A Comparative Media Analysis of the Darfur Conflict

Jens Månsson

Uppsala University, Department of Earth Sciences
Master Thesis E, in Sustainable Development, 30 credits
Printed at Department of Earth Sciences, Geotryckeriet, Uppsala University, Uppsala, 2014.
A Comparative Media Analysis of the Darfur Conflict

Jens Månsson

Supervisor: Ashok Swain
Evaluator: Roland Kostić
Content

1 INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................................. 1
  1.1 MEDIA BIAS ............................................................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 HOW HAS DARFUR BEEN PORTRAYED IN THE MEDIA ............................................................................ 2
  1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE DARFUR CONFLICT ............................................................................................ 3
  1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION ....................................................................................................................... 4
  1.5 DEMARCATIONS ........................................................................................................................................ 5

2 OUTLINE ......................................................................................................................................................... 5

3 METHOD .......................................................................................................................................................... 6
  3.1 RESEARCH PURPOSE ............................................................................................................................... 6
  3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH ............................................................................................................................ 6
  3.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY .............................................................................................................................. 7
  3.4 DATA COLLECTION .................................................................................................................................. 7
  3.5 SAMPLE SELECTION ............................................................................................................................... 9
    3.5.1 Cases .................................................................................................................................................. 10
  3.6 ANALYSIS .................................................................................................................................................. 10
  3.7 VALIDITY ................................................................................................................................................... 11
  3.8 RELIABILITY ............................................................................................................................................ 12

4 THEORY .......................................................................................................................................................... 12

5 DATA ............................................................................................................................................................. 14
  5.1 NEW YORK TIMES (NY TIMES) ................................................................................................................. 14
  5.2 DAGENS NYHETER (DN) ......................................................................................................................... 15
  5.3 CHINA DAILY .......................................................................................................................................... 15
  5.4 GULF NEWS .......................................................................................................................................... 16
  5.5 CROSS CASE COMPARISON ....................................................................................................................... 16

6 DISCUSSION .................................................................................................................................................. 17
  6.1 DOES THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA FRAMING REGARDING THE DARFUR CONFLICT DIFFER DEPENDING 
      ON THEIR OWN COUNTRY’S NATIONAL STRATEGIC POLICY? ................................................................... 17
    6.1.1 How has different media reported on the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict? .......................... 17
    6.1.2 Does this framing portray reality in a way that is in consensus with to that of the 
      nations geo-strategic policy? ................................................................................................................... 17
    6.1.3 What are the background factors for the conflicts eruption that is being mentioned in 
      the different media outlets? .................................................................................................................... 17
    6.1.4 What are the different types of media bias that are being used? .................................................. 18
  6.2 REFLECTIONS ........................................................................................................................................... 18
  6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY .................................................................................................................. 19
  6.4 FUTURE RESEARCH ................................................................................................................................ 19

7 CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................................................. 20

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ................................................................................................................................ 20

9 REFERENCES .................................................................................................................................................. 21
A Comparative Media Analysis of the Darfur Conflict

Jens Månsson

Månsson, J., A Comparative media analysis of the Darfur conflict. Master Thesis in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University, No, 198, 23 pp, 30ECTS/hp

Abstract:
This thesis explores how media has reported on the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict. For that purpose a media analysis has been carried out that analyses quantitative data through four different cases from different parts of the world. In order to get this data a quantitative content analysis has been carried out. The analysis has been carried out by using a media policy framework that enables the data to be classified in three different categories depending on the level of elite consensus and policy uncertainty on the matter at hand. This thesis concludes that media around the world have been reporting on climate change as a contributing factor depending on how that argument can be used to serve their geo-strategic policy on the conflict. In that sense climate change is mainly brought up as a way to relieve the Sudanese government of its responsibility in the conflict.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Darfur, Media, Climate Conflict, Media Bias, Elites

Jens Månsson, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE- 752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
A Comparative Media Analysis of the Darfur Conflict

Jens Månsson

Månsson, J., A Comparative media analysis of the Darfur conflict. Master Thesis in Sustainable Development at Uppsala University, No. 198, 23 pp, 30ECTS/hp

Summary:
This thesis explores how media has used the argument about whether the Darfur conflict is a climate conflict or not. The current secretary general of the United Nation published a debate article in the Washington post in 2007 saying the origins of the Darfur conflict was rooted in Climate change that worsened living conditions in the area. Therefore this thesis gathers editorial articles from four different media houses around the world to see how they have followed up on this argument. It turns out that the argument of Darfur as a climate conflict has mainly been used as a way to not blame either side of the conflict but instead blame the conflict on climate change.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Darfur, Media, Climate Conflict, Media Bias, Elites

Jens Månsson, Department of Earth Sciences, Uppsala University, Villavägen 16, SE- 752 36 Uppsala, Sweden
1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore to which extent media reported on climate change to be a contributing factor to the Darfur conflict. In order to do this four different cases existing of four different media houses will be analysed. Climate change has contributed to the origin of the Darfur conflict according to Ban Ki-moon who wrote and OP-ED on the topic published in the Washington Post on the 16th of June 2007. This has also been pointed out by other researchers and writers (Faris, 2007, Sturdivant, 2012, Welzer, 2012). There has also been research to suggest that the conflict should not be seen as the world’s first climate conflict and has played down climate changes part in its origin (Kevane & Gray 2008; Verhoeven, 2011). The word climate conflict is very hard to define, because to which extent does the conflict have to be caused by climate change compared to other factors in order to be classified as a climate conflict. Therefore it becomes quite open for interpretations and media can use it as they think is fit. The environmental aspect of the origin of the conflict has also been pointed out in research (Suliman 2008). And therefore it becomes interesting to analyse how media has reported on these aspects. Since media influences public opinion (Schudson, 2002) it’s important to understand these mechanisms especially in relation to sustainable development. If public opinion is misinformed in relation to these issues it is therefore likely that the public will base their democratic decisions on misconceptions, rather than facts. This could either lead to the social and political aspect of a conflict being ignored or that the environmental aspect is being ignored depending on how media has reported on the conflict and therefore its unlikely that a sustainable path will be chosen.

1.1 Media bias

Media is supposed to work as a fourth estate in a utopian state, meaning that it is supposed to “check and balance against abuses and excess of the state” (Simons, 2013). However this is not always the case and Entman (2007) names three different types of bias that can occur in media. These are distortion bias to purportedly falsify or adapt reality, content bias to favour one side of a political conflict and don’t provide equal treatment to both sides and finally decision making bias which means that the journalists that produce the news are biased by their motivation.

These types of bias occur in media when they are reporting on US foreign Policy among other issues (Entman, 2004). Chinese media is giving a priority to the party’s views in its reporting (Chan, 2002), however it has also been stated that the difference between state owned media systems and governmental owned ones has become harder to tell apart. It seems the Chinese communist party care less about the coverage of economic, social and environmental issues but more about political news (Schudson, 2002). Swedish Media has also had a biased standpoint and with a pro-American view in recent years when it comes to international conflicts (Nord & Strömbäck, 2006). Arabic media on the other hand, which has also been shown to be biased in recent research, but have carried a sense of anti-Americanism (Gentzkow, & Shapiro 2004). Given these four statements it seems like media bias is common all over the world or at least occurring in very different parts of the world.

Media bias on foreign policy is biased due to serving the ruling elites of the country and thereby agreeing with the government’s foreign policy and framing the story in a way that make the countries foreign policy seem righteous. Thereby they only provide scandals that are seen to be within acceptable frames, and act as a supportive arm for the ruling elites. (Herman, 1993) Media can be seen as supporting existing hierarchies and making sure they are preserved (McQuail, 2003). This can be explained by the simple reason that news sources to a large extent are official communication from the actors of a conflict and journalist see them as reliable since they come from an official source such as a press statement (Kothari, 2010).

This link between the governmental elites and medias framing has been empirically shown by Zaller and Chiu (1996). They compared documents from the US congress, such as votes or speeches that was being held in either house on 35 different foreign policy events between 1945 and 1991 and then compared these with how the media reported on the same events and found out that there was a strong correlation between how the so called elites and media reported on the events, with focus laying on if they presented the event as “hawkish” or “dovish”. They also concluded that its more likely that the press follow the lead of the members of congress who would only follow press opinion would tend to be less likely to take risks since they simply follow the opinion given to them by the press and thereby have less speeches on the floor, due to that they might say something controversial. However they were able to show that press and congress opinion actually had a bigger correlation when it came to speeches rather than by votes where also risk-reducing members is forces to vote.
One example of how media has been biased with regards to foreign policy three separate events pointed out by Herman (1993) where the Soviet Union in 1983 shot down a Korean airliner, which media called barbarian and cold blooded. These hard words might be because of President Reagan’s hard line towards the Soviet Union, and thereby disregarding the soviet claims that they were unaware that it was a civilian aircraft. However when a Libyan airliner was shot down by Israel in 1973 it was deemed a tragic accident by the media. And further on when an Iranian airliner was shot down in 1988 by the American military it was deemed a tragic error and that civilian airliners have to abide warnings and avoid combat zones, so that it seemed the responsibility laid in the pilots hands rather than the US military (Ibid).

However when there is disagreement in the elite sector media has to take a stance. This stance can then come influence the government’s foreign policy on the issue discussed (Robinson, 2001). In the Darfur case there was no objection within the US government of taking a stance on another side of the conflict, the issue discussed and framed was whether to intervene or not. The question discussed wasn’t what has led up to this humanitarian crisis, nor whether to support the rebels or the government. The influence between media and the state can thereby be seen as a loop, where the governments foreign policy is influencing the media, and if there is disagreement over this media can in turn influence the governments foreign policy (Ibid).

Boykoff (2007) points out that US media has not given an equal reporting on man made climate change, and given priority reporting on the climate change as a non man made phenomena in comparison to the scientific community. This could lead to the Darfur conflict not being less likely to be pointed out, as a climate conflict in the US due to the reluctance of US media to point out Climate change is man made. This can be explained by that if climate change is a natural phenomenon not man made there is no link those who do the emission, and the moral link for having a responsibility to protect is weakened. “The R2P resolution mandates foreign intervention in an independent nation’s affairs if it fails to curb crimes against humanity” (Adeba, 2011 P.23).

In the case of US media reporting on Africa it has tended to give the receiver only episodic information. This is done by mainly reporting on atrocities, catastrophes and human suffering such as war, famine and disease being presented along with graphic images. Often a story start with a report on that a crisis might be about to happen, then these are reported on for a while and in the end a resolution is either passed that solves the crisis or a new crisis erupts (Moeller, 1999). Because of this many Americans have a faulty picture of Africa, due to the brief media coverage of the continent (Hawk, 1992). During such conflicts US media often fails to portray the background factors or the reason for the conflict in any larger degree (Atkinson, 1999). Therefore this study becomes relevant in order to investigate the medias reporting from around the world on an African conflict, with a focus on background factors.

1.2 How has Darfur been portrayed in the media

Darfur first became news when it was stated in a UN report that the area now was the world’s worst humanitarian crisis (Prunier, 2007). But it wasn’t until the New York Times found their perspective on the conflict that the story really kicked off. The perspective was that Arabs were killing the black population and went hand in hand with the American foreign policy at the time with the global war on terror (Kothari, 2010). At this time the conflict started to be portrayed as genocide in media (Adeba, 2011). Thereby the focus shifted towards being portrayed as a government which practiced genocide on its population and used unlimited violence on a rebel force and civilian public in an area of Sudan rather than how to solve the original land disputes (Kothari, 2010).

An organization called Save the Darfur Coalition was formed in 2004 (Adeba, 2011). The organisation works to end the suffering in Darfur and Sudan (Save Darfur, 2014). They tried to increase public awareness of the conflict in Darfur by writing letters, having demonstrations and recruiting celebrities as spoke persons. This led to that the reporting of the conflict kept going (Adeba, 2011).

The Canadian media houses also started reporting more heavenly on the story once they found a context for the story to be portrayed as, this story was just like in the case of the New York Times genocide and Arabs killing Africans. This story fit very well with what had happened in Rwanda 10 years earlier and thereby the Canadian media started portraying Darfur through a “Rwandan lens” in 2004 (Adeba, 2011). Another reason for why the reporting of the conflict later increased in Canada maybe because the political establishment i.e. elites started noting Darfur as an important political point. Due to this, the Canadian news starting seeing Darfur through a filter of the domestic political argument regarding the Darfur situation (Ibid). Overall Canadian news lacked a background perspective on the conflict and instead focused violence (Ibid). They also lacked a perspective of the Darfurians and focused their sources on official and often international sources, which might lead to policy makers focusing on a very top down solution rather than a bottom up approach (Ibid). There was also a big part
of the coverage that portrayed the conflict as between Arabs and Africans (Ibid). This also led to the conflict being seen as a comparison with the Holocaust and focused on the description as a war between two races, which is a huge simplification of the conflict (Mamdani, 2009). This type of rhetoric of whether or not Darfur was genocide sparked huge debates both in the US congress, which proclaimed that Darfur was to be classified as genocide on the 9 July 2004, and in the Security Council. The Security Council started an investigation to finally come to an end of the debate of whether Darfur was to be classified as genocide or not, and in 2005 published the result that Darfur was not to be considered to be classified as genocide but rather grave violations against human rights (Annan, 2012).

The New York Times also failed to portray the underlying causes of the conflict and rather covered the conflict in a way that would justify the actions taken by the US officials and their foreign policy on the topic (Kothari, 2010). It has also been identified that they depicted the US as saviours of the Sudanese people in a large amount of their article with about 60% of the articles being depicted this way. Another dominant frame was that the Darfur conflict was an ethnic conflict with over 28% of the articles portraying the conflict in this way (Ibid).

1.3 Description of the Darfur conflict
Sudan gained its independence from Egypt and the United Kingdom (UK) in 1956; prior to this the southern part of the country had been ruled by the UK and the northern part by Egypt (Brosché, 2008). The capital of the country is Khartoum and consists mainly of elites from the northern region of the country. The northern region consists of less than 2% of the entire population but is dominating the countries politics. However these are not unified and are fighting for power amongst themselves. This has led to that several unstable governments and military regimes have governed the country throughout the years (Brosché, 2008). Since its independence Sudan has been involved in several internal conflicts, starting with southern based rebel group fighting for independence called Anya Nya. This conflict ended in 1972 with the Addis Ababa agreement (Prendergast & Winter, 2008).

In 1983 a new North South conflict emerged as the SPLM/A (Sudans Peoples liberation movement/army) started a rebellion to establish a united socialist Sudan. This conflict didn’t end until 2005 with the Comprehensive peace agreement. In 2011 a referendum was held in South Sudan regarding a independent South Sudan, due a big majority of the people voting for a sovereign state South Sudan became an independent nation on July 9 2011 (UCDP, 14).

Darfur is the most western part of Sudan (See figure 1) with a population of about 6 million people according to the US Department of State (2004). The Darfur conflict grew beyond a localised civil war on the 25th of April 2003 when the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attacked a Sudanese government air base, and thereby became a national civil war (Kohtari, 2010). The attack was a major success for the rebels (SLA and JEM). However the government responded by teaming up with and recruiting the Janjaweed. Janjaweed is a group of armed gunmen from Arabic ethnicity. The Janjaweed had already been involved in fighting in the Darfur area when the conflict was still very local and had suffered loss of land due to droughts and the conflict (Kohtari, 2010). The government launched a campaign against the rebels with the help of the Janjaweed that led to a very high amount of civilian suffering and casualties. The attacks of the campaign were...
launched in three stages first with bombing settlements with Antanov airplanes, then a second attack by attack-helicopters and finally a ground assault by the Janjaweed and governmental troops (Adeba, 2011).

A drought hit Darfur in the 1980s with 1984 and 85 being the worst years. During this time the Arabic nomad tribes in the region saw their animals die in the desert and tried to enter more fertile lands, however these were already controlled by tribes of non Arabic ethnicity which sparked conflict as these tribes refused the Arabic tribes access to these lands and the Arabic tribes tried to take the land by force (Suliman, 2008).

This drought is believed to have been an effect of climate change and had a negative impact on the conflict in the area however there were many other issues that also made an impact on the conflict such as ethnic dimensions, the politics in the region, how the Sudanese government handled the raising problems and the economic factor (Sturdivant, 2012).

The Darfur conflict is very complex and can be seen as three parallel conflicts escalating simultaneously. These can be seen as interlinked communal conflicts, conflicts between different regional elites and periphery centre conflicts. (Mohamed, 2007) The centre periphery conflict is between the rebels and the central government. The rebels originate from Darfur a region that is seen as marginalized and therefore the rebels feel like the policies originating from Khartoum doesn’t take the Darfurians into consideration and feel neglected (Ibid). The people of Darfur have been aware of this marginalisation since the 1960s, when a movement called Darfur Resistance Front was formed. They tried to increase the political representation by Darfur in Khartoum and wanted more development resources. In the 60s voices was also raised concerning used force as a means to reach a more stage of more political influence. Movements such as Sooni and the Red Flame were the main supporters of military or violent measures to reach more political influence. This shows that military means to reduce the marginalization of Darfur has been around for many years, even though they since the 1960s mainly have focused on using a democratic path to achieve their means (Brosché, 2008).

The interlinked communal conflict is a tribal struggle over diminishing resources at a grassroots level due to environmental degradation and increased population and livestock footprint (Mohamed, 2007). Throughout the last 75 years there has been plenty of conflicts between different ethnic groups in Darfur over water resources and grazing lands. A very broad generalization of these conflicts can be seen as though that most of them have been between farmers and nomads. During the 1970s and 80s environmental degradation increased which put increased strain on the existing resources, during this time migration from Chad contributed to even more pressure on the resources. During this time there was no effort done to relive the tensions existing in the area by ruling elites. Many see this as the primary factor for the violent eruption that occurred later on i.e. 2003 (Brosché, 2008).

The communal elites conflict began in the early 1980s when the central government in Khartoum wanted to appoint a regional governor from the local natives. The governor would appoint a cabinet from regional elites. Initially three ethnic groups aroused as the main contestants for this position in Darfur being the Arabs, the Furs and the Zaghawa. The Zaghawa is a African ethnic group which is mainly nomadic while the Furs is the largest ethnic group and have given name to the region since Darfur means home of the Furs. The Furs are African and mainly farmers (Brosché, 2008). Thereafter an intergroup rivalry has been a major part of the political life in Darfur. When the current government came into power in 1989 the Furs and Masalit Africans didn’t show it much support, however the Arabic nomads did and were therefore able to secure support including military capabilities from the central government in Khartoum. The Masalit are Africans and mainly farmers (Brosché, 2008). The Furs and Masalit Africans were famous for having the most fertile homeland with access to water all year round. Thereby the Furs and Masalit blamed the government of helping the Arabs to take over their land and thereby took up arms to fight the central government. While the Arabic nomads became known as the Janjaweed (Mohamed, 2007).

There were also three parallel events that came into question around the same time that heavily influenced the outcome as a violent conflict in Darfur. These are the drought between 1984-85, the Arab supremacy ideology promoted by the Arab gathering and Arab-Fur war 1987-1989 (Flint, 2007).

1.4 Problem formulation
From this background it becomes clear that the Darfur conflict was very complex with a lot of different factors coming into play. This would allow for media from different countries to find a framing that fits with the geo-strategic environment that it originates from and to fit with the foreign policy of that nation. Geo-strategy is defined as: “the geographic direction of a state’s foreign policy. More precisely, geostrategy describes where a state concentrates its efforts by projecting military power and directing diplomatic activity. The underlying
assumption is that states have limited resources and are unable, even if they are willing, to conduct a tout asimulus foreign policy. Instead they must focus politically and militarily on specific areas of the world. Geostrategy describes this foreign-policy thrust of a state and does not deal with motivation or decision-making processes. The geostrategy of a state, therefore, is not necessarily motivated by geographic or geopolitical factors. A state may project power to a location because of ideological reasons, interest groups, or simply the whim of its leader" (Grygiel, 2006 P.23). Thereby it is quite possible that the conflict would have been very differently presented in different media around the world, especially the reasons for the conflict that have a lot of factors coming into play and were one could make one sided arguments to fit its own agenda. This becomes an increasingly important aspect of media bias research since climate change is only expected to increase (IPCC, 2014), and thereby it will be more likely that future conflict will be labelled as climate conflict than the past conflicts. Hopefully with the aim of this thesis being to explore the factors coming in the play when media is reporting on a conflict as a climate conflict or not, this thesis could help understand how media will report on future conflicts. Therefore the following questions have been developed for this thesis.

Research Question: Does the international media framing regarding the Darfur conflict differ depending on their own country’s national strategic policy?

Sub questions

Q 1: How has different media reported on the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict?

Q 2: Does this framing portray reality in a way that is in consensus to that of the nations geo-strategic policy?

Q 3: What are the background factors for the conflicts eruption that is being mentioned in the different media outlets?

Q 4: What are the different types of media bias that are being used?

1.5 Demarcations

In order to limit the scope of this thesis only four cases will chosen, which are relevant to the purpose of the study. These will be influential media houses from their respective geo-strategic environment. Further on the focus will only be on editorial and opinion articles, thereby removing the normal information dense articles about for example the war events and peace talks. These could have been of focus for the study, but in order to get the clear opinions of the media houses and to limit the amount of data these will be eliminated. The focus will also only be on articles that in some sense are connected to the Darfur conflict. Thereby articles not mentioning the conflict or the region will not be apart of the analysis. In other words articles regarding Darfur, but not about the conflict will be eliminated and likewise articles about other conflicts that don’t mention Darfur will be eliminated as well. Further on this thesis will not take a stance on whether Darfur was a climate conflict or not.

2 Outline

The thesis starts with and introduction setting the frame for the rest of the paper by giving a brief background of medias role in society and Darfur, both how it has been portrayed in media but also its relation to climate change and a brief history of the conflict (see Figure 2). Thereafter the methods are explained and justified in the methods section. Further on the thesis goes deeper into the theories that will be used in order to answer the research question. The data section follows with the results of the data collection, and a data analysis after that the cases are compared in a cross case analysis. A discussion follows with the data and theory brought together and the theories are used in a way to explain the data, it is also here that the research questions are answered. The main conclusions of the thesis are later summaries in the conclusions chapter. Finally the author gives his acknowledgements.

Figure 2 Outline of the thesis
3 Method

3.1 Research purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to explore to which extent media reported on climate change to be a contributing factor to the Darfur conflict. Bhattacherjee (2012) describes three different ways of doing research; these are exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory research focuses on a new area of interest. Three goals for this kind of research has been identified (1) as being to find out the scope or magnitude of a phenomena, (2) to get some initial understanding of the issue at hand and (3) to see if the phenomena would be fit for more extensive research. This type of research will perhaps not produce a very thorough description of the phenomena however can get some information regarding the extent of it and can serve as a useful basis for further research (ibid). Exploratory research provides an orientation for a newly emerged social issue (Bickman & Rog, 2009) and normally the research question starts with what (Yin, 2009).

Descriptive research aims at doing detailed documentation of the phenomena through careful observations. It’s of high importance that these observations are carried out in scientific manner so that they are replicable in order to have a high level of reliability. This form of research tries to describe the: what, where and whens of the chosen research subject (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Explanatory seeks to explain a phenomena or observations and thereby tried to answer how and why regarding the chosen research subject. One can thereby say that it attempts to connect the dots by identifying the outcome and causal factors at the phenomena at hand. Often the goal is to prescribe strategies to overcome societal ailments. This often requires a great deal of personal experience and strong interpretational and theoretical skills (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The study will be performed in an exploratory manner in order to provide an initial understanding for the magnitude of the phenomena (Yin, 2009). In this case the phenomena is that between the geo-strategic environments stance on Darfur in regards to climate conflicts and the media. In other words it’s how media has used climate conflict as an argument in the policy debate regarding Darfur. This would thereby qualify as a newly emerged social issue, since the conflict was first reported on in 2003 and Ban Ki-moon wrote his OP-ED on Darfur as a climate conflict in 2007.

3.2 Research approach

Research can be divided into two different types of research depending on their data these are qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative research is basing its conclusion on that data can be quantified and thereby try to explain a phenomena with the help of numbers (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). This type of research means that small amount of information is collected from many research units by applying systematic and structured observations (Holme & Solvang, 1991). In this case the small amount of information would be what the media describes as the origin of the conflict and what side of the conflict they blame for it, while the research units are the articles being analysed.

Qualitative research on the other hand bases its conclusions on data that is harder to quantify, examples of these types of data can be attitudes, values or perception (Lundahl & Skärvad, 1992). In opposition to quantitative research, qualitative research relies on a closeness to the object at hand and fits better if purpose is to get a lot of information from few research units. Therefore it becomes harder to generalize however can get a deeper understanding of the study object (Holme & Solvang, 1991).

In this case it would be hard to gain a proper picture of how media reports on climate conflicts from one case or a small amount of articles, instead the focus will be on a quantitative data. The analysis will be carried out by quantifying the amount of articles that describes the origin of the conflict in four different categories these are; blaming the government for the conflict, blaming the rebels for the conflict, blaming environmental causes and blaming climate change. There can be more discussed causes for the conflict but these are the ones that are relevant for the main research question and theory, however as one of the sub research questions asks what the different causes for the conflict being mentioned are, the ones that fall outside of these four categories will be documented.

There are two ways to work with your data and theory; these two are referred to as inductive and deductive. The goal of inductive research is to build theoretical patterns and concepts from the collected data or observations. This type of research is sometimes referred to as theory building due to the way it contributes to theory. The other form of research called deductive instead test theory with new empirical data. This way its possible to
falsify, improve extend and refine theory. Therefore deductive research is sometimes referred to as theory testing research. Both of these forms are very important for the progress of science, due to the constant need for new theories but also the falsification and improvements of these (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Due to the extensive amount of theories that already exist on the field of media bias and its relation to the foreign policy of the geo-strategic environment by which it originates from this thesis will use those theories in a the field of climate conflicts and therefore try to improve or extent existing theories. By doing this the thesis will be performed in a deductive way.

3.3 Research strategy
There are several different methods to choose from when it comes to social science research. Yin (2009) accounts for five of these, being Experiment, Survey, Archival Analysis, History, and Case Study (See table 1). Which one to choose can be decided on three factors, how the research question is framed, if there is a focus on contemporary events and if the researcher requires control over behavioural events. Since the research question for this thesis starts with “does” and therefore we can’t leave out any method based on the start of the research question, since yin doesn’t account for does questions. However gaining the required data from a survey would be very complicated since it would have to rely on people’s perception on the reporting rather than the actual reporting. An archival analysis would be harder to use as a form comparative study where several cases could be examined together. Further on the research that is being performed does not require control over behavioural events, which leaves out experiment as a chosen method. Therefore the remaining two options are case study or history. Since this thesis will focus on events that has recently happened and will therefore be seen as contemporary, especially since press coverage of the Darfur conflict is still on going. Therefore the only remaining option is to perform a case study (or studies) (Yin, 2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Form of Research Question</th>
<th>Requires Control of Behavioral Events</th>
<th>Focuses on Contemporary Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiment</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>who, what, where, how many, how much?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival Analysis</td>
<td>who, what, where, how many, how much?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes/no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study</td>
<td>how, why?</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Relevant situations for Different Research Methods
Source: Yin (2009 P.8)

Bhattacherjee (2012 P.40) defines case research as “an in-depth investigation of a problem in one or more real-life settings (case sites) over an extended period of time.” The strengths of this type of research is that its able to identify a number of social, cultural and political factors that can be related to the research topic. The weakness of a case study is that its hard to generalize after only studying one case, however this can be dealt with by multiple case design in the analysis where several cases studies that are performed in the same way are compared to each other (Ibid). This thesis will therefore have a multiple case design in order to increase the ability to generalize its results. Therefore this thesis will be examining a number of different media houses instead of just one, with each one being its own case.

3.4 Data collection
There are several ways of collecting data and Yin (2009) names some of the most common ones (see table 2). These are documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifacts. The table bellow (2) lists the strengths and weaknesses with each of these methods. Since this study is supposed to examine media, with opinion and editorial pages in focus the best way to do so is to read these, and as Yin (2009) states that news articles are apart of documentation and therefore that is the way the data will be collected. Another way of doing this could have been to interview journalist or the editorial staff of the chosen media houses, however as table 2 points out interviews has a weakness in its bias, and that the interviewee gives the interviewer what he wants. Another negative fact about interviews is that it might be hard to find the right people to interview, and its therefore assumed that the editorial staffs of these media houses is very busy and thereby it would be very hard to get an interview with the right people in order to get a stratified sample. Another negative effect would be the difference in time zones and the distance between the researcher and the interviewer that would further make it hard to achieve. However it would be a very nice complement to this documentation to be able to compare it with interviews of people with a high degree of knowledge about the situation just like
Kothari (2010) did in his study over the framing of Darfur in New York Times. However to his advantage he only had one media house to examine. If this approach would have been adapted, firstly more time would have been needed but secondly one would have been able to adapt the research question to include why has different media reported on the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict. Since these people would have been able to motivate from their personal experience why it has been done in this certain way. This information is very hard to come by without asking the people involved in the reporting or writing of the articles in focus.

The data collection will be carried out by searching for articles that first hand is available online either on the media house webpage if possible or in different databases such as ProQuest and Factiva, these search engines can sometimes allow you to do more narrow searches than the media houses webpages. The data that will be collected will be of the quantitative kind in order to get a bigger picture of how the conflict has been portrayed. By quantifying the data the articles will be analysed to see how they portray the origin of the conflict and what side of the conflict they blame for it, one example of such a classification can be “the responsibility for the violent conflict lies with the government in Khartoum”. In that case the article is classified as blaming the government for the conflict, of course the different articles phrase this different and the way they express their blame will vary. Another example can be if the conflict is referred to as a climate conflict, then climate change is seen as a background factor for the conflict and labelled as such. The articles will mainly be editorials when possible in order to get the view on the conflict by the editorial staff of the newspapers and thereby the ones in control of the content of these newspapers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of evidence</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>• Stable- can be reviewed repeatedly</td>
<td>• Retrievability- can be difficult to find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unobtrusive- not created as a result of the case study</td>
<td>• Biased selectively, if collection is incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exact- contains exact names, references and details of an event</td>
<td>• Reporting bias- reflects (unknown) bias of author</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad coverage- long span of time, many events, and many settings</td>
<td>• Access- may be deliberately withheld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival records</td>
<td>• (Same as those for documentation)</td>
<td>(Same as those for documentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Precise and usually quantitative</td>
<td>• Accessibility due to privacy reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>• Targeted- focuses directly on case study topics</td>
<td>• Bias due to poorly articulated questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insightful- provides perceived causal inference and explanations</td>
<td>• Response bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Inaccuracies due to poor recall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflexivity- interviewee gives what interviewer wants to hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct observation</td>
<td>• Reality- covers events in real time</td>
<td>• Time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contextual- covers context of “case”</td>
<td>• Selectivity- broad coverage difficult without a team of observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflexivity- event may proceed differently because it is being observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cost- hours needed by human observers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td>(Same as above for direct observations)</td>
<td>(Same as above for direct observations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insightful into interpersonal behaviour and motives</td>
<td>• Bias due to participant-observer’s manipulation of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical artifacts</td>
<td>• Insightful into cultural features</td>
<td>Selectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Insightful into technical operations</td>
<td>Availability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2. Six Sources of Evidence: Strengths and Weaknesses**

Source: Yin (2009 P.102)

### 3.5 Sample selection

A media analysis will be performed by doing four case studies of media sources from different parts of the world from different geo-strategic environments. The four cases will be China Daily, Dagens Nyheter New York Times and Gulf News. The reason that these four cases have been chosen is that they all originate from different political environments. Once the cases has been presented individually a cross case analysis will be carried out which according to Miles and Huberman (1994) deepens the understanding and explanation of the research topic. I was decided to be of great importance to have at least one case from each side of the conflict, these are USA and China that have very different attitude in their foreign policy to the Darfur conflict and were China supports Sudan (Large, 2008), while USA have been arguing for a military intervention through the security council and was very quick with calling the conflict a genocide (Heinze, 2007). Thereafter one of the cases is a
Islamic Arabic case which is interesting since both sides of the conflict are Muslims but where the government and Janjaweest is predominantly Arabic and the rebels are predominantly Africans (Mohamed, 2007), therefore this case originates from Dubai in the United Arab emirates. The last case was chosen in order to give a European perspective with a high priority of the environmental policy within the nation and therefore Sweden was chosen.

### 3.5.1 Cases

New York Times is famous for its thorough international reporting and is read by decision makers in the USA. However has been criticised for its biased reporting on Africa (Kothari, 2010). The Pulitzer price was also awarded one of the news papers columnists in 2006 for its reporting on the Darfur conflict (Kothari, 2010).

China daily is the leading news organisation in English language from the people’s republic of China and thereby Chinas most influential English web portal with an astonishing 52 million page views per day. The webpage has editions for USA, EU, Asia pacific and Africa. This information makes it a clear choice for the thesis as the Chinese media house (Chinadaily.com.cn, 2014). If Cantonese or Mandarin would have been spoken the chosen case would perhaps have been different but since English in this case works as a limiting factor the choice came down to China Daily.

Dagens Nyheter is one of Sweden’s biggest newspapers and is considered to be one of the most famous debate forums in the country on their debate and op-ed pages. Among their renowned writers on these op-ed pages are ministers, other politicians and researchers (Info.dn.se, 2014). It thereby became the obvious choice for as the chosen media case rivalled only by Svenska Dagbladet, but since it was editorials that were the interesting aspect the debate forum became an important aspect and thereby Dagens Nyheter was chosen.

Gulf News originating from Dubai has established itself as the leading English speaking newspaper in the region, it was also rated the most read newspaper in the region including both English and Arabic language. (Gulfnews.com, 2014) In this regard Gulf News is only rivalled by Khaleej times originating from Abu Dhabi. However since Gulf news is the biggest paper in the region and had a better search engine for going through old editorial articles it became the best choice for this case.

### 3.6 Analysis

The analysis will be quantitative in order to get a bigger picture and to be able to work with a more extensive amount of data. Its also allows to get an overview of if there is a correlation between blaming the government and reporting on climate change or by blaming the rebels and reporting on climate change as an origin of the conflict.

Yin (2009) proposes four different strategies for the analysis, these are: relying on theoretical propositions, developing a case description, using both qualitative and quantitative data and examining rival explanations. By relying on theoretical propositions you structure your research according you previous research and your literature review. By using this way the propositions will shape what type of date you should give priority to in the analysis. This is especially useful when it comes to research questions that start with how or why (Ibid).

By developing a case description the researcher instead of letting theoretical propositions guide the researcher in the data analysis one relies on making a description of the case this might help to identify the causal relationships of the case that are relevant for studying the phenomena at hand (Yin, 2009).

Using both qualitative and quantitative data can give a very strong analytical strategy by using statistics as a second source of data and having the qualitative data as a centre of the analysis. This can be used both to test propositions and to explain the outcomes being researched (Yin, 2009).

Examining rival explanations might be used in combination with all the above three strategies. There can be several different types of rivalry between explanations but this strategy ensures a critical approach to research and can serve as a way to make sure that correlation doesn’t mean causality (Yin, 2009).

This thesis will rely on theoretical propositions as an analytical tool and let theory guide the data analysis, this way its possible to sort out the relevant data. It would have been possible to use qualitative and quantitative data especially if either discourse analysis or interviews would have been made as a second source of data. However this would have required more time than was available to complete the thesis. In the discussion chapter of this thesis rivalry explanations will be examined however will not guide the data analysis.
3.7 Validity

Validity can be seen as a measurement of quality for research and tests how valid the research is. Yin (2009) has identified three different types of validity; these are construct validity, internal validity and external validity. Yin (2009 P.40) also offers the following explanations for the three different types of validity.

- **Construct validity**: identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied
- **Internal validity** (for explanatory or causal studies only and not for descriptive or exploratory studies): seeking to establish a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships
- **External validity**: defining the domain to which a study’s findings can be generalized

It thereby becomes clear that these different types of validity all share the goal of making sure that research is measuring the right things and that the relationship it examines is correct as well as making sure the results can be generalized. As table 3 shows there are different ways of achieving these types of validity. When it comes to construct validity the thesis uses several different media houses and several different articles as sources however does rely only on these and unfortunately does not use for example interviews to complement this data which could harm the construct validity of this thesis. Please see chapter 3.4 for a discussion about why interviews was not performed. Since the data is collected through documentation it is also hard make the “key informants review the case”, one way this could be done is to send the empirical data to all the media houses however would require a lot of time on their behalf and haven’t been done due to that reason. While the chain of evidence is given by the data, so that it is up to the data tell me if climate change led up to a conflict in Darfur.

**Internal validity** is strengthened by the quantifying the data in a pattern matching manner and later on trying to explain the data given using theories in the field of media bias. The pattern matching means the thesis aims at investigation if there is a correlation between supporting the rebels in Darfur and thereby blaming the government for the conflict and at the same time calling it a climate conflict or vice versa. Rival explanations will also be brought up by using countries where the environmental policy is a priority and thereby seeing if countries with less performance on the environmental side of things would be less likely to call it a climate conflict and thereby one can see if it’s the foreign policy or the environmental policy of the geo-strategic environment that has the biggest priority when it comes to media bias.

Using theory to analyse the data ensures the external validity and by replicating the structure and analysis of the cases so that all of them are performed in the same way just as suggested by Yin (2009) see table 3. Therefore every case will be analysed with the help of theory. All the cases will also be analysed in the same way and the data will be collected using the same criteria of the different articles at hand when they are analysed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Case study tactic</th>
<th>Phase of research in which tactic is in focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Construct validity | 1. Use multiple sources of evidence  
2. Establish chain of evidence  
3. Have key informants review draft case study report | 1. Data collection  
2. Data collection  
3. Composition |
| Internal validity  | 1. Do pattern matching  
2. Do explanation building  
3. Address rival explanation  
4. Use logic models | 1. Data analysis  
2. Data analysis  
3. Data analysis  
4. Data analysis |
| External validity  | 1. Use theory in single-case studies  
2. Use replication logic in multiple-case studies | 1. Research design  
2. Research design |
| Reliability        | 1. Use case study protocol  
2. Develop case study database | 1. Data collection  
2. Data collection |

*Table 3. Case study tactics for four design tests*  
*Source: Yin (2009 P.41)*
3.8 Reliability

There is also another quality measure in order to decide how good the research is, which is called reliability. Yin (2009 P. 40) explains reliability as “demonstrating that the operations of a study – such as the data collection procedures – can be repeated, with the same results”. Bhattacherjee (2012 P.56) defines reliability as “the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable” from these two definitions it becomes clear that this measure of quality comes down to if the research is done in such a way that its duplicable and reliable. As seen in table 3 above one can ensure its reliability by using a case study protocol and develop a case study database. During the time this thesis has been written a database for all the analysed articles has been developed which thereby ensures reliability and makes sure other researchers can get in touch with the author to gain information regarding which articles that has been analysed and thereby duplicate the research to test if the results are reliable. It’s also important to understand that reliability does not mean accuracy but consistency (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

4 Theory

Climate change is a global concern that will not only affect a small portion of the globe but the entire globe. This impact will also influence the world in a big variety of ways with species, ecosystems, and landscapes being affected. Thereby biodiversity will decline and ecosystems services will become less available. (Leemans, & Eickhout, 2004). It has also been shown that climate change is a security problem, by looking at climate change as a security problem rather than a global commons problem we risk making it a problem for the military rather than be dealt with by foreign policy (Barnett, 2003). This risk means that different countries may prioritise their geo-strategic security higher than that of global climate change. In doing this the countries need public support for their prioritising, and as stated earlier media influenced public opinion (Schudson, 2002). Thereby media following the consensus of the elites will portray the geo-strategic security issues to a bigger degree than the concern for global man made climate change. It can thereby be seen by the use of theory relating to media bias and ruling elites together with empirical data from medias reporting how media is prioritising or ignoring climate change as a factor for the Darfur conflict.

The idea that media is controlled by a ruling elite consensus was stated by Herman and Chomsky (1998). They meant that media would only very rarely and in limited ways break away from the elite consensus. They use the Indochina war as an example where media in the US kept on following the elites even though the general population grew more sceptic towards the war. During this war the US media kept on being patriotic and gave a priority to official Washington explanations and statements as well as that of the corporate elites, and would exclude the views coming from the countries political left. Once there would be a disagreement between the ruling elites the media would take a contradictory stance on the subject and reflect elite dissatisfaction with those holding office. This type of bias would go further than just to what type of news that are reported on and how they are reported on but also the background of those issues with in which they gain their context (Ibid).

This makes its very interesting for this thesis since it is the background factors of the Darfur conflict that is in focus and thereby would follow this theory put forward by Herman and Chomsky (1988). However this theory was later criticized by Schudson (2002), where he pointed out the fundamental flaws of Herman and Chomsky’s reasoning. Schudson (2002) meant that the prior theory failed to explain the real differences between state-owned and state controlled media houses such as Pravda in the Soviet Union and western press. He also argues that in several countries such as Norway and Sweden media that are in danger of succumbing to market pressure gain subsidies in order to operate, without necessarily being biased in the favour of the national government and in many cases actually being critical of the national government (Ibid).

One of the major reasons behind the media being biased towards the government’s views is that in many cases the majority of sources are governmental sources (Schudson, 2002). This would constitute as content bias, where the media doesn’t give equal treatment to both sides of the argument and instead favours sources from one side according to Entman (2007). He also names two other types of bias that can be used: distortion bias and decision-making bias as pointed out in the introduction (Ibid). There are several ways for a government to get their views out to the media, these include press releases, press conferences, public speeches, and background briefings for the press just to name a few. By using these types of sources the journalists can handle their job easier and faster, in that sense they report on the world of government rather than seek out what’s happening in society. There are two ways media can work; one is to mirror the voices and views of democratically elected government officials, in this scenario the media is more of a neutral servant of democracy. The other way is by
working unconstrained by democratic control and allowing the editorials, publishers and reporters portray the world from their eyes. In this scenario the media can exercise great power (Schudson, 2002).

News and especially when it’s made television carry a lot of influence from its native culture. In this way culture influence the way the pictures, the sentences and the story is portrayed, which means that the culture will come to portray its world view in the form of news that originate from that particular culture (Schudson, 2002).

The theory that elites strongly influence or control media bias and coverage is referred to as manufacturing consent theory and is supported by other scholars than those already referred to, such as Halling (1986). Journalists who report objectively on an issue can be explained as acting within the “sphere of legitimate controversy” and will report overwhelmingly on an issue that has a broad national consensus, which is referred to as a “sphere of consensus”. Further on they will also report mockingly on a subject that lies outside of these sphere and is referred to as a “sphere of deviance” (Hallin, 1986). However this theory fails to explain the influence between media and the policy process, and therefore does not disregards that media can influence the policy process. Instead this theory focuses on news media as a reinforcement of the policy (Robinson, 2001).

The manufacturing consent theory also lacks in its ability to explain how and why reporters take a stance on an elite discussion over policy. In this case the journalists will become a participant in the political discussion. By taking a stance on in a political debate the media can come to influence the policy makers, and as stated by Robinson (2001) this has happened both during the Vietnam war and the US intervention in Somalia in 1992 where policy makers got effected by news coverage and adapted their policy because of the information given to them by the news.

Hallin (1986) believes as stated earlier that critical news is unlikely to be produced when there is an elite agreement a so-called “sphere of consensus” (see table 4). When there is no elite consensus and instead a dissensus the media will report both critically and supportive of the issue at hand in the so-called “sphere of legitimate controversy” (Ibid). This will therefore allow for the media to influence the policy process, since they take a stance in the debate. However in order to influence policy there has to be a certain policy uncertainty, and the bigger uncertainty the more likely is it that media will have any influence (Robinson, 2001). Without policy uncertainty media will operate in the “sphere of legitimate controversy” without influencing the policy (Robinson, 2001; Hallin, 1986) (See table 4). According to Robinson (2001) there is policy uncertainty if: "an issue suddenly arises and no policy is in place, or if there is disagreement, conflict of interest or uncertainty due to an ambiguous policy between the subsystems of the executive”.

Once media takes a stance on a elite dissensus issue the elites are faced with three effects, these are that the negative media framing might influence public perception, the image and credibility might be hurt because of the coverage, and thirdly that the policy makers might start to question the present policy (Robinson, 2001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of elite consensus</th>
<th>Media-state relationship</th>
<th>Role of media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elite consensus</td>
<td>Media operates within “Sphere of consensus (Hallin, 1986)&quot;</td>
<td>Media “manufactures consent” for official policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite dissensus</td>
<td>Media operates within “sphere of legitimate controversy” (Hallin, 1986)</td>
<td>Media reflects elite dissensus as predicted by Hallin (1986) and Bennett (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite dissensus plus policy uncertainty within government and critically framed media coverage</td>
<td>Media takes sides in political debate and becomes active participant</td>
<td>Media functions to influence direction of government policy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. The policy-media interaction model and theories of media-state relations
Source: Robinson (2001 P. 536)
5 Data

The table below (Table 5) contains the result of the performed data collection of the 221 articles that was analysed. The results show how the different media houses blamed the government or the rebels for the conflict as well as if the media brought up environmental factors or climate change as a contributing factor for the conflict. As one can tell by table 5 the way that these different media houses portrayed the conflict differ dramatically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media House</th>
<th>No. Editorials on Darfur</th>
<th>No. against the government</th>
<th>No. against the rebels</th>
<th>No. mentioning environmental factors as a root cause to the conflict</th>
<th>No. mentioning Climate change as a root cause to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NY Times</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Daily**</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf News</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Data

*blames both sides

**analysis consist of opinion pages

5.1 New York Times (NY Times)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media House</th>
<th>% against government</th>
<th>% against the rebels</th>
<th>% mentioning environmental factors as a root cause to the conflict</th>
<th>% mentioning Climate change as a root cause to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NY Times</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. New York Times Data

New York Times continuously made clear that the Sudanese government was responsible for the conflict in 39.7% of the articles analysed (see table 6). In one article they blamed both sides of the conflict for the on-going conflict, saying that both sides needed to be pressured to allow for peacekeepers to end the conflict (No more delay on Darfur, 2007). In this case it is important to remember that the 1.7% of the articles blamed the rebels however that same article also blamed the government of Sudan so therefore they didn’t entirely blame the rebels in the sense that they put all the blame for the continuation of the conflict on one side of the conflict. Likewise 1.7% represent an articles that blamed both sides and is apart of the 39.7% of articles that blamed the Sudanese government but this one article blamed both side and if that article would have been taken out of the analysis the numbers would instead have been 38% blaming government and 0% blaming the rebels. By these numbers it becomes clear that in this sense the media operated in the “sphere of consensus”. However one aspect that is not apart of this analysis is whether the media argued for intervention or not and in this sense several of the articles actually did (No Sanctuary, 2006; Take the lead on Darfur, 2006), and in that regard one can say that the media operated in the “sphere of legitimate controversy” since the US did in fact not intervene in Darfur therefore didn’t seem to be enough policy uncertainty in this area. Unless the argument is extended to include the UN peacekeepers that was decided on by the security counsel in 31 July 2007 (Brosché, 2008). In that case media would have became an active participant in the political debate and influenced the direction of policy (see table 4). However whether media actually was a contributing factor for the US stance on a peacekeeping mission in the security counsel requires additional research.

They never mentioned climate change as a contributing factor to the conflict, however did on two occasions mention the environmental aspect of the conflict (see table 5). In this sense it would seem that New York Times prefers to blame the government of Sudan rather than mentioning climate change as a factor for the conflict, whereby the media operates in a “sphere of consensus” and does not blame other factors than the ones targeted by US foreign policy. Even the environmental factors are at a minimal and would be seen as being part of the same category. In this sense it seems as if there was a huge deal of content bias by not brining up the possibility that the conflict was influenced at least to some degree by climate change.
5.2 Dagens Nyheter (DN)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media House</th>
<th>% against government</th>
<th>% against the rebels</th>
<th>% mentioning environmental factors as a root cause to the conflict</th>
<th>% mentioning Climate change as a root cause to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DN</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Dagens Nyheter Data

Dagens Nyheter brought up climate change as an aspect of the conflict at an early stage, (Ekdal, 2004) of their reporting but then didn’t continue to bring it up until at one more occasion (see table 5). It therefore seems like the views/knowledge of climate change as a contributor to the conflict was available at the editorial office but wasn’t brought up much more after that. This can be a conscious decision to focus on other aspects of the conflict in that case it would be either a form of decision making bias or distortion bias (Entman, 2007). Depending on the motivation behind not continuing to portray the conflict in that light. This might be explained by that the editorial office wanted to create pressure on the Khartoum government by blaming the government for the atrocities that was on going in the Darfur region, or more likely to preassure the Swedish government into pressuring the Sudanese government. Dagens Nyheter continuously spoke of the Darfur conflict as a genocide and urges for international action to stop the conflict (Mardröm utan slut, 2004), this approach might have been too diluted if climate change would have been brought in to become a more predominate part of the editorials, and in that case would have been a case of decision making bias.

Since the media house was much more likely to put blame on the Sudanese government and never put blame on the rebels this would be a clear case of elite consensus on the topic and the media reporting in the “sphere of consensus”. Because of the low amount of articles attributing climate change as a contributing factor of the conflict it becomes hard to make a solid argument about that the media house acted in the “Sphere of legitimate controversy” in this manner, however the media did bring both climate change and environmental factors up in their editorial pages so it would mean that there would be a small amount of elite disensus on the manner and therefore the media did report on the different views. This reporting was however very limited in comparison with the big consensus that the Sudanese Government was to blame.

5.3 China Daily

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media House</th>
<th>% against government</th>
<th>% against the rebels</th>
<th>% mentioning environmental factors as a root cause to the conflict</th>
<th>% mentioning Climate change as a root cause to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China Daily</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. China Daily Data

China Daily continuously talked about climate change as a contributing factor to the conflict with over 11% of their articles referring to that as the root cause of the conflict. This might be explained by China’s foreign policy as a supporter of the Khartoum government and thereby it’s more appropriate to blame climate change for the causes of the conflict rather than the government’s inability to keep stability within its nation. This can also be seen that they are more likely to blame the rebels than the government for the conflict (see table 8). Therefore it would represent a very big elite consensus and that the media, China Daily in this case would operate within the “sphere of consensus”. China Daily continuously stated that the conflict was being overplayed in western media and as a matter of fact wasn’t as great as described by their western counterparts (Yan, 2008), which would also support that the media operating within a national elite consensus regarding the conflict, and does not portray the western story regarding the conflict. Therefore this would mean that the media house carries decision making bias, as it has been actively choosing to not portray the western side of conflict. But also a huge amount of distortion bias due to the fact that they placed such heavy blame on climate change without having a consensus in the academic field to fall back on, and thereby adopted reality according to the benefit of Chinese foreign policy. One of the China Daily articles also attributed that poverty was at the core of the conflict, which can be seen as another way to get away from blaming the government, and therefore the Chinese investments in Africa can gain legitimacy (Zhuoqiong, 2007).
5.4 Gulf News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media House</th>
<th>% against government</th>
<th>% against the rebels</th>
<th>% mentioning environmental factors as a root cause to the conflict</th>
<th>% mentioning Climate change as a root cause to the conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gulf News</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Gulf News Data

Gulf News didn’t report on climate change or environmental aspect of the conflict at all, however they did mention Darfur as an oil rich and mineral rich area and that that could have led to the conflicts (There are riches under those bodies, 2006). What is interesting in this sense is that Gulf News found its own reason for why the conflict erupted, that has to do with oil findings instead of climate change. This might be due to be able to draw similarities of the Iraq war that has often been criticised as being a war over oil resources. And therefore they would put the conflict within a context in a similar way as the Canadian media did, but in their case the context was the Rwandan genocide instead (Adeba, 2011). This framing would perhaps also fit better for a big oil exporter such the United Arab Emirates, rather than blaming it on man made climate change that comes from the burning of fossil fuels. In this sense the reporting have to be seen as operating within a “sphere of consensus”. It can also be seen as a form of distortion bias in order to give their own explanation a different strategy was found by the Gulf news reporters and adapt reality accordingly. Gulf news blamed the government on two occasions for the conflict (See table 6), however after the International criminal courts’ rule to charge president Omar al-bashir of Sudan for war crimes and crimes against humanity for what had been going on in the Darfur region Gulf news stated on numerous occasions that this wasn’t the way to move forward and stated that this would further distance the peace talks (ICC may bring Sudan more bloodshed, 2009).

5.5 Cross case comparison

Gulf News and New York Times never mentioned climate change, however Gulf News never mentioned the environmental aspect either and was reluctant to put the blame of the conflict to either side, even though they were a little bit more likely to blame the Sudanese government. New York Times on the other hand was very likely to blame the government for the conflict. The China daily case show that they are more likely to attribute climate change as a contributor to the conflict and is also the only case to blame the rebels, at least to a higher degree than the government. While it seems judging from Dagens Nyheter and New York as if heavy blame is placed on the Sudanese government then climate change reporting is non existing or minimal. Gulf News stands out in this sense where they were reluctant to put blame on either side of the conflict and talked about a third reason for the conflict being the oil rich soil under Darfur.

It seems like both Gulf News and China Daily operated in the “sphere of consensus” and where not very likely to put blame on either side, but instead blamed external factors, such as climate change and the oil rich soils. They also both used distortion bias in order to portray the reality according to their worldview.

Dagens Nyheter and New York Times both reported from within the “sphere of legitimate controversy” and criticized the western passiveness on Darfur and urged for a military intervention to a certain degree. It would seem out of all the cases as if Swedish and American media are the closest to each other on this topic out of all the four cases and would therefore support the initial assumption based on Nord & Strömbäcks study (2006) that Swedish media tends to be pro American as described in the introduction.

It would seem as if all different forms of bias is being used with Gulf News and China Daily focusing on distortion bias, while Dagens Nyheter focused on decision making bias and New York Times on content bias. This might be explained by the different reasons behind the bias, and in which way the different arguments were directed. Therefore it would seem as distortion bias is more readily used when blaming either side is avoided to the highest degree and only few articles blame either side. However content bias and decision making bias seems to be used when blaming the government and avoiding to focusing the origin of the conflict on climate change.
6 Discussion

6.1 Does the international media framing regarding the Darfur conflict differ depending on their own country’s national strategic policy?

Yes very much, the Chinese media focused its blame on the rebels and climate change along with environmental and climate factors, while American media never mentioned climate change but focused its framing on blaming the Sudanese government. However they did on some occasions mention the environmental factors as a background for the conflict. The Swedish media was more reluctant to talk about climate change as a contributing factor than about climate change however they did bring it up. Regarding blaming one of the sides in the conflict they had a similar view as the American media and did focus their blame on the Sudanese government. Arabic media turned out to be very reluctant both to blame environmental factors, climate change or either side of the conflict however did have a little bit more tendency to blame the government than the rebels. They were also the only media to not take up environmental factors as a background factor for the conflict. This can be explained with the help of the chosen theory that the media houses tends to follow the geo-strategic policy when there is an elite consensus on the matter and thereby climate change is used a geo-strategic tool by the media.

6.1.1 How has different media reported on the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict?

Different media has reported on climate change as a contributing factor to the Darfur conflict quite differently (see table 5). It seems that Swedish and Chinese media is the most likely to report on climate change as a contributing factor to the conflict. Chinese media however stands out in the number articles that mention of climate change as a contributing factor compared to the other cases. The Chinese media also was the only case to not put any blame on the Sudanese government for the conflict and instead blamed the rebels. This made the Chinese case unique. The least likely to blame climate change was the American and Arabic media. The American media focused on blaming the Sudanese government while the Arabic media was very hesitant to blame any side of the conflict. The Swedish media was the sole one to bring up climate change and still blame the Sudanese government. However this was done to a much smaller degree than the Chinese media, and the focus of the blame was on the Sudanese government and in that sense they were very similar to the American media.

However it becomes apparent that the different media did report on the conflict as a climate conflict depending on the geo-strategic policy of the country from which it originates and thereby all of the media seemed to follow elite consensus on the matter. Thereby the media is shown to be rather subjective in its reporting on the conflict and carry a great deal of decision making bias. One could however say that the Swedish media that reported very brieﬂy on the conflict as a climate conﬂict operated in the “sphere or legitimate controversy” because certain elites felt that the conflict had its roots in climate change, and thereby elite dissensus existed.

6.1.2 Does this framing portray reality in a way that is in consensus with to that of the nations geo-strategic policy?

Yes, when it comes to the blaming one side of the conflict all the media houses operate within the “sphere of consensus” and blame the same side of the conflict as their foreign policy. However Swedish and American media can be seen as extending their views into the “sphere of legitimate controversy” and take a stance on if a military intervention is needed without having a elite consensus on that matter. However military intervention has not been a dominant part of the data analysis. How the consensus of the elites has influences the media reporting can be compared by looking at how the different countries stand on the Darfur issue and see how their foreign policy is designed on the matter.

6.1.3 What are the background factors for the conflicts eruption that is being mentioned in the different media outlets?

These are environmental factors, such as lack of water resources; this factor is brought up in all cases except for by the Gulf News. Instead Gulf News attributes a mineral and oil rich soil as a underlying factor for the conflict. This might be explained with that Gulf News originates from a Muslim environment and both sides of the conflict are predominantly Muslim, thereby the media house follows the elite consensus of being very careful with placing blame on one side of the conflict and instead finds another background cause that doesn’t interfere with the oil exports of the United Arab Emirates. Climate change is brought up both the Swedish and Chinese media as an important part of the conflict background. While Chinese media is also the only one to bring up
poverty as a background factor, however this can be seen as a connection with climate change or environmental degradation, since the climate change would have led to decreased amount of resources and therefore poverty. It becomes clear here that there is several different background factors that have been reported on and they all seem to be linked with the geo-strategic policy of the countries from where they originate, and in that sense follow an elite consensus.

6.1.4 What are the different types of media bias that are being used?
These are Content Bias, Decision making bias and Distortion bias. The different media houses use these in different ways and. The Gulf News and China daily predominantly use distortion bias, adapting reality and finding other root causes of the conflict than those of a badly handled conflict with poor performance of the national institutions in restoring the peace, while Dagens Nyheter tends to use decision making bias, where it seems like the editorial staff were biased in themselves and disregarded the early report of climate change as a contributing factor in their later coverage. While the New York Times predominantly used content bias, as a way to favour one side of the conflict and mainly reported on the atrocities that the Sudanese government took part in and not distorting that picture with claims that there was another root cause for the conflict.

6.2 Reflections
Climate conflicts can be used as an argument for tougher action on climate change as it highlights some of the worst possible things that might be unleashed in the future due to unrestricted emissions of green house gases, thereby it could be an argument for a stricter environmental policy of a country (Salehyan 2008). Thereby the high pollution countries would bear responsibility in other peoples suffering by emitting green house gases. This argument can thereby be used to decrease the emissions of the high emission countries. It could however also be used as an argument to intervene in a climate conflict, in a sense that since the high emission countries have a blame in the origin of a climate conflict and its therefore morally correct to risk that countries soldiers in order to intervene in the country suffering from a climate conflict and saving the population there. But on another hand the argument about climate conflict can also be used in a way for one not to take a side in a conflict since both sides are fighting because of the increased green house gases in the atmosphere, and not because of a deeper underlying political difference. Therefore the argument can be used in several different ways. In this case it seems to be only used as a way to not put blame on any side by the Chinese media and as an argument to increase action against climate change as part of the environmental policy in Swedish media. However its seems like that the most important aspect for when it is being used is that there is an elite consensus on the matter and that its beneficial for the geo-strategic policy.

One could also imagine that the environmental policy of a nation could impact the framing of the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict. However in this case it doesn’t seem like the environmental policy has much influence but rather that the foreign policy dominates. Salehyan argues that (2008) it can be seen a try by Ban Ki-Moon and others, to lift up climate change on the agenda by attributing the Darfur conflict as a climate conflict (Ki-Moon 2007), and thereby giving climate change a higher international priority. Even if it would be the case the environmental policy would be the guiding force in the framing and reporting on the conflict as a climate conflict it would still be a product of an elite consensus.

These arguments can be having negative impacts when decisions are based on one-sided claims. In worst case decisions may be based on that climate change is the root of a conflict and thereby fail to hold the political structure accountable for what’s going on together with other important aspect of violent conflicts. This argument is an extension of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen (1999) who argues that in the face resource scarcity democratic institutions work to prevent famine due to that these institutions are accountable to their citizens. Thereby climate change cannot solely lead to famine and conflict, because democratic institutions would prevent these from escalating. However it seems like Sudan lacks in these democratic institutions and thereby perhaps climate change and undemocratic institutions can work as a risk-increasing factor for armed conflicts.

On another hand if climate change as a contributor to conflict is ignored there is less moral obligations to both mitigate climate change from the developed world and of accepting refugees and mitigating the conflict since they didn’t play a role in the origin. Best-case scenario the global community acts to prevent and stop future conflicts and at the same time mitigate their green house emissions as well play a role in taking care of refugees and migrants. Thereby it important that media plays an objective role so that public opinion can be influenced to do what’s morally right given the circumstances. According to Kofi Annan (2012) the responsibility to protect is applicable whether it’s a climate conflict or not, and unfortunately during the Darfur crisis there was a lack of political will by the international community to intervene and practise this principle in any way that would have had a significant difference. When media is put into this context the lack of an international will might be attributed to the media never becoming an active member of the political debate are not acting enough the
“sphere of legitimate controversy”. However both Swedish and American media did operate in this sphere and the reason that they did not have any or enough policy influence might have been due to a lack policy uncertainty, due to the lack of political will described by Kofi Annan.

6.3 Implications for Theory

This thesis aimed at describing the factors coming in the play when media is reporting on a conflict as a climate conflict or not, and could thereby be used to understand how media will respond to future allegation of an armed conflict as a climate conflict. In this thesis it’s shown that the origin of the conflict is explained differently depending on how it fits with the geo-strategic policy of the elites of the country from which the media originates. This thesis can serve as a complement to Kothari’s (2010) media analysis of New York Times over the Darfur Conflict and Adeba’s (2011) comparative study of two Canadian media houses reporting over the same conflict. However this study focuses more on the climate aspect of the reporting, and is in that sense unique. It also supports the findings of Nord & Strömöck, (2006) that Swedish media tends to have a pro-American point of view.

Further on the thesis can also be seen as an empirical test of the “The policy-media interaction model and theories of media-state relations” (Robinson, 2001 P. 536). These results also support Boykoff’s (2007) findings that US media is more reluctant than other media to report on climate change as anthropocentric; however in this case it may be more focused on elite consensus blaming the Sudanese government for the conflict rather than the environmental standpoint of US media to dot show equal argument for climate change as a man made phenomena as the British media as pointed out by Boykoff (2007). However both of these can be seen as influenced by the elites, even though there seems to more of an elite dissensus over anthropocentric climate change than there is over who’s side to take in the Darfur conflict in the USA.

Former studies have concluded that media tends to put a conflict into a perspective when reporting on it; such was the case with the Canadian media houses when they reported on the Darfur conflict (Adeba, 2011). This study has shown that Gulf News also tried to put the Darfur conflict into the same context as the Iraq war with talking about the oil rich area as a reason for the conflict. Thereby, since climate change is likely to increase (IPCC, 2014), and China Daily have been reporting on this conflict quite heavily as a climate conflict it becomes very likely that Chinese media will put future conflicts in the same context as the Darfur conflict and thereby reporting on them from the same perspective. That is, if there is elite consensus on the matter and the climate changes impact can be a beneficial argument for their geo-strategic policy.

As Moeller (1999) points out that American media tends to only give brief news coverage of African conflicts and therefore not give them the full picture of the continent. Atkinson (1999) also shows that the same media fails to portray the background factors for these conflicts, thereby this thesis becomes relevant on the topic were its shown at least in the case of climate change the origin of the conflict is adapted to fit the geo-strategic policy from where they originate and therefore this can perhaps offer an explanation to why the American news coverage is so brief and why the background factors often is failed to be portrayed. This is a clear example of distortion bias, where the reality is adapted to fit the geo-strategic policy.

6.4 Future Research

In order to find support for these finding or falsify them a Discourse analysis is suggested, also interviews with the media houses to get an inside point of view on these issues. The Discourse analysis could focus on normal news articles regarding the Darfur issue rather than editorials or opinion pages, however does not necessarily need to. These findings are only limited for a small amount cases and therefore a bigger sample is also recommended in order to gain more perspectives, for example is a African perspective missing that would be vital to understand how the African media works with climate conflict as a geo-strategic tool, or if they are more objective to the understanding of the conflict in Darfur in its reporting. Another important factor to understand is how the media will report on climate conflicts in the future, will it still be used as a geo-strategic weapon or will it be reported on more objectively.

Further on when not analysing media it would be of great importance to the conflict research community to further understand the mechanisms between conflict and climate change, or ever from a prevention perspective and in that case it would be beneficial to reach a bigger understanding of how climate change adaptation can contribute to conflict mitigation.
7 Conclusion

This thesis has concluded that climate change as a contributing factor to the Darfur conflict has mainly been reported on by the media when it has been able to be used as a geo-strategic argument for the foreign policy of the country from which the media house originates. The Chinese media has been the media house of the analysis that has reported on this issue most. It would however seem like all media has mainly been reporting in what is known as the “sphere of consensus”. Thereby all the media has followed the elites views of the conflict, even if the western media such as Swedish and American has been shown to be more likely to break away from elites consensus. In this aspect it has been seen that the concept of climate conflicts has been used as a geo-strategic weapon in the information war over the Darfur conflict. These finding will contribute to a more holistic understanding of how media bias works especially in regards to climate conflicts but also in the way that media operates with relation to foreign policy and geo-strategic goals. Thereby it will allow the general public to be more critical of the information from news media and thereby the general public can make more informed decision that can lead to a more sustainable path, both environmentally and socially. But since media also can influence policy decisions during times of policy uncertainty it becomes increasingly important to understand how media reacts to a conflict that by some is pointed out as a climate conflict.

8 Acknowledgement

I would first and foremost like to expand a big thank you to my supervisor professor Ashok Swain who continuously pushed me in the right direction in a very constructive way, and who believed in my topic of choice. Secondly I would like to extend a thank you to my evaluator who gave me very valuable feed, Roland Kostic. I would also like the thank all those around me who have been supporting me on this journey, my friends who I have spend a great amount of time studying with, my girlfriend who has been patient enough to allow spend all this time on the thesis, and of course my family who has motivated me to work hard enough to finish it in time.

Now that this is thesis is submitted and I am ready to start a new chapter in my life I am sure that I will look back on this part of my life with great joy and remembering all the good times, interesting research and to be able to be proud of what I have accomplished.
9 References


Flint, Julie (2007) Darfur’s armed Movements in de Waal (ed) *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace*


Uppsala Conflict Data Program (Date of retrieval: 14/04/15) UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia: www.ucdp.uu.se/database, Uppsala University.


