

The construction of urgency discourse around mega-projects



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Overview

Mobilization of bias

literature review. how are emotions, framing and decision-making connected?

Our research

case study on urgency in the planning of natural gas infrastructure in Israel

Urgency

literature review. what do we know about the role of urgency in mobilizing biases?

Results & Conclusion

what did we find and what does it mean?

Institutionalization of urgency

how does urgency become part of a policy decision?

Climate policy

possible applications of research results to climate policy

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1

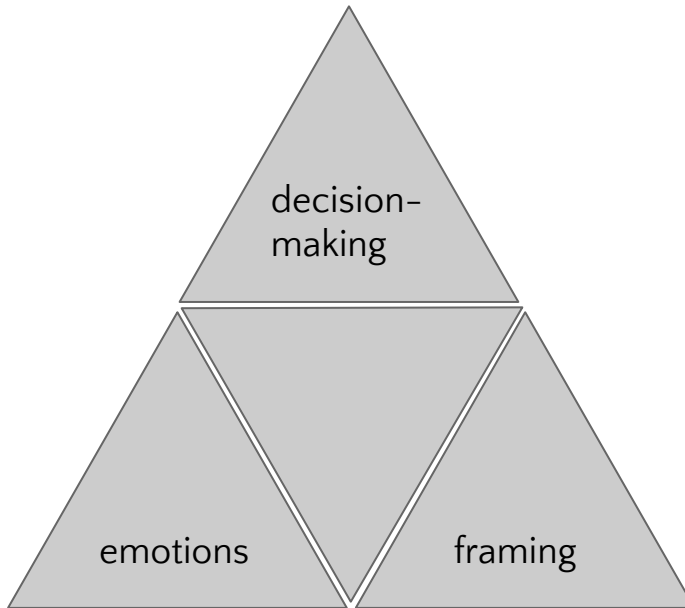
Mobilization of bias

framing, emotions and bias in decision-making





Mobilization of bias



- emotions
- framing
- biased decision-making
- multidisciplinary

Emotions guide information processing, influencing what information is attended to and likely to be recalled and what is ignored. This information can be expected to influence judgments.

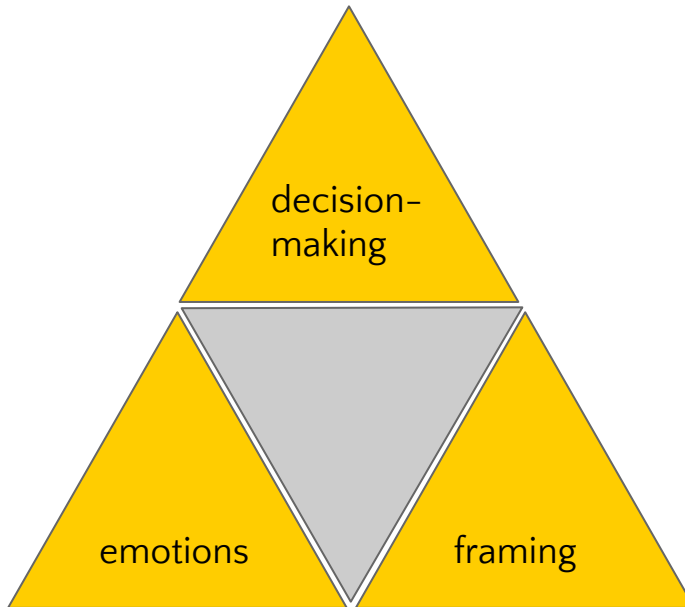
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Nabi 2003



Mobilization of bias

how are they connected?



- information processing
- anticipation of emotions
- bias
- discourse
- institutional level?

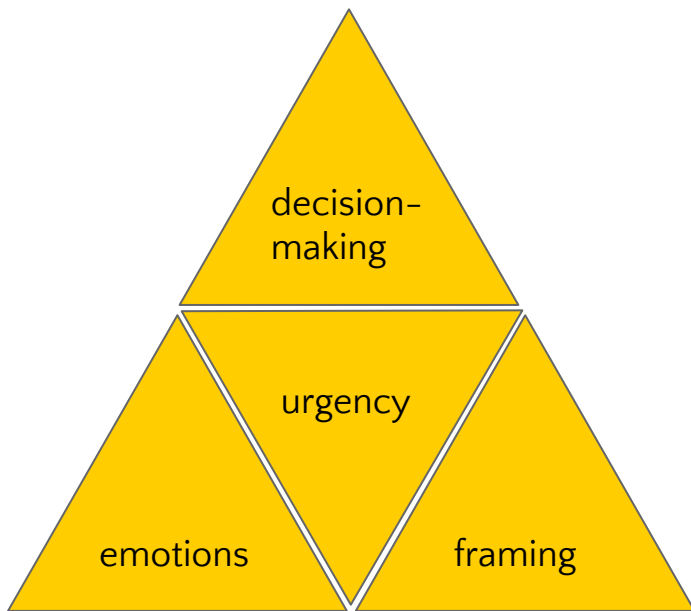
A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a clock face. The numbers 11 and 12 are prominent in the center. A red hand is visible on the left side, pointing towards the 11. The word "Urgency" is overlaid in a bold, black, serif font on a bright yellow rectangular background, centered horizontally and partially overlapping the numbers 11 and 12.

Urgency

2



Urgency

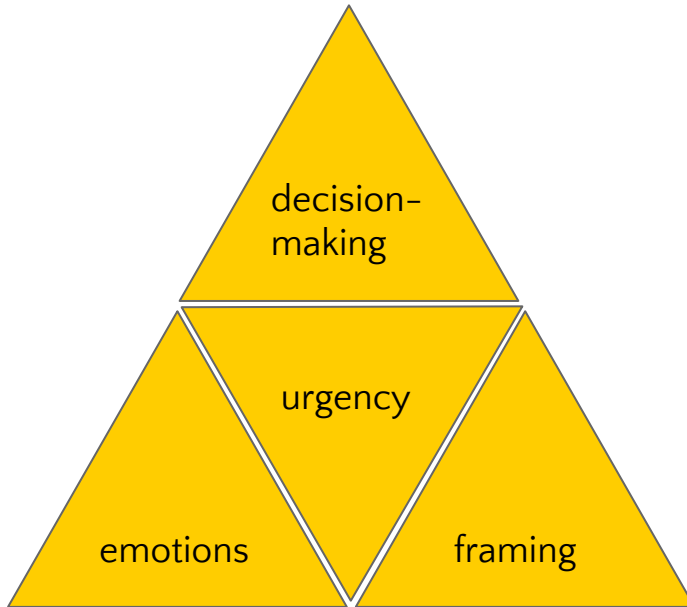


how does it work?

- mobilizes cognitive bias
- triggers emotional response
- discursive framing
- drives decision-making
- permeates policy
- institutionalization



Urgency



why does it work?

- ◉ limited attention
- ◉ crisis justifies investment of time and resources
- ◉ urgency compromises cognitive ability to detect biases
- ◉ information that does not confirm emotional state is rejected

The background is a 3D-rendered map with a grid of streets. A blue path is drawn across the map, starting from the top left and ending at a green location pin in the bottom right. A red location pin is visible in the top left corner. The text is overlaid on a yellow rectangular background.

**how is urgency
institutionalized?**

Mega-Projects

why mega-projects are a good case study to research urgency

- long-term projects
- once build, irrevocable
- multiple interest-groups
- emotional appeal
- project framing
- biased decision-making
- multiple venues
- institutional level



Our research - NOP 37/H

4



Natural gas in Israel

- Resource scarcity
- Tamar gas field discovery
- New gas treatment and transportation infrastructure



National Outline Plan 37/H

Methodology

- ◉ 117 official protocols
- ◉ relevant planning venues
- ◉ urgency statement as unit of analysis
- ◉ discourse analysis to trace:
 - by whom urgency is raised
 - when during the policy process urgency is triggered
 - the rationale for urgency
 - which policy measures are proposed to facilitate urgency



National Outline Plan 37/H

Research questions

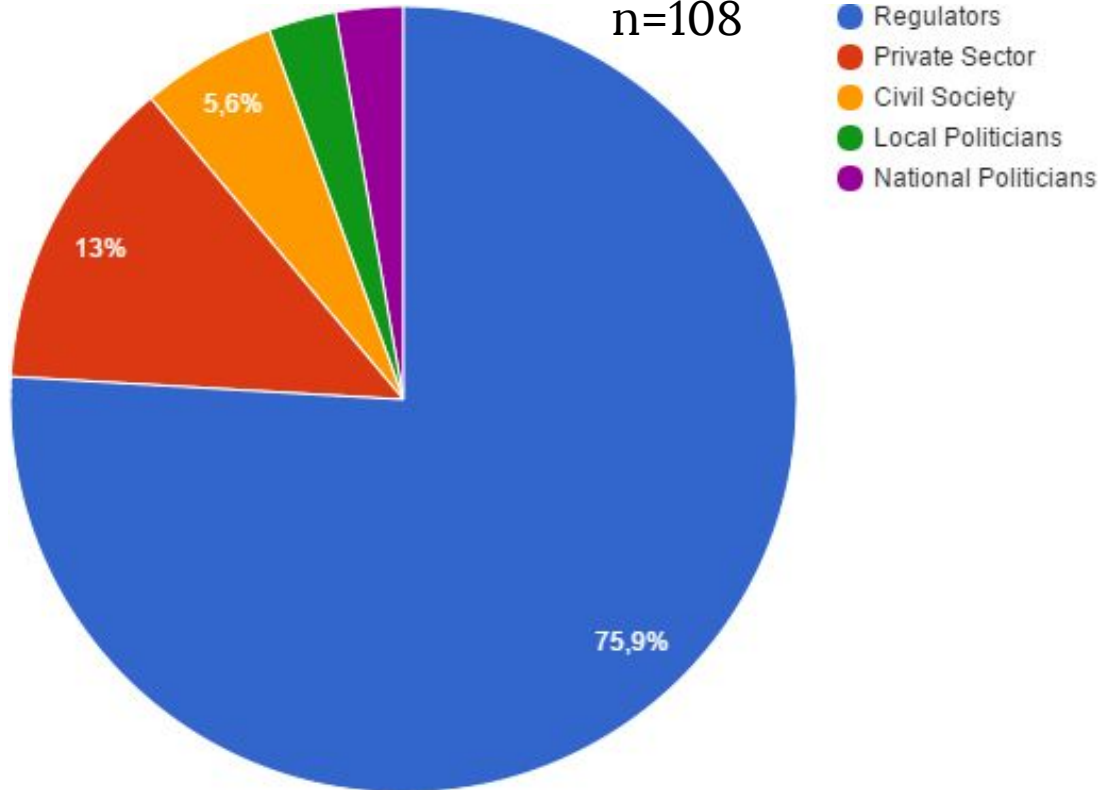
- ◉ how, when and by whom is urgency constructed in the policy process?
- ◉ how is urgency institutionalized in the adopted policy?
- ◉ how do actors respond to urgency?
- ◉ what is the role of emotions in constructing urgency, and in shaping criticism on urgency?

An aerial view of a large industrial facility, possibly a refinery or chemical plant. The foreground shows a complex network of blue and white pipes, walkways, and structural supports. In the background, there are tall distillation columns, storage tanks, and other industrial structures under a clear sky. A person is walking on a path in the middle ground. A large yellow rectangular box with the word 'Results' in bold black text is superimposed over the center of the image.

Results

Urgency Statements per Actor Group

n=108



who raises urgency?



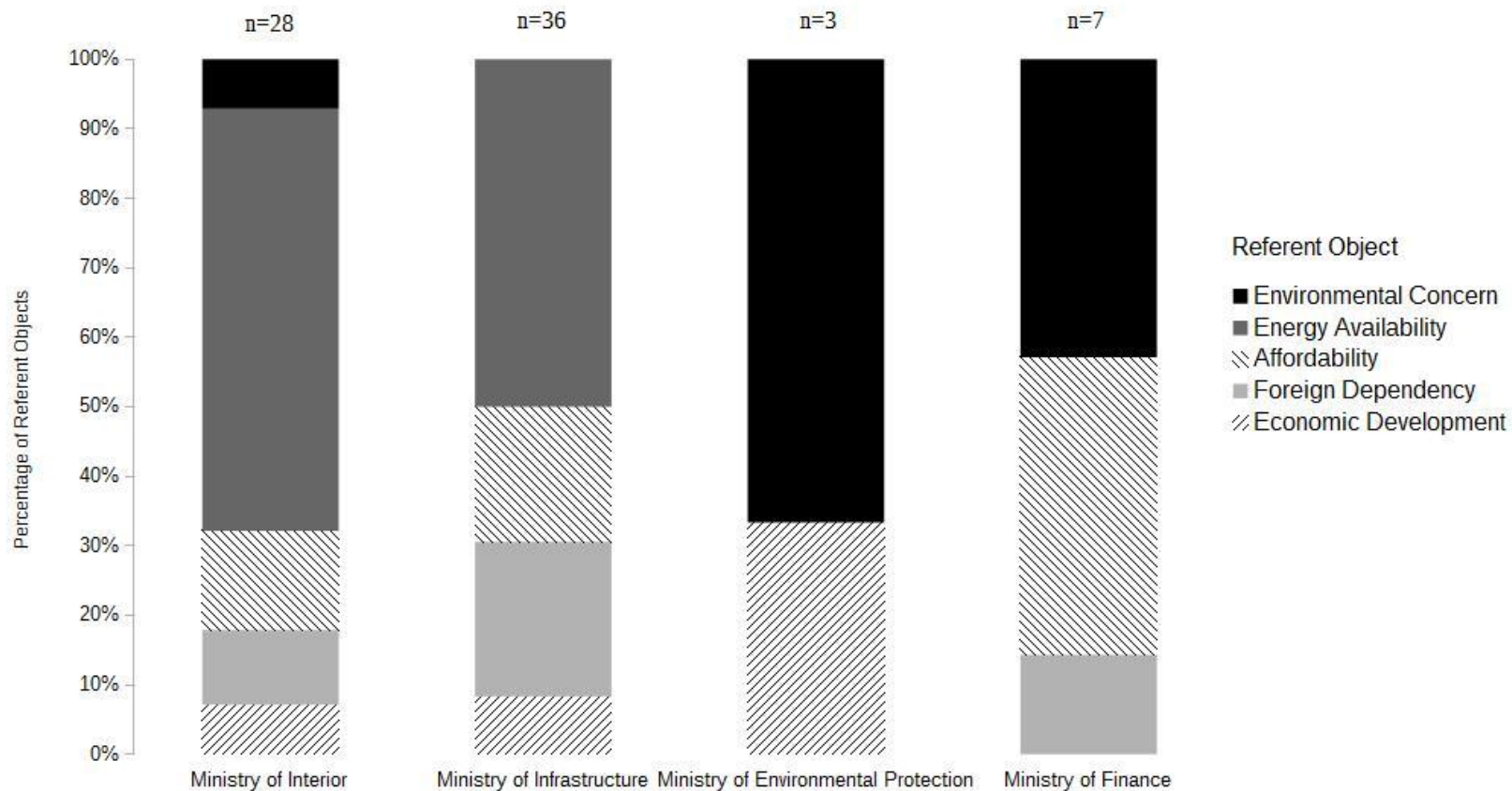
The National Council is convinced that there is an urgent need to make NOP 37/H ready for approval in order to allow the flow of gas from the new gas discoveries to coincide with the expected shortage of natural gas in the near future, for the sake of the Israeli economy. Therefore, there is a need to significantly shorten the schedule for the approval of the plan.



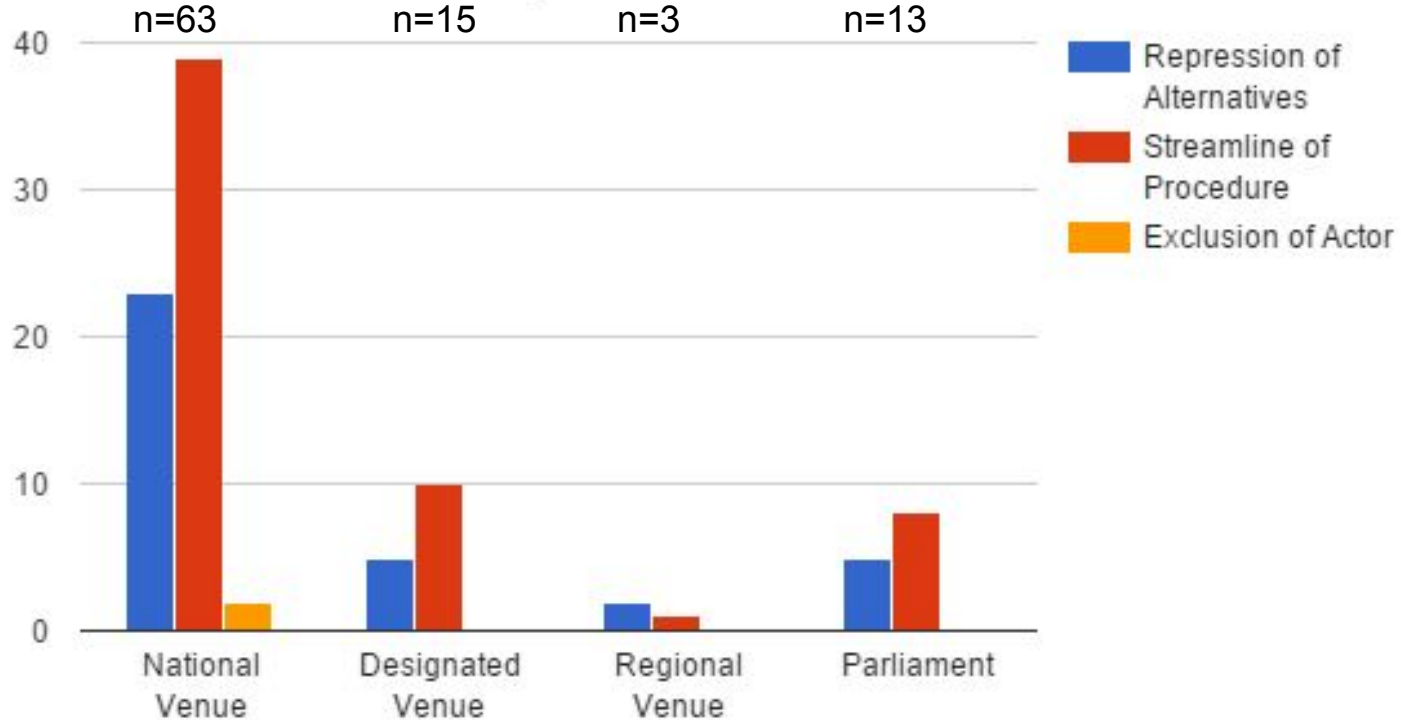
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Ronit Mazer, chairwoman of the National Planning and Construction Council. May 1, 2012

Urgency Statements by Regulator

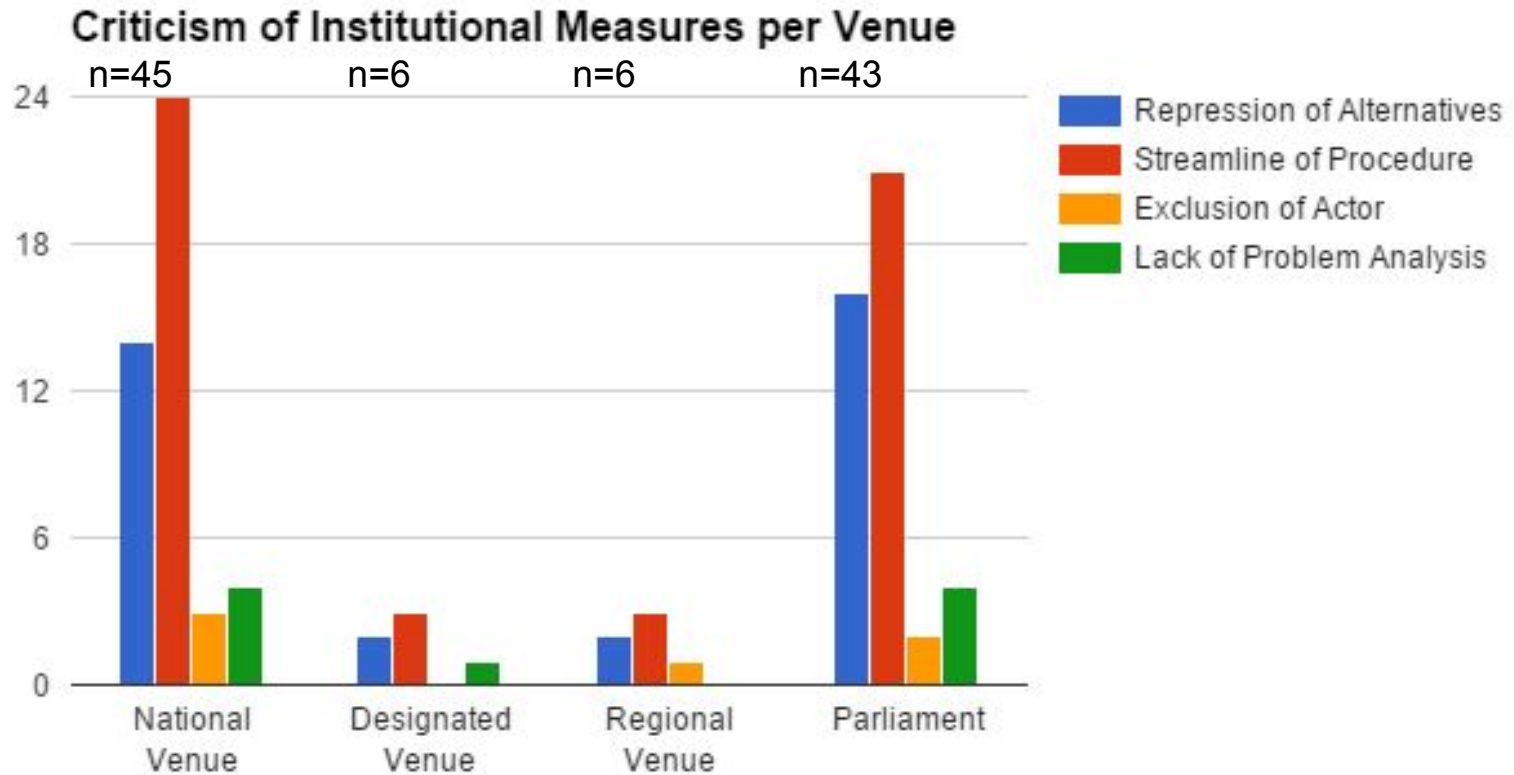


Institutional Measures per Venue



where is urgency institutionalized?

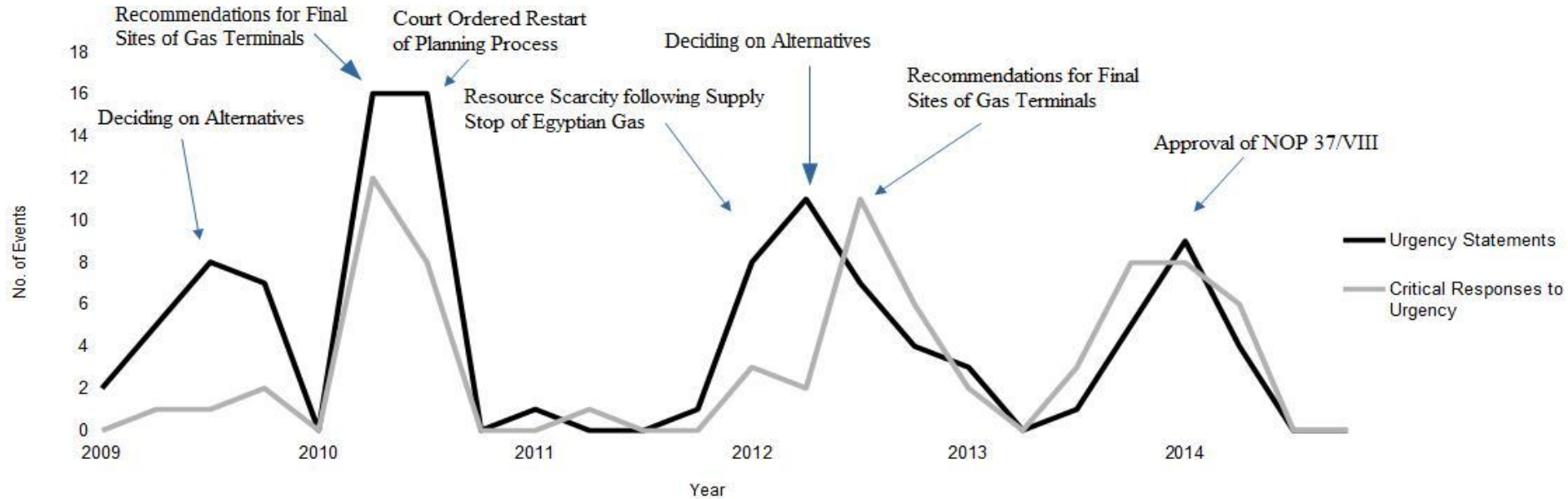




where is the institutionalization of urgency criticized?

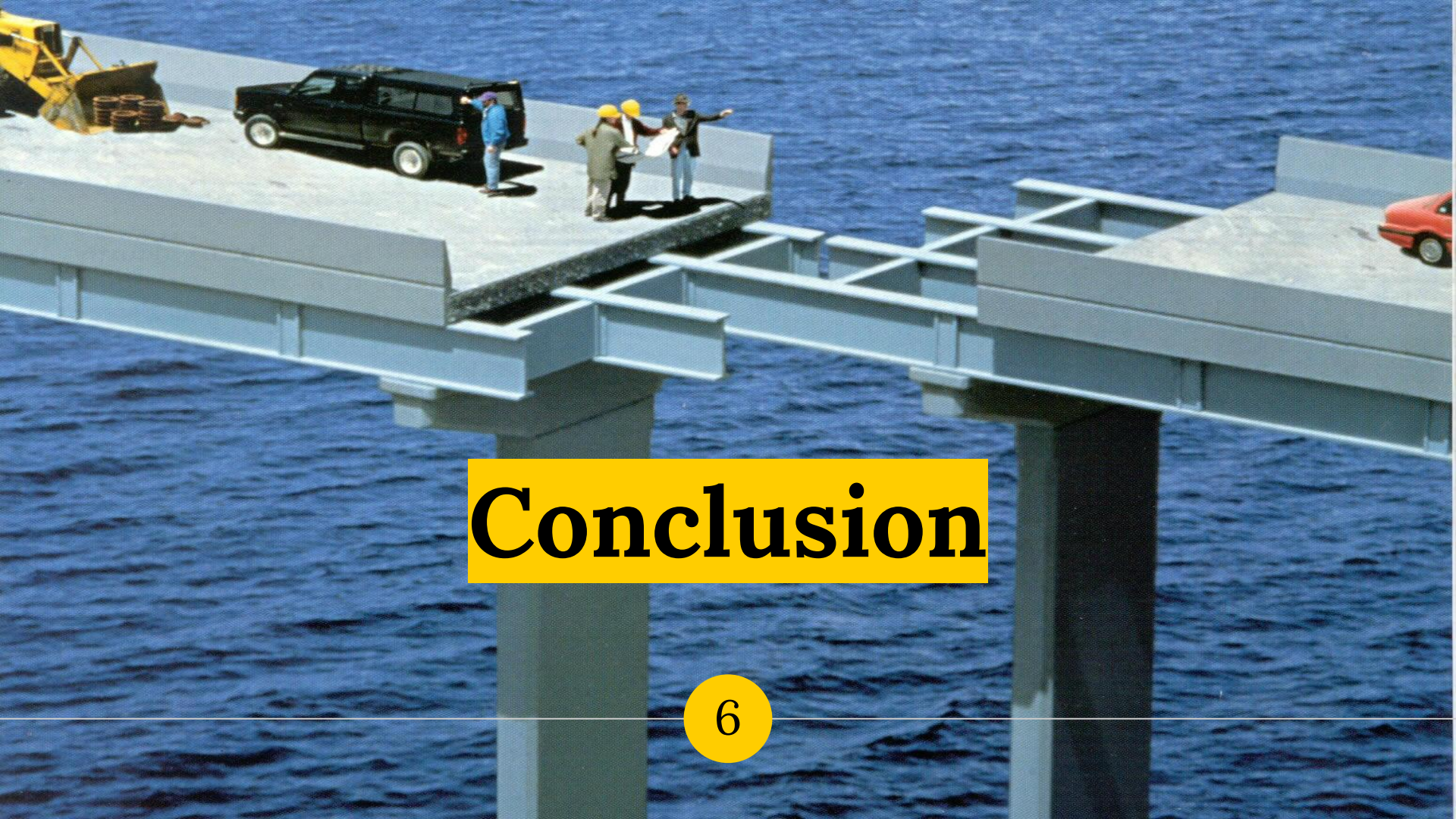


Timeline of Events



when is urgency constructed?



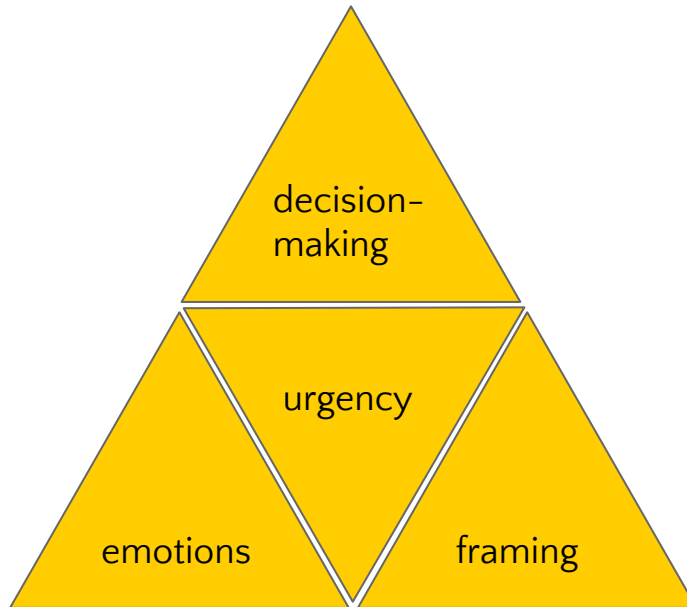


Conclusion



Conclusion

institutionalization of urgency



- raised deliberately at crucial moments in responsive venues
- justifies the proposal of unorthodox planning measures
- institutionalized through facilitation of urgency during the policy process



Application to climate change





Climate policy

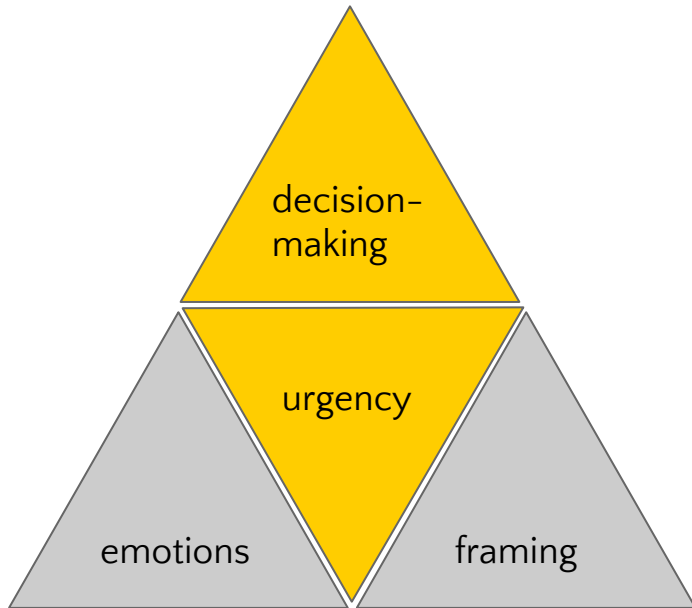
current condition of climate policy

- ◉ discourse saturated with expressions such as ‘irreversible’, ‘catastrophic’, ‘urgent’, ‘tipping point’
- ◉ reframing climate unlikely to increase support for climate policies
- ◉ difficult to advance adequate institutional response to climate change



Climate policy

harnessing urgency for policy change



urgency and decision-making

- raise urgency in specialised venues, avoid political venues
- portray in ways that appeal to target audience
- voiced by regulators urgency is most effective
- raise in response to external events
- suggest extreme planning measures to facilitate urgency



where do we go next?

?



Conclusion

future research

- ◉ role of urgency in non-infrastructure policy areas?
- ◉ comparative research into the role of urgency in other planning processes?
- ◉ correlation of use of urgency discourse with policy action?
- ◉ role of emotions in policy change?



Thanks!

Any **questions** ?

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