

Journalism Studies



ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjos20

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To cite this article: Andreas Ytterstad & Henrik Bødker (2022): Climate Change Journalism in Norway—Working with Frequency Around the "Green Shift", Journalism Studies, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2022.2084143

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2022.2084143

9	© 2022 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
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Climate Change Journalism in Norway—Working with Frequency Around the "Green Shift"

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ABSTRACT

This article traces the origins of the term of the green shift, which gained increased cultural, social and political traction in Norway after it was introduced in 2015 by journalist Anders Bjartnes, editor of Energi og klima (2011-). By looking at this outlet as well as two other contemporary niche media, Harvest (2013-) and Naturpress (2016-), we show how this term provided a way of working with frequency, one of the 12 news values outlined in Galtung and Ruge's seminal study from 1965. Inspired by discourse-historical analysis, we base our article on interviews with the editors of the three outlets, their journalistic output as well as on contextual material in order to show how the slow, uneven, global and partially invisible process of climate change was given a different temporal frame through the notion of the green shift. By addressing notions of frequency in relation to a specific time and context, we speak, on the one hand, to discussions about how an event-driven journalism struggles with the complex temporalities of climate change and, on the other, to recurrent calls for providing a more "context-driven reflection on the value and legacy of Galtung and Ruge" [Joye, Stijn, Ansgard Heinrich, and Romy Wöhler. 2016. "50 Years of Galtung and Ruge: Reflections on Their Model of News Values and its Relevance for the Study of Journalism and Communication Today." CM Komunikacija i Mmediji 36: 5–28].

KEYWORDS

Climate change; niche media; news events; frequency; temporality; iournalistic norms

Introduction¹

This article traces the origins of the "the green shift" in Norway after it was introduced by journalist Anders Bjartnes, editor of Energi og klima (2011-) in 2013. In 2015, "the green shift" was declared the "new word of the year" by the Language Council of Norway. A search in the retriever database of 364 Norwegian newspapers shows that in 2021, for the very first time, the number of entries under the search string green* shift* (11291) surpasses climate change*(8481). Bjartnes defined the green shift as "a continually ongoing, inescapable and unstoppable process" (Bjartnes 2015). This understanding, and the rise in the use of the term, signals a sustained attempt to deal with what Kunelius and Roosvall (2021) call the "event-process gap" (7) in the sense that the processes implied by the green shift constituted a frame within which a broader range of events could become newsworthy. Indeeed, when Norwegian Climate Scientist Helge Drange sighed "[i]f only you could see or smell the CO2 molecules", he aptly expressed the "invisibility of many environmental phenomena", a key challenge for journalists according to textbook introductions to environmental journalism (Pezzullo and Robert Cox 2018, 93). The relative absence—at least from some locations and/or perspectives—of unambiguous and visible symptoms means that the dynamics of climate change are not very well aligned with the frequency of journalism (see e.g., Dahl and Fløttum 2017; Moernaut, Mast, and Temmerman 2019). Most news is episodic, not thematic in nature (lyengar 1991), and thus amplifies events more than processes. So even though global warming (and concentrations of CO2 molecules in the atmosphere) has grown dramatically in the last seven years, we have to go back 12 years to find the biggest global spike in newspaper coverage of global warming.² The 2009 Copenhagen Climate Summit was a predictable (media) event that journalists planned for and attended (Eide and Kunelius 2012; Schäfer, Ivanova, and Schmidt 2014).

The media interest in this event can partly be understood through Galtung and Ruge's reflections on frequency, which they based on thinking about the "world" as "an enormous set of broadcasting stations, each one emitting its signal or its program at its proper wavelength" or—perhaps more appropriately for discussions of climate change—"a set of atoms of different kinds emitting waves corresponding to their condition" (Galtung and Ruge 1965, 65). Galtung and Ruge's discussion of frequency thus invites us to think about climate change issues as a complex network of signals at different strengths, qualities and temporal patterns in relation to which journalists have to decide what and when something is newsworthy. Seen from this perspective, climate summits have a fixed frequency, a beginning and an end, and can thus be anticipated and related to other re-current events such as national elections. The Copenhagen summit may therefore be an apt illustration of frequency understood as a shorthand for "event-centeredness" (Moernaut, Mast, and Pauwels 2018, 1326). Against this background, this paper investigates how the notion of a "green shift" helped climate journalism construct frequencies that allowed a more continuous coverage of a range of events that were diversly related to the overall issue of climate change. We analyse three niche online media that we consider pioneers of the green shift within climate journalism, and who also have helped shape the polysemic nature of the term. We also provide examples of how these different understandings of the green shift spread into the mainstream of Norwegian climate journalism.

The context in which we study this caught the attention of the Financial Times, Aljazeera and the New York Times, which all noted how the Norwegian General Election campaign in September 2021 was dominated by climate change. What Norwegian newspapers drew most attention to was, however, the front page of the relatively small, left liberal newspaper Information in Denmark, which—in bold across the entire page—exclaimed: "Dear Norway. If you, who have an oil fund of 12.000 billion kroner, cannot undertake a rapid green shift, then nobody can. We await the climate plan of the new government with anticipation". While the notion of a "green shift" has similarities with concepts more familiar internationally, like "green transition" (Cai et al., 2019; Haarstad and Rusten 2018) or "green economy" (Healy and Barry, 2017; Loiseau et al., 2016) it is also peculiarly Norwegian. A web of science search with "green shift"

as topic (20 September 2021) produces no more than 55 results, 9 of which relate to Norway or the Nordic region. While an entry on "det grønne skiftet" (the green shift) in the Norwegian Dictionary in May 2021 notes how the concept "so far" has "no precise definition", it also points out how "det grønne skiftet" was declared the new word of the year in 2015. It is also noted that Bjartnes (2015), the editor of the niche publication "Energi og klima" (Energy and climate change), coined the term.⁴

The notion of a "green shift" in Norway was thus initiated within climate journalism and has continually been reinvented by climate journalists (Veimo 2020; Veimo and Ytterstad 2020). In 2021, the E24 outlet, for example—which regularly delivers economic news to Norway's largest newspapers—created a new editorial team, and a new section called "the green shift". The green shift has helped shape Norwegian climate journalism. Interviews with the editors undertaken in 2018 is combined with an analysis of the discursive development of the green shift in the journalistic practice of these three niche media. This analysis illustrates how climate journalism may work with frequency.

The Frequency of News

The argument that "the press is not monolithic in how events are reported, [but] ... in which events are covered" (Patterson quoted in Cook 1998, 80) is somewhat similar to the perception undergirding Galtung and Ruge's (1965) question: "how do 'events' become 'news'" (65; emphasis in the original). What is underlined by both Patterson and Galtung and Ruge is thus a broad agreement among journalists as to what is a newsworthy event; and one of Galtung and Ruge's contributions was to see timing as important. Frequency is thus ultimately about attempts to synchronise the temporalities of journalism with those of possibly newsworthy events; and such synchronisation has indeed been a challenge as climate change—to many living in the affluent worlds—is a somewhat hidden, slow, and disjointed process that is relatively distant in both time and space.

As a starting point for understanding how events become news, Galtung and Ruge sketch a flow from "world event" to "personal image"; and it is in relation to the first part of this passage, from "world events" to "media image", that Galtung and Ruge invite us to reflect upon through the metaphor of a world linked through an "enormous set of broadcasting stations, each one emitting its signal or its program at its proper wavelength" (65). In this first image, the right frequency refers to the ability to receive the "event". This is about catching and being able to decipher the signal and in relation to this the article lists eight implications that may explain why something is "recorded as worth listening to" (65) and which broadly speaking, concerns qualities of the event itself and how these relate to what is known already and thus, by implication, how this is linked to broader social contexts. In relation to our discussion below, it is here worth singling out the third and fourth of these, which state, respectively, that "The more clear and unambiguous the signal" and "The more meaningful the sign" (65) are important for whether something is found worthy of attention.

In relation to events, they push the metaphor of frequency further; they write: "Since this is a metaphor and not a model we shall be liberal in our interpretation of 'frequency' and proceed as follows. By the 'frequency' of an event we refer to the time-span needed for the event to unfold itself and acquire meaning" (66). In this reading, the frequency of an event is a combination of its intrinsic temporality and related but also distinct processes of interpretation. It is precisely this duality of frequency, i.e., its emergence as an interplay between "objective" events and processes of meaning making, that is important here. And, in relation to such processes, Galtung and Ruge introduce yet another meaning of frequency and this is linked to the hypothesis that

the more similar the frequency of the event is to the frequency of the news medium, the more probable that it will be recorded as news by that news medium. (66, emphasis in the original)

Seen from today's media landscape, it is indeed interesting to note that Galtung and Ruge speculate that "if newspapers were published every minute the perspective could possibly be changed to the individual soldier" rather than the battle itself; and, they go on —with pertinence to climate change journalism—to argue: "Correspondingly, the event that takes place over a longer time-span will go unrecorded unless it reaches some kind of dramatic climax" (66). They do notice in relation to this that the "underreporting of trends is to some extent corrected by publications with a lower frequency". Following this, they go on to outline eight hypotheses some of which indeed are relevant for the coverage of the climate, for instance, that "an event with a clear interpretation, free from ambiguities in its meaning, is preferred to the highly ambiguous event from which many and inconsistent implications can and will be made" (66).

The notion of frequency is thus divided by Galtung and Ruge into three distinct but at times also interrelated aspects: (1) the extent to which journalists are tuned in to perceive a certain type of event; (2) the temporal unfolding and understanding of an event; and (3) the periodicity of publishing. While climate change is not an event in the sense of having a clear beginning and end and is certainly not "free from ambiguities in its meaning", it does, we argue, make sense to pursue some of the layered notions of frequency outlined by Galtung and Ruge in relation to the coverage of climate change in Norway.

The ideas of Galtung and Ruge expressed in "The Structure of Foreign News" have been applied, discussed and revisited rather extensively since 1965. The article has in fact, according to Google Scholar, been cited just over 6000 times. With regard to the notion of frequency, the most salient media developments concern the development and spread of broadcast liveness and, relatedly, the new ways in which news are published online on news sites and on social media. With regard to the former development, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) argue in their first revisit of Galtung and Ruge, "that 'frequency' has become less important for newspapers as they are outpaced by electronic media" (277).⁵ In relation to this, Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2007) argue similarly that "the temporalities of the electronic media" require a more "medium-specific approach" (28). In terms of the digital, Saltzis (2012) writes that "the notion of continuous deadlines raises questions about the frequency and patterns of news updates in websites" (702) and there is a wealth of writing on how the digital play into new journalistic temporalities in terms of speed, immediacy and accumulation (see for instance Bødker 2016).

Indeed, Galtung and Ruge's linking of the frequency of events with that of publishing rhythms is made more tenuous given the temporalities of both TV and the Web. Yet, what is at stake here is not simply when something is published but just as much whether something is being published at all and this concerns, especially with regard to climate change, what is perceived as an event and, not least, its temporal unfolding. When Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2007) argue that "temporality is a property that extends

beyond the news story itself" this should, we argue, be thought of not only in terms of technology but also in terms of the wider social context. In relation to this, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) raise the question of how to think about frequency as "related to stories that are not about events at all, but about trends, speculation, or even the absence of events" (268). Later on they expand on this by arguing that the factor of frequency may be less about a story's (or event's) "intrinsic properties" and more about the context within which something is deemed newsworthy.

An important point is precisely that the notion of frequency with which something is covered is not only determined by the frequency with which something happens or unfolds, and/or, the intervals of publishing; this would imply a relatively passive relation between "media images" and "events" as if these were "endowed with epistemological qualities" (Caple and Bednarek 2013, 4). Such a perspective is indeed challenged by climate change as this is a slow, incremental process with no clear end in sight and whose main material "events" largely are only visible through scientific measurement. In such cases, it is arguably untenable for journalists to merely wait for events that unambiguously can be linked to the broader process of climate change. Indeed, the practices analysed in this article underline that frequency also is a highly reflexive, active and less "event-centric" (Caple and Bednarek 2013, 6) process that is dialectically related to social contexts, which journalists draw on and contribute to.

By focusing on such contextual processes in our approach to frequency, we follow a call of Joye, Heinrich and Wöhlert (2016) who—by building on critiques of the status of Galtung and Ruge's typology—argue for "a stronger integration of journalistic practice with political, economic, social, global and other contexts". (15). What we propose here is to see the selection process, and thus the notion of frequency, as intimately linked to broader temporal frames whether this is the global and "objective" progress of climate change, the horizons of COP resolutions, national political goals or, as the case is here, the temporalities inherent in the discourse of a green shift. We thus argue that the temporality of an event is not intrinsic but given meaning through overarching temporal frames. This means that the temporal frame of the green shift allowed journalistic interventions while these simultaneously helped giving shape to the overall notion of the green shift. From this perspective, frequency is less of an isolated news value only relevant in relation to when something is reported but intimately also linked to what and how something is reported. The analysis below of how the frame of the green shift played into working with frequency is thus divided into three sections addressing how the editors—in relation to their own practices—thought about the green shift in terms of what it is as well as when and how it will happen.

The Outlets, the Interviews and the Method

By 2022, the green shift had become a mainstream term in Norwegian media. As Iselin Fjeld put it in a September 2021 interview about the motivations of the public broadcaster NRK, the sharper climate policy underway in the EU "is a reality now and for Norway it is beginning to sink in. We are going through a green shift anyway" (our emphasis).⁶ In our analysis of the beginnings and the discursive development of the green shift within Norwegian climate journalism, we focus on three niche media: Energi og klima (launched in 2011), Harvest (2013) and Naturpress (2016).

Energi og klima is "the online magazine of the green shift", owned by the Norwegian Climate Foundation—"The Green Think Tank of Norway". Most of the content consists of commentaries, but there are also expert interviews and recordings (or streaming) of events and debates, organised by the Climate Foundation. Energi og klima has received financial support from the Norwegian Fritt Ord Foundation and the stated aim is to be "the most important Norwegian source of debate, analysis and background on climate change, renewable energy and green technology". Harvest is "an online magazine on nature, people and the environment" with 45,000 followers on Facebook. The format is mostly long form journalism. Harvest also buys and translates foreign articles, particularly within the genre of nature writing. In 2018 the online magazine PAN was established, co-financed by Harvest, as a separate more theoretical channel and in 2021 Pan also became a think tank. Naturpress is "the green daily paper" online. They describe themselves as "an independent online newspaper publishing news and other content primarily related to climate change, the environment and resource topics". The Fritt Ord Foundation has supported various journalistic projects, including Naturpress, which, however, also has sought financing from advertisers as well as from their readers. To the latter, they write that they are "the paper that will continue to follow the green shift".

The Interviewees and our Method

We have drawn our key empirical observations from (1) interviews with editors in 2018 and (2) textual analysis of the journalistic texts from the three media from their launch up until the present (17 March 2022). Anders Bjartnes, the inventor of the "green shift" term, is Editor in Chief of Energi og klima. He has 25 years of experience as a journalist, and he has worked both for Dagens Næringsliv, the largest financial paper, and VG, the largest tabloid paper in Norway. Torbjørn Ekelund is co-owner and one of the three journalists behind Harvest. He has published several books in the category of nature writing, which is a way of listening more deeply to the signals of nature. Kjetil Fless is responsible editor and Terje Bjørsvik (was) daily manager of Naturpress. Fless has experience as a journalist in the trade press and Bjørsvik has been a screenwriter for documentaries and fiction films. Fless and Bjørvik were interviewed together. All quotes in this article are taken from these three interviews with the editors.

These interviews were conducted in 2018 by one of the authors of this paper together with a master student. The interviews were a precursor to a master thesis charting both the numerical spread and the various discourses embedded in the green shift in the opinion pages of seven national newspapers in Norway (Veimo 2020). They were thus not originally intended as the empirical basis of this paper. But during the hour-long, semi-structured interview with the Naturpress editors, whose aim is to produce daily news on the green shift, a Galtung and Ruge question emerged. We asked "how can you chase news vis-à-vis a reality where the environment and climate change do not come with the same regularity as other types of news?" The editors responded by saying that this was a "very difficult question", but one that was posed "too early" for them back in 2018. Our analysis of their journalistic practice—in news stories with mentions of the green shift up until 2022—may help us answer this question. With the hind-sight of seeing the green shift flourishing in mainstream media, we believe the editors



interviewed in 2018 gave historical pointers towards the polysemic discursive employment of the green shift in climate journalism.

In our approach to understand how the term came into being, how it helped structure thinking and journalism and thus processes of frequency, we have been inspired by the discourse-historical approach (DHA), which "attempts to integrate [various types of] available knowledge about the historical sources and the background of the social and political fields in which discursive 'events' are embedded" (Wodak 2001, 64). In our study, the "discursive 'events'" are both the interviews and journalistic texts; indeed, drawing on "some ethnographic elements, for example interviewing" is often utilised in DHA (Unger 2013, 63). In addition to that we have also drawn on broader "extra-linguistic social/sociological variables" (e.g., political climate) and the "institutional frames of the specific context of a situation" (e.g., the specific outlets and their backgrounds) (Wodak 2009, 318; original emphasis). It is important to point out here, that we are not attempting a broader "contextual genealogy" (Zavala-Pelayo 2021) of the term; this would require tracing the circulation and mutations from its origin to the present. In this paper, we mainly focus on the context of the term's initiation, its early development but also follow some traces up to the present. In doing so, we have mainly but not exclusively focused on definitional statements, i.e., how the editors perceived of the green shift in terms of its main focus (the section: What is the Green Shift?); temporal makers (the section: When is the Green Shift?); descriptions of transitional processes (the section: How will the Green Shift Happen?). In all three sections, we have also focused on argumentation strategies with regard to the role of journalism as well as "intertextual and interdiscursive relationships" (Wodak 2009, 318; emphasis in the original), which here mainly relate to how the interviewees perceived of other journalists or politicians.

What is the Green Shift?

In December 2015 Anders Bjartnes was interviewed in Journalisten, the newspaper about journalism in Norway, as "the man behind the new word of the year". He believed the term green shift is appealing because it signals movement, something unstoppable, destiny bound and inevitable. In terms of content, the term refers, broadly, to a change in economics and in markets. One of the very first op-eds on the Green shift written by Anders Bjartnes—from September 2013—begins by stating that "the real climate struggle ... is not about business against the environment, but about business vs. business. New versus old. Clean versus dirty. Future versus past". Bjørsvik from Naturpress refers to the green shift in a similar, deterministic way. When asked to formulate the goal of their journalism, he replied "The goal is to follow the green shift closely, which has to come and that is needed". Bjartnes' own definition of the term in his book on the green shift suggests that a deterministic appeal was part of meaning he wanted to convey: The green shift is "a continually ongoing, inescapable and unstoppable process, involving reduced climate emissions and improved resource productivity in all sectors of society, at the same time offering new opportunities for value creation" (Bjartnes 2015, 23 our translation).

"At the same time the term is so imprecise that you can put anything you want into it, and use it in many contexts". Biartnes continued in his 2015 interview. In 2018, however, he expressed no further need to define the term. He was at the time exploring the green shift in the agricultural sector and in policies on biofuels. Bjørsvik from Naturpress—again —shared the understanding of the term as something "we actually can fill with content". Indeed, part of the very raison d'etre of Naturpress, its aspiration of becoming "the green daily paper" in Norway was "to become a tool for the green shift, an information and debating tool, of course". Our textual analysis strengthens our conviction that the deterministic flavour of the green shift was something Bjartnes himself had helped inject into the term. In March 2015 Energi and klima republished an op-ed he had first written for Aftenposten, Norways largest paper, entitled "The epoch of the Green shift", in which he argued that "The question is not if a change is happening, but how fast change is coming". In September 2015 polemic against a critic who had labelled the green shift "a theoretical construction", he wrote that "to shut your eyes in front of such ongoing change, is simply a denial of reality".

Over the years, the content of Energi og klima suggests a consistent and ever more concrete focus on how investments in the green shift—in multiple ways—can and will pay off. In late 2020, for example, Energi og klima created a separate topical page and newsletter on green shipping where "the editorial board of Energi og klima gives you the latest news on politics, technology and market trends with impact on the green shift of shipping". Energi og klima also offers strategic perspectives of how to further this market-driven green shift (cf Ytterstad 2016) and provides both news from and to policy-makers to this effect. In February 2021 Energi og klima employed a EU correspondent and two months later they launched a bi-weekly "climate editorial", presented as being "About the news that drive the green shift". One of three consistent themes of these climate editorials, Bjartnes promised at the launch, would be the European Green Deal. "VAT cut in the EU shall promote the green shift" reads one of several news stories by the EU correspondent intent on demonstrating the important policy role of the EU has for the necessary investment shifts.

Such market ecomodernist discourse contrasts sharply with the ways in which Torbjørn Ekelund approached climate journalism and the green shift. While he hoped their magazine, as a new journalistic actor in Norway, was part of the green shift, and acknowledged the "good thinking" by Bjartnes, he had reservations about a term associated with "economics, economic thinking, economic models and a growth economy". As we shall detail below in the how section—the green shift for Harvest is much more of a mentality shift than an investment shift. In our reading, the journalistic practice of Naturpress oscillates between Energi og klima and Harvest in their approach to the "what" of the green shift. Some of the early news and opinion pieces written by Terje Bjørsvik are closer to the Harvest mentality shift position, than the Energi og klima market shift position. For example, in a September 2017 news piece referring to Angela Merkel as "The Chancelor's New Clothes", he draws inspiration from George Monbiot, and argues that

climate advocates and journalists ... across the board ... must ensure *The green shift* in all shades of the color becomes something more than facades and diversions of business as usual by the large corporations, where they waltz our elected leaders through the ballrooms with a hand twisted behind their backs.

Given such words, it was somewhat surprising to discover that the bulk of news story we found in Naturpress was precisely about the green investments (or green ambitions for investments) of businesses, both big ones like Volkswagen or Equinor and small ones,

like the furniture factory Magnor, who in March 2021 won an award as "the most environmental factory in the world". The Director of this factory, Jan Christian Vestre, was appointed as minister of Industry in Norway in the current Norwegian Government.

When is the Green Shift?

The inevitable process of the green shift allowed Naturpress to "follow it from day to day and from hour to hour" according to Bjørsvik. A December 2021 news item about climate friendly candles called "The coziest climate measure in the world" exemplifies how news of the green shift can be found most of the time. The preponderance of business news of the green shift in Naturpress is also due to their ambition of becoming a newshub: they reproduce environmental news from other outlets, like the Norwegian news agency. Moreover, one reason why Bjørsvik and Flessnes believed in the viability of Naturpress as a new journalistic project, was the growth of business interest to go green. Among the ads on their front page on Dec. 20, 2021 we found one from Grønt Skift (Green Shift) "Norway's largest supplier of clothes for the entire family" and another content marketing piece from Hyundai—a story of the Arctic climate expedition "Hearts in the Ice". Yet in the ensuing discussion of "greenwashing" with the two Naturpress editors, we noted a tension between them, one we could discern even more clearly when we read what they have written about the green shift over the years. Bjørsvik appeared more troubled by how badly the "timeslot" of climate science—"it is almost already too late", he added squared with the timeframes of market opportunities for a green shift. In our interpretation, this tension reflects a broader discrepancy between two temporal understandings within Norwegian climate journalism, between climate emergency time on the one hand, and market demand time, on the other.

With climate emergency time, we refer to the timeframes set by the publications of the ever more dire IPCC reports. The 2018 report on 1,5°C helped shape the understanding of a climate crisis. The school strikes in 2019 raised awareness, and stressed that meaningful climate action to limit global warming to 1,5°C would require to half global emissions within a decade (Fisher 2019; Thackeray et al. 2020). With market time, by contrast, we refer to the speed (or lack of speed) in which demand for renewable energy (and other green products) succeeds in outcompeting fossil fuels (or other unsustainable things). The question for climate journalism (as well for other stakeholders in Norwegian society, like oil workers (Ytterstad, Houeland, and Jordhus-Lier 2022)), is which temporal understanding—what yardstick of assessing progress—to foreground, in their descriptions (news) and in their argumentation (comments).

Climate emergency time looms in the background of all three-niche media explored in this article. They all cooperate with (one or both of) the centres for climate change research in Norway (CICERO in Oslo and Bjerknes in Bergen). They all display a sense of urgency in their climate journalism. Positive news stories about incremental green changes in large or small businesses—present in both Energi og klima and Naturpress —may lead readers to think that the market demand for green products is speeding up. Yet how and how much they foreground market demand time—as the main way of speeding up the tempo of the green shift—differ. Bjørsvik oscillates, in ways we find typical of Naturpress, between using and rejecting market demand time in his journalism. In one May 2017 news story he uses the (in)famous analogy of Kodaks failure to go digital,

to foretell the collapse of cars run on petrol and gas within eight years. In an op-ed in August the same year, however, he writes an op-ed entitled "Only a reduction in growth can dampen global fever" where he stresses the inadequacy of a shift in market demand (May 2017).

What distinguishes the enduring contribution Bjartnes and Energi og klima have made to Norwegian climate journalism, apart from coining the term green shift to begin with, is the ways in which he fuses climate emergency time and market demand time. He insists consistently in his op-eds, in October 2016, in November 2021 and in February 2022, that the green shift is happening "too slowly" and in doing so she refers both to climate science and to a (far too sluggish) market demand. But as witnessed in the subtitle of the book he wrote about the Green shift in 2015, his emphasis is on economics. "Stop the Norwegian Bet against Climate Policy" is normative first and foremost by insisting Norway is making the wrong economic choice by sticking to oil and gas as the main source of future revenue. Bjartnes clearly believes that this argument carries more force than any dire climate report. We have to make a green shift before market demand and stricter policies (above all in the EU) force us to do so. What is fused here are the temporalities emanating from, respectively, knowledge about climate science and a prognosis of market demands, via the likelihood of stricter climate policies; and this fusion of temporalities is found within the notion of "climate risks". "That is a key concept you need to master, it takes some time to understand it but once you have done it, it is quite easy to grasp" he told us in the interview. During the general election campaign of 2017, Bjartnes made, in Daabladet, a climate appeal to Prime Minister Solberg and opposition leader Støre, focused on the climate risks of giving out new licenses for oil drilling in the Barents Sea. Later in the campaign, he was invited by the public broadcaster NRK to challenge Solberg and Støre directly on this matter on TV.

This invitation, in our interpretation, is evidence of how innovations in journalistic practice from niche media has emanated and become diffused into more mainstream media. Further evidence of such diffusion came in the autumn of 2021. The economic journalism site E24 (delivering 24-7 economic news to the largest newspapers in Norway) launched a "green shift" editorial team and a separate topical webpage on the green shift. This is symptomatic, we believe, and this observation is supported by Veimo (2020) and Høegh-Krohn (2021) research, of how the "market demand time" version of the green shift—pioneered and shaped most by Energi og klima—has become the dominant one in mainstream climate journalism although Harvest illustrates an important countercurrent to this development.

How Will the Green Shift Happen?

Who can make the green shift happen (fast enough) and how can they do so? The deterministic definition Bjartnes made of the term largely hides agency, or relegates it to market forces (Veimo and Ytterstad 2020). When we asked him for whom Energi og klima was written, Bjartnes replied that "We write for the elite. We write for decision makers". In his climate editorials, Bjartnes provides nuanced critiques of decision makers. One such editorial was prompted by an interview Prime Minister Støre had given to The Financial Times prior to the Glasgow climate summit entitled "Drilling shutdown would mean end of green transition, Norway PM warns". Bjartnes recognized how "constructive" Norway is in climate summit negotiations, agreeing with Støre that "climate policy first and foremost is about measures on the demand side". Yet he ended his editorial with a strong critique of Støres refusal to stop drilling for oil in new areas in the Barents Sea:

Norway does not appear wanting to assume a leading role amongst oil producing countries, as we could have done, by tightening policy on the supply side too. Climate protection of unopened areas could have been a first step ... Such a position is clearly something Jonas Gahr Støre thinks he can leave to somebody else, in another place and maybe for another time. Han wants to join the battle of delivering the last oil.8

Whereas the hows of the green shift in the climate journalism of Energi og klima is largely determined by the wrong or right decisions of the elite, Bjørsvik wants Naturpress to provide journalism that engages differently with the general public. Speaking of former PM Erna Solberg, he said that "whatever she does ... it is not she who will start a green shift. If one was to make it, it must come from what they call the market, which I call society, those who just understand that it will not happen out there, it can happen here, near us". He clearly saw the role of Naturpress as one of shifting the dialogue in empowering ways, "getting people to understand that they are not pawns with no will of their own (viljesløse brikker) in a game happening out there". For Bjørsvik, it was apparently important to shift agency within the green shift to the actions of people living in his locality Nesodden, as when they "make a library for tools" and "hand in you their lawnmower because they no longer need it".

For Harvest editor Torbjørn Ekelund, his preferred version of the green shift was a mentality shift more than an investment shift.

What we think and what many of our essayists have thought is that this is part of the same mindset, of economic growth. Everything is about making money. You do not invest in a wind-mill park unless you can become a billionaire. Everything stays the same. That is the only way we manage to think, which means that we end up with the same solution we criticize.

Harvest is not only geared less towards the elite, more towards popular audiences, but wants to turn the popular mindset of economic thinking, economic models and the growth economy, which Ekelund dubs "Kind of the root of all evil, although we understand that you cannot turn this line of thinking in a day". Based on our analysis of the items tagged with the green shift, we believe Harvest has worked to strengthen their alternative ways of thinking. In December 2019 PAN was branded as the discussion arena of Harvest—with a promise that they would enter "controversial topics" within the "broad green camp". One recurrent theme in the letters to the editor is the counterposing of nature to climate change and the green shift. One such letter, written by two local leaders of Friends of the Earth was published twice in 2020 (first in January than in July) and stated explicitly the distinction Ekelund alluded to in 2018:

A green shift does not consist of more technology, plastic, powerlines, satellites, computer power, rotor blades, screens, "green" oil or coal. A green shift involves changing our mindset and process was really IS important and green; the nature we are a part of.

The climate research centre CICERO contacted Harvest, Ekelund told us, because of their narrative expertise. Eliciting agency is about writing about the climate crisis in engaging ways that foster a mentality shift. For Ekelund, this mentality shift is loaded with moral appeals. Whereas Bjartnes' definition of the Green Shift is descriptive, Harvest does not at all shy away from appeals that are explicitly normative, what Griskevicius et al. (2008) calls "injunctive social norms". Ekelund cited a telling example of an external essayist who writes for Harvest: Arne Johan Vetlesen is one of the best know philosophers of Norway but after Arne Næss he is probably also the most authoritative deep ecologist in the county (cf Vetlesen 2015). In the interview, Ekelund cited an argument Vetlesen used in a riposte to the editor of the left-wing paper Klassekampen, who said it was futile to stop flying, as the planes flew anyway.

Vetlesen used the nazi explanations after WW2 as a parallel and how the courts found the argument "if I do not torture Jews, someone else will" invalid. In one second, he thereby invalidated the argument of the editor of a national newspaper

In March 2017, Ekelund himself partook in a TV debate at the public broadcaster on the need to stop flying, after Harvest had dedicated an entire week to stories and statistics of emissions and the need to stop flying. Ekelund remembered, and apparently endorsed "many who shared those stories saying 'I have a bad conscience, I have a bad conscience."

In summary, the "how" of the green shift for Norwegian climate journalism varies, and is linked to multiple actors. Yet Harvest stands out as most focused on popular agency and —as Høegh-Krohn (2021) found in her recent analysis of how Harvest covered the climate crisis in 2020—is less prone to reproducing established power structures in society. Whereas Energi og klima and (to a lesser extent) Naturpress tend to see the "market" as the main driver for the green shift, Harvest criticizes the world views and lifestyles of ordinary Norwegians. Indeed, as their efforts to stop Norwegians from flying illustrate, Harvest works more against than with popular agency. Their "take" on the Norwegian green shift as a mentality shift suggest what Hegel thought of as a "unity of opposites". Without the growth discourse of green investments, it would be harder for the "degrowth" message of Harvest to gain ground. The climate change-related opportunities for profit-seeking and technological wizardry, contrasts with—and therefore re-emphasizes—the need to protect wilderness, environmental values, and indigenous ways of interacting with nature. Harvest thus illustrates that climate journalism need not use the green shift as a possible, or inevitable enabling device but that this term functioned as the focal point of broader tensions inherent in the public issue of climate change.

Concluding Discussion

The declaration of a "climate change emergency" by the UK parliament, 9 the Green New Deal debates in the US and the summoning of world leaders by the UN General Secretary for an additional Climate Action Summit for September 2019¹⁰ all illustrate how "History has sprung alive, through a nature that has done likewise" (Malm 2018, 11). Yet such events prompted only small spikes in journalistic coverage. Thus, the Copenhagen record still stands, both worldwide, in Europe and in Norway, according to the database of the Media and Climate Change Observatory (although Glasgow coverage came close and in Europe went beyond, the Copenhagen spike). The frequency with which journalism covers a specific issue remains driven by events that can be supplied with—in the words a Galtung and Ruge (1965)—a relatively "clear interpretation"; and it is the

relatively small number of such precisely defined events that lies behind the discontinuity of journalistic coverage of climate change.

The public concept and narratives of the green shift changed that by creating a loosely defined framework within which political, commercial, social, cultural events and processes could be assigned meaning. As this concept was initiated within journalism it underlines how the frequency of climate-change journalism both relied upon and contributed to a temporal context that was more specific and national than the temporal horizons of climate change as a global and scientifically-described issue. Working with frequency thus here means not simply accepting conventionally held perceptions of what may constitute climate-change events, e.g., extreme weather events, but a search for different temporal frameworks in relation to which other events can be made newsworthy. Working with frequency is in this instance thus both about temporal and spatial proximity and continuity. The "Green shift" discourse in Norway exemplifies how it may be possible to find and/or construct events with the right internal frequency within a more clearly defined process—Norway needs to be weaned off its dependence on oil. In relation to this, journalists may ask how a specific event, e.g., the formation of a new start-up, may contribute to this shift and what the temporal frame is for that.

Galtung and Ruge's (1965) oft-cited hypothesis of an alignment between the frequencies of occurrences of specific events and the frequency of publication as a key factor in what gets published is here put into perspective. Climate change is—as argued above – often difficult for journalism to approach "directly" through fairly unanimously-defined events; the green shift was partly a way of circumventing this challenge by instigating another and partly agreed-upon temporal frame within which a diversity of events could be identified. This allowed for a more continuous coverage, which also underlines the fact that frequencies of publication have become more fluid given the advent of digital publishing. In relation to this, Harcup and O'Neill in fact argue that they "would not include ... 'frequency' in a ... contemporary set of news values" (277). Thus, while Harcup and O'Neill did point to frequency as a more qualitative process, they here seem to revert to frequency mainly as a process of measuring the intervals between publishable events. Yet, we argue, this is a regretful reduction of frequency that neglects some of the implications of Galtung and Ruge's (1965) ideas related to wavelength, i.e., what "types" of events one is tuned into searching for and how this is linked to broader social, cultural and temporal structures. What we have been doing here is, and perhaps ironically so, to bring back and inserting parts of Galtung and Ruge's model into a contemporary Norwegian context from which it has been increasingly detached over the decades since its publication

The three niche media discussed in this article were instrumental in initiating and forming a public discourse about the green shift—but have done so in different ways. Energi og klima moves the news strategically with a focus on business interest and climate policy. Naturpress reports on any news, from any agency related to the green shift in a similar vein to Energi og Klima. Harvest represents the clearest contrast, shaping a version of the green shift centred on ethics, popular agency and caring for nature. All publications stress the urgency of addressing the climate crisis, but whereas Energi og klima emphasises how little time we have left due to market demand for green products, Harvest leans more explicitly towards how climate science (and the crisis in our relationship with nature) sets the clock for our urgent need to act and

change. The notion of "climate risk", pushed consistently in the climate journalism of Energi og klima, is an attempt to fuse what we have called "market demand time" with "climate emergency time".

This fusion of a dual rationale to act—prompted both by economic opportunity and scientific necessity—has emanated, and arguably become the dominant perspective within mainstream Norwegian climate journalism. When asked to define his understanding of the green shift, the political editor of Dagbladet (a large national tabloid in Norway), said it entailed "a total reorganization of society, in a way that preserves value creation, but without emissions so that we stay beneath the 1.5 degree target" (Veimo 2020, 86). We can, however, also note how this editor appears to understand a need for a reorganization of society that goes beyond adjusting markets. This illustrates the polysemy, and the persistent lack of precision in the discursive development of the green shift.

Our assessment of the spread of the green shift within Norwegian climate journalism is, however, not intended as a normative argument about the green shift as a panacea for addressing the climate crisis with the urgency it requires. The "rapid green shift" anticipated by the Danish newspaper Information has not come and—as we saw in one of the climate editorials of Anders Bjartnes—Norway continues to see new drilling for oil as part of the solution to the climate crisis—indeed, as a prerequisite for the green shift of Norway. Our argument, moving forward, has rather been to propose a keener attention to how journalism on climate change can play a part in constructing temporal frames within which local events and their temporal unfolding can be identified and communicated. There may, obviously, be other and better ways of constructing temporal frames. Yet our analysis of Norwegian climate change journalism—focused on niche media that have helped assist the spread of the green shift within the mainstream—at the very least suggest that it is empirically possible for climate journalism to do more than passively wait for the newsworthy events. They can work with frequency.

Notes

- 1. The ideas developed in this article derive from an equal collaboration between the two authors. We thank Marte Veimo for her participation in and transcription of the interviews underpinning this study, and the Centre for Environmental Journalism at the University of Colorado, Boulder, for allowing Ytterstad to be a visiting scholar there in 2019 – where the work for this article began as part of the WAGE project, financed by the Research Council of Norway.at
- 2. https://sciencepolicy.colorado.edu/icecaps/research/media_coverage/world/index.html
- 3. https://www.vg.no/nyheter/utenriks/i/nWv0Aa/dansk-avis-med-klimastikk-til-norge-vaaredanske-venner-har-helt-rett
- 4. https://snl.no/gr%C3%B8nt_skifte
- 5. In their second revisit in 2017, Harcup and O'Neill, do interestingly not question the notion of frequency.
- 6. https://journalisten.no/hans-cosson-eide-iselin-fjeld-klima/slik-jobber-nrks-klimaredaksjon-krisen-begynner-a-bli-mer-konkret-i-folks-liv/478853
- 7. https://journalisten.no/arets-nyord-sprakradet-klima/anders-bjartnes-er-mannen-bak-aretsnyord-det-gronne-skiftet/303789
- 8. https://energiogklima.no/meninger-og-analyse/klimavalg21/store-og-den-siste-oljen/
- 9. https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48126677
- 10. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change-2/



Acknowledgements

We sincerely wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for critical, insightful and constructive comments on both the first and second drafts of this manuscript.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Norges forskningsråd: [Grant Number 283345].

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