



## Issue expansion in Dutch shale gas lobbying

*A case study on strange bedfellows in an ad hoc coalition*

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## Summary

The main research question in this single case study is “*Among the actors on the same side of the shale gas debate in the Netherlands, how have interest groups employed the strategy of issue expansion and what similarities and differences occur? What causes these deviations?*”. The case that is researched is the policy debate regarding shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands, with a focus on those interest groups opposing the exploitation.

Central topics are those of policy change, interest group strategies, the forming of interest group coalitions and issue expansion. These concepts were studied by analyzing articles from nine big Dutch newspapers. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with interest groups to acquire additional information.

It was analyzed that in the Dutch shale gas case an ad hoc coalition has formed. This coalition is of a heterogeneous nature, meaning that there are both purposive and material actors present in it. It was shown that both type of actors use issue expansion but in different ways. There are varying degrees of cooperation within the coalition. Some actors actively coordinate their actions while others take a less active role and simply seem to be on the same side of the policy debate. It was found that purposive actors choose more indirect lobbying strategies than material actors. Another central conclusion is that even though an ad hoc coalition has formed in the Dutch shale gas case, conventional wisdom on the strategies that interest groups choose in coalitions remains valid.

## Preface

This thesis is the concluding piece of my education on the topic of public administration. It is a nice goodbye to both my time at Leiden university and to the period in my life as a student. By acquiring a job besides writing my thesis I have already taken an advance on a new lifestyle, but now it is time to make the final step towards working life.

I have enjoyed writing this thesis. It was a real challenge to combine all the knowledge and skills I have gathered and bring them together in one final assignment. But as often, the more challenging the task, the greater the enjoyment when it is completed successfully. Regarding the completion of my thesis, I owe gratitude to various persons. I thank dr. Timmermans for guiding me in writing my thesis. His advice sometimes left me a bit confused in a positive way. This stimulated me to structure my thoughts on my thesis and thus forced me to be precise and explicit. I also thank dr. Van den Berg for being my second reader. A second critical look at my thesis further strengthens the final verdict that was given. I thank Mr. Cramer and Ms. Van Dorp of the Parlementair Documentatie Centrum for granting me access to the Parliamentary Monitor. Their kind support led me to use the monitor with success. Finally I thank my relatives and people close to me. They have showed exceptional strength and endurance in coping with my stories about shale gas and offered crucial tips that only people outside the process can offer.

Besides the theoretical things I have learned by writing this thesis, there are also some important practical things I have learned. One of the most important is to persevere even when the going gets tough. Writing a thesis is a big project that often lacks a clear structure. At these moments the only solution is to push on and structure will follow eventually. Another topic I have learned a lot about is the technical side of the exploitation of (shale) gas and all of its intricacies. Now that I have finished this thesis, lighting my kitchen's gas stove will never be the same.

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# 1. Introduction

Flaming water running from a tap in Pennsylvania, caused by fracking. It remains one of the most striking images in an international discussion about the pros and cons of shale gas exploitation. This research studies how interest groups have bonded together to fight shale gas exploitation and what strategies they have employed to do this. A feature of the shale gas discussion in the Netherlands is that strange bedfellows have seemingly formed a coalition. Indeed, business actors and purposive environmental groups find themselves on the same side of a policy debate. What does the subsequent cooperation look like? Has a true coalition formed or do some actors just happen to be on the same side? And how does it influence the way these interest groups lobby? The answers to these questions allow us to learn about the matter of interest group behavior in uncommon coalitions.

This chapter introduces the central parts of this study into the behavior of interest groups. It elaborates on the context of shale gas developments in the world and, more specifically, in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the basic structure of the study and research design are highlighted.

The following research question is at the core of the study and will be answered in the following chapters: *Among the actors on the same side of the shale gas debate in the Netherlands, how have interest groups employed the strategy of issue expansion and what similarities and differences occur? What causes these deviations?*

The results from this study are relevant because they offer more knowledge on the behavior of interest groups and which variables influence this. A special feature is the composition of the coalition that is researched. Before we continue elaborating on this point, we will offer some background information regarding shale gas.

## 1.1 Background

Shale gas was first mentioned as a serious source of energy in the Netherlands by Energie Beheer Nederland (EBN, 2009). EBN is a company that is entirely owned by the Dutch government and is used to reap most of the profits from soil exploitation in the Netherlands. As of 2009 EBN has started publishing yearly reports called “Focus on Dutch gas” in which it analyzes the situation of the Dutch gas sector. In these reports shale gas is increasingly mentioned as an alternative energy

source. As the “normal” gas bubble located in the soil of Groningen is rapidly running out, the Dutch gas sector is looking for new sources to exploit. In line with this development Cuadrilla, an English gas company, has requested the first license to execute shale gas trial drillings in the Netherlands in 2009. From this point onwards the topic of shale gas exploitation has been present in Dutch media and politics, with varying degrees of prominence.

In recent years shale gas has also enjoyed a lot of attention on a global scale. There are a few reasons for this phenomenon. As countries around the world try to cut down on their carbon emissions, the relatively clean fossil fuel of gas is used more and more. This motivation is sometimes presented as an ecological reason for the increased use of (shale) gas<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, the general energy demand in the world has increased. This is mainly due to the recent boom of economies in China, India and Brazil. Here, sheer need of energy increases the need for gas. Finally, countries also try to become independent in their energy provision. The United States, for example, have mostly become independent energy-wise because of a transition to the use of domestically produced shale gas (Rathenau, 2013).

Regular gas is relatively easy to extract from the ground. This is why normal gas fields have been exploited first and are starting to deplete. Now that the demand for clean, safe and abundant gas is rising, more non-conventional sources are becoming viable for exploitation. One of these non-conventional sources is shale gas. This gas is locked in layers of shale rock in the earth. To extract it from the ground, gas companies use a technique called “fracking”. This fracking breaks the shale rock under the ground and frees the gas from the rock. Water and added chemicals are then used to extract the gas from the soil (ibid.).

The process of fracking is controversial. Opponents say that fracking can cause soil contamination, that it can cause earthquakes and that it is a nuisance for the surrounding area of the exploitation site. Proponents of shale gas exploitation try to conceal the risks that are involved with fracking, while opponents try to emphasize them (ibid.). This juxtaposition between opponents and proponents of shale gas exploitation leads to an interesting battle of interests. The

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<sup>1</sup> The word “relative” is used because gas is not cleaner than wind or solar energy, but it is less polluting than other fossil fuels like oil.

discussion about shale gas exploitation has now also appeared in Dutch media and politics. The lobby coalitions that have subsequently formed are the focus of this study.

## ***1.2 Scientific relevance***

The Dutch shale gas case is an interesting case to study as there are a lot of different actors active on the topic, all with different interests. One can broadly identify two sides of the debate. Those actors that favor shale gas exploitation, for example gas companies that are requesting trial drilling licenses. On the other side of the spectrum are those actors that oppose the exploitation of shale gas, like environmental organizations or municipal- and provincial governments. This dichotomy offers a situation where actors try to push their own interest in hopes to influence the final decision on shale gas.

There are three features of the Dutch shale gas case that give it additional scientific relevance. First, there has been done no prior research into the behavior of Dutch interest groups in relation to the developments around shale gas in the Netherlands. This case study is therefore a good basis for the future development of the body of knowledge on Dutch interest groups, specifically in relation to shale gas exploitation. Second, the development of the Dutch shale gas industry is in its infancy, with actual drilling still having to take place. The results from this study could therefore be worthwhile for professionals active in the gas industry, interest groups involved in the shale gas case and for scientists that study the behavior of interest groups. Furthermore, its conclusions could find a good connection to a societal discussion that is still taking place in the Netherlands.

Last but not least, the case offers a broad spectrum of active interest groups. It combines a wide variety of actors into one case. Municipalities, provinces, ministers, beer brewers, power companies, environmental Non-Governmental Organization's (NGO's) and gas industry players are all active in this specific case. This deviates from an often seen situation wherein typical industry players face typical NGO's. Indeed, on the topic of Dutch shale gas an uncommon assembly of interest groups all find themselves on the same side of the debate. By studying this atypical case we can see whether conventional wisdom on the behavior of interest groups and coalitions holds when the composition of these coalitions deviates from the regular composition.

### *1.3 Conceptual lens*

Now that we see why the shale gas case could offer new insights, we can take a look at the theoretical underpinnings of this study. This section offers a short synthesis of the used theory and will present the beginnings of a hypothesis on the behavior of interest groups in the Dutch shale gas case.

A central concept is that of advocacy coalitions. Howlett et al. state that actors can work together through so called advocacy coalitions. These are groups of actors that share a set of beliefs and who strive to influence policy accordingly (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009, p. 83). Sabatier (1988) has created a very influential framework that conceptualizes advocacy coalitions as “people from various organizations who share a set of normative and causal beliefs and who often act in concert” (ibid., p. 133). This framework is called the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). Sabatier (1999, p. 138) mentions two types of interest groups: material groups and purposive groups. This is an important distinction in the reasons why an actor is active in a certain coalition and is also important in this study. The ACF is further elaborated in the theory part of this research.

The concept of advocacy coalitions in Sabatiers framework envisions coalitions as groups of actors that work together very extensively. There are, however, also less structured coalitions where actors more or less happen to be on the same side of a policy debate. Pijnenburg (1998) describes these coalitions as ad hoc coalitions. Part of this study analyzes what type of coalition has formed in the Dutch shale gas case and whether it is suitable to think of this coalition as one that fits Sabatiers work. Before the analysis of the coalition, when we mention the concept of a advocacy coalition (or just coalition) we assume the most minimal definition of a coalition, namely an assembly of organizations that are on the same side of a policy discussion.

Another central topic in this research is the fight over the direction of policy change. Baumgartner and Jones (2009) describe how policy change can be seen to develop incrementally, coming from seemingly independent policy sub-systems (ibid., p. 1). This is based on the literature that describes “iron triangles” which form a policy environment that suits incremental policy change the best (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009, p. 81.). This is not their preferred perspective however. Baumgartner and Jones (2009) create an alternative theory of policy change based on a very different dynamic. They pose that policy change is not bound to an ever incremental process in policy subsystems. Instead, policy change can develop very quickly, creating a punctuation in a

policy equilibrium. Baumgartner and Jones use Schattschneider's theory (1960) to state that they expect that policy change happens when an issue definition is influenced in such a way that it can be discussed in other venues. This perspective on policy change will be further elaborated in the theory chapter of this research.

A central theme in the work of Baumgartner and Jones is the concept of issue expansion. The authors name two mechanisms through which it can take place: venue shopping and by influencing an issue definition. Venue shopping (Baumgartner and Jones, 2009, p. 31) can be employed by actors looking to change the arena where, or a medium in which, a policy issue is discussed. An example could be trying to lift a policy debate from a national level to a European level. Changing the issue definition in a certain case (ibid., p. 25) is also part of issue expansion. This can entail adding extra dimensions to the problem that is at hand.

A critique on the venue shopping concept is that it is too often portrayed as a rather straight forward strategic activity with purely instrumental roots (Pralle, 2003). It is sometimes assumed that rational interest groups make structured decisions on the basis of full information when choosing their venue. Pralle further develops the concept of venue shopping by researching the variables that influence the act of venue shopping. Expectations from the theoretical work of Pralle can lead to a relevant hypothesis for this study into issue expansion and the use of venue shopping by Dutch interest groups. Indeed, it can be expected from the aforementioned theory that the interest groups in the coalition opposing Dutch shale gas exploitation do not all use the same strategy of venue shopping. After having presented a hypothesis, this study both answers important questions on the use of issue expansion by interest groups and also examines a theoretical proposition in a Dutch empirical setting regarding shale gas exploitation.

#### ***1.4 Sub questions and operationalization***

The following section provides information on the main question and the sub research questions that are used in this study.

The main research question of this research is: *Among the actors on the same side of the shale gas debate in the Netherlands, how have interest groups employed the strategy of issue expansion and what similarities and differences occur? What causes these deviations?*

Before this question is answered I research whether the opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands have bonded together in a coalition and if so, what type of coalition this is. This specific part of the study will be analyzed through the theoretical lens of the advocacy coalition framework by Sabatier (1988) and that of ad hoc coalitions by Pijnenburg (1998). The research question concerning this part of the study is as follows:

*Sub question 1: Have opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands bonded together in a coalition? And if so, what kind of coalition has arisen?*

Moving on to the concept of issue expansion the following sub questions were answered.

*Sub question 2: Have the opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands applied issue expansion to influence the policy decision on this topic?*

We can further specify this sub question by differentiating between influencing the issue definition and venue shopping. This leads to two further questions under sub question 2. In answering these sub questions it is analyzed which similarities and differences occurred and why.

*Sub question 2a: How have interest groups tried to influence the problem definition in order to achieve issue expansion?*

*Sub question 2b: How have interest groups used venue shopping in order to achieve issue expansion?*

Seeing the time and resource limitations for this project, not all interest groups concerned with shale gas will be researched. Because this project focuses specifically on the opposing side of the shale gas debate, this coalition will be mapped. When the active interest groups in this coalition are known, a few interest groups will be selected for further research. The two selected actors are good examples of a material and a purposive actor.

Now that we have a basic understanding of the study at hand, we can move on to an elaboration on the central concepts of this study in the next chapter. Chapter three subsequently focuses on the methods and data that were used in this study. Chapter four presents an analysis of this data and goes into answering the sub questions and assessing the hypotheses. Finally, chapter five presents a conclusion to this study and answers the main research question.

## 2. Composing a theoretical framework

This chapter describes the various concepts that are used in this study. Taken together, these concepts create the theoretical framework this study is based on.

First, the concept of advocacy coalitions is highlighted. Second, the concept of issue expansion will be elaborated on. This concept consists of two dimensions, namely venue shopping and the influencing of the issue definition. Third, a short elaboration on policy change is given. Finally, a hypothesis is presented based on the foregoing theory.

### *2.1 Advocacy coalitions*

An important concept in this study is the advocacy coalition. Howlett et al. state that actors can act together through so called advocacy coalitions. These are groups of actors that share a set of beliefs and who strive to influence policy accordingly (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009, p. 83).

Mahoney (2007) states that certain characteristics of an issue can determine whether a coalition forms. These are the level of conflict and the level of salience. The level of conflict indicates how severe the conflict is and how inclined interest groups subsequently become to form a coalition. The level of salience indicates the prominence and broadness of an issue and the subsequent need of interest group to demonstrate a broad constituency. The higher the level of conflict and salience in a certain policy issue, the more likely that interest groups will form a coalition.

There are multiple types of coalitions. They range from coalitions of actors that work together intensively and have far going coordination (Sabatier, 1998) to groups of actors that form an ad hoc coalition when they happen to be on the same side of a debate and coordinate little of their actions (Pijnenburg, 1998). Some authors go so far as to argue that every form of collective action can be considered as a form of coalition building (ibid.). We can conclude that various types of coalitions exist but that an exact definition is hard to offer. To clarify the concept we will now discuss some of the most common forms.

Sabatier (1988) conceptualizes advocacy coalitions as “people from various organizations who share a set of normative and causal beliefs and who often act in concert” (ibid., p. 133). A policy issue can have several advocacy coalitions that adopt conflicting views and strategies. These conflicting strategies can be mediated by a third group, called policy brokers. These policy brokers try to find common ground to create an acceptable policy solution for both parties.

Sabatier combines his work on coalitions in the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). The original framework dates back to 1988, after which an updated version was published in 1998. The framework is based on five basic assumptions. The first is that the role of technical information in policy change should be addressed in a theory. Second, the framework employs a scope of ten years when it is used in an analysis. This increases the chance that a full cycle in policy making is analyzed. The third notion is that the most interesting unit of analysis in the study of policy change is a policy subsystem, instead of only the government itself. The fourth notion is a broad scope of analysis including more actors than just those in the iron triangles. The fifth notion is that policy programs can be conceptualized as belief systems because they implicitly contain theories about how the program reaches its goals (ibid., p. 118). In the next figure an overview of the ACF is given.

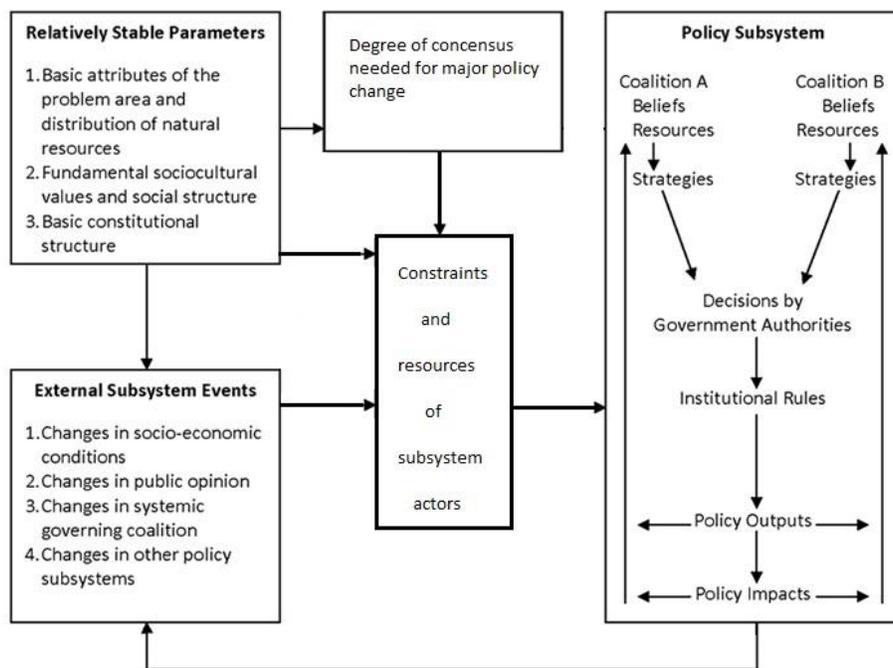


Figure 1: The Advocacy Coalition Framework

A central aspect of the framework is the policy subsystem. This is a group of actors that work on a certain area of policy. There can exist multiple coalitions within a policy subsystem, each with their own policy beliefs and resources. These beliefs can be divided into three categories. *Deep core* beliefs include basic ontological and normative beliefs that often spread over all policy domains. The next level are *policy core* beliefs, which are the basic normative commitments and causal perceptions of a coalition and are often subsystem wide. An example of these is the balancing of economic growth and protection of the environment. Within the ACF it is assumed that the policy core beliefs are the “glue” of a coalition because they are the basic normative and empirical commitments within a group of policy elites. The *secondary beliefs* are narrower commitments relating to technical policy preferences (ibid., p.p. 121-122). Policy change often demands of a coalition to change its policy core beliefs.

The members of the coalition and their beliefs are influenced by relatively stable parameters and external system events of a less stable nature. The relatively stable parameters change little over time and are rarely the target of a lobby strategy. They include “the basic constitutional structure, sociocultural values and natural resources of a political system” (ibid., p. 120). The external system events are expected to change and are, in the ACF framework, an important condition for major policy change. They include “major socio-economic changes [...], changes in the systemic governing coalition [...] and policy decision and impacts from other subsystems” (ibid., p. 120).

One of the accompanying hypotheses of the framework is that the line-up of a certain coalition is relatively stable. This could be caused by the fact that policy core beliefs are relatively fixed. Apart from these long term coalitions, Sabatier also describes coalitions of convenience. These coalitions are of a more temporary nature and are used to improve the resources of an advocacy coalition to achieve policy change on the short term. In these coalitions there is less of a coherence in policy core beliefs. The focus lies on the instrumental value of cooperation with certain other groups to form a coalition (ibid., p. 149).

Sabatier (1999, p. 138) mentions two types of interest groups: material groups and purposive groups. It is stated that material groups are solely motivated by the maximization of their own self-interest. The purposive groups are active because of ideological reasons and the wellbeing

of the broader society. An empirical example of a material group could be that of private companies. A purposive group can be an NGO.

### **2.1.1 Ad hoc coalitions**

We have now seen two coalitions that stem from Sabatier's ACF, namely an advocacy coalition and a coalition of convenience. They range from true collations in which actors coordinate and cooperate extensively to coalitions where there are more temporary ties like in the coalition of convenience.

De Bruycker (2014) has published a conference paper on coalitions consisting of strange bedfellows, specifically focusing on coalitions that consist out of interest groups that usually do not work together. Sometimes, the interests of NGO's and business actors overlap. In these cases it can be advantageous to create a coalition consisting of actors that normally do not mingle. These coalitions are heterogeneous in nature, meaning that they do not consist out of one type of actor. An example of this can be seen in the shale gas case, where business actors have teamed up with environmental groups. It is notable that De Bruycker sees interests as an important factor in creating coalitions. In the framework of Sabatier the reason why interest groups form a coalition lies in coalescing beliefs. De Bruycker sees shared interests as a reason for interest groups to form a coalition. This difference creates the possibility that a coalition arises where the beliefs of coalition partners do not necessarily overlap, but that there are certain shared interests that creates added value for bonding together in a coalition.

Pijnenburg (1998) coins the term of ad hoc lobbying coalitions. As a basis Pijnenburg uses the definition of ad hoc coalitions by Berry (1989) which says that they are "*alliances that exist for the specific purpose of working on a single issue and dissolve when that issue reaches some resolution or when the coalition partners nog longer feel the effort is worthwhile*" (ibid., p. 166). Pijnenburg then adds several other criteria to this definition, being (1) little or no formalization, (2) limited duration, (3) considerable autonomy of coalition partners and (4) a single issue profile (Mulford & Rogers, 1982). It is also mentioned that ad hoc coalitions tend to have multiple types of actors on board representing different types of interests (Mahoney, 2007).

We see that this classification of a coalition is different from the definition that is offered in the ACF framework. It envisions a lobbying coalition far less structured and deliberate than a coalition as defined by the ACF framework.

There are some benefits in creating a coalition consisting of strange bedfellows (De Bruycker, 2014). Policy makers might be more inclined to listen to the message of a heterogeneous coalition. Indeed, the policy maker can see that the coalition consists of a broad collection of actors. Its message might therefore not be beneficial for just one group of actors, but could serve a broader purpose for a larger set of constituencies. This could be an appealing feature to a policy maker because by supporting one group he tends to a broad selection of actors. Furthermore, a broad collection of actors in a coalition could also muster up more resources than a group could acquire on its own. This can be resources like expert knowledge or political services. These pooled resources can then be used for the benefit of the coalition.

Next to benefits there are also some risks for interest groups that join coalitions with strange bedfellows. De Bruycker (ibid.) mentions that joining a coalition could hurt the identity of organizations. The identities of for example NGO's and business actors are sometimes not compatible and the combination would convey the wrong image to the constituency of the interest groups. Therefore, groups might choose not to interact with each other. Furthermore, coalitions of strange bedfellows might be an uneasy truce. The stability may rest upon carefully nuanced compromise positions which (when combined) might not lead to a clear view or position on the issue or policy at hand. The stability might also be influenced by prior lobbying battles that were fought between organizations that now choose to team up. This could lead to distrust and an uncomfortable coalition.

Hula (1995) introduces the notion that interest groups within a coalition can have different positions in the group and that this position can influence the level of activity by a specific actor. He notes that actors that have the most at stake within a coalition are likely to take the lead and devote the most resources. Actors that have little at stake tend to stay in the "periphery" of a coalition and devote little resources. According to Hula this can be seen as a sort of free riding within the coalition.

A question that rises after reviewing this theory is the type of coalition that has formed in the Dutch shale gas case. From the theory we can expect a multitude of coalitions. A coalition with intense cooperation could have formed on the basis of shared beliefs that the ACF describes. There is also the less intense variant within the ACF, being the coalition of convenience. Here beliefs still play a crucial role. Finally, there could exist a loose collection of actors that simply happen to be on the same side of a policy debate with minimal coordination and teamwork, that we see in the ad hoc coalitions of Pijnenburg.

## ***2.2 Issue expansion***

Now that we have an understanding of the various forms of coalitions in the literature, we can start to explore the way these coalitions try influence a policy debate.

Issue expansion is a concept that relates to the scope of a policy debate. Much like the description of Schattschneider (1960), which will be elaborated in the next section, the concept describes how actors try to enlarge or change the scope of an issue. So called “issue expanders” try to attract attention for a certain issue, and in the process, have to explain why the issue is suitable for consideration in that particular venue (Baumgartner and Jones, 2009, p. 36). This entails changing the definition of a policy issue. As in Schattschneider’s theory on conflict, this possible influx of new actors in a policy debate may change the dynamic, which could change the direction of a debate in a favorable way.

Baumgartner and Jones name two mechanisms that can cause issue expansion, namely that of *venue shopping* and by *influencing the issue definition*. Venue shopping (Baumgartner and Jones, 2009, p.p. 31) can be employed by actors looking to change the arena where a policy issue is discussed. A policy issue is pulled from a certain policy subsystem where a group of actors could have enjoyed a policy monopoly. By changing the venue, different actors and procedures are involved in discussing a policy issue. Examples can be the movement of an issue from a municipal agenda to a provincial agenda, by attracting an NGO into a discussion or finding a new media outlet for a policy discussion. Venue shopping is more than simply choosing a different institutional venue for a policy problem to be discussed in. Venues are also communication channels like media, scientific reports or the public at large.

The issue definition part of issue expansion (ibid., p. 25), concerns the changing of the definition of a certain policy issue. By changing how a certain issue is understood one can change which and how much people mobilize. Conflict between pro- and opponents are often about how a certain policy issue is understood and which image it should get. Baumgartner and Jones note that in a policy discourse, “losers” are more inclined to apply issue expansion as the current configuration of the policy environment is not beneficial for them (ibid., p. 34).

Issue definition and venue shopping interact (ibid., p. 37). When the tone of a policy discussion changes because of the promotion of a certain issue definition, the appropriate venue in which it should be dealt with, can also change. This change in venue can subsequently lead to a different substantial discussion of the problem. This new discussion could attract the attention of previously uninvolved groups, which on itself expands the issue further. Here we see the interplay between policy image and the policy venue and how a snowball-effect can occur causing an expanding issue.

Baumgartner and Jones discern two models of issue expansion (ibid., p.p. 83-84). On the one hand there are issues that reach the public agenda on a wave of positive enthusiasm, on the other hand there are those issues that reach prominence due to a wave of negative criticism. When a wave of enthusiasm occurs, conditions are favorable for the construction of new policy subsystems. This happens because politicians want to support a positive flow of policy change and do not want to get in the way of perceived progress. Conversely, a wave of criticism can destroy long existing policy subsystems. In this case, decision makers want to be perceived as taking action on a certain issue and are not inclined to give away discretionary freedom to experts. The positive wave of mobilization via a wave of enthusiasm is called a “Downsian mobilization” by Baumgartner and Jones (ibid., p. 88). Here, the government is called upon to react to a certain alarmed discovery made in society that creates a large wave of enthusiasm to solve a certain problem. This alarmed discovery is part of Down’s theory of the issue attention cycle (1972). The negative mobilization is called a “Schattschneider mobilization” by Baumgartner and Jones (2009, p. 89). Here, the mobilization originates from a policy equilibrium, where the losing side tries to expand the scope of the issue. Internal and external critics are said to join forces to change the scope of an issue.

The Downsian and Schattschneider mobilization both lead to different processes. The former creates subsystems, where the latter can potentially destroy them. The outcome of these processes is comparable however. The existing policy equilibrium is disturbed which opens the way for, sometimes, dramatic policy change (ibid., p. 89).

### ***2.3 Policy change***

We now have an understanding of how interest groups can try to influence policy discussions. We can subsequently focus on how this policy change is created. For this we need an elaboration on the basics of policy change. This topic will be discussed in the following section.

There are various schools of thought in the study of policy change. Baumgartner and Jones (2009) describe how policy change can be seen to develop incrementally, coming from seemingly independent policy sub-systems (ibid., p. 1). These policy sub-systems create so called “iron triangles” that form a policy environment that suits incremental policy change the best (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009, p. 81.). It is stated that this process is not necessarily democratic, as the policy making is hidden away in a policy sub-system. The policy process takes place behind a wall that consists of institutional arrangements that the sub-system helped to create. Through this mechanism some policy actors can enjoy a large freedom of action (Baumgartner and Jones, 2009, p. 8).

Baumgartner and Jones, however, argue that policy change could also be achieved through a very different dynamic. Policy change is not bound to an incremental process. Instead, policy can develop very quickly, creating a punctuation in a policy equilibrium. Baumgartner and Jones use Schattschneider’s theory (1960) to state that they expect that policy change happens when an issue definition is influenced in such a way that it can be discussed in other venues. This process transforms a negative feedback cycle, where the same input in a policy process yields less and less results, into a positive feedback cycle. In this situation small events can cause larger and larger results (Baumgartner and Jones, p. 16). In such periods, change can come fast and radical. Baumgartner and Jones link this idea to issue expansion.

After a period of rapid change, a new equilibrium can develop in a policy subsystem. This process can be seen as punctuated equilibrium theory, where periods of incremental change are punctuated by sequences of rapid change and lack of balance. This is a very different dynamic than

that is, for example, described in Lindblom's "The science of muddling through" (1959). In this famous article the policy process is described in a very incremental way. Lindblom holds that policy is developed by conducting successive limited comparisons in deliberating the next step to take. This is contrary to an actor who carefully evaluates all possible options that are available to him when the actor is at decision point of a specific policy. Lindblom defends incrementalism because it offers a faster way to make decisions and furthermore uses the accumulated knowledge of an actor from the prior steps.

Policy change is often joined by political conflict over the exact direction of said change. Schattschneider (1960) portrays a political conflict like a regular fight between two persons. He states that the outcome of a fight is usually determined by the degree of involving the audience. The same goes for a political conflict over change, where the degree of public involvement usually determines the outcome (*ibid.*, p. 5).

An audience in a physical fight is often many times larger than the two persons that are fighting. Thus, fights can be won or lost by the ability of the opponents to draw in audience. The same goes for a political fight, in which actors can attract the audience by increasing the scope of conflict (*ibid.*, p. 4). The attracted parties who join a policy contest bring a different dynamic to the fight. For example, two opponents can form a coalition and fight the third party together. This shows that adding players into a game changes the dynamic. Furthermore, actors do not join a policy contest without their own agenda (*ibid.*, p. 4). This further complicates a given policy fight. Thus, Schattschneider states that control of the scope of conflict is an important tool in managing a political conflict.

Actors can try to increase or decrease the scope of conflict in various ways. For example, they can try to socialize a certain conflict. This means that the issue moves from being a "private" conflict to a conflict in which society at large is involved. Furthermore, actors can try to nationalize the problem, pulling it away from a local arena where the issue is tucked away and only enjoys a small audience (*ibid.*, p.p. 7-9). In the line of increasing the scope of conflict also lies the concept of issue expansion that we saw before (Baumgartner and Jones, 2009).

## ***2.4 A hypothesis on interest group strategies***

As was mentioned in the introduction, the concepts relating to issue expansion are not without their critics. Pralle (2003) has worked on the rationality behind the activity of venue shopping. This author holds that although venue shopping is portrayed to be a technical exercise in which fully rational actors choose the venue that best suits their interest, this might not be the case in reality. According to Pralle, there are some variables that influence the freedom in which interest groups can choose their venues.

Pralle holds that there are three facets that influence the freedom of interest groups in choosing venues. First, it is not likely that interest groups have full rationality. They are limited in time, resources and experience and interest groups might have preconceptions about the use of a certain venue. Second, internal and external constraints influence venue shoppers. External constraints can be formal rules and jurisdiction of a venue. Internal constraints can be preferences of an interest group towards certain policy venues. Third, interest groups can learn certain techniques in venue shopping which influences their future choices. In line with this policy learning, interest groups can also start to identify with a certain venue, which further influences venue choice. In sum, it seems that venue shopping is somewhat different than the conceived notion that it is a straight forward, technical activity. Interest groups might not be as free in picking their venues because of the three mentioned elements that influence them. Pralle tests her theory with a case study in a Canadian setting regarding forest advocacy.

The elements that Pralle mentions as influencing the choice of venue are expected to play a role in the anti-shale gas coalition as well. An initial scan of the shale gas case shows that a very diverse collection of interest groups have mobilized and it is questionable whether there is a form of coordination within this coalition. The question also rises whether the composition of the coalition influences the behavior of the interest groups within it and whether the interest groups stick to the behavior that theory dictates.

Binderkrantz has worked on the typical strategies that interest groups choose (2005). In her article she focuses on the tendencies of interest groups to choose a specific strategy depending on characteristics of that group. This is a broader topic in the literature on lobby strategies, which is often called the distinction between direct and indirect lobbying. Binderkrantz focuses on this distinction. When a direct strategy of lobbying is chosen, an interest group seeks direct contact

with a public decision maker. An example of this can be calling a minister via an informal network. An indirect strategy is a situation wherein an interest group seeks to indirectly influence a decision maker, for example via the media.

Binderkrantz partially confirms an expectation that is often voiced in the literature. Namely that privileged groups tend to choose direct strategies and that less privileged groups choose indirect strategies. An often used argument is that business groups are very privileged as they control important economic resources. Less privileged groups could be more ideologically motivated and represent less economic interests. Although privileged groups could be more inclined to use direct lobbying, this does not mean that indirect lobbying strategies are not used.

If we synthesize the previous literature on the topic of interest group strategies we can create the following hypothesis. In doing this we integrate (1) the notion of Pralle that venue shopping is a less structured and rational process than is often believed and (2) the distinction of Sabatier between purposive and material actors and finally (3) the notion in the literature of direct versus indirect lobbying strategies. We bring this theory together and see if our expectation holds in a coalition that has an uncommon composition.

*H1: A purposive actor in the Dutch anti-shale gas coalition uses more indirect strategies of venue shopping, like focusing on the use of the media and mobilization venues, than a material actor does.*

Now that we have a thorough understanding of the theory on which this study is based, we can elaborate on the used methods in the next chapter.

### **3. Data and methods**

This chapter will further elaborate on the type of this research and the various methods that were used to answer the main questions. The way data was collected is described and it is also highlighted which types of sources were used. Furthermore, the rationale behind the various decisions on data collection are explained.

#### ***3.1 Type of research and unit of analysis***

This research is a qualitative single case study that answers a central question and various sub questions. On the basis of these answers a hypothesis is also assessed. By analyzing documents produced by relevant actors, media articles and conducting interviews a reconstruction of the Dutch shale gas case and the behavior of interest groups therein can be made. The concepts of issue expansion and advocacy coalitions are used as a theoretical lens in this reconstruction. The research could also serve as a springboard for future research on the same topic.

Without creating a too quantitative framework for this research we do discern a unit of analysis. It is the population of interest groups in the Netherlands that oppose the exploitation of shale gas. To limit the broadness of this research we focus specifically on interest groups opposing shale gas exploitation. The opposing side in the shale gas discussion is very diverse and complex, which makes it an interesting object to study. We study the unit of analysis by researching the specific interest groups that oppose the exploitation of shale gas in the Netherlands. The data sources that will be used are spoken and written statements by interest groups that are relevant to the topic at hand. Furthermore, we use reports from the media as an important source to determine the strategies and positions of actors. Finally, interviews were held with crucial actors to acquire insight into the reasons behind their behavior.

#### ***3.2 Methods***

##### ***3.2.1 Actors***

To further analyze the collection of interest groups in the Dutch shale gas case we will divide it into two groups. Group 1 are the material groups, who are motivated solely by economic reasons. Group 2 are the purposive groups, who are motivated by ideological reasons. From each group a typical actor is selected to cut down on the amount of data that is to be gathered. The two actors

will be selected to create the most ideal juxtaposition of two types of actors. The greater the contrast in groups, the more interesting the different uses of the concept of issue expansion could turn out.

<b><u>Group 1: Material</u></b>	<b><u>Group 2: Purposive</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nederlandse Brouwers</li> <li>• Nederlandse vereniging Frisdranken, Sappen, Water.</li> <li>• Federatie Nederlandse Levensmiddelen Industrie</li> <li>• Vitens and Brabant water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milieudefensie</li> <li>• Shalegas-free municipalities and provinces</li> <li>• Greenpeace</li> <li>• Verenigde Natuur en Milieufederaties</li> <li>• Concerned citizens</li> </ul>

*Table 1: Overview of material and purposive actors*

The model actor for group 1 are the Dutch beer brewers. These actors are solely motivated to act in the shale gas case because of economic reasons.<sup>2</sup> Opposite this actor is the NGO Milieudefensie. This actor is solely motivated by ideological reasons. These two actors will serve as representative examples for the two sides within the opponents coalition. We believe that these actors are good examples of the distinction between material and purposive groups because they have a clear origin. For example, the beer brewers are not semi-public companies like Vitens could considered to be and Milieudefensie has no for-profit intentions and is not affiliated to the Dutch government. The contrast between the two actors will serve as a good starting point for the analysis of our empirical data and has the most potential to prove our hypothesis.

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<sup>2</sup> The Dutch beer brewers are listed in this study as an actor that is against shale gas exploitation. Their official statement holds that the brewers are a neutral actor in this case. This statement is analyzed and further elaborated on in chapter four.

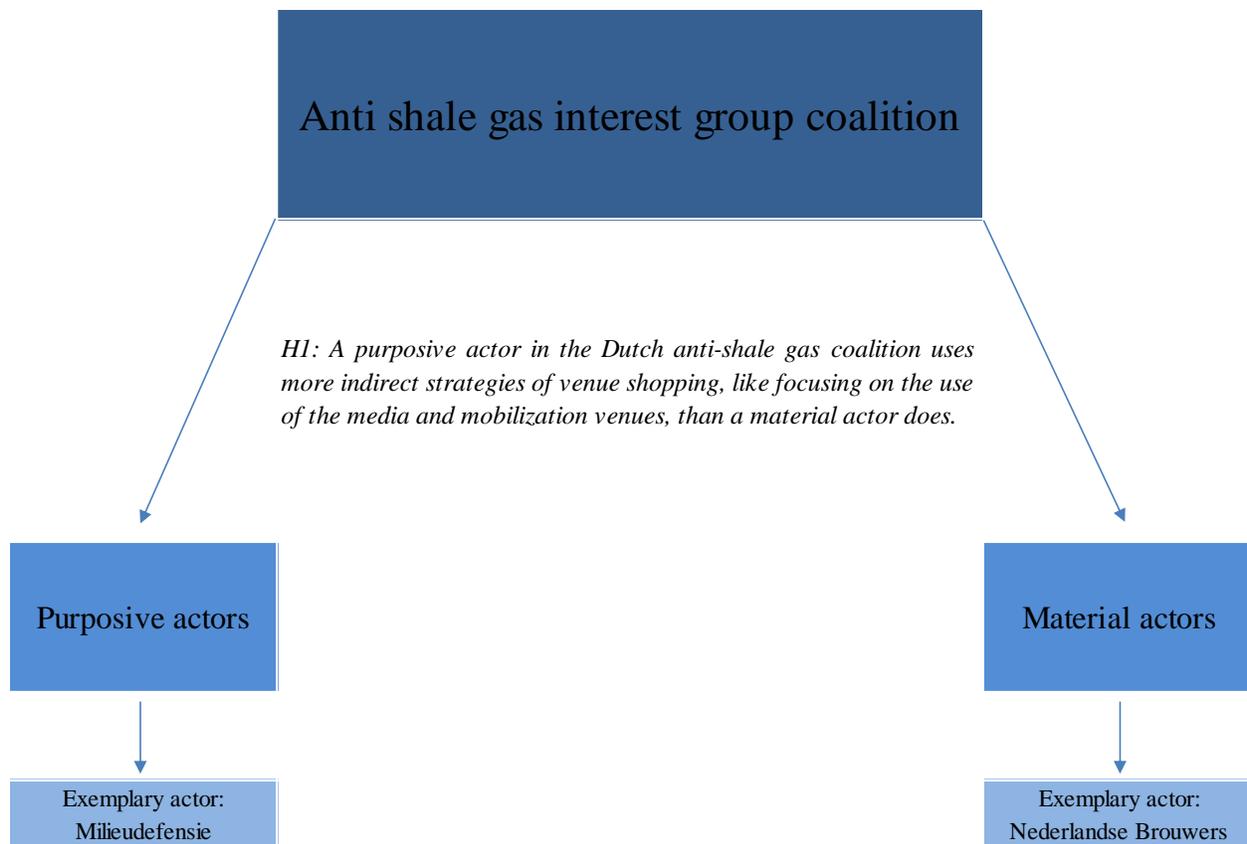


Table 2: Conceptual breakdown of the coalition

### 3.2.2 Venues

In this study the following venues are considered. The first is the *administrative venue*, which are the governmental organizations that execute policy. Examples are governmental bodies at the municipal, provincial and national level. Second, there are *political channels* like a committee in a House of Representatives which can be influenced to change certain policy. Third, there is the *media*, being newspapers or tv-channels who can influence policy and serve as a mouthpiece for certain actors. Fourth is the *contact with a following* (mobilization) that a certain organization has. In this context one can think of the mobilization of members or an organization.

### 3.2.3 Strategies

In the table below an overview is given of the strategies that are considered in this study. They originate from Binderkrantz (2005) who uses this set of strategies in her work. The strategies are accompanied by the empirical manifestations of the various strategies.

Direct strategies		Indirect strategies	
Administrative strategies	Parliamentary strategy	Media strategy	Mobilization strategy
- Contacting the relevant minister	- Contacting parliamentary committees	- Contacting reporters	- Arranging public meetings and conferences
- Contacting national public servants	- Contacting party spokespersons	- Writing letters to the editor and columns	- Organizing letter-writing campaigns
- Actively using public committees, etc.	- Contacting other members of parliament	- Issuing press releases and holding press conferences	- Arranging strikes, civil disobedience, direct action and public demonstrations
- Responding to requests for comments in policy making	- Contacting party organizations	- Publicizing analyses and research reports	- Conducting petitions

Table 3: Overview of interest group strategies and actions

### 3.3 Data

Through desk research it was analyzed which strategy the exemplary actor has chosen and which activities were employed. Besides desk research interviews will be held with the two model actors to see which activities they have employed besides those visible in the media. A special focus of these interviews is the informal contacts that were used by an interest group, for example with a ministry.

The data for the sub questions will be gathered in the following ways

- *Sub question 1: Have opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands bonded together in a coalition? And if so, what kind of coalition has arisen?*

The existing actors will be charted by conducting desk research. In this preliminary research we can create a comprehensive list of the interest groups involved in the Dutch shale gas case. On the basis of the definition of an advocacy coalition the coalition is then classified.

*Data sources: media, internet webpages, scientific reports, public records of governmental bodies*

- *Sub question 2: Have the opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands applied issue expansion to influence the policy decision on this topic?*
  - *Sub question 2a: How have interest groups tried to influence the problem definition in order to achieve issue expansion?*
  - *Sub question 2b: How have interest groups used venue shopping in order to achieve issue expansion?*

These sub questions will be answered through analyzing which activities were employed by the interest groups in the shale gas coalition. From this analysis we can conclude which strategy was adhered to by the interest group. Interviews have provided data on the activities that are not visible through the media.

*Data sources: A selection of Dutch national newspapers, analyzed using the Parliamentary Monitor and interviews with relevant organizations.*

When the sub questions are answered enough data has been gathered and analyzed to assess our hypotheses on the strategies that are employed by interest groups in the Dutch anti-shale gas coalition.

### **3.3.1 The data-set**

The collection of data was established by using the Parliamentary Monitor of the Montesquieu Institute. This instrument can collect data from various news sources from both domestic sources and international ones. The newspapers Telegraaf, NRC Handelsblad, Volkskrant, Algemeen Dagblad, Reformatorisch Dagblad, Nederlands Dagblad, Trouw, Financieel Dagblad and Het Parool were chosen to collect data from in this study. The initial search was done with the keyword “schalie gas”. This search among the nine mentioned newspapers produced 918 articles from the period between 2009 until 2014.

From this broad selection of articles on shale gas, those articles that contained “schaliegas and milieudefensie” and “schaliegas and bierbrouwers” were then selected for further analysis. This resulted in 65 articles from nine newspapers that were coded and analyzed for signs on venue shopping and the alteration of the problem definition by actors. These occurrences were highlighted throughout the dataset and each article was shortly summarized with a focus on the relevant components for our study. The signs of venue shopping and changing an issue definition were

sometimes direct quotes in a newspaper made by representatives of the beer brewers or Milieudéfensie. The occurrences were also found in texts that were made by the newspapers themselves in which the input of an actor was incorporated.

Besides this analysis, traces of a certain strategy (administrative, parliamentary, media and mobilization) were also coded. This was done on the basis of the typology of strategies that is presented by Binderkrantz (2005). This analysis resulted in adequate data to answer the sub questions and assess the hypotheses.

Interviews were also conducted with relevant actors. These interviews have filled blank spots in the analysis. Because certain phenomena are hard to observe in the media the interviews gave a crucial inside peek into the workings of the coalition and some of the actors that operate within it. For this research Milieudéfensie and the Federatie Nederlandse Levensmiddelen Industrie (FNLI) were contacted and provided information on their activities that were not visible in the media. The FNLI was interviewed because the beer brewers did not grant permission for an interview. The contacted organizations were large brewers like Heineken and also smaller brewers like Gulpener. The FNLI oversees the communication regarding shale gas case on behalf of the Nederlandse Brouwers. In that sense it can comment on the role of brewers in the shale gas case.

At Milieudéfensie an interview was held with a campaign leader on the topic of shale gas exploitation. On behalf of the beer brewers an interview was organized with the FNLI. Transcripts of both interviews were added as an appendix.

The quotes that were used in this study both from newspapers as well as interviews with representatives have been translated to English. The original Dutch quotes and transcripts can be found as appendix three of this research.

Triangulating a combination of data sources has led to a complete and integral overview on the Dutch shale gas case, which provided enough insight to draw conclusions. The next chapter covers the analysis of the data that was gathered.

## 4. Analyzing the shale gas case

The first part of this chapter will focus on determining if a coalition, and if so what type of coalition, has formed in the Dutch shale gas case. After having analyzed this coalition we will move on to answering the remaining sub questions of this research.

### *4.1 The interest group coalition in the Dutch shale gas case*

To gain a thorough understanding of the collection of interest groups that are active in the Dutch shale gas case a comprehensive analysis is made of the actors that are active as an opponent to shale gas. The various interests of actors have been included in the analysis, creating some insight as to why they choose to act in this case. The actors have been divided in four categories, being governmental, non-governmental organizations (NGO's), concerned citizens and scientific.

The *governmental* category consists out of 61 shale gas free municipalities and three shale gas free provinces. Lower governmental bodies cannot officially decide on whether their territory will be used for shale gas exploitation. There are municipalities and provinces however, who have declared themselves shale gas free (cf. Utrechtse Heuvelrug, 2013 and Ooststellingwerf, 2013). The declaration serves mostly as a signal to the minister who is a decision maker on this subject. The shale gas free provinces are Flevoland, Brabant and Gelderland. The complete list of shale gas free municipalities has been included as an appendix.

The *NGO's* category consists out of the two actors Milieudéfensie and Greenpeace. Milieudéfensie is an association that defends and improves the environmental condition of the Netherlands. The shale gas case is one of the many environmental topics that it tends to. Milieudéfensie has three main reasons to oppose the exploitation of shale gas. First, the exploitation is bad for the environment, second, the exploitation causes safety risks and, third, it is an inefficient source of energy. Milieudéfensie holds that exploitation is bad for the environment because fracking can contaminate soil and gas is an unclean fossil fuel (Milieudéfensie, 2014a). Furthermore, Milieudéfensie argues that there is a safety risk in the process of fracking (Milieudéfensie, 2014b). Finally, Milieudéfensie argues that using shale gas is inefficient due to all the costs involved in exploiting it and because it can cause a “bubble” in the market (Milieudéfensie, 2014c). From these motivations we can conclude that Milieudéfensie mainly opposes shale gas exploitation in order to preserve the natural environment. Greenpeace is a

worldwide campaigning organization that focuses on exposing global environmental problems. One of its goals is to prevent the pollution and abuse of the earth lands, water and air. That is why the Dutch division of Greenpeace is active in the shale gas case. It is concerned that the exploitation will contaminate the environment, much like Milieudefensie.

The *concerned citizens* category consists out of various actors. First are the shale gas free municipalities: Apart from the municipalities that have declared themselves “shale gas free” there are also non-governmental organizations under the same name. These are Stichting Schaliegasvrij Nederland, Schaliegasvrij Boxtel, Schaliegasvrij Haaren, Schaliegasvrij Noordoostpolder, Schaliegasvrij Oisterwijk, Schaliegasvrij Haastrecht en Vlist and Burgercomité Meinweg Onberoerd. Together they form a coalition of neighborhood- and environmental groups which act to implement a moratorium on the exploitation of shale gas (Schaliegasvrij Nederland, 2014a). They pursue this goal because the organization believes that shale gas exploitation will harm the environment and will cause safety issues within the municipalities that are locations for shale gas exploitation. This line of argumentation is very much like that of the Milieudefensie group (Milieudefensie, 2014b). The coalition operates under the name “Schaliegasvrij Nederland”.

The Natuur and Milieufederaties is an organization that overarches twelve provincial environmental federations in the Netherlands. It has more than a 1000 volunteers who work for a better environment under the various provincial federations (Natuur en Milieufederaties, 2014). Three of the provincial federations stand out for being exceptionally active in the shale gas case. It is very likely that this is caused by the activity of private companies wanting to exploit shale gas in those provinces. These three organizations are now highlighted one by one.

The Brabantse Milieufederatie is a provincial overarching organization for a 110 charity groups who commit themselves to a better environment in the province of Brabant. The federation’s main interest is a clean environment with lots of vitality and a varied landscape. Although the federation is a provincial organization, it cooperates with a lot of local actors on the area of environment improvement (Brabantse Milieufederatie, 2014a). Like Milieudefensie, the federation is against shale gas exploitation because of environmental risks. Furthermore, the federation believes that we should not invest in the exploitation of fossil fuels anymore (Brabantse Milieufederatie, 2014b).

Like the Brabantse Milieufederatie, the Gelderse Natuur en Milieufederatie is also a provincial organization that overarches more than 100 local charity organization that work for the benefit of the environment in Gelderland (Gelderse Natuur en Milieufederatie, 2014a). The organization tries to prevent shale gas exploitation because the risks of the exploitation are not yet clear. To prevent the exploitation the federation has, for example, organized information meetings, wrote a letter to the minister and organized trips to the city of The Hague (Gelderse Natuur en Milieufederatie, 2014b).

Finally there is Natuur en Milieu Overijssel. It is dedicated to working together with citizens and companies in Overijssel to preserve its nature and create a sustainable environment (Natuur en Milieu Overijssel, 2014). The organization is currently not active within the coalition since the company that wanted to exploit shale gas in the province of Overijssel has cancelled its request. Natuur en Milieu Overijssel was opposed to shale gas exploitation due to concerns over the pollution of the environment and the safety for the community (Natuur en Milieu Overijssel, 2011).

The *business* category is made up of five actors. Nederlandse Brouwers is a representative of the beer industry. The Dutch beer brewers are against shale gas exploitation as long as it is not proven that it cannot harm the quality of the groundwater.<sup>3</sup> Water is an important ingredient for beer and therefore the brewers have an economic interest in preserving the high quality of the Dutch groundwater. The potential contamination of groundwater by the exploitation of shale gas is a risk for this actor (Trouw, 2013b).

The Nederlandse vereniging Frisdranken, Waters, Sappen (FWS) is somewhat like the Dutch brewers. They represent the soft drink industry. The association for soft drinks has expressed that, if shale gas exploitation is not proven harmless, they do not support its exploitation. Water is also an important ingredient for producing soft drinks. This is why the FWS has the same economic interest as the brewers: preserving their supply of clean groundwater (ibid.).

The Federatie Nederlandse Levensmiddelen Industrie is an umbrella organization for companies and sector organizations in the Dutch foodstuff industry. Companies and sector organizations can become a member of this organization, which serves as a mouthpiece of the

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<sup>3</sup> See section 4.3.4. of this research for a full statement on the position of beer brewers

sector. Among other tasks, the Federatie Nederlandse Levenmiddelen Industrie represents the interests of the beer brewers in the shale gas debate (FNLI, 2014).

Vitens is a Dutch water company. It is not a principal opponent to shale gas exploitation, but the organization does discern various risks. Vitens states that since groundwater is such an important resource to society, the involved risks in shale gas exploitation are very grave. The company holds that fracking could cause irreversible damage to the groundwater resources (Vitens, 2013a and 2013b). This safety issue is the principal reason why Vitens is an opponent until all risks of the exploitation can be ruled out. Economic risks are of secondary importance to the company (Trouw, 2013a).

Like Vitens, Brabant Water is worried about shale gas exploitation. The water company also has an interest in preserving the quality of groundwater. In 2011 the company stated that it would fight the trial drillings that were planned (Binnenland Bestuur, 2011). Later in 2011, the company still seems worried about shale gas exploitation. It does feel, however, that fracking can be done safely when certain precautions are taken (Omroep Brabant, 2011). Brabant Water continues to invest time and money into researching the potential risks surrounding shale gas exploitation (Brabant Water, 2014).

Finally, 55 scientists have bonded together in a *scientific* category and have jointly published a manifest against shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands (Trouw, 2013c). The scientists argue that shale gas is mostly a fad that moved from America to Europe, which offers little benefits to the Netherlands. The economic profit is small and comes with huge environmental risks, so say the scientists.

We see that the group of actors under study consists out of different types of organizations and that they have different reasons to be active in the shale gas case. They range from organizations that act out of the belief that the environment should be protected. There are also those organizations that have a more material interest in participating, like for example Vitens or the beer brewers.

## ***4.2 An analysis of the coalition***

After having analyzed the group of actors that has mobilized in the anti-shale gas case I can start to classify the coalition. Sabatier (1988) defines a coalition as “people from various organizations who share a set of normative and causal beliefs and who often act in concert”. We use this definition as a starting point in the analysis. The definition can be cut into three pieces. First, people from various organizations need to be active. Second, these people share a set of normative and causal beliefs. Third, the people with the same convictions have to act in concert.

### **4.2.1 What type of coalition has formed**

The first part of the definition is easily identified. Through desk research it was analyzed that the anti-shale gas coalition consists out of a wide array of actors. The players in the shale gas case range from business actors to NGO’s, to concerned citizens and scientists. An interesting feature of the coalition under study is that it consists of multiple types of actors. For example, the classic gap between the NGO-sector and the business-sector is bridged. We can therefore conclude that the coalition in the Dutch shale gas case is of a heterogeneous nature. There are different types of actors active within the coalition.

The second part of Sabatier’s definition, that actors share a set of normative and causal beliefs, can also be discerned. The most important beliefs in this respect are the policy core beliefs and the secondary beliefs. In the anti-shale gas coalition, the policy core beliefs seem to be coherent. Actors mostly state that they are against shale gas exploitation out of environmental concerns. This is a policy core belief that is broadly shared in the coalition. The secondary beliefs might differ somewhat among coalition members. For example, some actors state that unless shale gas exploitation is proven safe, they do not support it. Others completely reject the exploitation of shale gas. These are differences in rather narrow convictions of an actor. The broad policy core belief that shale gas exploitation is not the way to go, however, is shared. Looking at the combination of actors active on the case it is very plausible that the actors only share certain beliefs on this topic, and not so much on other topics.

The third part of the definition holds that actors should act in concert, meaning that they act together. At this point we come across some mixed findings. We see that in the anti-shale gas coalition some actors have acted in concert. For example, the Nederlandse vereniging Fris, Water,

Sappen and Nederlandse Brouwers have publicly joined the critical comments made by Vitens about the exploitation of shale gas (Trouw, 2013d). Another example is the fact that Schaliegasvrij Nederland actively promotes the petition that Milieudefensie has started against the exploitation of shale gas (Schaliegasvrij Nederland, 2013). From interviews with a representative of Milieudefensie this image of coherent action also arises, which can be seen in the quote below. This quote has been translated from Dutch to English. The original quote can be found in appendix three.

*“The statements of the beer brewers, Rabobank and water companies on the topic of shale gas are completely independent from the statements of Milieudefensie. With other organizations (including Greenpeace and WWF) we do coordinate activities and sometimes we take action together. This usually concerns the joint writing of letters to parliament or to ministers. These actions are coordinated by Milieudefensie”*

*(Interview with Milieudefensie)*

The representative states that Milieudefensie actively cooperates with other purposive actors within the coalition. He also states, however, that the actions of for example the beer brewers are completely separate from the actions of Milieudefensie. We thus conclude that the coalition in the Dutch shale gas case has several actors that work together and several others that do not work together in a coherent way. The beer brewers seem to take a place in the periphery of the coalition, whereas the purposive actors more intensely coordinate their actions.

From a combined analysis of the current shale gas actors and the definition that Sabatier offers for a coalition, we suspect that the group of actors cannot be conceptualized as a coalition that fits within the ACF-framework. Although a group of organizations with coherent beliefs can be discerned, they do not actively coordinate their actions or act in concert. Perhaps the ad hoc coalition that is defined by Pijenburg offers a better framework. This envisions a coalition as a more loose structure than the ACF-framework. Now that we have analyzed the cooperation within the coalition, we can move on to analyzing the combination of actors to see whether this offers more proof for the existence of an ad hoc coalition.

#### **4.2.2 Purposive and material actors in the anti-shale gas coalition**

An analysis of the active actors in the anti-shale gas coalition shows that there are five material actors present. These are the Nederlandse Brouwers, the Nederlandse vereniging Frisdranken, Waters en Sappen, Vitens, FNLi and Brabant Water. These companies only have an interest in opposing shale gas exploitation because of their dependence of clean ground water. This commodity is essential for their economic position and thus motivates them to oppose shale gas exploitation. The other actors in the coalition are of a purposive nature because they oppose shale gas exploitation for more ideological reasons like environmental and safety concerns. They see shale gas exploitation as a negative development in general. The exploitation does not directly threaten their economic position, but does hurt their deep core beliefs. This heterogeneous nature of the coalition (namely, purposive actors and material actors) is also a feature of the ad hoc coalition that is mentioned by Pijenburg. This is more proof that the coalition in the Dutch shale gas case is an ad hoc coalition.

Another aspect of the ad hoc coalition that is defined by Pijenburg is the relative autonomy of some of the coalition partners and the single issue nature of the coalition. The relative autonomy shows in the quote of the representative of Milieudefensie where it is stated that some of the actors do not cooperate with others organizations and that they put out statements by themselves. The single issue nature can be derived from the fact that besides shale gas exploitation, no other topics are discussed within the coalition. This conclusions offer more proof for the existence of an ad hoc coalition in the Dutch shale gas case.

#### **4.2.3 An ad hoc coalition**

Now that we have an image of the coalition under study and the type of actors within it, it can definitely classified as an ad hoc coalition. This is because there are low levels of cooperation within the coalition and it has a heterogeneous nature. Besides this, the coalition also chooses to act only on the topic of shale gas exploitation. We also find it likely that the actors in the Dutch shale gas case do not share much deep core and policy core beliefs other than the interest in preventing the exploitation of shale gas. This is concluded because the business actors act out of very different interests than the ideological actors. Indeed, one could argue that in other cases the

material actor Heineken could very well be an opponent of a purposive actor like Greenpeace.<sup>4</sup> Thus, we see that at least some actors in the coalition do not share much beliefs besides the wish to stop shale gas exploitation and that the coalition mainly serves a common interest.

We argue that the ACF framework cannot be used to conceptualize the coalition in the shale gas case. Sabatier mentions two types of coalitions, namely that of a standard advocacy coalition and the coalition of convenience. The “standard coalition” envisions coalitions as working together rather intensively. This is not seen in the case under study. A coalition of convenience is temporary in nature and mainly serves to increase resources for a group of actors. This combined pool of resources enables them to deploy more activities than a single actor. Coherent policy beliefs of course play a role in the construction of a coalition. The focus, however, lies on the instrumental value of cooperation with certain other groups. It was noted however that not all the actors act in concert within the Dutch shale gas coalition. The representative of Milieudefensie has stated that they operate completely separate from the beer brewers and only share their standpoint. That is why the ACF framework (or the coalition of convenience for that matter) does not fit the analysis completely. The glue of the coalition in the shale gas case also does not seem to be beliefs, but rather a shared interest that puts different types of actors on the same side. The focus on beliefs within the ACF framework is not found in the Dutch shale gas case.

With this analysis, the first sub question *Have opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands bonded together in a coalition? And if so, what kind of coalition has arisen?* has been answered. We see that an ad hoc coalition has arisen where some actors within the coalition have coordinated their actions and act coherent but also that some actors do not work together and merely share the same side of the debate.

### ***4.3 The empirics of issue expansion***

The next part of this chapter will focus on the way actors within the ad hoc coalition that has formed in the Dutch shale gas case, have applied issue expansion. After having analyzed this conclusions can be drawn on the way lobby groups applied issue expansion, which type of lobby group is

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<sup>4</sup> An example of this can be seen in the situation where Greenpeace reminded Heineken of its good intentions regarding the environment and subsequently accused Heineken of creating a “greenwash” by only stating good intentions without actually changing company processes (Greenpeace, 2014).

potentially inclined to use a certain type of strategy in issue expansion and whether this is influenced by the composition of the coalition. As was explained before, we will research the case using a media analysis.

#### 4.3.1 Shale gas in the media

There has been a varying degree of attention to shale gas in the Dutch media. Figure two shows the rise and fall of the attention for shale gas within the nine researched papers from 2009 to 2013. We see some small attention starting to begin in 2010, after which a steady rise occurs in the end of 2012. The year 2013 has a real peak in attention. This could be caused by the (at that time) pending decision whether to start conducting trial drillings or postpone drillings for future research. The decision was taken to postpone, which caused a downfall in attention in the media, which can also be seen in the graph.

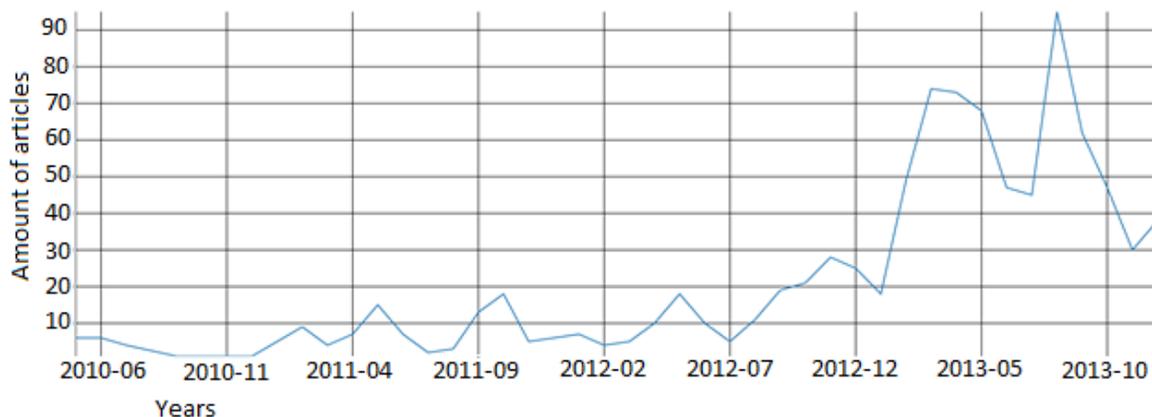


Figure 2- Media attention to shale gas from 2010 until 2013

#### 4.3.2 Milieudefensie and shale gas in the media

The following section focuses on the media-analysis that was executed on Milieudefensie. The data set that has been gathered was coded for traces of issue expansion. We have found evidence for both the modification of the definition of the problem and for venue shopping. We will first elaborate on the way Milieudefensie has tried to change and expand the issue definition.

The basic notion that shale gas exploitation is bad for the environment, which is often voiced by the opposition, was enlarged with others topics as well. Below is a list of these **additions to the problem definition**. These additions do not necessarily reflect reality, but they are used by Milieudéfensie to expand the problem of shale gas exploitation. There are various quotes taken from the dataset to illustrate the observed examples of issue expansion. These quotes have been translated from Dutch to English. The original quotes can be found in appendix three.

### *The basic argument*

We see that the basic argument that Milieudéfensie uses is that fracking is bad for the environment. This is the basic principle upon which this actor opposes shale gas exploitation. This principle is then further expanded by adding different dimensions to the definition. The following paragraphs highlight these dimensions per topic.

### *A lack of broad societal discussion*

Besides an environmental problem, Milieudéfensie also points at the lack of a broad societal discussion. The present discussion is too narrow and does not cover all the necessary topics. An example of this is the topic of usefulness and necessity that is not being picked up in the discussion.

*“Milieudéfensie criticizes the fact that the rules were changed halfway during the game by Minister Kamp. “It should be a public discussion, but the focus group will now be silenced and is not taken seriously. If the minister walks away from a public debate, he has a problem” says Geert Ritsema of Milieudéfensie. He was a member of the focus group on behalf of several environmental organizations.” (Reformatorisch Dagblad, 02-08-2013)*

*“Already during the first meeting in June 2012 it was criticized that ‘usefulness and necessity’ will not be researched. The question whether the costs outweigh the benefits is thus not addressed, despite the fact that both the focus group and the parliament has asked for this time and time again.” (NRC Handelsblad, 07-10-13)*

### *Financial compensation*

Milieudefensie also adds a financial dimension to the shale gas discussion. They state that shale gas companies cannot compensate the damage that could potentially arise from exploitation. Milieudefensie holds that the patrons of shale gas should, at the least, be able to compensate the damage that could potentially occur. This adds another facet to the problem definition of shale gas exploitation.

*“Yesterday it was announced that the British firm Cuadrilla, that is drilling for shale gas in the Netherlands, has no financial buffer to compensate any damages that the drilling might cause. This is stated by Milieudefensie, that conducted an investigation into the financial position of Cuadrilla. In 2009 the company received a permit for exploratory drilling in Noord-Brabant and the Noordoostpolder. The government assumed that the company could reimburse any damages. Milieudefensie believes that the Minister of Economic Affairs should now declare the permit unjustified now that they have been given out on false pretenses.”*

*(Nederlands Dagblad, 11-11-13)*

### *Quality of conducted research*

Another dimension is added by Milieudefensie through commenting on the quality of research on shale gas exploitation. They hold that the quality of scientific research that is done is “nonsense” and not trustworthy. Milieudefensie even goes as far as calling the research documents “shoddy”. An example is given in the fact that some studies are only based on literature and have no attention for location-specific circumstances. The problem thus complicates further, as the societal discussion is not based on proper research.

*“Milieudéfensie classifies the proposed governmental decision as reckless and based on shoddy research.” (Telegraaf, 22-08-13)*

*“Milieudéfensie suspects that the Ministry of Economic Affairs has influenced the outcome of the independent investigation into shale gas in the Netherlands” (Financieel dagblad, 04-09-13)*

*“According to Milieudéfensie, the risks that the researchers clearly mention in the report, are severely mitigated in the concluding summary” (Volkskrant, 04-09-13)*

*“The report is shoddy work” says Geert Ritsema of Milieudéfensie" From the beginning we have been involved in the preparation of the study. We have come up with all kinds of input. Not only we, but also the municipalities, provinces and independent scientists. This input has simply been ignored.” (Telegraaf, 22-08-13)*

#### *Behavior of central government*

According to Milieudéfensie, the responsible ministry does not communicate adequately on the matter of shale gas and does not stick to agreements neither. Evidence is offered in the fact that actors have quit the soundboard-group that was created to increase support for shale gas exploitation. In this way, some actors involved in the exploitation of shale gas are portrayed as not being trustworthy. This problem dimension further expands the problem in the shale gas case in the sense that the procedures towards said exploitation are not executed properly.

*“The drop-outs (the provinces of Noord Brabant, Limburg and Zeeland, the municipalities Noordoostpolder and Boxtel and Milieudéfensie) argue by voice of Alderman Peter van de Wiel of the municipality Boxtel, that they are not at all taken seriously”*  
*(Volkskrant, 26 -06-13)*

#### *A link to Groningen*

The problem of shale gas exploitation is also linked to the situation in Groningen, where earth quakes are occurring (likely) because of the exploitation of regular gas in Slochteren. This expands the problem from a shale gas only problem, to the whole problem sphere of the situation in

Groningen. The Groningen case attracted a lot of attention in the national media and enlarges the problems concerned with shale gas exploitation significantly.

*“Is the victory in Groningen also the end of shale gas in the Netherlands? The opponents are making their case at least. Milieudéfensie subtly stated on Tuesday that shale gas exploitation could also lead to earthquakes. In the past the main risks of shale gas exploitation was usually seen to be pollution.” (Financieel Dagblad, 22-01-2014)*

Taking the previous examples into account we can see clear evidence of issue expansion through changing and enriching the problem definition.

There is also some evidence for the concept of **venue shopping**. These instances are shown below.

#### *Scientific reports*

Milieudéfensie has studied the case of shale gas exploitation and has also ordered other organizations to conduct research for them. By doing this, Milieudéfensie has tried to add a scientific realm to the discussion on shale gas. The scientific reports are a new platform on which the discussion can be held.

*“In the meantime, 26 municipalities in the Netherlands have explicitly spoken out against shale gas exploitation within their borders. This is stated by Milieudéfensie who conducted a survey.”*  
*(Milieudéfensie, ~2013)*

*“A great success is the moratorium that Minister Verhagen announced in October 2011 on the (test) drilling for shale gas, and which is still in place. The determining factors were: 1) a proper scientific foundation for our argument that the risks of shale gas are too big [...]”*

*(Interview with Milieudéfensie)*

## *Mobilization*

Another venue that was used by Milieudefensie is that of the mobilization of the masses. By organizing events and protest at key points in the decision making process surrounding shale gas exploitation, Milieudefensie has used a “public” venue to voice its concerns. Examples of these venues were debates and protests at well-known places.

*“Tomorrow in debate center De Balie, Milieudefensie organizes a meeting on the exploitation of shale gas.” (Trouw, 11-06-12)*

*“Yesterday, on the square in front of the parliament in The Hague, a demonstration was held against shale gas drilling in the Netherlands.” (Nederlands Dagblad, 12-11-13)*

### **4.3.3 Beer brewers and shale gas in the media**

We can now move on to the data set regarding the Dutch beer brewers. A striking difference is the amount of articles that mentions beer brewers. Where the Milieudefensie data set delivered 44 articles, the beer brewers set has 21 articles from a period of 2009 until 2014. The difference in the amount of published articles is hard to explain. A possible reason is that beer brewers deliberately kept a low profile. Another explanation could be that the media did not find the beer brewers an interesting topic to highlight in relation to shale gas exploitation. We can also see that the beer brewers joined the anti-shale gas coalition at a later point in time, namely since 2013. The other actors were in the media as of 2010 which is a significant difference.

The qualitative analysis of the data set offers less insight than the Milieudefensie set. We see evidence of a media strategy in which the beer brewers warn the decision makers on allowing shale gas exploiting. This warning however is not substantiated or expanded with other subjects. This does happen in the case of Milieudefensie, where the shale gas case is allocated multiple additional problems.

*“The beer brewers Bavaria, Grolsch and Heineken do not favor the extraction of shale gas, it is stated in newspaper Trouw. The three major brewers want to see hard evidence that no contamination of groundwater occurs, before the drilling starts.”*

*(Trouw, 17-04-13)*

*“Because of the latter risk, Heineken, Grolsch and Bavaria, as major users of water, oppose shale gas exploitation for the time being. Just like Princess Irene. She recently said in Het Parool that she does not favor shale gas at all. The beer brewers teaming up with the aunt of the King and the environmental lobby: that is something we haven’t experienced before” (Volkskrant, 25-04-13).*

A venue that the beer brewers specifically add to the discussion is that of scientific reports. It is stated by the brewers that unless shale gas is proven safe for ground water supplies, the brewers do not support fracking. Another venue that is used, is that of the media. Repeatedly, the brewers warn for the exploitation of shale gas through media statements.

It is a striking detail that the analysis of the beer brewers in the media surrounding this topic reaps such a meager result. What can explain this low profile of the brewers? Why do the beer brewers become a member of the anti-shale gas coalition, but do not actively voice this position? The next paragraph will analyze these questions and will offer insight into the matter.

#### **4.3.4 The reluctance of beer brewers**

A good starting point for this discussion is to question what beer brewers (or material actors for that matter) stand to gain in participating in the anti-shale gas coalition. Brewers instinctively oppose fracking due to the alleged risks regarding the ground water reserves. If beer brewers decide to very actively communicate that anti-shale gas agenda it is very possible that they would gain a positive image in the public opinion. The actor would decrease its regard at the Ministry of Economic Affairs. On the other hand an actor can choose to remain completely silent regarding the shale gas case (or even support exploiting it). This gains them a positive image at the Ministry of Economic Affairs but not so much in the public opinion, seeing the public outcry on shale gas exploitation.

We see that both options have serious down sides for interest groups, either lose good terms with the policy makers, or lose good terms with the general public. Losing good terms with policy

makers leads to problems in the future when a material actor needs a favorable decision from policy makers. An often seen strategy of material actors is direct lobbying where a policy maker is directly approached. This method of working is complicated when the relation with that policy maker deteriorates. Losing good terms with the general public could lead to a decrease in turn overs. It is therefore expected that beer brewers choose to very cautiously voice their opinion on shale gas.

We see three reasons for situation that is described above. First, by being cautious a material actor remains on relatively good terms with the ministry and policy makers. This maintains the possibility for them to employ direct lobbying strategies regarding the ministry. Second, by being cautious a material actor also stays on relatively good terms with the general public. This partly ensures that the public will keep buying a product. Third, shale gas case has become so controversial in the public opinion, one could hold that it is unlikely that exploitation will take place regardless of the actions of a material actor. Indeed, material actors have realized that no action by them is needed and their goal, preventing risky fracking, will be met anyway without them losing their favorable position with the ministry and policy makers.

The analysis above leads us to believe that the beer brewers are deliberately silent on the topic. Evidence for this is found in the fact that beer brewers were also very reluctant in approving a request for an interview or talk on this topic<sup>5</sup>. Multiple requests often ended in the same response, being that the beer brewers do not wish to comment on the topic other than their shared statement. The statements is shown below. The original Dutch statement is added in appendix three.

*“The Dutch brewers are not pro or anti-shale gas extraction. We do attach (as well as other users of high-quality water) great importance to the protection of our groundwater as the main ingredient of beer. All activities that possibly pose risks to our groundwater, we monitor critically. We welcome a thorough investigation into the potential risks before actual drilling takes place. It is therefore good that there are, at this time, further investigations being done regarding the environmental impact of shale gas exploitation. We look forward to the conclusions of said research”.*

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<sup>5</sup> The contacted organizations are big organizations like Heineken and Nederlandse Brouwers, but also smaller brewers have been contacted like the breweries Alfa, Brand and Gulpener.

We see that the beer brewers go so far as to pose as a neutral actor in the shale case discussion. The media analysis, however, shows that in the past the brewers took a more critical stance on the topic. Furthermore, one can defer from the statement that the brewers are still in the opposing coalition. Indeed, no research has shown that fracking is completely safe for ground water, so the wish of the beer brewers that proper research is done into this matter has not yet been met.

The continuous referral to a general statement combined with the fact that the beer brewers refuse to have an interview on the topic of shale gas exploitation leads to the conclusion that these actors are actively keeping a low profile despite being on the anti-shale gas coalition. This is also shown in an interview with the FNLI, in which it was stated that the brewers do not have to act at this point in time. The beer brewers do not actively participate in elaborating or enhancing the problem definition and do not use any public venues besides the general media statements and referring to scientific research.

We can see some of Hula's (1995) work in the Dutch shale gas case, namely that actors can take different positions within a coalition of interest groups. Looking at the behavior of both purposive and material actors we can say that the beer brewers are in the periphery of the coalition. The purposive actor Milieudefensie on the other hand takes a far more active role within the coalition and could be considered a leader.

#### **4.3.5 The lobby black box**

A factor in analyzing the use of issue expansion through changing the problem definition and adding venues is that lobbying can be conducted "off the radar". We have concluded from an empirical analysis that beer brewers have not added any significant public venues to the shale gas discussion. This conclusion is tentative, however, if we take into account that a brewer could have used a venue that is invisible in the media. A brewer CEO<sup>6</sup> could have contacted a minister through a private network and might have influenced the decision process through that contact. Due to the nature of these networks it is very hard to empirically observe and prove the existence of such influence.

We should consider that while the beer brewers keep a low profile in the public discussion, an active anti-shale gas agenda might be pushed through more covert means. This question was

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<sup>6</sup> CEO: Chief Executive Officer

researched through an interview with a representative of the Federatie Nederlandse Levensmiddelen Industrie. Here it was confirmed that the federation has contacts with both politicians like a minister or secretary, but also with policy makers at the ministry itself. Through this channel beer brewers can achieve policy influence through direct lobbying where a decision maker is in direct contact with the influencing actor.

#### **4.3.6 The use of issue expansion and our hypothesis**

After having made the above analysis we can answer the second sub question: *Have the opponents of shale gas exploitation in the Netherlands applied issue expansion to influence the policy decision on this topic.* The two sub questions to this questions are *How have interest groups tried to influence the problem definition in order to achieve issue expansion?* And *How have interest groups used venue shopping in order to achieve issue expansion?*

We can say that interest groups in the opponents coalition have used issue expansion. We do see that the actual application of the concept differs.

The first difference is the use of changing the problem definition. The purposive actors tried to change the problem definition to a greater extent than the material actors. We see that Milieudedefensie has added a lot of dimensions to the shale gas problem definition ranging from economic arguments to safety ones. The beer brewers have not employed changing the problem definition. They keep mentioning the potential risk for the ground water and stay relatively quiet otherwise. Unlike Milieudedefensie they do not try to add additional dimensions to the problem of shale gas exploitation.

If we look at venue shopping we see a comparable image. The purposive actor Milieudedefensie has used more venues to reach their goal than the beer brewers. For example, mobilizing the masses through demonstrations, creating scientific reports by conducting research or putting out statements in the media were part of their venue shopping. The material actor has used less venues, mainly being the media and also some scientific research. We do see that the material actor has used direct lobbying to influence policy. In this respect the material actors differ from the purposive ones, in the sense that the latter choose a more public approach to lobbying. This observation leads us to assess our hypotheses on the strategies that purposive and material actors use.

The hypothesis that was derived from the literature on interest group behavior is as follows *H1: A purposive actor in the Dutch anti-shale gas coalition uses more indirect strategies of venue shopping, like focusing on the use of the media and mobilization venues, than a material actor does.*

From the analysis we can conclude that the hypothesis is confirmed. We expected to see that purposive actors would choose more indirect lobbying strategies than material actors. This was shown in an empirical setting through the fact that Milieudefensie has frequently used mobilization and media strategies. They choose a far more public approach to lobbying in the shale gas case than the beer brewers.

The representative from the material actor noted that his professional network was frequently used to give and receive information in the shale gas case. We see far less activity from the material actor in the indirect strategies, which was shown in the media analysis.

The use of direct strategies was hard to quantify because the source of this information were interviews with representatives from Milieudefensie and the FNLI. Through this method it is only possible to confirm that certain direct strategies were used, but this provided no further information on actual frequencies of use.

The findings regarding the hypothesis further confirm the work of Binderkrantz (2005). Privileged groups tend to choose indirect strategies on a smaller scale than less privileged groups. In this case, the privileged groups are the material actors and the less privileged are the purposive actors. The findings also confirm the results of Pralle (2003) because again the interest groups seem to be adhering to the strategies they have also chosen in previous situations. This suggests that interest groups are not as free to choose which lobby strategy they use and that variables like the type of interest group (purposive versus material) does play a role in strategy choice even when the composition of the interest group coalition is unusual, which is the case in the heterogeneous anti-shale gas group in the Netherlands.

## 5. Conclusion

This chapter contains the most important findings of this study. It serves to answer the main question and formulate conclusions. We will also reflect on the possibilities for generalization and span of this study. Furthermore we will offer directions for further research to continue the academic work on the study of interest representation.

The main question of this study was: *Among the actors on the same side of the shale gas debate in the Netherlands, how have interest groups employed the strategy of issue expansion and what similarities and differences occur? What causes these deviations?*

First, we can confirm that an anti-shale gas coalition is present in the Netherlands. Based on the work of Pijnenburg, we can say that there is an ad hoc coalition of organizations who work together in varying degrees on the topic of shale gas exploitation. Some groups seek active coordination and cooperation while others groups just seem to be on the same side of a policy debate.

The composition of the coalition is rather uncommon because it mixes material actors and purposive actors into the same group. These groups have different beliefs, but share a common interest in the shale gas case. The actors in this heterogeneous coalition do not necessarily share the same policy core beliefs besides their beliefs regarding shale gas exploitation and the focus lies on the instrumental value of cooperation with other groups.

A question is whether this heterogeneous coalition of material and purposive actors changes the behavior of interest groups. That is why venue shopping and how actors change the problem definition have been researched within the coalition. It was found that the purposive actor mostly changed the issue definition and that Milieudéfensie has added a lot of extra dimensions to the problem of shale gas exploitation. This is in stark comparison to the material actors like beer brewers. These actor have only warned about the dangers of shale gas exploitation, but have not added extra topics in the discussion. Therefore, we see a publically far more vocal actor in the purposive Milieudéfensie, then in the beer brewers, who chose a more low profile approach.

This is also seen in the use of venue shopping by the two types of actors. The purposive actors have chosen more public venues, like the media, organizing protests in The Hague or organizing a petition. The focus thus lies on creating a public profile of the problem through public

venues. The material actors have not used so many public venues. From interviews with representatives of the beer brewers it became clear that invisible venues were used, like organizing a meeting with policy officers at a ministry. This suggests that beer brewers have used a direct strategy of lobbying.

The reported findings are in line with the theory about the preferences of types of interest groups in choosing their lobby strategies that is offered by Binderkrantz. The fact that the shale gas case has attracted a heterogeneous collection of interest groups has not changed the notion that purposive actors choose indirect lobbying strategies more than material actors. The findings of Pralle are reaffirmed in the sense that interest group type does seem to influence the type of strategies a group chooses to pursue. This means that interest groups do not experience great levels of freedom in choosing the venues they use for their lobbying that is sometimes assumed. Looking at the framework that is offered by Baumgartner and Jones we can conclude that the concept of issue expansion is also used by interest groups when the composition of a coalition is not typical. The fact that strange bed fellows have joined each other in a coalition does not influence the use of issue expansion as a lobbying strategy.

This study offers the notion that the behavior of interest groups in ad hoc coalitions and true advocacy coalitions can be comparable. This can be an interesting topic for future research. Indeed, does this behavior of interest groups also emerge when other ad hoc coalitions on different topics are researched? And could there be international differences? Furthermore, a more quantitative study is needed to further build on the results of this study. Preferably an in-depth study of the direct lobby strategies by material and purposive actors. A more quantitative approach could offer insight on how much more or less indirect strategies are used than direct strategies. This would then clarify our ideas on the use of these strategies which enables us to confirm our hypothesis with more vigor.

Another question that rises are the effects of issue expansion on the societal debate that is held. If we take the changing of a problem definition as an example, we see that Milieudefensie has created doubts regarding the quality of the scientific research that was done in the shale gas case. This strategy seems effective for an interest group that is trying to advance its own agenda, but could this new definition change the way we look at scientific reports in general? Could there be negative effects? Are the strategies that interest groups employ only beneficial to the interests

groups that use them or do they serve a broader societal goal? This line of thinking offers many new directions for further research from a more normative point of view.

The conducted study provides a qualitative account of lobbying in the Dutch shale gas case. The results could be generalized to similar topics in The Netherlands, like for example problems surrounding gas exploitation in Groningen. We assume this because the situations are comparable. Both cases are a fight over the future policy direction regarding the exploitation of a natural resource and the risks that are possibly attached to this process. Since this is a single case study the possibilities for broad generalizations are limited. From a theoretical point of view we suggest that the frameworks that are offered by Pijnenburg, Sabatier and Baumgartner and Jones are a good tool to study lobbying in coalitions consisting of strange bedfellows. The approaches taken by these authors can also be used for future research on this topic which creates some theoretical generalization for the study.

All in all this study has created more insight into the world of interest groups and their behavior. It showed that common knowledge in the interest representation literature remains true even when the coalition in which it takes place is different than usual. Regardless of the future developments of shale gas in the Netherlands, this study has helped to clarify the behavior of interest groups up to this point and has sought to explain why this behavior was displayed.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 – List of shale free municipalities

### Schaliegasvrije gemeenten

1. Aalburg	61. Gulpen-Wittern	119. Ridderkerk
2. Aalten	62. Haaren	120. Roerdalen
3. Achtkarspelen	63. Haarlem	121. Roermond
4. Almelo	64. Haarlemmerliede en Spaamwoude	122. Roosendaal
5. Alphen-Chaam	65. Haarlemmermeer	123. Schijndel
6. Amersfoort	66. Halderberge	124. Schoonhoven
7. Amsterdam	67. Heemstede	125. Schouwen-Duiveland
8. Arnhem	68. Hellendoorn	126. Sint-Michielsgestel
9. Asten	69. Helmond	127. Sint-Oedenrode
10. Baarle Nassau	70. Hengelo	128. Sittard-Geleen
11. Bellingwedde	71. Heumen	129. Sliedrecht
12. Bergeijk	72. Heusden	130. Someren
13. Bergen op Zoom	73. Hilvarenbeek	131. Son en Breugel
14. Berkelland	74. Hilversum	132. Steenbergen
15. Bernheze	75. Hof van Twente	133. Steenwijkerland
16. Best	76. Huizen	134. Texel
17. Beuningen	77. IJsselstein	135. Tholen
18. Binnenmaas	78. Kampen	136. Tiel
19. Bladel	79. Landgraaf	137. Tilburg
20. Blaricum	80. Laren	138. Tubbergen
21. Bloemendaal	81. Lelystad	139. Twenterand
22. Bodegraven-Reeuwijk	82. Leudal	140. Ubbergen
23. Boskoop	83. Lingewaard	141. Utrecht
24. Boxmeer	84. Littenseradiel	142. Utrechtse Heuvelrug
25. Boxtel	85. Lochem	143. Veghel
26. Breda	86. Loon op Zand	144. Veldhoven
27. Bronckhorst	87. Loppersum	145. Vianen
28. Brummen	88. Maasdonk	146. Vlagtwedde
29. Bunnik	89. Meerssen	147. Vught
30. Buren	90. Midden-Delfland	148. Waalre
31. Bussum	91. Mill en St. Hubert	149. Waalwijk
32. Castricum	92. Millingen aan de Rijn	150. Wageningen
33. Cuijk	93. Moerdijk	151. Waterland
34. De Bilt	94. Montferland	152. Weert
35. De Friese Meren	95. Mook en Middelaar	153. Weesp
36. De Ronde Venen	96. Muiden	154. Westerveld
37. Delfzijl	97. Naarden	155. Weststellingwerf
38. Diemen	98. Neder-Betuwe	156. Wijchen
39. Dinkelland	99. Nieuwegein	157. Wijdmeren
40. Doesburg	100. Nieuwkoop	158. Winsum
41. Doetinchem	101. Nijmegen	159. Winterswijk
42. Dongen	102. Noorderveld	160. Woerden
43. Dongeradeel	103. Noordoostpolder	161. Wormerland
44. Dordrecht	104. Noordwijk	162. Woudrichem
45. Drimmelen	105. Oirschot	163. Zaanstad
46. Dronten	106. Oisterwijk	164. Zeist
47. Duiven	107. Oldenzaal	165. Zevenaar
48. Ede	108. Olst-Wijhe	166. Zundert
49. Eijsden-Margraten	109. Oost-Gelre	167. Zutphen
50. Eindhoven	110. Oosterhout	168. Zwartewaterland
51. Enkhuisen	111. Ooststellingwerf	169. Zwijndrecht
52. Epe	112. Opsterland	170. Zwolle
53. Ermelo	113. Oss	
54. Geertruidenberg	114. Oude IJsselstreek	
55. Geldermalsen	115. Papendrecht	
56. Geldrop-Mierlo	116. Purmerend	
57. Goirle	117. Reusel-De Mierden	
58. Gorinchem	118. Rheden	
59. Grave		
60. Groesbeek		

## *Appendix 2 – Transcripts of interviews*

### Interview FNLI – 20/06/2014 15:00

- Statement in de media dat bierbrouwers tegen schaliegaswinning zijn is “foutief”. Is een jaar geleden verkeerd in de media gekomen. Het huidige statement, dat bierbrouwers niet voor of tegen en dus neutraal zijn is leidend.
- Centrale punt in lobbyen is informatie uitwisseling. Voetbal analogie: alle spelers bevinden zich op hetzelfde speelveld, hebben dezelfde regels en instrumentarium. Hun positie bepaald welke instrumenten zij gebruiken. Een verdediger zet eerder een tackel in, een aanvaller zal eerder schieten op doel. Where you stand is where you sit? Actoren kunnen verrassen, soms doen organisaties iets dat onverwacht is. Een keeper kan ineens 30m uit zijn goal komen.
- De FNLI heeft contacten met het ministerie inzake het schaliegas debat. Ambtenaren hebben informatie uit het veld nodig en spreken daarom met de FNLI. De FNLI kan contacten met stakeholders via verschillende kanalen en op verschillende niveaus.
  - Lunchen met een ambtenaar
  - Directeur van FNLI spreekt met de minister
- Op dit moment hoeft de FNLI niet te ageren in het schaliedebat omdat de minister op termijn met extra onderzoek komt over schaliegas boringen. Zodra er nieuwe onderzoek komt weegt de FNLI opnieuw af wat het standpunt van de levensmiddelen industrie zal zijn.
- Venue shopping: de FNLI maakt gebruik van meerdere kanalen. Niet zozeer het mobiliseren maar wel contacten leggen met ministerie (dus contacten met ambtenaren/bewindspersonen). Contactpersoon bevestigt dat een ideële actor eerder geneigd is te mobiliseren en meer aandacht zoekt.
  - Ook politiek wanneer nodig. Een actor heeft alle instrumenten, gebruikt wanneer nodig en toepasselijk.
- Issue definition: zie de statement van de FNLI.
- FNLI vertegenwoordigt meer dan alleen de Nederlandse Brouwers, namelijk 18 leden uit de Nederlandse levensmiddelenindustrie.
- Literatuurtip: Van Drimmelen, Nederlandse Lobby
- Gister had contactpersoon gesprek met de directeur van de Nederlandse Brouwers

## Interview Milieudefensie – 16/07/14 15:00

- Wat is het grootste succes van Milieudefensie in de lobby tegen schaliegas exploitatie? Wat was daarbij de bepalende factor? Wat is de grootste uitdaging? Waarom? Zijn er zaken die Milieudefensie achteraf gezien beter anders had kunnen doen? En waarom?

*Grootste succes is het moratorium dat minister Verhagen in oktober 2011 aankondigde op (proef) boringen naar schaliegas en dat nog steeds geldig is.*

*Bepalende factoren zijn geweest: 1) een goede wetenschappelijke onderbouwing van ons standpunt dat de risico's van schaliegas te groot zijn; 2) het vormen van een alliantie met andere milieuorganisaties (Greenpeace, WNF, Natuurmonumenten) 3) samenwerking met lokaal gewortelde netwerken van bewonerscomite's 4) mobiliseren en informeren van lokale en provinciale autoriteiten 5) aanwezigheid in de lokale en landelijke pers*

- Maakt Milieudefensie deel uit van een coalitie met andere actoren die tegen schaliegas exploitatie zijn? Bijvoorbeeld met bierbrouwers? Of andere milieuorganisaties zoals bijvoorbeeld Greenpeace?
  - Coördineert Milieudefensie acties samen met andere partijen? Zo ja, hoe verloopt deze coördinatie?
  -

*De uitingen van de bierbrouwers, Rabobank en waterleidingbedrijven over het onderwerp schaliegas staan volledig los van de uitingen van Milieudefensie. Met andere organisaties (waaronder Greenpeace, WNF) vindt afsteming plaats en soms gaan we ook gezamenlijk tot actie over. Het gaat dan meestal over het gezamenlijk schrijven van brieven aan de Tweede Kamer of aan bewindspersonen. Deze acties worden door Milieudefensie gecoördineerd. Tot slot heeft Milieudefensie samen met lokale bewonersgroepen uit diverse delen van het land de Stichting Schaliegasvrij Nederland opgericht ([www.schaliegasvrij.nl](http://www.schaliegasvrij.nl)).*

- Via welke kanalen wordt er door Milieudefensie getracht beleid te beïnvloeden?
  - Maakt Milieudefensie naast publieke kanalen zoals demonstraties en petities ook gebruik van “off the radar” kanalen zoals bijvoorbeeld contacten met beleidsambtenaren en/of bewindspersonen?

*Naast publieke uitingen (in de “traditionele media”, op conferenties, op internet, tijdens bewonersbijeenkomsten etc.) vinden er ook gesprekken “achter de schermen” plaats, b.v. met Tweede Kamerleden en met beleidsambtenaren op ministeries. Onze nadruk ligt op de Haagse politiek, want die beslist uiteindelijk. Met de schaliegasindustrie hebben wij geen overleg. Wij treffen elkaar alleen tijdens publieke debatten (b.v. op de radio, bij conferenties, etc.)*

- Zo ja, hoe verlopen die contacten? Formeel? Informeel?
- Op welke soort kanalen ligt de nadruk van de aanpak?

- Probeert Milieudefensie het probleem van schaliegas exploitatie opnieuw te definiëren en/of aan te passen? Hoe? Ik stel vast dat er in de media vaak nieuwe facetten aan de discussie worden toegevoegd, bijvoorbeeld: het onderzoek dat wordt gebruikt door de voorstanders van schaliegas is niet van voldoende kwaliteit, of: de maatschappelijke discussie over schaliegas is niet breed genoeg qua insteek.

*De inzet van Milieudefensie gaat veel verder dan schaliegas. Ons standpunt is dat wij vanwege het klimaatprobleem zo snel mogelijk -en volgens ons is dat rond 2030-naar een fossielvrije economie toe moeten. Schaliegas is dus maar een voorbeeld van een ontwikkeling die wij willen keren, maar wel een belangrijke en ook een die -vanwege de gebruikte winningsmethoden- extreem schadelijk is voor mens en milieu. (schadelijker dan b.v. traditioneel aardgas)*

- Welke ontwikkelingen voorziet Milieudefensie in de nabije toekomst op het gebied van schaliegas ontwikkeling? Waarop is dat gebaseerd? Welke gevolgen heeft dat voor uw strategie?

*2015 wordt een cruciaal jaar voor schaliegas. Dan zal de beslissing vallen of er in Nederland wel of niet naar schaliegas geboord gaat worden. Wij denken dat we een hele goede kans maken dat de beslissing in ons voordeel uitvalt en dat boren naar schaliegas voor langere tijd verboden zal worden in Nederland. Mocht dat inderdaad het geval zijn, dan zullen we ons gaan richten op het tegenhouden van de ontwikkeling van schaliegas in andere landen, zowel binnen als buiten Europa.*

### **Appendix 3 – Original Dutch quotes**

#### **Page 34:**

*“De uitingen van de bierbrouwers, Rabobank en waterleidingbedrijven over het onderwerp schaliegas staan volledig los van de uitingen van Milieudefensie. Met andere organisaties (waaronder Greenpeace, WNF) vindt afstemming plaats en soms gaan we ook gezamenlijk tot actie over. Het gaat dan meestal over het gezamenlijk schrijven van brieven aan de Tweede Kamer of aan bewindspersonen. Deze acties worden door Milieudefensie gecoördineerd.”*

*(Interview with Milieudefensie)*

#### **Page 38:**

*“Ook Milieudefensie laakt het feit dat minister Kamp de spelregels halverwege verandert. ‘Het moet een publieke discussie worden, maar de klankbordgroep wordt nu monddood gemaakt en niet serieus genomen. Als de minister wegloopt voor een maatschappelijk debat, heeft hij een probleem’, stelt Geert Ritsema van Milieudefensie desgevraagd. Hij zat namens verschillende milieuclubs in de klankbordgroep.” (Reformatorisch Dagblad, 02-08-2013)*

*“Al tijdens de eerste bijeenkomst in juni 2012 klinkt er kritiek dat 'nut en noodzaak' niet zal worden onderzocht. De vraag of de kosten opwegen tegen de baten komt dus niet aan de orde. Ook al wordt er binnen de groep en in de Tweede Kamer telkens weer om gevraagd.” (NRC*

*Handelsblad, 07-10-14)*

**Page 39:**

*“Gisteren werd bekend dat het Britse bedrijf Cuadrilla dat in Nederland wil boren naar schaliegas geen financiële buffer heeft om schadevergoedingen te betalen als het misgaat bij boringen. Dat stelt Milieudefensie, dat een onderzoek heeft laten doen naar de financiële positie van Cuadrilla. Het bedrijf kreeg in 2009 een vergunning voor proefboringen in Noord-Brabant en de Noordoostpolder. Daarbij werd er door de overheid van uitgegaan dat het bedrijf eventuele schades kan vergoeden. Milieudefensie vindt dat minister van Economische Zaken Henk Kamp de vergunningen ongeldig moet verklaren nu die onterecht verleend lijken te zijn.” (Nederlands Dagblad, 11-11-13)*

**Page 40:**

*“Milieudefensie noemt het voorgenomen kabinetsbesluit roekeloos en gebaseerd op broddelwerk.” (Telegraaf, 22-08-13)*

*“Milieudefensie vermoedt dat het ministerie van Economische Zaken (EZ) de uitkomst van het onafhankelijke onderzoek naar schaliegaswinning in Nederland heeft beïnvloed” (Financieel Dagblad, 04-09-13)*

*“De risico’s die de onderzoekers in het rapport duidelijk benoemen, worden in de concluderende samenvatting behoorlijk verzacht’, aldus Milieudefensie.” (Volkskrant, 04-09-13)*

*“Het rapport is broddelwerk”, zegt Geert Ritsema van Milieudefensie. “We zijn van het begin af aan betrokken bij het opstellen van het onderzoek. We hebben allerlei punten aangedragen. Niet alleen wij, maar ook de gemeentes, provincies en onafhankelijke wetenschappers. Daar is gewoon niet naar geluisterd.” (Telegraaf, 22-08-13)*

*“De afhakers (de provincies Noord-Brabant, Limburg en Zeeland, de gemeenten Noordoostpolder en Boxtel, en Milieudefensie) vinden, in de woorden van wethouder Peter van de Wiel van Boxtel, dat zij “totaal niet serieus worden genomen” (Volkskrant, 26-06-13)*

**Page 41:**

*“Betekent de overwinning van de Groningers nu ook het einde van schaliegas in Nederland? De tegenstanders slijpen in ieder geval de messen. Milieudefensie wees er dinsdag fijntjes op dat schaliegaswinning ook tot aardbevingen kan leiden, terwijl voorheen vooral werd ingespeeld op de angst voor vervuiling bij winning van dat soort gas.” (Financieel Dagblad, 22-01-2014)*

*“Inmiddels hebben 26 gemeenten in Nederland zich nadrukkelijk uitgesproken tegen schaliegasboringen binnen hun grenzen. Dat blijkt uit een inventarisatie door Milieudefensie.”  
(Milieudefensie, 26-08-2013)*

*“Groot succes is het moratorium dat minister Verhagen in oktober 2011 aankondigde op (proef)boringen naar schaliegas en dat nog steeds geldig is. De bepalende factoren zijn geweest:  
1) een goede wetenschappelijke onderbouwing van ons stadpunt dat de risico's van schaliegas te groot zijn [...]” (Interview with Milieudefensie)*

**Page 42:**

*“In debatcentrum De Balie houdt Milieudefensie morgenavond een bijeenkomst over de winning van schaliegas.” (Trouw, 11-06-12)*

*“Op het Plein voor de Tweede Kamer in Den Haag werd gisteren een demonstratie gehouden tegen schaliegasboringen in Nederland.” (Nederlands Dagblad, 12-11-13)*

**Page 43:**

*“De bierbrouwers Bavaria, Grolsch en Heineken zien niets in de winning van schaliegas, zo meldt dagblad Trouw. De drie grote bierproducenten willen eerst harde bewijzen zien dat er geen vervuiling optreedt van het grondwater.” (Trouw, 17-04-13)*

*“Vanwege dat laatste risico zijn Heineken, Grolsch en Bavaria, als watergrootgebruikers, vooralsnog tegen. Net als prinses Irene. Die verklaarde onlangs in Het Parool niets van schaliegas te moeten hebben. De gezamenlijke bierbrouwers hand in hand met de tante van de koning en de milieulobby: dat mochten we nog niet eerder beleven.” (Volkskrant, 25-04-13)*

**Page 44:**

*“Nederlandse Brouwers is geen uitgesproken voor- óf tegenstander van schaliegaswinning. Wel hechten we (net als andere gebruikers van kwalitatief hoogwaardig water uit eigen bronnen), groot belang aan bescherming van ons grondwater als belangrijkste ingrediënt van bier. Alle activiteiten die mogelijke risico's voor ons grondwater kunnen herbergen, volgen we kritisch. We zien graag dat er gedegen onderzoek naar mogelijke risico's plaatsvindt, alvorens wordt overgegaan tot boringen. Het is daarom goed dat er op dit moment nader onderzoek naar de milieueffecten van schaliegaswinning plaatsvindt. De uitkomsten hiervan zien we met belangstelling tegemoet.”*