

Climate change as a discursive frame for
environmental management:

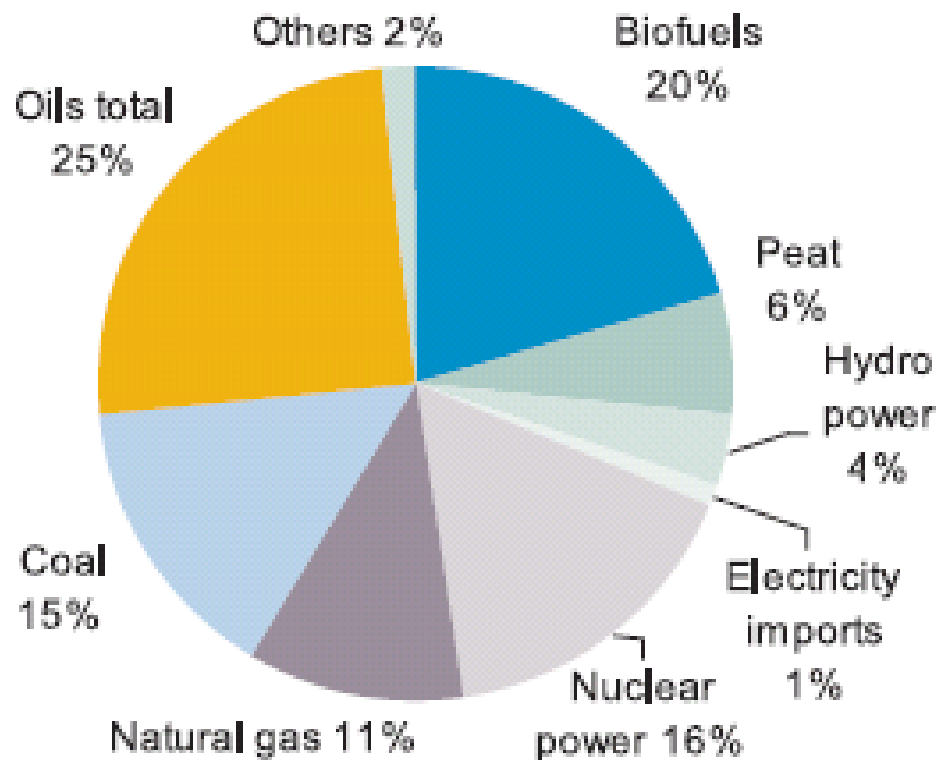
How social movement organisations
frame the debate in Finland

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The Finnish Energy System

- No domestic coal, gas and oil resources
- Imports: 67% of all energy consumed
- Domestic energy sources:
 - Biofuels, including wood and peat
 - Hydropower
- No solar power, including wind
- Growing importance of nuclear power
- “annual energy consumption per person, 6.8 tonnes of oil [equivalent], is one of the highest in the Western countries” (KTM 2005)

Finland: Energy Sources (KTM 2005: 2)



Energy sources in Finland in 2004, 35.4 Mtoe in total.



BWR 2 x 840 MW (net)
 Operation started: 1979, 1982
 Production: 14.1 TWh (2004)
 Load factor: 95.6% (2004)



PWR 2 x 488 MW (net)
 Operation started: 1977, 1981
 Production: 7.7 TWh (2004)
 Load factor: 90.1% (2004)



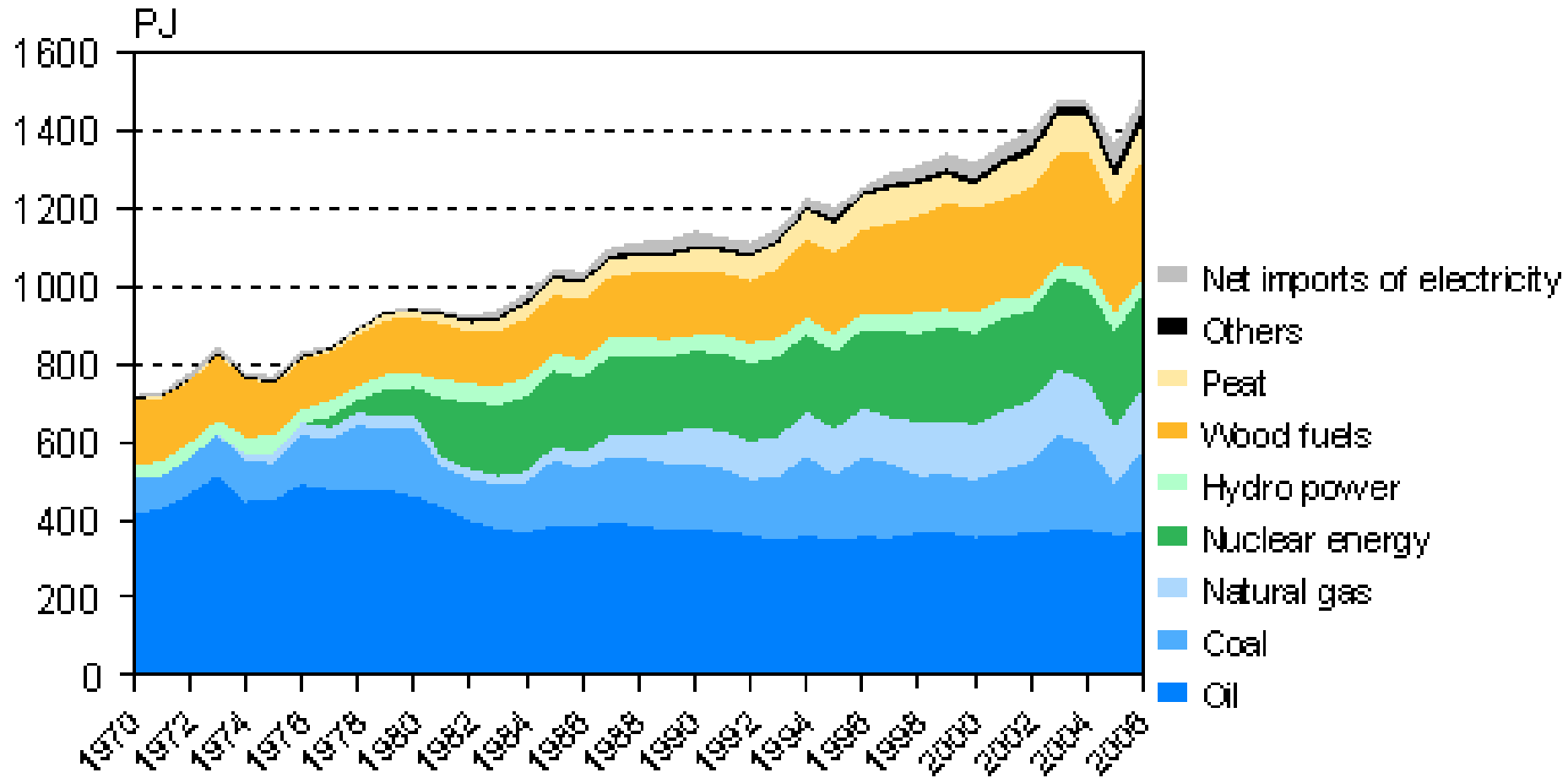
A climate and energy campaigner:

“And there is this mechanism I think that is very typical of Finnish culture that Finnish people were very equally divided before the decision by the Parliament on the issue. But after the decision was made, a lot of people started to think of it as a national project. They have to stand behind regardless of whether they were for it in the first place or not. And that certainly happened, that after the decision a lot of people changed their mind. And it became it became a national pride, a national project.”

How is the Finnish energy system being negotiated?

- Positive attitude towards nuclear power; part of the national climate and energy strategy
- Strong believe into authorities
- Relatively little change in energy production by sector over decades -> energy consumption
- Contested definitions of renewable energy resources such as hydropower and peat
- EIAs well established planning tool
- Many active environmental NGOs, many of them focussing on climate change

Total energy consumption 1970-2006



Source: Statistics Finland, Energy Statistics

Climate change as a frame for negotiations

- Popular knowledge about climate change allows more people to participate
- Individual energy projects can be looked at in a wider context
- Pitfalls:
 - Scientific and social uncertainties are transferred to environmental management
 - Difficult to talk about solutions (global vs. local)
- Hypothesis: Climate change concept leads to stalemates in societal negotiations and environmental management

Environmental NGOs

- Use climate change as a framework to bring their message across; former topics are united under the banner of climate change
- Cooperation between environmental NGOs
- Environmental NGOs act complementary:
 - Radical actions of one organisation raises attention nationally and internationally, but do not promote cooperation, public participation nor consensus
 - Well established cooperation with business and industry of another organisation provides manuals for resolving conflicts over environmental issues

Environmental NGOs cont'd

- Conflicts inside:
 - Local vs. national priorities
 - Leisure activities and nature protection vs. political engagement and protest
 - Difficulty of integrating environmental management and social needs

Environmental Impact Assessment

- EIAs as a tool for civic participation in municipal planning
- EIA and SEA
- Climate change concept as a chance to develop and strengthen EIA and SEA

Questions for discussion and further research

- What are the implications of a hegemonic climate change concept for environmental management?
- Could the concept of climate change help to elaborate the different levels of EIA and SEA?
- How is participation and decision making in environmental management understood by the different actors? What is expected of EIAs and SEAs on a political, managerial and social level?