

# **Participation of minority political parties in the transposition of the European Green Deal policies in the Wadden Sea area**

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## List of abbreviations

AfD = Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)  
BBB = Boer Burger Beweging (Farmers Citizen Movement)  
CDA = Christen-Democratisch Appel (Christian democratic call)  
CDU = Christlich-Demokratische Union (Christian democratic Union)  
CU = ChristenUnie (christian)  
EFA = European Free Alliance  
EGD = European Green Deal  
EU = European Union  
FDP = Freie Demokratische Partei (Free Democratic Party)  
FNP = Fryske Nasjonale Partij (Frisian National Party)  
GL = GroenLinks (GreenLeft)  
NDR = Norddeutsche Rundfunk (Northern German Broadcasting)  
NOS = Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (Dutch Broadcasting Foundation)  
PvdA = Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party)  
PvdD = Partij voor de Dieren (Animals Party)  
SNP = Scottish National Party  
SGP = Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (State political reformed Party, conservative christian party)  
SP = Socialistische Partij (Socialist Party)  
SPD = Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Socialdemocratic Party of Germany)  
SSW = Südschleswiger Wählerverband (South Schleswig Voters' Association)  
VVD = Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)  
UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## Abstract:

The Wadden Sea is a vulnerable nature area along the coast of the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. Minority political parties in the region stand for the protection of the Wadden Sea nature. In the Netherlands, the Frysian National Party (FNP) opposes plans for gas drillings in the Wadden Sea. In Germany, the Südschleswiger Wählerverband (SSW) opposes similar plans for oil drillings. Both parties are represented on regional governmental level. These policy levels have relatively much power regarding environmental issues. In Denmark, the minority party Schleswigsche Partei is only represented on municipal level, and there are no plans for oil and gas drillings. Therefore, this research only includes the FNP and SSW. Both FNP and SSW are member of the EFA (European Free Alliance), a pro-European alliance of regional parties in the European Union. In the European Parliament, the EFA cooperates with the Greens. Therefore, this research conducts whether the parties participate in the transposition of the European Green Deal (EGD) on regional level in the Wadden Sea Area. The participation framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) was earlier used for citizen participation of climate adaptation measures in the Netherlands. There are three phases of participation and nine objectives of participation. However, not all the objectives of participation belong to every category. Generally spoken, the theory generally applies to this case, but there are deviations. One important deviation is influencing decisions, which is mostly mentioned as the most important objective. It is also often the most important objective in categories not identified as such by Uittenbroek et al. (2019). Since the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) is applied to political parties instead of public participation, this variation can be caused by the different application. In addition, the SSW is more focused on gathering support and information, probably to get more power as an opposition party. However, a comparison is difficult because of the different political cultures of opposition between the Netherlands and Germany. In addition, the SSW has a more activist and greener progressive attitude, while the FNP is in the political centre and prefers more cooperation. Further research of opposition and coalition situations of both parties is needed, considering the differences in political culture. FNP and SSW both represent national minorities on regional level. Both parties are member of the EFA, that has a progressive attitude on environmental issues such as the EGD. The regional level has many tasks for the transposition of the EGD. Moreover, there are many environmental water-related challenges in the Wadden Sea area. Therefore, this research analyses the participation of FNP and SSW in the transposition of EGD water policies in the Wadden Sea region. In addition, since the Schleswigsche Partei is not represented in a regional parliament, it is not included in this study.

## 1. Introduction

The European Green Deal (EGD) is the most important set of policies from the European Union (EU). It aims to address climate challenges (European Commission, n.d.-f). Important objectives are a circular economy, protecting biodiversity and ecosystems and reducing air, water and soil pollution and ensuring the sustainability of the blue economy and fishery sector (European Commission, n.d.-a). Moreover, there are measures to protect the Wadden Sea area resources (Wadden Sea Forum, n.d.).

The Wadden Sea is a sea area along the Dutch, German and Danish coast (Dr Cormac Walsh Research and Consulting, 2021).. It is a complex ecosystem that is sensitive to environmental changes (Van Beusekom et al., 2019). Its unique and intertidal system make it vulnerable (Egberts & Schroor, 2018). The intertidal nature with tidal currents, storms and waves is crucial to the survival of many species (Camphuysen, 2012).



Figure 1: map of the Wadden Sea Area (Common Wadden Sea secretariat, n.d.)

The Wadden Sea faces several challenges on environmental issues. The oil drillings can cause leaks, with natural disasters as a result for marine life. Gas drillings can cause soil subsidence and indirectly influence flood patterns. In the eastern part of the Dutch Wadden Island Ameland, a significant land subsidence is taking place since 1986. This causes sea-level rise and harms coastal vegetation (Decuyper et al., 2020). The plans for new oil and gas drillings in the Wadden Sea area are inconsistent with the EGD. This strives for protecting biodiversity and ecosystems and for cutting pollution and carbon emissions (NOS, 2021; European Commission, n.d.-a; European Commission, n.d.-g).

In Fryslân, national minorities feel not getting enough attention for their interests by national governments (Omrop Fryslân, 2021). Minority parties generally have to deal with a lack of representation in policy processes (Waltz and Schippers, 2021). This makes the research topic

relevant for society. A similar situation for the minorities in Schleswig-Holstein is thinkable. Enhancing the participation of minorities fits in the objective of the EU to include vulnerable groups, such as minorities, for a just transition. In this research, a minority is defined as "a group of people within a country that speak a minority language as recognised by the Council of Europe" (Council of Europe, n.d.). All the minorities addressed in this research are a minority according to this definition. This makes the topic fits in the EGD-plans of the EU. Moreover, in both Fryslân and Schleswig-Holstein, there are recent discussions on gas and oil drillings, making this research topic currently relevant (Deutsche Umwelthilfe, 2022; NOS, 2021).

### 1.1. Problem statement

The FNP represents the Frisian minority in the Netherlands. The SSW represents the Frisian and Danish minority in Germany (FNP, n.d.; SSW, n.d.). The Frisian and Danish minorities, represented by the Südschleswiger Wählerverband (SSW), are minorities within the region. They are about 100,000 people out of almost 3 million inhabitants of Schleswig-Holstein (Schleswig-Holsteins Mitte, 2018). Both minority parties, the topic of this research are based in the Wadden Sea Area. Its politicians are mostly member of a minority group, in this context, a non-dominant group in relation to most of the countries (FNP, n.d.; SSW, n.d.).

FNP and SSW are member of the European Free Alliance (EFA). That is a European political party with self-determination for minorities as main issue (European Free Alliance, n.d.-a). It has a pro-European and green attitude. In the European Parliament, the EFA belongs to the EFA/Green fraction with mainly green parties. This alliance favours ambitious carbon reduction objectives: 65% in 2030 (European Free Alliance, n.d.-b; The Greens/EFA in the European Parliament, 2020). The EGD aims to phase out fossil fuels The position of the EFA on environmental issues gives the FNP and SSW an interesting position since the nature of the Wadden Sea is under pressure. It is known gas and oil drillings are a potential danger for the nature of the Wadden Sea Area, in which the minorities live (Wang et al., 2019; NDR, 2021; Lammers, 2021). In Denmark, municipalities have no substantial role in transposing EGD-policies (European Committee of the Regions, n.d.). The Schleswigsche Partei, the party of the German minority in Denmark and part of the EFA, is only represented in municipalities (Schleswigsche Partei, n.d.). Moreover, no plans are known for oil and gas drillings in the Wadden Sea area in Denmark. Therefore, the minority political party from Denmark is not included in this research.

The knowledge gap addresses the pro-European and green attitude of the EFA. It is the question whether this is translated in the transposition of the EGD on regional level by FNP and SSW. Documents such as the coalition agreements of the FNP and contributions to debates of SSW are known. However, there hardly is information on the participation of FNP and SSW in the policy process. This shows the scientific relevance of this research topic. In addition, the impact of the oil and gas drillings, the protests of minority parties and citizens and the intentions of the EGD show the societal relevance.

### 1.2. Research objectives

FNP and SSW both represent national minorities on regional level. Both parties are member of the European Free Alliance (EFA), that has a progressive attitude on environmental issues such as the EGD. The regional level has many tasks for the transposition of the EGD. Moreover, there are many environmental water-related challenges in the Wadden Sea area. Therefore, this research analyses the participation of FNP and SSW in the transposition of



EGD water policies in the Wadden Sea region. In addition, since the Schleswigsche Partei is not represented in a regional parliament, it is not included in this study.

### 1.3. Research questions

There is no clear evidence minorities themselves or minority organisations protest organised against oil drillings, gas drillings or other potential harms to the Wadden Sea nature. Protests of citizens are limited to environmental groups and little groups of inhabitants (Deutsche Umwelthilfe, 2022; Middel, 2021). Therefore, the research is about minority political parties and not about minorities themselves or minority organisations.

“HOW do minority political parties from the Wadden Sea Area in the Netherlands and Germany currently participate in the transposition of the water policies of the EGD to regional policies?”

- ❖ HOW does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
  - WITH WHOM does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
  - WHEN does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
  - HOW does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
- ❖ HOW does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Schleswig-Holstein to regional policies?
  - WITH WHOM does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
  - WHEN does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?
  - HOW does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?

The participation of minority parties is central in this research. Frameworks of social equity and multilevel governance theory were considered as well, but do not align enough with participation as the central theme of this research. A framework of Dekker (2020) considers the role of local authorities in Ireland in climate policies, but hardly focuses on a form of participation. The framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) focuses on the participation of citizens in climate adaptation planning. Although this framework does not apply to political parties, it fits in the topic. Minorities and minority political parties sometimes do feel not being involved enough in the policy process. In the Wadden Sea region, they are an important group that should be involved, also because the EU values a just transition and citizen participation. Therefore, the participation framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) for public participation is adapted to political parties to answer the research questions. The political context and the differences between participating in a coalition or in an opposition are considered here. Per party, a literature review is conducted and interviews with three current representatives of the party on regional level are conducted. Afterwards, the results are compared, and a conclusion is drawn. It is important to mark that this research is not a comparison with the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019), but a different application of the framework. Therefore, comparisons are hard to draw.

#### 1.4. Thesis outline

In chapter two, the theoretical context is explained. The possible research frameworks are discussed, and the choice for the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) is explained further. Since Uittenbroek et al.(2019). is originally applied to citizens participation, its application to political parties is clarified. The difference between participation in policy process from the coalition or the opposition and the institutional contexts are explained as well. In chapter 3, the relevant parts of the EGD are discussed and the environmental issues of the Wadden Sea area are explained. In chapter four, the data gathering, data analysis and ethical considerations are explained. In chapter five, the results are explained per party. These are split along the three phases of participation of Uittenbroek et al. (2019): WHO, WHEN and HOW. These phases are split again along the nine objectives of participation of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) plus the category other. Afterwards, there is a reflection on the research methods with suggestions for further research in the discussion section. In chapter 6, a reflection on the research methods takes place. Lastly, in the conclusion, the conclusion is drawn.

## 2. Theoretical context

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework for this research. The choice for the theoretical framework is explained and its application in this research is elaborated on. Lastly, the context of the two cases is clarified.

### 2.1. Theoretical context: a review of relevant concepts and frameworks

In the Wadden Sea context, there is no research on engagement with political parties as stakeholders instead of citizens. Participation stresses the role of public input on programs and policies. This is clearly something different than inclusion: inclusion emphasizes engaging a community broadly in public issues. Since there is a focus on policy documents, participation is a more relevant concept in this context than inclusion (Quick & Feldman, 2011).

The most basic definition of social equity is ‘eliminating inequities in how we educate, medicate, feed, house, pay and otherwise treat people’ (Caples & Jefferson, 2022). However, while these definitions are discussed, at the core, it is about equal treatment, fairness and reducing social inequalities. A social equity framework has not been chosen since it is not the focus of this research. However, it is a relevant background because of the social dimension of the involvement of minority parties. Minority parties aim to contribute to (equal) representation of their minority, and so aim to contribute to social equity. Moreover, social equity is also linked with sustainability. It includes diverse populations, not only racial civil rights (Brenman & Sanchez, 2012). This research does not focus on the just transition or social equity. However, the EU values a just transition: it wants to leave no one behind: also, not vulnerable groups such as minorities (European Environment Agency, 2022).

Multilevel Governance (MLG) theory has evolved since its inception. The EU has contributed significantly to its development. MLG emphasizes coordinated action among the EU, Member States, and local and regional authorities (Serafín Pazos-Vidal, 2019). However, this is also why multilevel governance is out of the scope of this research. However, the minority political parties FNP and SSW are indirectly represented in the European Parliament as well (European Commission, n.d.-f, n.d.-a). Therefore, theory on the relations between governmental levels is relevant for the background of this research.

To plan and execute climate adaptation measures, citizens should be actively involved. Local governments often shape public participation structures, prompting questions about deliberate design and the underlying objectives. For example, Uittenbroek et al. (2019) conducted a Dutch-based participation study. For this study, a theory-derived framework linking public participation design with nine potential objectives was used (2019). Another interesting insight comes from Dekker (2020). Dekker examines the role of Irish local authorities', who are well recognised for their unique position, in responding to climate change. Dekker (2020) argues for diverse community engagement, as a crucial component of the solution to overcome resistance to climate action. This should be done specifically with community energy. The concept of energy democracy is introduced, advocating for collective engagement over individual rationality (2020). Energy democracy seeks to involve the public in the planning and ownership of renewable energy systems. The involvement of local inhabitants to the climate transition is crucial. However, Dekker (2020) does not provide a framework that can help to clarify the participation of minority political parties. Nevertheless, the idea is relevant as background information. Perlaviciute & Squintani (2020) focus on the intersection between legal frameworks and public preferences in climate policies. The Aarhus Convention

mandates public participation. However, the authors argue that current frameworks often overlook macro-level decisions. It limits the influence of participants, who prefer to participate on local level. These are interesting insights, but this participation research does not provide a method that could clarify the participation of minorities further.

The framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) offer a perspective that aligns with the aim of this research: it focuses on the objectives of participation and a deliberate approach. Moreover, it includes a framework that makes participation in different phases of the policy process measurable. Using the participation framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019), this research explores HOW minority political parties instead of citizens, engage as stakeholders in policymaking. How that is done in this research, is further explained in section 2.2.2.

## 2.2. Research framework: how to apply Uittenbroek et al. to the minority political parties in the Wadden Sea area

This research focuses on the participation of minority political parties in regional politics. This study examines water-related policies of the EGD, focusing on minority parties' influence on shaping the policy. First, the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) is explained, and afterwards, its application to the minority political parties is explained.

Uittenbroek et al. (2019) describe the participation of citizens in the planning and transposition of climate adaptation measures. The authors provide a description of three cases of citizen participation. The corresponding framework connects the design of citizen participation with nine possible objectives of participation. These objectives are linked to three phases of participation: WHO, WHEN and HOW. However, the objectives that do belong and do not belong to one of these phases differs per phase.

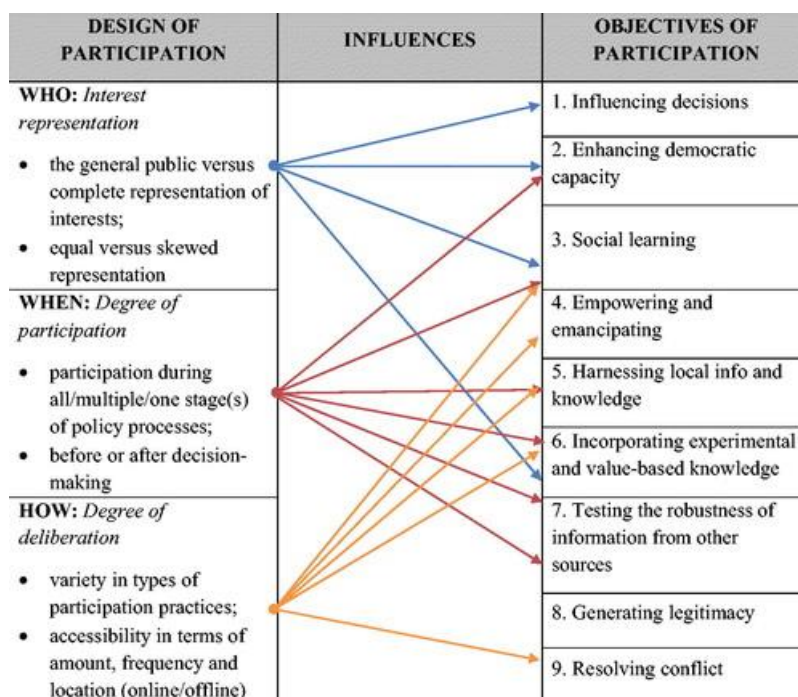


Figure 2: participation framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019)

This framework was developed in a Dutch context, so fits to the context of this research.

Uittenbroek et al. (2019) use WHO for the scope of interest representation. WHEN is used for the opportunities for participation. HOW is used for the degree and way of influence. In this context, WHO especially means WITH WHOM, and which other parties are the minority parties working in parliament. WHEN can be defined as WHEN they decide to participate constructively to reach policy outcomes. This can happen either in a coalition or in a responsible opposition. Moreover, it applies WHEN parties do not participate but prefer a responsive opposition for profiling themselves. It applies to WHEN a party strategically questions an ideologically distant coalition partner to put them in a tough position. HOW can it be defined in a sense parties participate in the coalition or a constructive opposition? This, for example, applies to which ministries they control or on which policy areas they participate. It also extends to their non-participation, like crafting a responsive opposition image to connect with disillusioned voters.

This framework originally does not apply directly to the political participation of the minority parties. However, the reasons for participation, especially influencing decisions, are an inspiration for this research project. Political participation of political parties can occur either in opposition or in coalition. This differs per party and period (Magyar, 2017). These forms of participation are relevant to this research. They apply to political parties. Especially, they can help to explain the influence of political parties on the transposition of water-related policies of the EGD into regional policies Magyar (2017). Central to this research is the impact of their participation on the policy outcomes regarding water-related EGD policies. The reason why they choose one way or another of participation is in the background. Therefore, it is important to clarify the forms of participation, either in coalition or in opposition.

Both Fryslân and Schleswig-Holstein have a multiparty system with proportional representation. That means several parties must build a coalition (Brockington, 2004; Mair, 2015). Building a coalition brings these parties into a special position (Whitaker & Martin, 2022). On the one hand, coalition partners are allies, but they are also often ideologically different. In general, the parties try to build a coalition with parties that are ideologically close to each other (Axelrod, 1970; de Swaan, 1973). They build a coalition agreement together to facilitate policymaking while avoiding ideological conflict (E. Bergman et al., 2023). However, coalition agreements generally have a less strong role in surplus governments. Parties mostly get certain ministries in which they control the policies to a certain agreed degree. However, there are mostly junior ministers of another party in the cabinet as well to avoid the controlling party pushing its agenda. In addition, if parliamentary questions are asked, ministers must share information with the parliament. This is most often done by coalition partners not leading the ministry. These parties are mostly ideologically the furthest from this minister (E. Bergman et al., 2023; Whitaker & Martin, 2022). Moreover, junior partners can constrain the discretion of a ministry governed by an ideologically distant minister if that serves them (Oppermann & Brummer, 2014). Controlling water-related policy terrains would give minority parties a key role in the regional transposition of the EGD. Moreover, the minority parties are mostly the smaller coalition parties. Their bargaining power depends on how many alternative coalitions they can be part of (Magyar, 2017; Shapley & Shubik, 1954). Being part of a stable pre-electoral coalition can narrow their ideological differences and expand the parties' support base Magyar (2017). Votes and political strategy mostly influence behaviour of oppositions. Therefore, opposition parties mostly try to highlight the differences within the governing coalition. This can lead to electoral losses or even the collapse of a cabinet (De Giorgi & Ilonszki, 2018; Whitaker & Martin, 2022).

The FNP is in coalition, but SSW is in opposition (Grüne SH, 2022; Omrop Fryslân, 2023c). For understanding the differences between the two cases, the different political contexts of opposition are relevant to understand. The main forms of opposition are responsible and responsive. A responsible opposition tries to cooperate with the government on several issues and is more likely to agree with the coalition De Giorgi and Ilonszki (2018). The responsive opposition is more focused on political purity, representing disappointed voters, and gaining electoral support (De Giorgi & Ilonszki, 2018). In general, the Netherlands has more than Germany a culture of political consensus. Therefore, the opposition mostly has less political influence in Germany than in the Netherlands. However, deals can be made, especially in crisis times, and as the coalition parties, opposition parties use parliamentary questions as an instrument as well De Giorgi and Ilonszki (2018).

### 2.3. Cases of study

The tasks of regional governments differ between the Netherlands and Germany. However, regional governments in both countries have power and tasks in the field of nature protection (Duitsland Instituut, n.d.; Prodemos, n.d.). This subchapter discusses the differences in institutions and party systems between the Netherlands and Germany.

#### 2.3.1. Netherlands

##### Institutions

The national government is responsible for the environmental law, which is into effect since January 1, 2024. It regulates the division of space for several functions in the Netherlands, such as agriculture, living and nature (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). Moreover, the national government decides about the gas drilling and salt extraction in the Wadden Sea Area (NOS, 2024). In addition, the national government has a coordinating function to protect vital functions against floods and to coordinate the policies of the water boards. Lastly, the national water plan has as objective to fulfil the EU-requirements regarding water quality, floods and the marine environment (Rijkswaterstaat, n.d.). The province is responsible for spatial planning, for example of nature and agriculture. It should create new nature and preserve existing nature, while it supervises the compliance of nature laws. Moreover, it should counter pollution with soil remediation and ensure safe bathing water. Lastly, the provinces supervise the municipalities and the water boards. Furthermore, the province has a role in protecting groundwater and acts as a licensing authority in this regard. The new environmental law, that went into effect January 1, 2024, is mostly being carried out decentralised Rijksoverheid (n.d.). The provinces are responsible for its enforcement (Informatiepunt leefomgeving, n.d.). Municipalities in general have a lot of responsibilities in the field of spatial planning Duitsland Instituut (n.d.). Municipalities are responsible for administrative agreements, groundwater care obligations, the regulation of groundwater and stormwater drainage, soil quality, environmental permits (together with the province) and sewerage charges (Helpdeskwater, n.d.). The Environment Act will be transposed as decentralised as possible, i.e. by municipalities. The municipal administration is entrusted with the tasks as the first responsible party. However, the central government does impose instruction rules and general rules. There is also a margin within which standards may be shifted in certain areas. A higher nuisance is possible in areas such as vibration, soil quality and odour (Pont omgeving, n.d.).

##### Party system

Since 2023, the Farmers Citizen Movement (BBB) is by far the biggest party in the regional parliament of Fryslân with 14 out of 43 seats. Before 2023, it was not even represented in the

parliament, and now the BBB is the biggest coalition partner. The second party is the Labour Party (PvdA), followed by the CDA (Christian democrats) and the FNP. FNP, CDA and ChristenUnie (CU, christian) are in the coalition. The FNP has been in the coalition since 2011, and so has a long tradition of being in opposition. The VVD (liberals) is the fifth party together with GroenLinks (green party) (AlleCijfers.nl, n.d.; Omrop Fryslân, 2023a). The VVD used to be in the coalition from 2019 until 2023 but is now disappointed since it is opposition (Omrop Fryslân, 2023a; SP Nordeast-Fryslân, 2019).

### 2.3.2. Germany

#### Institutions

Water law is seen as a central aspect of national climate law, meant to reach several climate and water objectives. Moreover, the national government has an important role in making the regulatory environmental law and regulations to reach these objectives (Bundesministerium für Umwelt, 2024). New water laws were harmonised all over Germany. These laws contain what can be decided by the states (Länder). Moreover, European law is transposed to the national level to reach climate objectives. Most of the transposition of nature protection law and environmental law in general is done by the states because the states know the local situation better than the national government. An important example is the energy transition and climate protection law from 2021 following a courts command for more climate action. In general, the German states have more competences in the field of nature and water than the Dutch provinces. To apply national law, to set additional rules and to transpose national policies, Schleswig-Holstein updated its water law in 2020: the last version was from 1960 and is also updated to address current challenges such as the sea level rise. Moreover, there is a special law per state to protect the Wadden Sea national park. A separate state office for all the states in the Wadden Sea area is responsible for decisions on mining (Landesamt für Bergbau, n.d.). The districts are responsible for tourism, economics and infrastructure. However, they coordinate activities in the field of environment and water as well (Deutscher Landtagskreis, n.d.). The competences of municipalities in reaching climate neutrality are rather small: they focus on renewable energy, governmental buildings, houses, creating space for nature and local traffic. This makes their focus concrete, since their closeness to citizens makes their role rather big. Nevertheless, they struggle with the big number of rules from the national government (Umweltbundesamt, 2023).

#### Party systems

On state level, SSW has been in coalition between 2012 and 2017 with the SPD (socialdemocrats) and the Greens. From 2017 until 2022, there was a coalition of CDU (christiandemocrats), Grünen and FDP (liberals). The current coalition consists of the CDU and the Greens. On district level, there was a cooperation, which is a form of a coalition, from 2018 until 2023, consisting of FDP, CDU and Greens. Based on the interviews in the results section, there is no coalition or cooperation on district level nowadays (der Christlich Demokratischen Union Deutschland Landesverband Schleswig-Holstein Bündnis 90/Die Grünen Landesverband Schleswig-Holstein der Freien Demokratischen Partei Landesverband Schleswig-Holstein, n.d.; NDR, n.d.; SPD Geschichtswerkstatt, n.d.). In Schleswig-Holstein, there often is a left-wing and a right-wing opposition. The right-wing opposition sometimes is divided between centre-right and extreme-right (Grüne SH, 2022).

### 3. Policy and empirical background

The context of the research question is further explained in this chapter. The focus in subchapter 2.1 is on the relevant policies of the EGD in general. Other relevant research fields are the just transition for the EGD and the blue-green issues in the Wadden Sea Area. Moreover, the water-related policies of the EGD and their application to the Wadden Sea area are discussed.

The EGD is a comprehensive set of policies and initiatives aimed at improving the environmental sustainability of the EU. The water policies include measures to protect and restore freshwater ecosystems, promote sustainable water use, and reduce water pollution (European Commission, n.d.-d). The EGD's water-related initiatives have important implications for the conservation and management of the Wadden Seas' water resources (van Beusekom et al., 2019). The EGD aims to lead global action against climate change. It emphasizes fairness and solidarity, aiming to leave no person or place behind. It is a comprehensive policy framework aimed at achieving climate neutrality in the continent in 2050 (European Commission, 2023). The EU has exclusive competences in the common fisheries policy. Moreover, the EU has shared competences with the member states in agriculture and fishery beyond the common fisheries policy, environment, energy, research and development and safety in public health matters (Europees burgerinitiatief, n.d.). The EU has a competence to support, coordinate or supplement actions of the Member States in human health, industry and tourism. It is important to remind that member states are represented in the council of the EU, who is co-legislator and has budget authority together with the European Parliament Europees burgerinitiatief (n.d.). Moreover, a citizen engagement initiative involved citizens to achieve the environmental, social and economic transitions (European Commission., 2022). However, this does not apply to members of a minority community specifically (European Commission., 2022).

#### 3.1. Water policies related to the EGD

The WFD is the core water policy of the EGD. It aims to get all the European waters in good ecological status by 2027 (Wise-Freshwater, n.d.). This WFD has been the basis for water management in the EU since its adoption in 2000: it has a holistic approach on water habitats (European Commission, n.d.-h). The first guiding principles of the WFD is the preservation of water bodies in their natural state. The second is encompassing the diversity and abundance of aquatic biotic communities. The third is the natural configuration and flow of rivers and streams. The fourth is the pristine quality of water, untouched by human interference (Land Schleswig-Holstein, 2022a). The primary objective of the directive is to prevent deterioration in the status of EU water bodies. This will help to achieve a 'good status' for rivers, lakes, and groundwater in Europe by 2027 (European Commission, n.d.-h). Exemptions can be made for the objective of a good status in 2027. This is possible WHEN is unfeasible or unreasonably expensive due to human activity or natural conditions. This is further explained in point B paragraph 31 of the framework for community action in water policies. In such cases, less stringent environmental objectives may be set based on transparent criteria (EUR-Lex, 2014). Additionally, exemptions from the prevention of further deterioration or achieving good status are allowed under specific conditions in point B paragraph 32. Examples are unforeseen circumstances, floods, droughts, or modifications for overriding public interest. There is a requirement to take practicable steps to mitigate adverse impacts on the water body's status (EUR-Lex, 2014). Member countries must submit water protection plans for rivers, streams, lakes, and coastal areas, adhering to specified deadlines. The WFD places emphasis on the rigorous preservation of undisturbed water habitats. Moreover, it stresses the restoration of



altered water sections, and the minimization of diffuse nutrient and pollutant inputs (Land Schleswig-Holstein, 2015). In 2015, the European Court of Justice ruled on the Weser River deepening. This emphasizes the need to integrate WFD-objectives into project planning and approval (Land Schleswig-Holstein, 2022b). The Water Resources Act in Germany transposes the binding WFD-objectives into national policy, including the prohibition of deterioration and the achievement requirement (*Wasserrahmenrichtlinie: Verschlechterungsverbot Nach WRRL*, 2022). The good status is based on biological, hydromorphological and chemical criteria. In addition, there is a prohibition on deterioration, and it is required to reverse trends in groundwater pollution (Land Schleswig-Holstein, 2015, 2022b). This involves protecting all forms of water, including surface, ground, inland, and transitional waters, also regarding the level of pollution.

Moreover, the Groundwater Directive aims to prevent and combat groundwater pollution in the EU (EUR-Lex, 2014). The directive requires EU countries to establish threshold values for pollutants by 2008 and monitor and reverse sustained upward trends. The program of measures must include prevention of indirect discharges, especially hazardous substances, and limiting non-hazardous pollutants posing risks (EUR-Lex, 2014). Preventive measures may exclude certain discharges based on stringent EU legislation or technical impossibility (EUR-Lex, 2014). It complements the Water Framework Directive and repeals Directive 80/68/EEC. The last directive addresses the legislative gap in groundwater protection. Groundwater protection is a priority due to its difficulty in cleaning once contaminated. This is relevant in the Wadden Sea context: the groundwater has impact on surface water quality and is important in maintaining wetlands (EUR-Lex, 2014). The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) aims to establish a common EU approach. It strives to the prevention, protection, and conservation of the marine environment to address issues such as overfishing and pollution (European Parliament & European Council, 2014). Moreover, the EU places great emphasis on conserving biodiversity. The Birds and Habitats Directives serve as pillars in this endeavour. These directives establish a robust legislative framework across EU countries to safeguard endangered biodiversity (European Commission, n.d.-e). In addition, the Habitats Directive mainly applies to drought in Natura 2000 areas (Provincie Fryslân, 2022). Nature Network Netherlands serves as the transposition of the Natura 2000 area policy (Provincie Fryslân, 2021). Member States must establish strict protection regimes, designate core areas, and manage habitats. European Species Action Plans and the European Red List of Threatened Species guide conservation efforts (European Commission, n.d.-g). Approximately 500 bird species inhabit Europe. However, over a third face threats or possess a precarious conservation status. This is primarily because of habitat loss and degradation. These phenomena are caused by urbanization, transportation networks, intensive agriculture, pesticides, pollution and inadequate building designs. It intends not only to halt the decline of bird species: it also intends to facilitate their long-term recovery and prosperity (European Commission, n.d.-e). Europe's unique biodiversity faces threats from human activities like agriculture and pollution. This leads to the endangerment of over a quarter of animal species. Preserving and restoring biodiversity is a top EU priority outlined in the 2030 biodiversity strategy (European Commission, n.d.-a).

The floods directive, established through Directive 2007/60/EC, sets up a comprehensive framework for flood risks in Europe (EUR-Lex, 2015). In the coalition agreement in Fryslân, European nature objectives and the various directives such as the Bathing Water Directive are included. (Provincie Fryslân, 2023). Moreover, the state of Schleswig-Holstein is involved in the transposition of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well (Landesverband der Wasser- und Bodenverbände Schleswig-Holstein, n.d.). In addition, The EU Nature

Restoration Law prescribes the restoration of marine habitats like seagrass beds or sediment bottoms. It prescribes the restoration of marine species like dolphins and seabirds. It also contains the idea for river connectivity to create more free-flowing waters by 2030. This can indirectly influence the Wadden Sea area as well due to the changing flows of fresh water (European Commission, n.d.-b). The Surface Water Directive, part of the WFD, intends to secure healthy surface water ecosystems for various purposes (European Commission, n.d.-e). Moreover, a Watch List This adds 25 substances with documented risks, including PFAS and pesticides (European Commission, n.d.-e). The Nitrates Directive is a part of the EU's efforts to address water pollution caused by nitrates in agriculture. The European Commission can grant derogations allowing higher nitrogen limits in specific cases. However, this doesn't exempt Member States from water quality objectives. Nitrogen, while essential for plant growth, becomes harmful in high concentrations and pollutes water (European Commission, n.d.-c). The EU Drinking Water Directive (2020/2184) sets stringent standards for microbiological and chemical parameters, also in areas sensitive to overflows (EUR-lex, 2021). Also, the Swim Water Directive applies to Fryslân (Provincie Fryslân, 2022).

### 3.2. Environmental water issues in the Wadden Sea area

Oil and gas leakage significantly threatens various water bodies, including groundwater reservoirs, rivers, lakes, and oceans. Offshore oil and gas production has intensified ocean pollution, triggering several effects like diffusion, dissolution, evaporation and sedimentation (Wang et al., 2019). Oil and gas drilling creates risks for the Wadden Sea. However, this does not align with the EGD striving to protect ecosystems. Oil entry into seawater disrupts the exchange of materials between air and seawater. This affects electromagnetic radiation absorption and hinders the reflection on the sea surface. Oil in seawater disrupts air-seawater material exchange, impacting electromagnetic radiation absorption and hindering reflection on the sea surface (Wang et al., 2019). Coastal areas and bathing places are at risk of destruction due to oil leakage. Furthermore, oil pollutants harm marine life, with even small concentrations affecting fish taste and odor (Wang et al., 2019). Aquatic plants absorb oil substances, leading to toxicity, damage to somatic cells, and water quality deterioration. Various oil pollutants have different toxicities, with aromatic hydrocarbons being the most toxic (Wang et al., 2019). The study highlights the harmful effects on aquatic organisms, especially juvenile fish and fish eggs. Moreover, it emphasizes the long-term impact on fish in gills, eggs, and the food chain (Wang et al., 2019).

Seabirds, shorebirds and in the Wadden Sea area especially coastal species, face significant threats from oil spills. This impacts both coastal and offshore species (Fingas, 2015). Diving or sitting birds are more vulnerable to oil spills, affecting their buoyancy and ability to fly. While shorebirds are generally less oiled due to their foraging habits (Fingas, 2015), their living environment can still be harmed. Various factors, such as bird behaviour, oil type, and environmental conditions, influence the extent of oiling. Birds in the spill area, even if not oiled, can suffer from inhaling vapours or ingesting oil (Fingas, 2015). Certain bird species in marine estuaries, like turns, gulls, and ducks, are proven to be vulnerable to oil spills. Oiled feathers for example reduce waterproofing, leading to hypothermia, and fouled plumage affects foraging and metabolism (Fingas, 2015). Ingested oil harms internal organs, causing injuries, dysfunction, and reproductive issues. Rehabilitation is crucial, as most birds would not survive without it (Fingas, 2015).

In general, researchers find that oil spills will likely happen more often. They also think that oil exploitation in general, also without spills, damages water, soil, air quality and human

health (Chang et al., 2014). This can have a very negative impact on, for example, coastal fish (Fodrie & Heck, 2011). This creates risks for the Wadden Sea area as well. German Wadden Sea lacks a scientific oil risk analysis. However, Rijkswaterstaat conducted and transposed one in the Dutch part (Van der Veen, 2021). That can be insightful due to Wadden Sea's parts' similarity, with eutrophication levels being the main difference (van Beusekom et al., 2019). Because of the risks of oil drillings and other circumstances, oil entering the Wadden Sea cannot always be prevented (Van der Veen, 2021). The Wadden Sea is an ecologically sensible area with bioturbation, low tide and high currents making removing the oil difficult. The circumstances change hourly: this is because of the ecosystem with migrating birds, changing weather and the tidal system (Van der Veen, 2021).

The eastern part of the Dutch Wadden Island Ameland has experienced coastal vegetation consequences since 1986 (Decuyper et al., 2020). It has experienced deep soil subsidence due to natural gas extraction. This way, it acted as a proxy for sea-level rise (Decuyper et al., 2020). This subsidence, resembling future sea-level rise, induces alterations in flooding and groundwater levels (Decuyper et al., 2020). Young dunes show increased seabuckthorn cover. In contrast, in old dunes, a decline is observed, with other species taking over. However, young dunes likely transition to older dunes, resulting in declining seabuckthorn since 2009. Rising sea levels cause frequent flooding in lower areas, saturating soil and reducing growth due to inundation and water saturation (Decuyper et al., 2020). It is likely that similar trends appear in other areas of the Wadden Sea as well. This is relevant for the Wadden Sea area since it contains several estuaries with river sediment. River sediment serves as a life source and a sink for hazardous chemicals, potentially causing biodiversity loss (Wise-Freshwater, n.d.). Another important concern is the influence of seawater intrusion due to the region's proximity to the sea (Provincie Fryslân, 2022).

The Wadden Sea is recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Gas extraction there is having profound effects on its habitats. This impact is exacerbated by land subsidence and rising sea levels (Brus et al., 2016). Several types of habitats were increasing, but some have been replaced by other habitats as well due to sea level rise, also caused by land subsidence (Brus et al., 2016). The soil subsidence results in sea-level rise, gradually increasing in flooding frequency, duration, and depth. This phenomenon can be regarded as a proxy for sea-level rise (van Dobben et al., 2022). This highlights salt marshes' resilience. The average water depth during flooding can serve as an indicator of storm intensity (van Dobben et al., 2022). Simulations based on various sea-level rise scenarios suggest the likely persistence of these salt marshes for the next century. However, higher regions may experience more frequent inundation (van Dobben et al., 2022).

## 4. Research design

This chapter discusses the research design. First, the boundaries of the research are explained. Second, the selection of policy documents, internet pages and media clippings and the way interviews are conducted are explained. Third, in the data analysis, the coding of the interviews is explained. Fourth, the data selection and analysis are accounted for.

### 4.1. Research strategies

This research is a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The interviews are split per question along the three phases of participation of Uittenbroek et al. (2019). In most of the questions, a choice out of the objectives of participation of the model of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) is asked. However, an explanation is asked explicitly, and there are also many questions that do not ask for these objectives. In addition, the review of policy documents is used to answer the research questions, also beyond using them only for hooking up with the interview questions.

### 4.2. Data sources and collecting methods

First, it involves the analysis of policy documents of the regional governments of Fryslân and Schleswig-Holstein and the parties themselves (Hammond & McDermott, n.d.). Further selection was based on the relevance of the combination of these four topics mentioned here before. After familiarising myself with the documents, a further selection took place. The relevant documents come from the website, mostly either related to the theme 'climate' or 'EU' (FNP Fryslân, 2023; SSW, n.d.-b). There is hardly any scientific literature on this topic available. Therefore, databases as Scopus and Google Scholar were not very relevant. The websites of the political parties and the relevant governmental institutions, the provincie Fryslân, Landtag Schleswig-Holstein and Kreis Nordfriesland, are used. In addition, news websites, especially the NOS, Omrop Fryslân and the NDR, are used as a database. To filter out the most important points of complex texts used for chapter 2, ChatGPT has been used for inspiration: next to my own ideas, the summaries of texts by ChatGPT were used to select the relevant points for this research. However, the responsibility for the content is of course mine.

Second, interviews with the minority political parties FNP and SSW were planned. Therefore, a required ethics approval is gained from the University of Twente. This was done with representatives of the fractions of FNP and SSW. Examine these documents to gauge minority parties' involvement in regional policymaking and their representation in the decision-making process. For the coalition case (FNP) and opposition case (SSW), there are separate question lists. These were shared with an explanation and the framework table of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) (see figure 2) before the interviews with the interviewees. Both the question lists, and the explanation can be found in appendix 1.

**Table 1: interviewees**

<b>Coding of interviews</b>	<b>FNP</b>	<b>Coding of interviews</b>	<b>SSW</b>
Interviewee 1A	Policy advisor FNP in the regional parliament since september 2019	Interviewee 1B	Member of Landestag (state level) responsible for economics and government

Interviewee 2A	Member of regional parliament, responsible for governance and security since 2021	Interviewee 2B	Party leader SSW im Kreistag Nordfriesland (district level) with a special focus on mobility
Interviewee 3A	Member of regional parliament, responsible for water and environment since 2023	Interviewee 3B	Member of the Kreistag Nordfriesland and former member of the water board

The kind of interviews are semi-structured with key stakeholders, providing crucial knowledge. The research of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) is based on semi-structured interviews as well. Opting for semi-structured format ensures standardized questions for each expert, facilitating comparison of answers across multiple interviews (Ahlin, 2019). However, the interview questions did not cover all the information that an interviewee can provide on the topic. Moreover, sometimes, the answers gave reasons for further questions. The amount of follow-up questions should be limited because of the comparability of the results. The follow-up questions bring up crucial information that the other interviewee did not provide; this should be asked afterwards Ahlin (2019). It is not about (minority) citizens' opinions, but rather the engagement of minority parties in transposing the EGD into regional policies. Since there are only a limited number of experts, the interviews were in-depth. They mostly took 1.5 hours per person. The relevant political parties were asked WHO their water or EGD expert was so this person can answer the interview questions. Each answer is analysed individually and compared with the answers of other interviewees. The comparison was used to draw conclusions. If a question is not answered, it is not considered in the results.

#### 4.3. Data analysis

The six interviews were transcribed with the help of Amberscript and then coded: open, axial and structural (Delf, n.d.). The phases of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) per party are used and split along belonging and not-belonging objectives of participation for the phase involved. Open coding gives meaning to quotes without connecting them with each other in categories: that is axial coding (Delf, n.d.). Structural coding involves categorizing codes, pairing them with quotes, and deriving connections to make sense of the data (Delf, n.d.).

#### 4.4. Data validation

Uittenbroek et al. (2019) used for the research of three cases a combination of semi-structured interviews with the stakeholders. Moreover, Uittenbroek et al. (2019) used data from policy documents, media clippings, scientific papers and internet websites. A similar approach is used in this research. However, due to the absence of scientific papers, the focus is on policy documents and internet websites, as explained under 4.3. The number of media clippings is limited, so this is not used a lot. This research on minority political parties has a similar approach. However, there is more focus on the policy documents than on scientific papers because of the limited availability of data.

For the internal validity, there are three interviews conducted per party. Since there is a very limited number of members of parliament or employees involved in environmental and water policies for FNP and SSW, three interviewees is enough. In addition, there are a several

questions asked per phase of participation (WHO / WHEN / HOW). This gives participants enough opportunity to see whether the objectives of participation are identified in several situations. This makes it likely that the results represent the FNP and SSW in general. Therefore, the external validity of this research is strong. For the reliability, the similarities and differences between the answers of the interviewees per party is considered in the conclusions.

## 5. Results

In this part, the results of both the interviews and the literature review are discussed. This is split up along the two parties, FNP and SSW. Per party, this is split up again along the phases of participation WHO, WHEN and HOW. Per phase of participation, these objectives are discussed in these two groups of objectives: belonging and not-belonging objectives in the application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019).

### 5.1. FNP

#### **WITH WHOM does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

All the interviewees confirm the current coalition with BBB, CDA and CU. According to interviewee 1A, there are especially tensions expected with BBB due to their strong focus on agricultural interests. Moreover, they lack political experience. According to interviewee 3A, the FNP positions itself a bit left from the political middle. Interviewee 2A says there are differences regarding green policies between FNP and PvdD (animals party), GroenLinks (green party) and PvdA. However, interviewee 3A says they are close to green and leftist parties on biological agriculture, but also confirms the ideological closeness to CDA, BBB and CU. FNP became part of the coalition in 2023 because the PvdA left the negotiations with BBB, CDA and CU. FNP was initially rejected because they were seen as too close to the BBB according to interviewee 3A: the BBB preferred more diversity within the coalition. An important general impression is that FNP stresses language and culture as their most important theme.

#### Objectives that belong to the WHO-phase in the original application

All the three interviewees confirm influencing decisions (a) as a motivation for participating in the coalition. Interviewee 1A says about participating in the coalition: “you see that as a coalition party you can do more than in opposition.” Language and culture are the main reasons to participate in the coalition, but liveability and housing are important as well. Regarding the representation of the interests of minorities and supporters of the FNP, the interviewees are divided. Some see a direct relation between their followers and interest representation in policies, some do not see this specifically. Regarding the EGD-policies, the interviewee 1A sees problems growing in the cooperation with the BBB. Important examples are the Nitrate Directive, the Water Framework Directive, space for nature and manure policy. Moreover, the interviewee 1A does not expect to meet the deadline of the Water Framework directive in 2027: ‘of that Water Framework Directive, there's a 2027 deadline attached to that. And we're never going to meet that.’ In addition, the interviewees all mention enhancing democratic capacity (b), but in different forms. Interviewee 1A is the most outspoken and concrete and mentions the participation of party members and petitions: “Of course we speak to everyone and to people in our party. And sometimes we participate in things like petitions or something like that (...)” Interviewee 2A says the FNP on regional level aligns with their municipal councillors on local level. They also stand up for local fishermen WHO have been squeezed by the government. These people, on the advice of the government, made their cutters sustainable, but were then denied a new licence. However, interviewee 2A does not mention enhancing democratic capacity explicitly. Interviewee 3A confirms the relevance of enhancing democratic capacity but sees this one as the most relevant.

Two of the three interviewees (1A and 2A) mention social learning (c) explicitly, while interviewee 3A finds all the objectives of participation relevant. Interviewee 1A mentions explicitly involving people and the influence of fellow party colleagues: “Of course you hope

that you not only influence things here in the house, but that you also determine the population”. According to interviewee 2A, social learning (c) is seen as one of the most important objectives. This becomes visible in involving FNP-aldermen in the coalition negotiations in 2023. For discussions that concern certain municipalities, municipal FNP-politicians are generally involved to avoid a division of opinions: “But if there are specific issues that relate to a particular municipality, region, we also go into that region” The example of unlicensed sustainable fishermen due to government policy failures was mentioned under enhancing democratic capacity. However, it applies to social learning as well, because the contact with fishermen on this topic is a form of social learning (c). The earlier mentioned examples of involving aldermen, municipal councillors, fisheries and the committee meeting in an area with recent floods are mentioned: these aspects all apply to incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f). The example of involving local inhabitants in Holwerd in the protests against the gas drillings, also is identified here implicitly. The FNP was involved in these protests in a stronghold area of its voters, although the gas drillings itself were the main motivation of being involved. However, only interviewee 1A confirms receiving this knowledge. Interviewee 2A and 3A do not.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the WHO-phase in the original application

Interviewees 2A and 3A mention empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) as a relevant objective. Interviewee 1A does not mention this point. However, interviewee 1A confirms that the language and culture of the Frisian minority always is a very important topic generally. An example is the involvement of local people in Holwerd in the protests against the gas drillings in the Wadden Sea, in which the FNP was involved. This region is an FNP-stronghold, but interviewee 3A does not think that this matters a lot for protecting the interests of these people. Interviewees 2A and 3A mention harnessing local information and knowledge (e) as objective of participation regarding the interest representation of the minority. Many aspects are already mentioned under objective c (social learning) and d (empowering and emancipating). Examples are involving aldermen in the coalition negotiations, generally involving municipal councillors and involving fishermen for gathering knowledge on failed policies. A more specific example for e (harnessing local information and knowledge) was to hold a committee meeting in an area where there had been recent floods. However, harnessing local information and knowledge (e) does not play a role according to interviewee 3A in the choose for and negotiations with coalition partners. Interviewee 1A mentions this objective shortly but does not offer a further explanation. Only interviewee 3A sees testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) as relevant in all the questions. However, interviewee 3A sees all the objectives as relevant, in this case without further explanation. Only interviewee 3A sees generating legitimacy (h) as relevant in all the questions. However, interviewee 3A sees all the objectives as relevant, in this case without further explanation. Interviewee 2A confirms that resolving conflict (i) is an objective of participation. Moreover, interviewee 3A sees resolving as relevant in all the questions. However, interviewee 3A sees all the objectives as relevant. They do not mention very specific reasons, but generally spoken, they connect it to influencing decisions. By participating in coalitions, the FNP can influence decisions by resolving conflicts.

#### **WHEN does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

The FNP is not a constructive coalition partner per se, but looks for the tensions in the coalition, for example with parliamentary questions. However, according to interviewee 2A, parliamentary questions are mostly asked together with other parties. Interviewee 2A confirms that this more often happens to ideologically distant regional ministers, but



interviewee 1A says this is more based on the topic: “theme-dependent.” It could both be true, but what is exactly true, remains unclear. Regarding the important theme gas drillings, there is a strong unity against this. However, the BBB said in the election campaign that they were open for gas drillings. Nitrogen and sustainability are important topics of discussion as well (NOS, 2023).

The interviewees disagree on the presence of pre-electoral coalitions. According to interviewee 2A, there was no pre-electoral coalition known, but CDA and maybe CU were suspected of being involved in a pre-electoral coalition, but not the FNP: “CDA, yes, but ChristenUnie, I know, CDA and yes, that was suspicious.” Interviewee 1A says the FNP was involved in a pre-electoral coalition without the BBB but does not want to share with which parties. Interviewee 3A says that BBB and CDA had a pre-electoral coalition while there were flirts with the CU as well. Apparently, there are differences in the information participants have. However, a pre-electoral coalition between BBB and CDA with flirts with the CU sounds likely because this was the base for both rounds of coalition negotiations. Literature shows that FNP asks in several ways attention for protection of the Wadden Sea area. Although this is mostly not directly motivated by the measurements of the EGD, the green attitude of the FNP is very clear (Fryske Nasjonale Partij, 2021; Middel, 2021).

In general, the coalition seems to have a positive attitude to nature protection and to protecting the Wadden Sea Area. This is in line with the election program of the FNP (FNP Fryslân, 2023). An example that was mentioned by interviewee 1A was the support of the FNP for a proposal for strict maritime rules in the North Sea area. The coalition focuses on issues such as protecting water quality, including bathing water, and combating salinisation. The coalition wants Fryslân to remain the agricultural province of the Netherlands and thinks that agriculture and nature should reinforce each other. Agriculture might, for example, increase the amount of meadow birds (Provincie Fryslân, 2023)

Moreover, the coalition is against oil and gas drillings in Fryslân, in the case of gas because of soil subsidence (Provincie Fryslân, 2023). This is in line with the EGD (European Commission, 2020). The CU, a coalition partner, fiercely opposes gas drillings, as does the FNP (Omrop Fryslân, 2023b). This makes it more difficult to clarify the FNP's influence on the coalition agreement. Lastly, special attention is paid to the specific nature of the Wadden Sea area, with a lot of tourism and other interests (Provincie Fryslân, 2023). Existing laws and policies will be followed. The Frisian Program for the Rural Areas should relate to the Water Framework Directive and the Netherlands Environmental Network . The national Nature Network Netherlands should not get the same status as the Natura 2000 areas of the EU because of the number of limitations. Also, regarding nitrogen, they only agree to the legal purpose of 2035 (Provincie Fryslân, 2023). The BBB seems not very nature minded. For example, they criticise the critical load of oxygen in nature areas (Omrop Fryslân, 2023d).

#### Objectives that belong to the WHEN-phase in the original application

Enhancing democratic capacity (b) is mentioned four times. That is not very often, taking the fourteen chances for answering this into account. Moreover, it is not mentioned at all by interviewee 2A. However, one should remember that there is no obligation from the theory to meet all the objectives in all the questions mentioned. Social learning (c) was the corresponding option according to the application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) that was chosen most often: seven times. That is relatively often out of fourteen options. Moreover, it is mentioned by all the interviewees at least two times. Harnessing local information and knowledge (e) is mentioned five times. In addition, it is mentioned by all the interviewees at

least one time. Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) was chosen six times, which is the most often after social learning (c). However, it only mentioned by interviewee 2A and 3A and not being confirmed by interviewee 1A. Testing the robustness of information (g) from other sources is mentioned two times. It is only mentioned by interviewee 2A and not by interviewee 1A and 3A.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the WHEN-phase in the original application

Generating legitimacy (h) is mentioned three times by interviewee 1A and 2A. That is not a lot for an answer that belonged to the WHEN-phase in the identification by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in public participation. In addition, it is not even mentioned by interviewee 3A. Influencing decisions (a) was chosen 11 times by the interviewees, more often than social learning (c). It was chosen by all the interviewees at least three times. This deviates clearly from the theory. It is likely that influencing decisions is an important motivation to participate in a coalition. “Influencing decisions (...) indeed you have to be in the coalitions (...)” Moreover, interviewee 1A and 3A confirm that regional ministers from other parties put the accent of their own political ideology on their policies. This confirms that influencing decisions is an objective of participation in the coalition, at least for this regional ministers. Pre-electoral coalitions might have had a role in the decision to get FNP on board in the coalition after the PvdA stopped the negotiations. Empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) does not belong to the WHEN-category in the application of the framework by Uittenbroek (2019). This option is mentioned three times. Moreover, it is mentioned by both interviewee 1A and 2A. Resolving conflict (i) was mentioned four times. It is mentioned by every interviewee at least once. Pre-electoral coalitions could have a role in this, but it is not likely that resolving conflict is the motivation for that: a pre-electoral coalition is probably more meant to secure power for the participating parties.

#### Other

J (other) was chosen four times. Mentioned options were: ‘focus on certain policy area's’ (question 4.1. coalition on the impact of regional ministers on their policy areas), ‘CDA-minister wanted to secure his job’ (3.1 general, reason for pre-electoral coalition, rather a cause than an objective), ‘personal relations’ (also 3.1 general) ‘looking for conflict’ (2.1 general, objective impacted by participation in policy process after protests against gas drillings) and ‘balance economics and nature and co-sey politics (also 2.1 general).

#### **HOW does the FNP currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

There is a surplus coalition with a small majority: CU could be removed. This is not really an open coalition with space to look for majorities outside of the coalition, and space for tension among each other: “The previous period we had 22 against 21 (..) many more things that were done together with the opposition.” This is not in line with the theory of Bergman et al. (2023), which says in surplus coalitions, coalition agreement generally have a stronger role. Regarding the opposition, there are tensions with PvdA, but this is expected to become more open. The CU is an instable partner due to personal problems of politicians. However, the CU might still help to get nature policies more towards the FNP-side in the coalition.

From the question on knowledge of the EGD-policies, it becomes clear that the broad EGD-objectives are mostly known and shared. However, there is less knowledge on the specific application of EGD-rules to the Wadden Sea area. Regional ministers on policy areas that apply to the Wadden Sea area not from the FNP. This could lead to a relatively high number

of questions towards these ministers compared to other coalition parties. This does not show up from the interviews yet, but the current coalition period is still short. Moreover, interviewee 1A expects tensions with the BBB regional minister on favouring agricultural interests over nature interests: “I do suspect that this will happen, but it is visible on those WFD things and nitrogen.”

#### Objectives that belong to the how-phase in the original application

Of the answers that fit to the theory, social learning (c) is mentioned sometimes: five times. That is not a lot for an answer that belonged to the how-phase in the application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in public participation. Moreover, it is also not mentioned by interviewee 3A. Of the answers that fit to the theory, empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) is mentioned sometimes as well: four times. That is not a lot and it is not mentioned at all by interviewee 3A. Harnessing local information and knowledge (e) is the answer most often mentioned that fits to the theory: eleven times out of twenty. Moreover, it is mentioned at least three times by every interviewee. Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) is hardly mentioned: three times. Moreover, it is not mentioned at all by interviewee 3A. Of the answers that fit to the theory, resolving conflict (i) is mentioned sometimes: five times, at least one time per interviewee and three times by interviewee 3A.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the how-phase in the original application

Influencing decisions (a) is, as it is in the WHEN-category, the most chosen answer: eleven times out of twenty. It is mentioned at least three times by every interviewee. It seems that there is no influence of ideological distance to coalition members on the policies. “Everyone, that ideology has disappeared from politics in recent years, except for the SGP (conservative christian party) and that kind of payment”, says interviewee 3A. However, this interviewee also thinks this can sometimes differ per topic. Interviewee 1A also saw tensions on the wolf-topic with VVD (conservative liberal) and CDA. However, being a nature-related topic, this is not directly related to the Wadden Sea area. However, according to interviewee 1A, the distances in political experience between the BBB, that is for the first time in parliament since 2023, are the most challenging aspect in the coalition. It is not clear whether there are more questions asked to regional ministers from other parties the FNP on EGD-related issues: the FNP does not have regional ministers on these issues. However, interviewee 2A says that regional ministers from other parties in general get more questions. Interviewee 3A says that the own deputy is supported with questions, which is confirmed by interviewee 1A. According to interviewee 1A, parliamentary questions are often about landscape and nature and contain local information. Interviewee 3A confirms the topic-based questions. The effect of the ideological distance of regional ministers of other parties on policy terrains regarding the EGD remains however unclear. Interviewee 2A says that it is the same dynamic as with the number of questions towards regional ministers from the FNP from other parties in the coalition: more questions to regional ministers of other parties in general.

Enhancing democratic capacity (b) is also mentioned sometimes: three times. However, it is not mentioned by interviewee 3A. Testing the robustness of information from other sources (g), an objective that is not identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019), is hardly mentioned: three times. It is not mentioned by interviewee 3A. Generating legitimacy (h) is also mentioned sometimes: two times by interviewee 2A.

#### Other

J is mentioned seven times in different forms.

## 5.2. SSW

### **WITH WHOM does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

According to interviewee 2B and 3B, cooperation with other parties depends on the topic. With the Greens, they cooperate on environmental topics because SSW is ideologically close to them on environmental issues. On green and water themes, such as CCS, there is strong cooperation with the Greens. WHEN the Greens were in the cooperation (a coalition on district level), the SSW often put certain themes on the agenda to provoke the Greens in the cooperation because of the compromises they had made: “(...) to force them to take a stand.” SSW works together with Greens on flood prevention and protecting the Wadden Sea coast, but the Greens did not support, but only vote in favour of a resolution for that: their national minister was criticised in it. With the SPD, SSW cooperates on social topics. With the CDU, SSW cooperates on language policies. With the FDP, SSW cooperates on civil rights. However, the SSW values green space much more than the FDP. In water issues, SSW are close to the SPD on state level. There is cooperation with both the coalition and the opposition. More cooperation regarding floods during the autumn in 2023 is expected by interviewees 2B and 3B, while there is strong cooperation on the climate crisis as well. Principally, the SSW does not cooperate with the AfD (extreme-right).

#### Objectives that belong to the WHO-phase in the original application

Influencing decisions (a) is the most chosen answer (12 out of 14). It is mentioned by all the interviewees. This makes objective a the most chosen objective. The SSW cooperates with other parties based on the topic to influence decisions (a). For example, they cooperate with the greens on environmental issues, and with the SPD on social topics. Enhancing democratic capacity (b) is mentioned by every interviewee as well, 10 times in total. This is the most chosen objective after influencing decisions (a). All interviewees mention social learning (c), but less often than influencing decisions (a) and enhancing democratic capacity (b): 6 times. Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) is mentioned the least often of all the WHO-objectives of participation: four times. However, it is mentioned by all the interviewees at least one time, and two times by interviewee 1B.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the WHO-phase in the original application

Empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) is not mentioned at all. However, the SSW cooperates with the FDP on civil right issues and with the CDU on language policies. Harnessing local information and knowledge (e) was mentioned one time by interviewee 1B. Testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) is mentioned two times and is only mentioned by interviewee 1B. Generating legitimacy (h) was mentioned four times: it was mentioned two times by interviewee 2B and is both times confirmed by interviewee 3B. Resolving conflict (i) is mentioned six times totally: two times by each interviewee. That is often for an objective that does not belong to the theory.

#### Other

Regarding question 4 of the category general questions, gathering knowledge on demonstrations and information meetings is mentioned as an objective of participation by interviewee 2B and 3B. The question is about interest representation of the minority in regional parliament. This does not really fit in category e (harnessing local information and knowledge) or f (incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge). Other (j) is also mentioned as an objective in question 1 of the opposition case regarding the effect of the

participation in the opposition on their objectives of participation. Interviewees 2B and 3B mention that points are set together on the agenda in the context of the ideological distance to the coalition partners. This is more done to make their point of view clear rather than to influence decisions. In general, it is interesting to read that SSW sometimes tries to provoke other parties such as the Greens on compromises in the coalition. Moreover, they put themes on the agenda instead of focussing on directly influencing decisions.

### **WHEN does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

In general, there is knowledge on the objectives and rules of the EGD. It is clear how this applies to the context of the Wadden Sea area, although not every interviewee has specific knowledge on all the regulations and directives. SSW protests heavily against oil drillings and gas drillings and horizontal drillings. SSW votes against the drillings in parliament and organize protests, demonstrations and information meetings for citizens: “political pressure, with protests, with demonstrations, with resolutions. (...) Information events.” The same happens for CCS (carbon capture storage). According to interviewee 2B, this is not per se a minority interest, but an interest of the inhabitants of the region in general. SSW has never been explicitly in pre-electoral coalitions at any level as far as the interviewees know. On state level, the SSW was in government from 2012 to 2017. After the election in 2017, it wanted either to continue with the same coalition with SPD and Greens or go in the opposition. The working relations with the Greens in coalition on state level has become more difficult. Minority interests are important for the SSW, also on EU-level. They are trustworthy in sticking to their views to protect the Wadden Sea nature. SSW is pro-European but can be critical of EU-plans as well WHEN necessary. On state level, the SSW tries to provoke the Greens, especially with motions on CCS: “We are currently the only party that is clearly against CCS.” In another question, it became clear that there was a similar trend on the district level in the cooperation (coalition) from 2018 until 2023. It depends on the circumstances whether the coalition – opposition relation is weakened or not. On district level, there was a strong contradiction with the cooperation (coalition) on social issues that was highlighted with motions. On the other hand, good proposals of the cooperation are supported and not rejected because they are from the cooperation. According to interviewee 1B, F (incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge) and g (testing the robustness of information from other sources) are in favour of the coalition. So, they weaken the contradiction coalition-opposition.

### Objectives that belong to the WHEN-phase in the original application

Enhancing democratic capacity (b) is chosen eight times. That is the most of all the options that did belong to the WHEN-category in the application by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) on public participation. It is mentioned twice by interviewee 1B, three times by interviewee 2B and confirmed by interviewee 3B. SSW organises protests, demonstrations and information meetings for citizens on the plans for CCS (carbon capture storage), which enhances democratic capacity. Social learning (b) is mentioned only two times: one time by interviewee 2B, which is confirmed by interviewee 3A. Together with generating legitimacy (h), it is the least chosen option that belongs to the WHEN-category in the application of the framework by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in the participation case. Harnessing local information and knowledge (e) is chosen three times. However, it is only chosen by interviewee 1B. Interviewees 2B and 3B do not mention this objective, which is identified as a belonging objective by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in the participation case. Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) is mentioned six times by the interviewees: it is mentioned no less than four times by interviewee 1B, one time by interviewee 2B and this one time is

confirmed by interviewee 3B. It is relevant to consider that interviewee 1B sees that this objective contributes to a stronger cooperation between coalition and opposition. According to interviewee 1B, objective f helps the coalition and so strengthens the cooperation between coalition and opposition. Testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) is mentioned five times, of which three times by interviewee 1B. It is interesting that interviewee 1B mentions harnessing local information and knowledge (e), incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) and testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) more often than interviewees 2B and 3B. Interviewees 2B and 3B mention testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) one time. Also, this objective is seen by interviewee 1A as contributing to strengthening the cooperation between coalition and opposition. According to interviewee 1A, testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) helps the coalition and so strengthens the cooperation between coalition and opposition.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the WHEN-category in the original application

Generating legitimacy (h) is mentioned by each interviewee one time. That is not a lot, but at least, it is a belonging objective in the identification of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) that is mentioned by every interviewee. Organising protests, demonstrations and information meetings for citizens on CCS contributes to creating legitimacy for the points of view of the SSW. Moreover, the SSW, as an opposition party, supports good proposals of the coalition, so SSW contributes to creating legitimacy for these proposals. Influencing decisions (a) is the second option chosen with 7 out of 12. That is a lot for an option that is not identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in the public participation case. All the interviewees mention this option: interviewee 1B mentions it one time, interviewee 2B three times and these three times are confirmed by interviewee 3B. Since there were no pre-electoral coalitions, this cannot have a role in influencing decisions. However, according to interviewee 2B and 3B, good proposals of the coalition are supported, and so SSW tries to have some influence there. Empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) is chosen two times as well: one time by interviewee 2B and confirmed by interviewee 3B as well. However, this is an objective that is not identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019). The organisation of actions of SSW against CCS contributes to the emancipation of the minorities in the Wadden Sea area. Minority interests are the core of the SSW and therefore stand for protecting the Wadden Sea area. With that background, SSW is pro-European, but can be critical of the EU as well because of their points of view. Resolving conflicts (i) is mentioned three times in total: one time by each interviewee. That is not that often. However, it is still interesting for an option that is not identified in the case of Uittenbroek et al. (2019). However, the opposite, looking for conflict, happens as well, for example by provoking the Greens in the coalition on environmental issues. The Greens have done compromises to participate in the coalition, and SSW can provoke them from the opposition. This happens according all the interviewees.

#### Other

Other (j) is mentioned by interviewee 2B and confirmed by interviewee 3B. They mention the objective to create conflicts within the coalition by showing the differences within it. However, the indirect objective seems in the end to increase the power position of the SSW and so to be able to influence decisions better.

**HOW does the SSW currently participate on behalf of minorities in transposing the water policies of the EGD in Friesland to regional policies?**

Most of the documents that could be found are contributions to discussions in the regional parliaments. This confirms the attitude of the SSW towards protecting the nature of the Wadden Sea area, but the link with policies of the EGD is rather weak. However, the impact on other parties and the policies on regional level become clear from the interviews: the documents show especially the contribution of SSW to the debates on these policies.

The SSW wants a climate-neutral industry that stimulates the maritime economy as part of the green transition (Nitsch, 2023a). Moreover, the SSW supports the finance of green-blue harbours in the national park Wadden Sea for the green transition in the region. This is close to where minorities live (Nitsch, 2023b). SSW supports a proposal of Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands to forbid PFAS in the EU from 2025 on. PFAS is very harmful for water ecosystems (European Commission, n.d.-e). Due to the floodings last October in the Baltic Sea region, the coast protection should be strengthened along all the coasts (Dirschauer, 2023c). To protect the nature of the sea and to tackle climate changes, nutrient yields of the agricultural sector should be decreased (Dirschauer, 2023b).

It wants to contribute to more sustainable, future-proof agriculture (Dirschauer, 2023d). Local food and a fair price are central to this (Dirschauer, 2024b). However, this must be in line with the EGD. This is one of the rare occasions when the SSW explicitly refers to the EGD (Dirschauer, 2022c). Water and soil protection should also be considered crucial (Dirschauer, 2022b). SSW is positive about EU-regulations for crop protection. Applying the EU's precautionary principle is important: we know very little about glyphosate, for example. The use of chemical pesticides should be banned in vulnerable environments according to the SSW (Dirschauer, 2022c). The total use must be reduced by half by 2030, with space for personal interpretation. According to the SSW, the transposition of the nitrate directive has taken too long (Dirschauer, 2022c). According to SSW, the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is not changed enough. This is not part of the EGD but is strongly related to it. According to the SSW, the CAP pays too little attention to resources, climate protection, animal welfare, biodiversity and social aspects. However, adjustments are not possible due to the excessive influence of the agricultural lobby (Dirschauer, 2023a). Lastly, the SSW attaches importance to coastal protection in the Wadden Sea national park. (Dirschauer, 2023e).

#### Objectives that do belong to the how-phase in the original application

Social learning (c) is mentioned by interviewee 2B and confirmed by interviewee 3B. SSW focuses on strengthening the cooperation with Denmark and the Netherlands, contributing to policy making with new information. On national level, the SSW uses a new-established group for members of parliament that speak Low German to ask attention for regional issues. Empowering and emancipating marginalised individuals and groups (d) is mentioned one time by interviewee 1B. The SSW sees protecting the Wadden Sea nature area as in the interest of the minorities in the region. Therefore, it opposes the CCS-plans of green federal minister Habeck (Dirschauer, 2022a), the LNG-terminal of the fossil industry (Harms, 2022) and oil drilling plans. In addition, they favour sustainable fishery, the protection of biodiversity, sustainable tourism and the protection of the coast (Dirschauer, 2024a; SSW, 2023).

The SSW focuses on taking minority interests into account in the case there is a majority for a proposal they oppose. Harnessing local information and knowledge (e) is mentioned two times: one time by interviewee 2B and this is confirmed by interviewee 3B. The SSW can, due to its roots in the minorities, bring in local information in policy making. Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge (f) is mentioned one time by interviewee 1B. From

the objectives that belong to the how-category in the identification by Uittenbroek et al. (2019), resolving conflict (i) is mentioned the most often: 5 times out of 7. It is mentioned one time by interviewee 1B and two times by interviewee 2B. These two times are confirmed by interviewee 3B. In crisis times, there is strong cooperation of SSW with almost all parties in parliament except for the AfD. Important examples are the war in Ukraine, the coronavirus crisis and the climate crisis. However, during a crisis on the household budget, SSW cooperated mostly with ideological closer partners.

#### Objectives that do not belong to the how-phase in the original application

From the objectives that do not belong to the how-category, influencing decisions (a) and generating legitimacy (h) are mentioned the most often: four times. Influencing decisions (a) is not mentioned by interviewee 1B, but it is mentioned by interviewee 2B and 3B. There is a lot of information available on the contributions to debates and points of view of the SSW regarding environmental issues. The feeling of the interests as a remote region that are not considered is strong within the SSW. SSW is in front of the protests against CCS (carbon capture storage), also because it threatens the way of life of the minorities. Cooperation within the parliament for majorities mostly takes place with ideologically closer parties. These parties also help to decide on the points of view. Minority interests in the case of a majority for a proposal are considered as far as possible. Opposition to CCS goes mostly via extra parliamentary organisations. The SSW-voters have a strong interest in protecting the Wadden Sea. The SSW has always been in front of the green movement. Consensus is strong in times of crisis. This applies to the energy crisis after the Russian invasion in 2022, but also the climate crisis: “the climate crisis itself (...) so we actually have a very, very common approach.” This influences the discussions on LNG and renewable energy. A shortage on drinking water is expected as well, but a strong consensus is expected here. Strong cooperation in the coronavirus crisis and the climate crisis. In the climate crisis, most parties share the objectives, but the ways towards it is a point of discussion. On district level, the cooperation with other parties due to the coronavirus crisis might give a feeling of better cooperation. On state level, it was weakened because economic interests became too important in the political debates according to the SSW. On district level, there is probably no correlation between the coalition-opposition relation and the number of parliamentary questions. However, on state level, this seems the case. However, also agricultural themes have an important role, especially animal welfare, pesticides, glyphosate and the promotion of local food. Enhancing democratic capacity (b) is mentioned one time by interviewee 1B. SSW enhances democratic capacity by contributing to the organisation of extra parliamentary action and the involvement of farmers in creating policies. Testing the robustness of information from other sources (g) is mentioned one time by interviewee 1B. The SSW stresses the importance of increasing knowledge generally in politics. From the objectives that do not belong to the how-category, generating legitimacy (h) and influencing decisions (a) are mentioned the most often: four times. However, in contrast to influencing decisions (a), generating legitimacy is mentioned by every interviewee: two times by interviewee 1B and one time by interviewee 2B. This one time is confirmed by interviewee 3B. There are several ways SSW tries to generate more legitimacy. First, it cooperates with ideological closer parties to find majorities. Second, it stimulates cooperation with ideological closer parties. Third, SSW involves farmers in policies regarding the agricultural transition.



## 6. Discussion

In this chapter, there is a reflection on the research methods. The aspects that are discussed are the application of the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in a different context and challenges that came up during the research. In addition, the objectives of participation of FNP and SSW are discussed. The application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) to political parties in this research is an experiment. The who is interpreted in this research as cooperation with other political parties, but it turned out that cooperation with citizens and local politicians was important as well. In addition, separating the when- and how-category is difficult because the stage of participation (coalition forming) determines the type of participation (coalition or opposition). The type of coalition (open or closed towards toe opposition) or opposition (constructive or responsive) determine the amount and frequency of participation. In addition, the stages of decision-making are not that well defined, because plans are proposed and accepted or rejected not only during coalition negotiations: this can happen regularly in the four years after the elections. In addition, parties are already represented for a long time in parliament and are so already longer involved in decision making on Wadden Sea environmental topics. Comparing the results of the interviews, an important analogy is that influencing decisions is the most chosen objective in almost all the categories. However, it is not identified for the WHEN- and HOW-phase according to the application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019). Moreover, generally spoken, except for influencing decisions, the objectives that were identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in the corresponding phases are more chosen than those not identified. However, this is not really the case for the WHEN-category, especially in the case of the FNP. There, the answers that were not identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) were chosen relatively often. In addition, it is interesting that in the FNP-case, interviewee 3A often gives different answers than the two other interviewees. However, interviewee 3A joined regional politics only recently, so there might be a knowledge gap. Regarding the objective category other (j), looking for conflict is mentioned by both the FNP (WHO-category) and SSW. This mostly is with the objective to influence decisions. Another objective is getting attention for certain policy themes. The FNP strives for a focus on certain policy in the WHEN-category and for working topic-based with questions. The SSW sets topic on the agenda, often together with other opposition parties, to get to know the points of view of the cooperation. In addition, the FNP mentions personal relations and supporting own regional ministers as a motivation as well. For the SSW, gathering knowledge at demonstrations is a relevant additional objective. As explained, influencing decisions is an important similarity, since this objective is relevant for both the parties. Whether it is identified or not in the category, does not matter: both parties continue to recognise its relevance. WHEN analysing the objectives further, the coalition case seems to have a bit more focus on information objectives: especially the objective harnessing local information and knowledge is mentioned relatively often compared to the opposition case. The opposition case seems to have a stronger focus on objectives that increase support for decisions: enhancing democratic capacity and generating legitimacy are mentioned relatively often. Social learning is mentioned relatively often as well, but this limits itself to the WHO-category. An important analogy is that influencing decisions is the most chosen objective in almost all the categories. However, it is not identified for the WHEN- and HOW-phase according to the application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019). Moreover, generally spoken, except for influencing decisions, the objectives that were identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in the corresponding phases are more chosen than those not identified.

However, this is not really the case for the WHEN-category, especially in the case of the FNP. There, the answers that were not identified by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) were chosen relatively

often. In addition, it is interesting that in the FNP-case, interviewee 3A often gives different answers than the two other interviewees. However, interviewee 3A joined regional politics only recently, so there might be a knowledge gap. Regarding the objective category other (j), looking for conflict is mentioned by both the FNP (WHO-category) and SSW. This mostly is with the objective to influence decisions. Another objective is getting attention for certain policy themes for the FNP and for working topic-based with questions. The SSW mentions looking for conflict to influence decisions. In addition, it sets topic on the agenda, often together with other opposition parties, to get to know the points of view of the cooperation. For the SSW, gathering knowledge at demonstrations is a relevant additional objective. When analysing the objectives further, the coalition case seems to have a bit more focus on information objectives: especially the objective harnessing local information and knowledge is mentioned relatively often compared to the opposition case. The opposition case seems to have a stronger focus on objectives that increase support for decisions: enhancing democratic capacity and generating legitimacy are mentioned relatively often. Social learning is mentioned relatively often as well, but this limits itself to the WHO-category.

The application of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) to political parties in this research is an experiment. Applying the framework in a new context causes several challenges. The WHO is interpreted in this research as ‘with which other parties do you cooperate’, but it turned out that cooperation with citizens and local politicians was important as well. In addition, separating the WHEN- and HOW-category is difficult because the stage of participation (coalition forming) determines the type of participation (coalition or opposition). The type of coalition (open or closed towards the opposition) or opposition (constructive or responsive) determine the amount and frequency of participation. However, the stages of decision-making are not that well defined, because plans are proposed and accepted or rejected not only during coalition negotiations: this can happen regularly in the four years after the elections. In addition, parties are already represented for a long time in parliament and are so already longer involved in decision making if that is already going on longer. However, the participation on decision-making is also determined by whether a coalition is open or closed towards a responsible or responsive opposition. A special difficulty of this research was that on district level in Germany, there currently is no coalition and opposition. However, there was a ‘cooperation’, which is in this context another word for coalition, from 2018 until 2023. The SSW was not part of this coalition. Since 2023, there is no coalition or opposition. However, environmental issues on the Wadden Sea area were hardly discussed after the dissolution of the cooperation. Therefore, the SSW can practically be considered an opposition case. In the WHO-category of the theory of Uittenbroek et al. (2019), equal and skewed representation is an aspect that is not used in the application of the theory of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) in this research. However, the topic of minority representation by the parties was discussed in three interviews. This is a topic that should be further researched.

This research applies the framework of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) to a different case than originally. Uittenbroek et al. (2019) applied the participation framework to public participation, but in this case, it is applied to political parties. However, a comparison between the similarities and differences of these two applications gives interesting insights. In addition, the belonging objectives in the application of the framework by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) were mentioned in the questions, asking whether these or (also) other objectives were relevant. In further research, this could be removed to make the research more neutral. Moreover, it is the question what is mentioning an objective enough to consider it as belonging to the phase. It is the question whether it should be mentioned by all the interviewees, and whether it should be mentioned in every question. In this research, the approach is that the more often an objective is mentioned and the more often this is equally done by the interviewees, the more the objective belongs to the phase. Although the EGD is only of recent years, related environmental laws already exist longer (EUR-Lex, n.d.). This research is limited to current times because of the focus on the transposition of the EGD. For earlier times, a lack of sources regarding the participation of parties in the transposition of European environmental policies and laws would make research difficult. Many politicians have left politics and many databases for policy documents or debates only contain data of the latest years. According to interviewee 1A, a member of parliament of the FNP was already worried about gas drillings in the Wadden Sea area in 2000. There was already a discussion on oil drillings in the Wadden Sea in Schleswig-Holstein in 2010. Moreover, there are worries about on the protection of the Wadden Sea against for example windmills in Denmark as well (Nationalpark Wattenmeer, 2023). Although there is a minority party for the German minority in Denmark only on local level, research on their participation can be relevant as well for the limited implications of the EGD on local level (Schleswigsche Partei, n.d.).

A last remark is the difference in ideological position between FNP and SSW. FNP is in the political centre and experienced in coalition governments. In contrast, SSW has a centre-left signature and focuses more on idealism, environmentalism and staying close to their own ideals. Both FNP and SSW stimulate cooperation outside of their own regional parliaments, which is broader only political parties. The FNP focuses on farmers, citizens and local politicians. The SSW brings specific knowledge from Denmark and the Netherlands because of their international connections in the Wadden Sea area. As explained, SSW cooperates with other parties based on the topic. They support proposals of the coalition if they agree.

## 7. Conclusion

In this part, the current participation of minority political parties from the Wadden Sea Area in the Netherlands and Germany in the transposition of the water policies of the EGD to regional policies is clarified. The similarities and differences with the application of the framework by Uittenbroek et al. (2019) are discussed. In addition, the relevant context of these outcomes is discussed.

It is remarkable that the role of the EGD in policy making is quite limited. Environmental and water themes are important for both FNP and SSW, but they do not refer a lot to the EGD or European Directives. There are some examples that have a role, such as the Water Framework Directive and the Nitrogen Directive. In addition, the FNP sometimes has a critical attitude to EU-regulations as well. Moreover, the FNP does not expect the Water Framework Directive deadline in 2027 to be reached. The coalition only mentions the directive as an ‘example’. In contrast, the SSW stresses the importance of the deterioration ban and the precautionary principle, all EU-regulations. Moreover, SSW criticizes the lack of reforms of European agricultural policies due to the powerful agricultural lobby. SSW challenges the Green party in the coalition from the opposition on the compromises they made on environmental policies, such as CCS in the Wadden Sea. In a coalition on state level, it has only cooperated one time with the green party and the social democrats from 2012 until 2017 (SSW, n.d.-a). However, FNP positions itself more in the political centre: between Christian democrats and the farmers party on the one hand, and progressive and green parties on the other hand.

This research shows that there are ideological differences between the FNP and SSW on environmental issues. It could be the case that there are ideological differences between the other EFA-members as well. Therefore, it is hard to deduce the outcomes of these research to other cases. However, if these parties are ideologically similar and in a similar situation of cooperation, deduction might become easier. Parties with an ideology like the FNP and in a coalition, for example the Schleswigsche Partei in Denmark on local level (Der Nordschleswiger steht, 2021) could be more comparable to the FNP-case. Parties with an SSW-like ideology and in opposition, for example the Scottish National Party (SNP) in earlier times, could be more comparable to the SSW-case (BBC News, 2010; European Free Alliance, n.d.-a). For other (regional) parties with a pro-European ideology, this research could give interesting insights as well. However, it remains important to take the form of participation, coalition and opposition, and ideology into account. In the Wadden Sea region, there are no other EFA-member parties on regional level than the FNP and SSW. Therefore, no case selection took place. However, the literature research of policy documents such as coalition agreements and reports of debates, web publications of the parties and media publications was limited. In the FNP-case, the reports of debate contributions of the FNP were very limited. However, there were more policy documents available, especially the coalition agreement. In the SSW-case, there were hardly relevant policy documents available, but more contributions to the debates of the SSW. To make the two cases as similar as possible, both the state and the district level are researched. In the Netherlands, only a province is in between the national and municipal level, but in Germany this are both the state (Land) and the district (Kreis) (Grenspost Düsseldorf, 2022; Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, n.d.). On the state level, there is much information available on state level, but this is less the case on district level. Especially regarding the outcomes of debates and decision-making in parliament, there is hardly literature available. Because of the two policy levels in Germany, there were also more possible interviewees available. Therefore, a

selection has been made. In the FNP-case, most of the politicians and policy makers involved in environmental and water topic were interviewed.

The interviewees have provided crucial information from their perspective on their participation in the transposition of EGD-policies. However, checking this with more neutral policy documents faced some challenges. The FNP made a coalition agreement with several other parties but joined the coalition only lately after failing coalition negotiations without the FNP. A lot was already agreed on for the earlier coalition, which the FNP joined. The coalition agreement and the election program of the FNP are published, but the exact contribution does not become clear from any policy document. In addition, no information on later contributions of the FNP after the coalition agreements is published. In short, it is generally spoken hard to check the exact contribution of the FNP to the policies of Fryslân with neutral sources. For the SSW, this is more the other way around. Generally spoken, the SSW, as an opposition parties, contributes often to the debate. However, how their contributions are translated into policies or not, is unclear. This makes it hard to check the contribution of the SSW to policy making with neutral sources. Moreover, there is more information on contribution in debates on state (Land) level than district (Kreis) level in Germany. However, these documents mainly confirmed the attitude on environmental issues and important themes of the SSW. It hardly contributes to the research on the objectives of participation.

More study should as well be conducted on the reasons why parties participate in a coalition or an opposition. In addition, it can be researched further how coalitions and oppositions work from the perspective of minority political parties. Moreover, the WHO-category in the research of Uittenbroek et al. (2019) covers equal versus skewed representation as well. In addition, it could be further researched whether the minority parties actually (equally) represent their minority. Further research on earlier periods of transposition of European green and water laws and policies by FNP and SSW could still be conducted. It might still be a possibility to ask for people within the political parties that were active earlier in politics regarding environmental EU water measures. In addition, Uittenbroek et al. (2019) concluded that participants were not explicitly informed about the objectives on beforehand. It could be interesting whether political parties do decide on beforehand what their objectives of participation are.

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## Appendix 1: Interview questions and explanation

The interview questions are inspired by the framework of Uittenbroek (insert reference), which links three participation designs to different participation objectives. These designs are interest representation (WHO), degree of participation (WHEN) and degree of deliberation (HOW). As explained in the theoretical framework, the innovative part of this research is that the participation of minority political parties in their region instead of citizens participation is addressed. The framework of Uittenbroek shows that there are often no explicitly formulated objectives of participation. According to Uittenbroek, a more systematic and deliberate approach make it more likely that the intended objectives are met if there is more explicit communication and discussion of objectives and participation design among participants. The research with the several forms of participation in the coalition and the opposition, as explained in the theoretical framework, in mind, the interviews intend to find out WITH WHOM, WHEN and HOW the Fryske Nasjonale Partij (FNP) and the Südschleswiger Wählerverband (SSW) participate in the transposition of the water policies of the EGD. Regarding the categorization of the research questions, it is important to remember that there is an overlap between the categories, which means some questions can be categorised into more categories.

The WHO-questions in this questionnaire address the cooperation with other parties in the regional parties, either in coalition or in opposition, and the position of other parties in the policy process. Although this framework is applied to participation of parties in the policy process instead of public participation, this approach is linked to the framework of Uittenbroek because of its discussion on involving all voices of the public and the stress on the importance of involving indispensable actors. Moreover, the authors point out that there can be differences in opinion regarding WHO is a stakeholder or not and what is an equal representation in interests. This is relevant context to keep in mind for the interviews. The WHEN-questions address the number of opportunities to participate in the decision-making process in the different phases of the planning process. These are policymaking, policy transposition / transposition of EGD-policies into regional policies, policy evaluation and maintenance phase. For the context of the EGD, it is important to remember that these policies involve several policy levels. The policies are made at the European level and transpositioned at the national, regional and local level. Fryslân and Schleswig-Holstein are responsible for carrying out several policies of the EGD. Multilevel governance theory helps to understand these dynamics better. Multilevel governance theory can involve formal, contractual relationships and more informal interactions. It could be the case that the FNP and SSW try to influence the policies via the Greens / EFA – fraction in the European Parliament or that the regional authorities or other political parties lobby in Brussels to get policies that better serve their ideas. This can serve several of the participation objective models explained further in this research: influencing decisions, social learning, empowering and emancipating, incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge, testing the robustness of information from other sources and generating legitimacy.

Early participation leads to more influence on the decision-making by participants and the inclusion of local, experimental and value-based knowledge while social learning is also stimulated. Later participation contributes to legitimising outcomes and testing the robustness of information, but this can be seen as window-dressing to hide the lack of participation. WHEN analysing the decision-making process, it is important to consider the difference between the coalition, which is mostly in the lead with a coalition-agreement, and the opposition, which is not needed for a majority in parliament. In the context of minority political parties' participation in the policy process, the WHEN-questions apply to the

participation in coalition or opposition and the formation of these choices. Although they also apply to how-questions since they are ways of participating, they determine the moments in which parties can participate. However, some overlap remains.

Each category of questions has its own color:

Important note: all the questions should be answered in the context of the transportations of water-related policies of the EGD into regional policies, if not mentioned explicitly. An explanation of every answer should be given. Moreover, the context of the participation of minority political parties should be considered as context in every question.

The interpretation of which elements of participation in policies belong to WHO (interest representation), WHEN (degree of participation) and HOW (degree of deliberation) are made by the researcher based on the framework of Uittenbroek and several sources regarding policy-making processes and political parties. However, the interviewees might not agree on this categorisation, and that is relevant since the different categories correspond with different sets of objectives of participation. Therefore, if interviewees do not agree with the categorisation, they can indicate that before the research, since the questionnaire will be sent to them beforehand. Moreover, the questionnaire is guided by a PowerPoint presentation with an explanation and the objectives of participation on it. Participants will be informed about this guiding presentation beforehand.

The answer options (based on Glucker et al. 2013, in Uittenbroek et al., 2019, p. 2532):

- a) Influencing decisions: Public participation will enable those WHO are affected by a decision to influence that decision.
- b) Enhancing democratic capacity: Public participation will enable participants to develop their citizenship skills (such as interest articulation, communication and cooperation) and, at the same time, provide participants with an opportunity to actively exercise citizenship.
- c) Social learning: Public participation will enable deliberation among participants and thus lead to social learning.
- d) Empowering and emancipating marginalized individuals and groups: Public participation will alter the distribution of power within society, thus empowering formerly marginalized individuals and groups. Substantive rationale
- e) Harnessing local information and knowledge: Public participation will enhance the quality of the decision output by providing decisionmakers with environmentally and/or socially relevant information and knowledge.
- f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge: Public participation will increase the quality of the decision output by providing decisionmakers with relevant experimental and value-based knowledge.
- g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources: Public participation will increase the quality of the decision output by testing the robustness of information from other sources. Instrumental rationale
- h) Generating legitimacy: Public participation will legitimize the decision-making process, thus providing legitimacy to the authority and facilitating project implementation (or here: transposition).
- i) Resolving conflict: Public participation will contribute to the identification and resolution of conflict before final decisions are made and thus facilitate project implementation (or here: transposition).
- j) Other

The option ‘other’ is added because the theory is tested in this case in the context of participation of political parties instead of citizens, and therefore it should be possible to ask for other objectives as well since the theory might not cover all the relevant objectives.

**Research questions:**

1. WHEN: What is the water-related policies of the European Green Deal that apply to the Wadden Sea region according to you?
2. WHEN: In which way did your party participate in the relevant policy process after the start of the protests against the gas and oil drillings in the coalition or in the opposition in your opinion?

2.1. Which objectives were impacted by this participation according to you? Please choose and clarify whether these objectives were set explicitly or not, and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

3. WHEN: In your opinion, was the choice for the form of participation (coalition or opposition and forms within) driven by pre-electoral coalitions?

3.1. Do you think the choice for pre-electoral coalitions impacted any of the objectives of participation? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

4. WHO: According to you, do the interest representation regarding the involvement in policy making in your regional parliament impact the objectives of participation a, b, c and f, or are other objectives impacted as well? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>



5. WHEN: Do you think the degree of participation regarding the involvement in policy making in your regional parliament impacts the objectives of participation b, c, e, f, g and f, or are other objectives impacted as well? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

6. HOW: In your opinion, does the degree of deliberation regarding the involvement in policy making in your regional parliament impact the objectives of participation c, d, e, f and i or are other objectives impacted as well? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

7. HOW: According to you, HOW do your knowledge and points of view on minority interest influence the objectives of participation? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

For the coalition case:

1. WITH WHOM of the political parties do you cooperate in the coalition and why?

1.1. What is the ideological distance to these parties, as you see it? Please explain

1.2. In your opinion, which objectives are impacted by the participation of your party in the coalition in the context of your ideological distance towards your coalition partners? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>

<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

2. From your perspective, HOW does your party participate in the coalition: in a majority, minority or surplus coalition?

2.1. In the case of a surplus coalition: according to you, does the choice for the coalition form in the context of the lower relevance of coalition agreements in surplus coalitions impact the objectives of participation? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

3. WHEN: In your opinion, is your role in the coalition very constructive or is your party more looking for the tensions for example by asking parliamentary questions to ministries controlled by other parties?

3.1. Which of the objectives of participation do you think are impacted by these behaviors in the coalition? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and how the different kinds of behavior impact these objectives (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

4. WHEN: Which party provides the regional ministers for the water-related policy areas of the European Green Deal?

4.1. Which of the objectives of participation do these ministers and their parties impact according to you? -Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

5. HOW: If your party has regional ministers on water-related European Green Deal: HOW does the ideological distance to coalition members influence the policies according to you?

5.1. Which of the objectives are impacted by this dynamic in your opinion? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

6. HOW: If your party has regional ministers on-water related European Green Deal policy areas: HOW does affect the number of parliamentary questions asked by other parties to your regional ministers from your perspective?

6.1. Do you think this dynamic regarding the parliamentary questions impacts the objectives of participation? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

7. HOW: If there are junior regional ministers: HOW does their presence influence the impact of the points of view of the ruling party on the corresponding ministry in your opinion?

7.1. HOW does the presence of junior ministers influence ministries that are headed by a minister of your party in your opinion?

7.2. HOW does the presence of junior ministers influence ministries that are headed by a minister of your party in your opinion?

7.3. Does the presence of junior ministers impact the objectives of participation from your perspective? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

8. HOW: If there are regional ministers from other parties on water-related European Green Deal policy areas: HOW does the ideological distance to coalition members

impact the objectives of participation from your perspective? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

9. HOW: If there are regional ministers from other parties on water-related European Green Deal policy areas: HOW does the ideological distance to coalition members affect the number of parliamentary questions asked by your party to their ministers from your perspective?

10. HOW: HOW does the ideological distance to your coalition partners in general influence the objectives of participation? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

For the opposition case:

1. WHO: With which other parties does your party oppose, or WITH WHOM does your party stand in opposition in water-related topics of the European Green Deal?

1.1. HOW does your participation in the opposition impact the objectives of participation in the context of your ideological distance towards your coalition partners according to you? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

2. WHEN: Does your party try to highlight the differences as a responsive opposition party within the coalition, for example with the objective to let it collapse?

2.1. Are the objectives for participation influenced by the behaviour of your party? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>

<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

3. HOW: Have there been any crises on water-related topics connected to the EGD, such as the publication of plans from national governments for oil and gas drillings in the Wadden and/or a need for more gas and oil in your country because of the sanctions against Russia? If so, continue with 3.1. and 3.2. If not, continue with question 4. .

3.1. WHO: WITH WHOM, the coalition, the opposition or both, did your party cooperate to make policies regarding the crisis / crises?

3.2. Because of which of the objectives of participation did your party cooperate? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

4. HOW: Have there been other crises on topics not related to water policies of the EGD?

4.1. Do you think these crises stimulated the cooperation on water-related topics of the European Green Deal from your perspective? Please explain how. If there has been any crisis / crises, please continue with question 4.2. and 4.3.

4.2. WHO: WITH WHOM, the coalition, the opposition or both, did your party cooperate to make policies regarding the crisis / crises?

4.3. Because of which of the objectives of participation did your party cooperate? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

5. WHEN: WHEN is the contradiction coalition – opposition in your party’s parliament stronger and WHEN weaker according to you?

5.1. Does this contradiction, or the absence of it, influence the objectives of participation in your opinion? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>

<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>

6. HOW: HOW do you think the coalition – opposition relationship correlates with the number of parliamentary questions asked: are there less questions in the case of more contradiction? 5.1. Does the behaviour of your party regarding the number of parliamentary questions and the corresponding coalition – opposition relationship impact the objectives of participation from your perspective? Please choose, make clear whether these objectives were set explicitly or not and explain (multiple answers possible):

<u>a) Influencing decisions</u>	<u>b) Enhancing democratic capacity</u>
<u>c) Social learning</u>	<u>d) Empowering and emancipating</u>
<u>e) Harnessing local info and knowledge</u>	<u>f) Incorporating experimental and value-based knowledge</u>
<u>g) Testing the robustness of information from other sources</u>	<u>h) Generating legitimacy</u>
<u>i) Resolving conflict</u>	<u>j) Other</u>