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Securitising Climate Change, Framing Climate Change:
Discursive Struggles and the Environment

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1. Introduction

'As climate change unfolds, one of its effects is a heightened risk of violent conflict' (Smith and Vivekananda 2007: 1). This statement, taken from the executive summary of a report for International Alert, a peacebuilding NGO, and funded by the European Union, neatly summarises the predominant framing of the environment/security nexus as it has evolved during the past decade. While in 1998, Buzan et al. claimed that securitisation in the environmental sector had not been successful, at least not in a pervasive sense, few analysts would doubt today that climate change has indeed been securitised, and that this securitisation has largely taken place through the linkage of climate change and conflict in the policy world. This linkage has become the basis, for instance, of numerous calls for projects investigating the effects of climate change on conflict, as much as it has provided a crucial backdrop for security policy. In that sense, it has become part of a widely shared and rarely disputed element of understanding climate change, part of the climate change *doxa* (Ashley 1998).

In this paper, we want to problematise this *doxa*. Our aim is not to dispute that under certain conditions, the effects of climate change may well lead to or intensify conflicts either through heightening tensions in water-scarce countries or in countries with a shortage of arable land, or through provoking conflict through mass migration, which are the two main threats associated with climate change in this line of thinking. Instead, we will firstly argue that this linkage of climate change and conflict is but one possible representation of the security implications of climate change among others. In particular, we will set this representation against the securitisation of climate change as an existential threat to humankind as such (as opposed to specific groups) or to the global nature as a whole. This raises at least two further questions: On the one hand, what are the ethical and political consequences of a particular

representation of climate change, linking it to conflict? Who are the actors, and which are the political instruments enabled and legitimised by this representation? On the other hand, the question arises how this representation has turned into a *doxa*, discounting alternatives. Who are the actors pushing for such a representation, and what are the conditions under which it has become so pervasive? As far as this latter question regarding the conditions of success is concerned, we cannot provide a complete answer at this stage, yet we will at least outline a number of hypotheses, which we deem to be worthy of further investigation.

Beyond the immediate relevance for climate change policies, the climate change/conflict nexus also raises important issues for securitisation theory. The literature has already picked up on the empirical limitations underlying the conceptualisation of securitisation in the Copenhagen School and its inability to recognise the securitisation of the environment (Floyd 2008, 2010; Trombetta 2008, 2011). It has also raised the ethical question of whether securitisation is indeed always bad because it limits the political debate, or whether, specifically in relation to the environment, it cannot also have the function of placing an important issue on the agenda that would otherwise either go unnoticed or not be taken seriously (Floyd 2007, 2010; beyond the environment also Elbe 2006; Roe 2018, 2012). These issues are, in our view, tied to the question of whether securitisation is an absolute category or whether there can be degrees or indeed different framings of securitisation. We will argue that there indeed are such different framings, and that the consequences of securitisation, in particular whether it will lead to politicisation or constrain the political debate, will depend on the specific ways in which securitisation is framed in relation to a particular issue, as well as the context in which this framing takes place.

To develop our argument, we will first substantiate our claim that the climate change/conflict nexus has indeed become a *doxa* of climate change policy. We will then outline how we think that the concept of framing can be linked to securitisation, and discuss which consequences this has for securitisation theory. Having done so, we will summarise the three competing securitising frames of climate change. In our last two substantial sections, we will then debate the ethical and political consequences of the different frames, before returning to the issue of the driving actors and conditions of success for securitising climate change and finally pointing to further research that is, in our view, necessary in that context in the conclusion.

2. The Climate Change/Conflict *Doxa*

For Pierre Bourdieu (1977), *doxa* is the field of generally accepted knowledge in a society. It is knowledge that is not or no longer questioned, and it is therefore beyond the realm of politics. Thus, as Ashley (1989: 262) points out, issues in the field of *doxa* are not 'politicized by the explicit play of competing interpretations'. Instead, they provide a foil against which political measures can be developed and debated. In Ashley's words, they 'impose international purpose' in 'enframing' the world in particular ways that are no longer to be questioned (Ashley 1989).

We suggest that at least in the policy world, the linkage between climate change and its security implications has taken on such a pervasive discursive position that it can be seen as generally accepted knowledge. As a consequence, the question asked is mostly no longer whether climate change – directly or indirectly - leads to conflict, but how to best mitigate and combat such conflicts. In this section, we give a few examples to illustrate this *doxa*, which we will then try to problematise in the remainder of this paper by recovering different frames for the securitisation of climate change.

To start, the climate change/conflict nexus is present in the United Nations discourse. UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon for instance stressed in 2007 that global warming is likely to 'become a major driver for war and conflict' (UN News Centre 2007). On 17 April 2007 the UN Security Council held its first ever session on climate change. The United Kingdom had initiated the debate to discuss the security implications of global warming, suggesting in a background paper that climate change has the potential to threaten international peace and security by exacerbating border disputes, resource shortages, migration and humanitarian crisis (UN Security Council 2007a). During the debate, Margaret Beckett, the then British Foreign Secretary, suggested that global warming influences the states' collective security (UN Security Council 2007b). We should note that this characterisation of climate change at the international level has not remained entirely unchallenged. Not global warming itself, but the 'economic model which drives growth, and the profligate consumption in rich nations that goes with it' is identified as the true threat by the United National Development Program in the 2007/2008 report *Fighting Climate Change* (UNDP 2007/2008: 15). Yet such a representation does not provide us with a completely different representation of climate change and conflict, but merely adds a causal layer to the argument.

In the US, a study by an influential group of retired US generals entitled *National Security and the Threat of Climate Change* (CNA 2007) inter alia referred to the possibility that extremists could exploit unstable conditions created by climate change. Two US Governments reports point into the same direction, suggesting 'while climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world' (US Government 2010a, cp. also US Government 2010b). The European Commission describes climate change more cautiously as a threat multiplier (European Commission 2008).

The *doxa* also holds for NGOs. A study by International Alert published in 2007 (Smith and Vivekananda 2007) compiles a list of 46 countries that face a high risk of violent conflict as a consequence of climate change. However, the study does not provide convincing evidence for the figures cited – a weakness it shares with a study by the Global Humanitarian Forum (2009) claiming that climate change is already killing 300,000 people annually. Moreover, advisory bodies installed by governments also shaped the debate on climate change. The study *An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security* (Schwartz and Randall 2003) prepared for the US Department of Defence assesses the implications of a climate-induced collapse of the Gulf Stream. The Stern Review (2006), which

focuses on the economic consequences on climate change but also considers its security implications in that context, and the report on *Climate Change as a Security Risk* by the German Advisory Council on Global Change (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat Globale Umweltfragen, WBGU 2007) have been other highly influential reports in that context.

These reports and policy papers indicate a widespread consensus that climate change is linked to conflict. The securitisation of climate change thus not only takes place in the sense of legitimising extraordinary measures, but more specifically it also invokes a link between environmental and military security. In the following section, we will first discuss why the Copenhagen School did not see this securitisation, and then outline the framework of securitisation frames.

3. Framing Securitisation

In contrast to these studies stressing the security implication of climate change in one way or another, Buzan et al. (1998: 73, 91/2) do not think that the environment has been successfully securitised, at least not on a global level, because the attempts to evoke the logic of security have not exceeded the realm of ordinary politics. Environmental policies are included in ordinary politics and every day activities by political parties and departments as well as companies, which is said to reflect politicisation rather than securitisation (Buzan et al. 1998: 73). Yet this view is contested. Trombetta (2011), for instance, argues that securitising moves in the environmental sector were successful insofar as they resulted in policies that would have otherwise not been realised (2008: 598). In a similar vein, Rita Floyd's (2007, 2010) case studies show that not all securitising moves have invoked a confrontational logic. Attempts to securitise the environment have come in the form of several *competing* securitisation moves. In this, we follow Maarten Hajer's seminal work on environmental discourse, in which he observes that different actors define environmental problems very differently, and that this has tremendous policy implications (Hajer 1995), as well as Karen Litfin's work on the Ozone regime, which also shows competing conceptualisations of the problem at hand (Litfin 1994).

Buzan et al. were unable to capture these developments because of a narrow and rather traditionalist view of what counts as extraordinary practices legitimised by securitisation. Securitisation is seen as a speech act that has a particular rhetoric structure and follows specific rules. For the Copenhagen School, the label security is connected to a specific mind-set and problematic practices associated with war and emergency (Wæver 1995: 54) that are not open to negotiation or political debate. Hence, security implies taking politics beyond the normal democratic realm, thereby increasing the risk for militarisation and hostility (Eriksson 2001: 13). As a result, the Copenhagen School imposes a problematic negative connotation and fixity on the logic of security as developed from the realist tradition (Williams 2003: 514-515). The notion of security as extremity has been criticised as both conceptually inadequate (Williams 2011, Trombetta 2008, Elbe 2005) and empirically problematic to capture certain instances of securitisation (Detraz and Betsill 2009, Trombetta 2008, 2011, Brzoska 2009).

Securitisation as framing

While the Copenhagen School proposes this formal speech act model of securitisation, we argue that it should be understood as framing. Conceptualising securitisation as framing allows for a variation of its singular linguistic structure. It better captures the diversity of different securitisation moves, for instance in the environmental sector, that the Copenhagen School cannot account for and hence addresses the theoretically problematic notion of a fixed meaning of security as extremity (Williams 2011, Stritzel 2011 and 2007, Balzacq 2011 and 2005, Huysmans 2006, Pram Gad and Petersen 2011).

We will first shortly introduce the concept of framing and then illustrate how framing constitutes a response to the shortcomings of the conception of securitisation as advanced by the Copenhagen School. In doing so, we will focus on two particular aspects that can be addressed by interpreting securitisation as framing, namely the fixed meaning of security as extremity and the temporal fixity that neglects changes of the notion of security over time through processes of securitisation.

Different ways of framing a security image

Framing research originates from the sociological work of Goffman (1974) and has been applied in communication and media studies (Entman 1993) as well as in social movement theory (Della Porta and Diani 2006). Goffman (1974: 21) defines frames as schemes of interpretation that enable human beings 'to locate, perceive, identify and label' occurrences. Thus, frames serve to both render certain events meaningful and simplify or condense interpretations of reality. This process involves selection and the attribution of salience. Thus, frames highlight certain interpretations and direct attention away from others (Entman 1993).

Our claim that there exist different ways of framing a security threat is supported on theoretical grounds (Stritzel 2007, 2011 and Guzzini 2011) and by evidence from different cases (cp. Neal [2009] on EU border policies, Trombetta [2008, 2011] on environmental policies, Salter [2008] on the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority). We suggest that a framing perspective on securitisation can best capture these different securitising moves. In this context, the differentiation between the narrower concept of frames and the wider idea of images that was made in the framing literature is helpful. A single image can be framed in different ways as shown by Carragee and Roefs (2004: 218) in their analysis of anti-nuclear frames, which all concur in their rejection of nuclear energy while providing different rationales for this position. In other words, competing frames offering divergent interpretations of the problem at hand can shape an issue. We argue that the discursive construction of a security threat is a specific image that can be framed in different ways. In that sense, the treatment of security in the Copenhagen School has been too abstract and has negated the different ways in which, for instance, the environment is framed in a security image.

A framing perspective on securitisation does not only highlight the possibility of different ways of framing a security threat, but also provides a starting point to analyse how these frames can be differentiated. They differ, for instance, in the causal mechanisms they provide

for the relationship between environment and security, in the referent objects they invoke, and in the intensity of the "existential threat" (on the idea of degrees of securitisation, cp. Diez et al. 2006, 2008). They also take on diagnostic (problem identification), prognostic (articulation of proposed solution) and motivational tasks ("call to the arms", providing a rationale for engaging in action, including the construction of a motive with adequate vocabulary), which are interconnected to the extent that, for instance, diagnostic frames enable certain prognoses and lead to particular policy recommendations (Benford and Snow 2000: 615, Hajer [1995: 6] on acid rain).

While securitising moves as described by the Copenhagen School also comprise a diagnostic dimension (existential threat to a referent object) and a related prognosis what to do (emergency measures), the framing approach highlights that securitising moves differ in how this evidence is to be interpreted, i.e. the (causal) link they make between threat, threatened object and the proposed response. Seen in this way, frames do more precisely evaluate the issue at hand (Entman 1993: 52) and provide a blueprint of how the evidence is to be interpreted (Rein and Schön 1991: 262, Hajer 1995: 56). Accordingly, the diagnostic dimension requires the identification of whom or what to blame (Benford and Snow 2000: 616). In other words, changes in the precise identification and description of a problem affect how the audience interprets the situation, including attributions of responsibility and (causal) treatment (Scheufele 2000). Conceptualising securitisation that way, one can preserve the notion of an existential threat and nevertheless explain how variations of the fixed structure of security as extremity lead to different policy recommendations that do not all evoke a state of emergency.

This emphasis on the precise diagnosis of the problem including (causal) links made between the problem and its outcome goes beyond the finding of the Copenhagen School that the presentation of something as an existential threat is necessarily followed by a call for extraordinary measures (Buzan et al. 1998: 20). Thus, *how* an issue is presented as an existential threat to a referent object or *why* it is considered as a problem in the first place rather than the mere fact that something poses an existential threat, is crucial (see table below). Hence, the link between problem diagnosis (existential threat) and policy response (extraordinary measures) that seems incontestable in the Copenhagen School's framework, where an existential threat is automatically followed by emergency measures, can be literally 'feazed' (cp. Balzacq 2011).

Framing (Entman 1993, Beford and Snow 2000)	Securitisation (Buzan et al. 1998)	Securitisation as Framing
Problem definition (diagnostic dimension according to Benford and Snow 2000)	Existential threat to the referent object	Existential threat to the referent object
(Causal) explanation, evaluation and/or interpretation of the problem (also diagnostic dimension)	*Not addressed*	(Causal) connection between existential threat and referent object
Proposed solution (prognostic and motivational dimension)	Extraordinary, Emergency measures	Solution according to evaluation of problem (possibly, but not necessarily extraordinary measures)

Frame transformation and disputes

Secondly, a framing approach to securitisation also highlights how different ways of constructing a security threat can emerge, challenge each other and change over time. While framing research has overcome its initial static bias with the study of frame transformation and frame disputes, securitisation theory with its fixed understanding of security fails to capture how different logics of security can be brought into being, for instance through the securitisation of non-traditional security issues (Trombetta 2011).

The understanding of framing as a dynamic process is inherent in its very definition. Benford and Snow (2000: 614, emphasis added) describe framing as 'an active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and *contention* at the level of reality construction'. Framing is contentious in the sense that it involves the construction of new frames that do not only differ from existing ones but also call them into question. Benford and Snow (2000) describe how frames develop through three overlapping processes, which they call discursive, strategic and contested. Two subcategories are of particular interest to highlight how securitisation can be re-defined as a dynamic process. Frame transformation as one strategic process related to frame development refers to the changing of old understandings and meanings or the generation of new ones in order to make the argumentation more familiar to the target group. Hence, securitising moves may take different forms in order to conform to particular institutional settings (cp. Salter 2011, Léonard and Kaunert 2011) or may be re-negotiated because actors find that they cannot escape the basic terminology, for instance that of security, but can re-define some of its meaning (Reese 2007: 153).

Even more importantly, the study of frame disputes (cp. Benford 1993) highlights how different securitisations of a threat can interact. Frame disputes refer to situations where negotiation and conflict processes emerge within a specific paradigm. These findings can be applied to the study of securitisation processes, where a certain threat, for instance environmental degradation, can be framed differently in a security image. More precisely, the finding that environmental change poses a threat – the environmental change security image – can be described so differently that dispute erupts over the question which particular version of reality best captures the phenomenon.

Conceptualising securitisation as framing raises the crucial questions whether a departure from the fixed grammar of security leads to an amorphous and too broad definition of security that the Copenhagen School initially tried to avoid (Buzan et al. 1998: 1–4) and whether resulting conceptualisations of security can still be subsumed under the umbrella of securitisation theory (cp. Stritzel 2007, Williams 2011, Huysmans 1998, Salter 2011, Sjostedt 2011 for similar discussions). However, the Copenhagen School's response, i.e. the formalism described above, is only one potential answer to this methodological challenge of analysing securitisation moves following different logics of security without risking is analytical value and distinctiveness (Williams 2011). We suggest that reconfiguring securitising moves as an instance of framing allows identifying different kinds of securitising climate change, in which frames stick to the basic idea of securitisation, but construct the threat differently, refer to different referent objects and propose different kinds of responses. In doing so, a framing approach to securitising preserves the analytical distinctiveness of security – the construction of an existential threat – but offers an analytical tool to assess how this threat is constructed, in reference to which objects and how this influences the proposed responses. The notion of different frames securitising an issue shows when security practices occur that work according to the logic proposed by the Copenhagen School, but also captures security logics that do not entirely conform to this fixed grammar of security.

4. Three Frames of Securitising Climate Change

Reconfiguring securitising moves as an instance of framing allows us to identify different kinds of securitising climate change, in which frames stick to the basic "grammar" of securitisation, but construct the threat differently, refer to different referent objects and propose different kinds of extraordinary measures.

The categorisation of different frames securitising climate change builds upon and combines several approaches discussed in the literature. Page (2010: 3) distinguishes between a shallow demilitarised view of security (climate change as threat to state security) and a deeply demilitarised notion referring to the concept of human environmental security. Detraz and Betsill (2009) focus on two distinct discourses linking climate change and security in the 2007 Security Council debate, environmental conflict and environmental security. Trombetta (2011) refers to two tendencies in the environmental security debate, a national security discourse and a framing of environmental degradation as a threat to global order and stability.

Environmental conflict

The environmental conflict frame can be traced back to the work of Richard Ullmann (1983) and the scarcity storyline first developed by Thomas Homer-Dixon (1991, 1994). Central to this argumentation is a causal explanation showing how environmental scarcity has significant influence on the outbreak and intensity of violent conflicts between (and within) states. In addition to studies that attempt to demonstrate a direct link between environmental

change and violent conflict and the related debates about resource wars (Ross 2004), a number of scholars identified intervening factors that increase the possibility of environmentally induced conflict, including migration and population growth (Barnett 2001). The environmental conflict theme is dominated by a narrow conception of the relationship between security and the environment. The major emphasis lies on the likelihood that particular communities, above all states, engage in violent conflict as a result of environmental degradation (Detraz and Betsill 2009: 305). Non-military threats are thus included in the discussion of security only to the extent that they undermine the security of states, as exemplified by Homer-Dixon's analysis of how internal conflicts over resources ultimately put the state at risk (cp. also Kaplan 1994 for a similar argumentation).

This understanding of the environmental change conflict nexus is linked to specific policy recommendations, foremost characterised by the call to strengthen traditional national security instruments like the military (Brzoska 2009: 144). Accordingly, such suggestions see states as the most relevant site of solution (Cudworth and Hobden 2010: 4). Moreover, policy recommendations within the environmental conflict paradigm underline the importance of adaptation if states want to address the risk of environmentally induced conflict effectively. The logic behind this is the following: those countries that can best adapt to the adverse effects of climate change will most likely avoid large-scale conflict that destabilises their countries. The focus on adaptation does not only narrow the range of potential policy responses (Detraz and Betsill 2009: 306), but also adheres to a limited notion of adaptation, privileging those parts of the population that will most likely experience conflict over resources (cp. Ross 2003). Nordås and Gleditsch (2007: 635) observe in relation to the policy responses addressing the security implications of climate change that they 'lead to greater emphasis on a national security response to whatever degree of climate change is seen as unavoidable. This would not be helpful to the primary victims of climate change.'

 Environmental security

The notion of environmental security was developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the Brandt and Brundtland reports. The environmental security frame stresses the adverse affects of environmental degradation for all human beings and human welfare instead of limiting the analysis to intra- or inter-state wars (Detraz and Betsill 2009: 306, Smith 2010: 233). With its focus on human vulnerability (cp. Vogel and O'Brien 2004, Adger 2006, Eakin and Luers 2006) and the implications of environmental change for individual human beings, the discourse moves away from the state-centric environmental conflict analysis and is closely linked to the concept of human security.

The environmental security frame is related to the environmental conflict frame in different ways. The environmental conflict theme is a subcategory of the environmental security frame insofar as environmentally induced violent conflicts (being the major storyline of the environmental conflict frame) affect not only the stability of states but also the well being of individuals. On the other hand, both frames are fundamentally distinct, most importantly because states that are the primary referent object to be secured according to the environmen-

tal conflict theme are portrayed as acting in ways that endanger environmental human security within the environmental security frame (Dalby 2000: 2).

In contrast to the focus of short-term adaptation within the environmental conflict discourse, policy response strategies consistent with an environmental security frame also emphasise the importance of precautionary measures (Trombetta 2008: 594) and long-term strategies to combat environmental change (Detraz and Betsill 2009: 308). In the case of climate change, the reduction of green house gas emissions and adaptation are central and the failure to do so is considered as affecting human security (Brzoska 2009: 142). In addition, measures must prioritise human over state security. Those arguing within an environmental conflict frame insist that the best results depend upon early intervention and prevention (cp. Trombetta 2008).

Ecological security

To these two frames, we add a third potential frame, which sees human beings as part of a greater whole and on this basis focuses on the environment as such as the main referent object. We call this frame ecological security. It follows the notion of complex ecology described by Cudworth and Hobden (2010) as well as Dalby (1992), both of whom focus on the ecosystem as the referent object to be secured. They emphasise the interdependence and symbiosis of different elements within a global ecological system and question the belief that a techno-institutional fix for the present problems is possible (Cudworth and Hobden 2010: 8). Bertell (2001) develops a similar idea of ecological security, prioritising the health of the environment over other referent objects. In this analysis, the ecological security discourse tends to shift from security to risk alleviation and aims at restructuring and transforming risk-producing activities rather than securing specific groups.

Framing Discourse	Referent Object	Diagnostic Dimension	Prognostic Dimension	Related Key Words
Environmental Conflict	Particular communities, including states	Focus on violent conflict when natural resources degrade, military plays central role, environment as a limited resource	Short term measures, rather adaptation and reactive (military) measures	Resource security, resource conflicts, degradation of natural resources water wars, energy security and energy diversification, military responses
Environmental Security	All human beings, the individual	Everyday security implications for all human beings, focus on human vulnerability to environmental change, environment as a common good	Long term strategies to combat environmental change, mitigation and precautionary measures in addition to adaptation	Human security, global security, climate as a common good, human vulnerability, global governance infrastructure
Ecological Security	The environment or ecosystem as a whole	Embeddedness of human beings in global ecosystem, threat to the environment as such, including plants and animals, environment	Move from security to risk alleviation, restructuring of risk creating activities rather than attempts to secure specific groups via	Ecosystem, limits of growth, human-nature relations, interdependence, symbiosis, risk

		as a good in its own right	mitigation or adaptation	

Table 1: Frames securitising climate change

5. On the Ethical and Political Consequences of Securitising Climate Change

Both a framing approach to securitisation in general and the different frames in particular raise the question of the ethical and political consequences of such a conceptualisation. The Copenhagen School emphasises the normative concerns connected to securitisation and refutes the belief that more security is always better, instead seeing security as a failure to deal with an issue as normal politics. Buzan et al. (1998: 29) admit that securitisation none-theless can have tactical attractions as means of raising awareness. However, the authors emphasise that 'when considering securitizing moves such as "environmental security" one has to balance the always problematic side effects of applying a mind-set of security against the possible advantages of focus, attention, and mobilization' (Buzan et al. 1998: 29).

By conceptualising securitisation as framing one cannot escape this 'normative dilemma of speaking and writing security' (Huysmans 1999). Ultimately, the purpose can only be to cre-ate an 'ethical sensibility' about the consequences of speaking security (Elbe 2006: 138). Nevertheless, the identification of different frames securitising climate change may lead to a more nuanced picture of the normative implications of securitising climate change, whose problematic nature might be more pronounced in certain frames than others. On the basis of the existing literature, we hypothesise that the effect of securitising moves depends on their specific framing, i.e. that securitising moves sticking closely to the structure as defined by Wæver, if successful, are more likely to lead to securitisation than to politicisation and vice versa. More precisely, one could imagine that the environmental security and ecological se-curity frames rather contribute to a politicisation of the debate defined as an increase of argumentative positions in the debate as a consequence, whereas the environmental conflict frame rather results in a normatively problematic securitisation in the sense of militarisation or a narrowing down of positions to a single dominant one.

In line with this argumentation, the mode and nature of the state response to securitisation – which varies according to the frame, as we have argued above – has been identified as the key question by Elbe (2006: 132) in his analysis of the implications of securitising HIV/AIDS, which does not invariably result in normatively problematic outcomes according to his find-ings (Elbe 2005: 413). In a similar manner, Floyd (2007, 2010) shows that some securitising moves have led to quick and effective solutions in a political process instead of triggering a confrontational logic. Hence, she argues, securitising moves are a priori neither positive nor negative and must be judged on the basis of their results. While their work provides initial insight in that direction, only a systematic study on securitising moves following different discursive frames in a particular sector can analyse whether and how the exact framing influ-ences the outcome in terms of securitisation or politicisation.

Finally, the question arises what the case of climate change tells us about the role that securitisation plays in politicisation. Trombetta (2011: 145) has argued in the case of the ozone regime that the politicisation of the issue occurred through its securitisation, but a systematic account of the possibility of such a process in climate change policies is lacking. It seems a worthwhile endeavour to examine the role that different frames sticking more or less closely to the grammar of security as defined by Wæver and proposing extraordinary measures that include military involvement (in our case the frame of environmental conflict) play in that context.

6.   Towards an Account of the Securitisation Process

A framing approach to securitisation, which allows different frames linking climate change to its security implications into the picture, subsequently raises the question which actors articulate which linkage between security and climate change in order to alter the political debate, which securitisations are taken up by political actors and find their way into concrete policies and why specific securitisations have been taken up by political actors rather than others.

Securitising actors

In the second section we mentioned some of the actors involved in process of securitising climate change, spanning from NGOs and advisory bodies to governmental agencies. Thus, contrary to the usual emphasis on securitising moves performed by political elites (cp. Buzan et al. 1998), we argue that securitising moves by non-state actors (NGOs and think tanks) are crucial. Securitisations of the environment are often articulated by NGOs and think tanks (Brzoska 2009) before they are taken up by the mainstream political debate (cp. Trombetta 2011 for a similar observation in the case of the ozone regime). A preliminary analysis of a number of policy documents[1] revealed a certain correlation between the actors involved in writing particular reports or at least in the consultative process and the principal frame used in the respective documents. The predominance of the environmental security frame in studies that closely cooperated with (former) military staff in contrast to references to the notion of environmental or ecological security in studies whose authors interviewed experts from the development or environmental community seems to indicate a certain propensity of particular actors towards specific frames, which would be a promising trajectory for future research. As regards the motivation, Trombetta (2008) has suggested that particular understandings of security are used in order to make the argumentation more familiar for the targeted audience, for instance to alert the security community to the impacts of environmental

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[1] Busby et al. (2010): Of Climate Change and Crystal Balls: The Future Consequences of Climate Change in Africa, Busby (2007): Climate Change and National Security: An Agenda For Action, Campbell et al (2007): The Age of Consequences: Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Global Climate Change, CNA (2007) National Security and the Threat of Climate Change, Levy et al. (2008): Assessment of Select Climate Change Impacts on U.S. National Security, UNEP (2007) Global Environmental Outlook 4: Environment for Development, Schwartz and Randall (2003): An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security, WBGU (2007): Welt im Wandel: Sicherheitsrisiko Klimawandel

degradation. This observation needs to be specified with the help of a more thorough analysis of different frames securitising climate change and the respective frame sponsors.

Success conditions

This question of who articulates a specific frame (and why) is closely related to question of success conditions, as the position of the frame articulator or securitising actor is identified as crucial for a frames success. Moreover, the use of a particular frame to securitise an issue was cited as one of the conditions that potentially influences if securitising attempts succeed (Guzzini 2011: 331, who uses the term "discourses" to refer to what we have described as frames). The Copenhagen School defines securitisation as a successful speech act 'through which an intersubjective understanding is constructed within a political community to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and *to enable a call for urgent and exceptional measures* to deal with the threat' (Buzan and Wæver, 2003: 491, emphasis added). Thus, our explanation of the success of a particular frame draws on the analysis of whether and how such a move has an effect on concrete policy (cp. Vuori 2008). Hence, we define success in terms of policy relevance.

Framing research and securitisation approaches identify very similar conditions for success (Snow and Benford 2000, Buzan et al. 1998: 32, Balzacq 2005, Stritzel 2007), which could shed further light at the question how and why particular frames translate into policies. Firstly, the idea of the *consistency of the argument* means that the speech act itself must be in accordance with the grammar of security (cp. Balzacq 2005, Stritzel 2007). For our purposes, we may therefore expect securitising moves to be more successful as they stick to a particular securitising frame, as this would make for the most consistent argument and not allow room for alternative representations. Secondly, the notion of "*goodness of fit*" means that the articulated securitising move must resonate with existing discourses. Balzacq (2005: 171) emphasises that effective securitisation is audience-centred, pointing to its interactive dimension. This is both reflected in the position of the securitising actor vis-à-vis the audience (cp. Léonard and Kaunert 2011, Balzacq 2005 on the role of audience in the Copenhagen School's framework) and the "goodness of fit" argument, referring to the extent to which a securitising move resonates with the audiences experiences and beliefs. In that context, the role of narratives of history, culture and identity (McDonald 2008) is also underlined. Accordingly, we would expect that the greater the overlap between the securitising frame used and the generally prevailing worldview, the greater the chances of a successful securitisation. Thirdly, *the position of the securitising actor vis-à-vis the audience* that he is trying to convince is crucial. As outlined above, the Copenhagen School assumes that in the strongly institutionalised field of security the political elite is privileged to speak security (Buzan et al. 1998). In contrast, Balzacq (2005: 179) differentiates between the formal powers of a securitising actor on the one hand – it is easier for state officials to securitise an issue – and their image as knowing the issue and being trustworthy on the other hand. On this basis, we would expect the success of a securitising move to be dependent on the specific profile of a

securitising actor within a society, both relating to the organisation on whose behalf the actor speaks, and to the standing of the actors themselves.

A fourth condition can be added following the discussion of the Paris School's conceptualisation of securitisation (Bigo 2000, 2002) and our reading of this as an issue of feasibility (see p. 4) Accordingly, the success of a securitising move may depend on its perceived feasibility in terms of (a) technological possibilities, (b) fitting administrative practices and (c) expected cost. While the Copenhagen School downplays such factors by stressing the emergency character of measures countering security threats, which overrides any such concerns, we would argue that this is only a characteristic of the debate once securitisation has been successful. However, it seems reasonable to assume that securitising moves are easier to accept if the cost is relatively low and there is a measure that is readily available to combat the alleged security threat.

With reference to Doty's (1998/99) work on migration, McDonald (2008) already posed the question of how some particular articulations of security became predominant, through which processes certain actors were empowered to "speak" security and to what extent framings of security were taken up respectively marginalised or silenced. As we illustrated, climate change provides a case to exploit this aspect that is only partially addressed within the Copenhagen School's framework, that has been criticised for focusing on the outcome rather than on the process of securitisation (Wilkinson 2007).

7. Conclusion

This paper set out with the observation of a *doxa* that ties climate change to conflict. Following the work of Floyd, Trombetta, Oels (2011a, 2011b and others, we have argued that this is a clear form of securitisation including the problematic political aspect of moving something which in principle is contested beyond the realm of the political debate. Yet a narrow understanding of the Copenhagen School cannot account for this securitisation. Thus, we suggested supplementing the traditional securitisation framework with the concept of framing. This has allowed us to distil three different frames in which climate change is securitised, and we have argued that these carry with them different normative problems. Importantly, however, the uncovering of these different frames problematises the idea that climate change leads to conflict, which is only one securitising frame that we have found to exist in the debate.

Further research needs to now investigate more carefully the processes of securitisation along the lines that we have charted in section 5. How, in particular, has it been possible for the environmental conflict frame to turn into a *doxa* widely held in public debate? A cross-national comparison may also elucidate whether this particular framing of climate change is accepted across countries, or whether there is variation in the way climate change is securitised. We suspect that indeed there is, which would allow further analyses of the conditions and consequences of the securitisation of climate change.

The purpose of this paper, however, was more limited. We wanted to demonstrate that there are different ways of securitising climate change, set out the content of these different frames and indicate the political consequences they invoke. Through this problematisation of the climate change/conflict *doxa*, we hope to also have made a contribution to the wider debate about the concept of securitisation, which we suggest would benefit from a link to the concept of framing.

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