics in both problem and policy streams were essential to the coupling process. The decision-making process included new participants who emphasized the importance of implementing a new policy without undermining returns or discarding the fundamental financial strategy. The problem for the new participants was to design a policy that would correspond with the prevailing policy regime. By strategically Conceptualizing the new policy in line with the original investment strategy of minimising risk and administrative costs, providing economic analysis supporting the recommendation, the task of the political entrepreneur, Prime Minister Bondevik, was made easier: “The report was so technically strong that even the Ministry of Finance was convinced.” (#2).

This case illustrates the added value of introducing a secondary coupling process. Despite the unanimous policy commitment by the Parliament in 2002, there was no fully worked-out proposal. Additionally, the issue had previously been relegated to an Advisory Board with a restricted mandate, resulting in minimal changes. The analysis of the transition from the decision agenda to effective policy change illustrates that successful decision coupling resulted from three key factors: (1) new participants Recognizing the issues related to ethics, risk and returns (2) concrete policy proposals incorporating the redefined problem, and finally, (3) the actions of the political entrepreneur within the politics stream.

Discussion and conclusions

This article contributes to the ongoing theoretical development of the MSF for decision-making by Conceptualizing agenda-setting and decision-making as distinct but interrelated phases within the policy formation process. While the original MSF provides a useful theoretical lens to analyze the intricate undertaking of agenda-setting, the examination of the Norwegian oil fund strategy exemplifies the significance of including the decision-making phase in the analysis of how ideas evolve into official policy decisions. Recent research has suggested several theoretical refinements to the MSF approach to encompass a broader scope of the policymaking process (Herweg, 2016; Howlett et al., 2015; Koebele, 2021; Zahariadis, 1995; Zohlnhöfer, 2016). By critically applying the two-phase model of Herweg et al. (2015), this study confirms the relevance of adapting the MSF to decision-making and further develops the theoretical framework.

The present study contributes to the literature in two ways. Empirically, it provides insights into the puzzle of how an idea that was initially discarded as unrealistic transformed into a policy decision within a relatively short timeframe. By exploring the seven-year process from when the idea was first suggested to its adoption in Parliament, this study illustrates how the MSF approach serves as a valuable theoretical lens for explaining policy changes in cases characterized by controversy and uncertainty. The developments in the political stream alone cannot adequately explain how the issue came to head the agenda. Moreover, there was no consensus within the problem stream on the gravity or amenability of potential unethical practices by companies in the Norwegian portfolio. Within the policy stream, various interrelated suggestions existed, but there was no coherent policy proposal. Changes were brought about by a combination of ongoing efforts by policy entrepreneurs and contemporaneous events taking place. During the spring of 2002, a window

of opportunity presented itself, and policy entrepreneurs seized this window to construct political coalitions and propel the matter onto the government's decision agenda.

However, the lack of a consensus on a detailed proposal and the uncertainty about the policy commitment's potential for driving political change underscore the significance of the decision-making process in policy research. Previous literature has focused on the politics stream in decision-making and the bargaining instruments political entrepreneurs use to get a policy adopted (Herweg et al., 2015; Zohlh ofer et al., 2016); less attention is given to the streams of policy and problem. This study demonstrates the analytical importance of the problem stream for the identification of key drivers to galvanise policy commitments into policy change. Furthermore, when the arena shifted from parliament to the government and the Ministry of Finance, new participants assumed a critical role in designing the new policy (Howlett et al., 2015; S tren, 2016). A key finding is their strategic reframing of the problem and changing the way the policy issue was perceived. By framing the problem to focus on the long-term adverse impact of investing in unethical companies, a shared understanding that this problem required a policy solution evolved (Knagg ard, 2016; Lep anen & Liefferink, 2022; Rein & Sch on, 1993; Zahariadis, 2003). Hence, the active framing of a problem and the policy solution that would follow implicitly, can be key drivers that help determine the transformation of a policy commitment into policy change.

In theoretical terms, this study enhances the suggested two-phase model of Herweg et al. (2015) by including a wider array of scenarios. By redefining the output of the agenda-setting process as a policy commitment, rather than a fully worked-out proposal ready for negotiations in the political stream, the framework is more applicable to situations where the policy solution is less developed. Consequently, the events in the problem stream and policy stream become more pertinent for comprehending the decision-making phase, including the role of agency in these streams. The presented model employs the foundational theoretical structure of the original MSF in both agenda-setting and decision-making processes, creating an analytical framework that accommodates the significance of all three streams in the subsequent phase. In some contexts, the political stream may be the primary determinant; in others, the other two streams carry equal analytical importance in elucidating the factors and mechanisms influencing whether an issue on the government's agenda translates into tangible change or not.

A potential avenue for future research would be to elaborate further on the role of agency in the decision phase. While previous literature focuses on the role of the political entrepreneur in the politics stream, an analysis of all three streams is likely to involve new participants and their understanding of the problem and necessary actions (Howlett et al., 2015; Knagg ard, 2016; S tren, 2016). However, the mechanisms that empower these agents have not been fully elaborated. Moreover, the determination of whether or when these participants qualify as entrepreneurial or not has not received adequate consideration in the current body of literature. While the concept of the policy entrepreneur encompasses a range of formal and informal roles within the political system, the constrained definition of the political entrepreneur as an individual holding a formal political leadership position may narrow the scope of our understanding of these agents. One potential approach is to focus on the role these individuals play beyond their official designation and establish an analytical distinction between entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurial process (Ackrill & Kay, 2011; Ackrill et al., 2013; Hogan & Feeney, 2012; Knagg ard, 2016; McCaffrey & Salerno, 2011; Mintrom, 2019).

The main limitation of the study stems from its methodology (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002, 2006; Hollstein, 2021). Like most applications of MSF, it is a study of a single case, and the weaknesses regarding generalisability of such studies are well-known. Another

limitation lies in the nature of the longitudinal qualitative study, which relies on elite interviews, potentially rendering the testimonies vulnerable to considerable bias. To counteract this weakness, all interviews have been triangulated with copious written sources such as transcripts, news articles and official reports. As Aberbach and Rockman (2006, 993) eloquently put it: if you want to know how political agents think and perceive their roles, there is little choice but to continue going to the source.

Politically speaking, understanding the mechanisms and timing behind the transformation of policy commitments into concrete political change is highly relevant. Given the complexity and uncertainty of contemporary global challenges, having policy commitments alone is insufficient; the true challenge lies in translating these commitments into effective decisions. Broadening the theoretical basis of MSF, especially in terms of decision-making, provides valuable insights into these processes, potentially guiding policy-makers and entrepreneurs in the development of innovative policies amidst rising global ambiguity and turbulence.

Acknowledgements The author would like to thank Bent Sofus Tranøy and Benjamin Callegari for providing valuable comments on previous versions of this paper. I also thank Natalie Mardal and Alf Jørgen Schnell for transcript assistance. Additionally, the author is appreciative to Kristiania University College and their support to the research group Politics, Innovation, and Leadership. Finally, a special gratitude to all respondents who provided essential information for the empirical section of this paper.

Funding Open access funding provided by Kristiania University College.

Data availability The interview transcripts are stored in a safe place to protect the respondents. All named respondents have approved their quotes. Nine respondents are anonymised.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The author declares that there are no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Aberbach, J. D., & Rockman, B. A. (2002). Conducting and coding elite interviews. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 35(4), 673–76.
- Aberbach, J. D., & Rockman, B. A. (2006). The past and future of political-administrative relations: Research from bureaucrats and politicians to in the web of politics—And beyond. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 29(12), 977–995.
- Ackrill, R., & Kay, A. (2011). Multiple streams in EU policy-making: The case of the 2005 sugar reform. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 18(1), 72–89.
- Ackrill, R., Kay, A., & Zahariadis, N. (2013). Ambiguity, multiple streams, and EU policy. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 20(6), 871–887.
- Alvesson, M. (2003). Beyond neopositivists, romantics, and localists: A reflexive approach to interviews in organizational research. *The Academy of Management Review*, 28(1), 13.

- Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2007). Constructing mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4), 1265–1281.
- Bache, I. (2013). Measuring quality of life for public policy: An idea whose time has come? Agenda-setting dynamics in the European Union. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 20(1), 21–38.
- Bay, I. (2002). Verdiløse penger? Oljefondet—Veien mot etiske retningslinjer. *Fremtiden i våre hender/Forskingsinstitutt FIFI 1/2002*.
- Boswell, C., & Rodrigues, E. (2016). Policies, politics and organizational problems: Multiple streams and the implementation of targets in UK Government. *Policy & Politics*, 44(4), 507–524.
- Brouwer, S., & Biermann, F. (2011). Toward adaptive management: Examining the strategies of policy entrepreneurs in dutch water management. *Ecology and Society*, 16(4), art5.
- Cairney, P. (2009). The role of ideas in policy transfer: The case of UK smoking bans since devolution. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 16(3), 471–488.
- Cairney, P., & Jones, M. D. (2016). Kingdon's multiple streams approach: What Is the empirical impact of this universal theory? *Policy Studies Journal*, 44(1), 37–58.
- Cohen, M. D., March, J. G., & Olsen, J. P. (1972). A garbage can model of organizational choice. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17(1), 1.
- George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2005). *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.
- Gioia, A. (2021). A systematic methodology for doing qualitative research. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 57(1), 20–29.
- Gioia, C., & Hamilton. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(1), 15–31.
- Gunn, A. (2017). 16. Policy entrepreneurs and policy formulation. In *Handbook of policy formulation*, 265.
- Hanisch, T. J., & Nerheim, G., eds. (1992). *Norsk Olje Historie. 1: Fra Vantro Til Overmot? / Tore Joergen Hanisch Og Gunnar Nerheim*. Norsk Petroleumsforening [u.a.].
- Herweg, N. (2016). Explaining European agenda-setting using the multiple streams framework: The case of European natural gas regulation. *Policy Sciences*, 49(1), 13–33.
- Herweg, N., Huß, C., & Zohlnhöfer, R. (2015). Straightening the three streams: Theorizing extensions of the multiple streams framework. *European Journal of Political Research*, 54(3), 435–449.
- Herweg, N., Zahariadis, N., & Zohlnhöfer, R. (2017). The multiple streams framework: Foundations, refinements, and empirical applications. In, 17–54.
- Hogan, J., & Feeney, S. (2012). Crisis and policy change: The role of the political entrepreneur. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 3(2), 1–24.
- Hollstein, B. (2021). Promises and pitfalls of qualitative longitudinal research. *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*, 12(1), 7–17.
- Howlett, M., McConnell, A., & Perl, A. (2015). Streams and stages: Reconciling kingdon and policy process theory. *European Journal of Political Research*, 54(3), 419–434.
- Jones, M. D., et al. (2016). A river runs through it: A multiple streams meta-review. *Policy Studies Journal*, 44(1), 13–36.
- Kingdon, J. W. (1984). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. 2. ed., [Nachdr.]. Longman.
- Kingdon, J. W. (2011). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies: Includes a New epilog: Health Care Reform in the Clinton and Obama Administrations*. Updated 2. ed. Longman
- Kingdon, J. W. (2014). *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies*. 2 ed., Pearson new international ed., update ed. with an epilog on health care. Pearson.
- Knaggård, Å. (2016). Framing the problem: Knowledge brokers in the multiple streams framework. In R. Zohlnhöfer & F. Och Rüb (Eds.), *Decision-making under ambiguity and time constraints: Assessing the multiple streams framework*. ECPR Press.
- Koebele, E. A. (2021). When multiple streams make a river: Analyzing collaborative policymaking institutions using the multiple streams framework. *Policy Sciences*, 54(3), 609–628.
- Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *The Academy of Management Review*, 24(4), 691–710.
- Langley, A., & Meziani, N. (2020). Making interviews meaningful. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 56(3), 370–391.
- Leppänen, T., & Liefferink, D. (2022). Agenda-setting, policy formulation, and the EU institutional context: The case of the just transition fund. *European Policy Analysis*, 8(1), 51–67.
- Lie, E., Kobberrød, J. T., Thomassen, E., & Rongved, G. F. (2016). *Norges Bank 1816–2016*. Fagbokforlaget.
- Lie, E., & Venneslan, C. (2010). *Over evne: Finansdepartementet 1965–1992*. Pax.

- McCaffrey, M., & Salerno, J. T. (2011). A theory of political entrepreneurship. *Modern Economy*, 02(04), 552–560.
- Mintrom, M. (2019). So you want to be a policy entrepreneur? *Policy Design and Practice*, 2(4), 307–323.
- Mucciaroni, G. (1992). The garbage can model & the study of policy making: A critique. *Polity*, 24(3), 459–482.
- Normann, H. E. (2015). The role of politics in sustainable transitions: The rise and decline of offshore wind in Norway. *Environmental Innovation and Societal Transitions*, 15, 180–193.
- Rein, M., & Schön, D. (1993). The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning. In F. Fischer, & J. Forester (Eds.), (pp. 145–166). Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822381815-007>. February 21, 2023.
- Roberts, N. C., & King, P. J. (1991). Policy entrepreneurs: Their activity structure and function in the policy process. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 1(2), 147–175.
- Sætren, H. (2016). Lost in translation: Re-Conceptualizing the multiple-streams framework back to its source of inspiration. *Decision-making under ambiguity and time constraints: Assessing the multiple-streams framework* (pp. 21–33).
- Teisman, G. R. (2000). Models for research into decision-making processes: On phases, streams and decision-making rounds. *Public Administration*, 78(4), 937–956.
- Tørres, L. (2002). Money, money, money—et oljefond å være stolt av. Fafo-rapport, mai, *Labour International Think Tank*.
- Wang, C., Geng, L., & Rodríguez-Casallas, J. D. (2021). How and when higher climate change risk perception promotes less climate change inaction. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 321, 128952.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Zahariadis, N. (1995). *Markets, states, and public policy: Privatization in Britain and France*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. <http://www.press.umich.edu/13929>. March 18, 2023.
- Zahariadis, N. (2003). *Ambiguity and choice in public policy: Political decision making in modern democracies*. Georgetown University Press.
- Zohlnhöfer, R. (2016). Putting together the pieces of the puzzle: Explaining German labor market reforms with a modified multiple-streams approach. *Policy Studies Journal*, 44(1), 83–107.
- Zohlnhöfer, R., Herweg, N., & Huß, C. (2016). Bringing formal political institutions into the multiple streams framework: An analytical proposal for comparative policy analysis. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 18(3), 243–256.
- Zohlnhöfer, R., & Rüb, F. W. (Eds.). (2016). *Decision-making under ambiguity and time constraints: Assessing the multiple-streams framework*. ECPR Press.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.